



JEEViKA's Newsletter

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JEEViKA's response to the COVID-19 pandemic through prompt measures



Ever since the Novel Corona Virus Covid-19 was declared to be a global pandemic, the governments and authorities have been working relentlessly to fight the pandemic. From ban on international travel, scrutiny of domestic travelers, lock down and quarantine, several other steps had to be taken in these testing times.

JEEViKA held its own during these testing times and came up with various steps to address the challenge of the COVID-19 outbreak especially in the rural areas. The outbreak and the consequent lockdown have heavily affected the rural regions of Bihar. Problems have ranged from unavailability of masks & sanitizers, adverse effects on trade and business, scarcity of resources for poor households to name a few.

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The Mask Messenger

In these dire times, JEEViKA adopted a multi-pronged approach to reach out to the 1.09 crore rural households through its network of 9.5 lakh self-help groups through the following

- Knowledge creation & sharing
- Relief work for vulnerable populations
- Volunteer and fund mobilization for essential items
- Livelihoods & economic opportunity
- Food security water & sanitation
- Infrastructure & logistical preparedness for supply chains, marketing and the likes



Awareness and Preparedness

JEEViKA in its venture for awareness has reached out to the community through audio messages, leaflets, theme songs and videos that are being shared with the community by the JEEViKA's officials and front line workers such as Community Mobilizers and Community Resource Persons.

JEEViKA is trying to reach out to a maximum number of households through its SHGs and spread the awareness on topics such as handwashing, sanitation, quarantine, isolation and social-distancing. A total of 1.4 lakh leaflets were distributed to cadres within a week of the announcement of the lockdown, while 5 lakh leaflets were printed for our self-help groups, these leaflets have been used widely for raising awareness on the COVID-19. JEEViKA released **15 audio messages, 5 videos, 1 theme song and a two-part comic series** to raise awareness on the pandemic, and has been relaying them through its SHG network.

Mask Manufacturing and Supply

With the purview of the sudden outbreak, shortage of masks was eminent especially in the rural areas where they were already scarce. JEEViKA took up the initiative to manufacture quality mask.

All 38 districts have been engaged in production of masks. The districts have been given specific targets and the quality of the masks produced is being monitored on a daily basis. Apart from manufacturing, the didis are also extensively engaged in distribution of these masks to the poor households. Some community members have gone to the extent of



using their personal vehicles for distribution of the masks.

More than **1000** households were engaged in mask production and had produced more than **6** lakh masks 31.3.2020 by the end of March, 2020. In times of the lockdown the ultra-poor families have been worst hit by the crisis. The menial jobs are on the brink of closure and the businesses cannot be operated, to battle the crisis.



JEEViKA has used the platform of Satat Jeevikoparjan Yojana (SJY) to make sure that no one sleeps with an empty stomach. In view of the on-going lockdown, to ensure food security at household level one time cash grant of **Rs. 2000/-** has been decided to be given to all Hhs endorsed under SJY through the concerned village organizations.

The policy was approved on 28th Mar, 2020. On the basis of fund availability in the VOs, the village organization is prioritizing among SJY HHs and is doing the identification work. Cash was transferred to more than **12,000** households within a week of approval. The outreach would be further increased and it would be ensured that the identified

households receive the due grant in time.

Ensuring the banking services remain operational

The bank sakhis have ensured that the cash flow in the rural areas remain steady as cash is the main need of the hour. Many Bank Sakhis are operationalizing their CSPs from their homes, while taking all the precautionary measures. The Bank Sakhis are also visiting ATMs and Banks with precautionary measures and permission to withdraw cash so that the customers don't have to face trouble in withdrawals. The Bank Sakhis are wearing gloves and regularly sanitizing their devices, they have also marked circles at one and a half meter distances for the customers to maintain queues. The bank sakhis are affecting transactions worth **INR 4-5 Crores** everyday.



Ensuring availability of essential goods



JEEViKA has stepped in the rural retail market through its customized Rural Retail Shops, these shops enlisted as essential services are open during the lockdown to ensure that people in rural areas are able to meet their needs of groceries and other essentials. All precautionary measures are being taken in these shops such as earmarked circles, sanitized shelves and the likes. The customers are also being imparted with information on the pandemic and what preventive steps can be taken to break the chain. The customers are also being advised to not touch anything in the premises to ensure maximum safety and minimize chances of contamination. BRLPS-JEEViKA which operates a total of **18** Rural Retail Shops has ensured steady availability of goods in the areas

they serve and has prevented people from panic-buying, moving to the cities to buy goods among others. These rural retail marts are also selling masks that are being developed by the JEEViKA didis.

Ensuring quality food to quarantined and in-patients through Didi ki Rasois

The 4 Didi ki Rasois operated by Didis of JEEViKA are currently operational and are serving quality food thrice a day to the quarantined as well as In-patients and suspects of CORONA Virus while taking all precautionary measures, such as no contact supply, maintaining all hygienic practices for preparing food and the likes.

The didis have shown no hesitance in serving the patients and are taking it up as an entrepreneurial task. The didis cover themselves properly with protective gear before

serving and make sure that all the patients get the food on time. The Didis are serving food to **150 quarantined** patients and almost **300 in patients** daily.



Agricultural services through Custom Hiring Centers & Producer Companies

Most of the farmers have ready their crops but due to non-availability of workers and agricultural laborers, they're facing trouble in harvesting the crops. The Custom Hiring Centers and Village tool banks established under farm livelihoods are coming to rescue of farmers in varied manners. harvesting and post harvesting equipment are assisting farmers to tide over this crisis, the



equipment are being put to judicious and optimal utilization.

Currently 106 Custom Hiring Centers are operational in Bihar, they're extending various services and lending tools to the farms, the most prominent tools that are being borrowed.

The producer companies promoted by JEEViKA are also adopting innovative measures to boost the sale of their produces such as Veggie Carts, Retail centers, seed sell and the likes.

Other measures for vulnerability reduction

Extended Moratorium Period

To reduce the financial distress of our Community members in during this time, a moratorium of three months has been given against all outstanding loans taken against RF, ICF or General Loan component, the payments due on March/April can now be repaid till June 2020 as per office order no. BRLPS/Proj-FI/497/14/Vol-VI/5257 dtd. 31.3.2020



Food Security

To help our didis in dire times with respect to food security, relaxation on triggers has been provided in the food security fund, the earlier mandate of covering only the village organizations with 40% ST/SCs population has been declared null and void, all VOs that have not received the food security fund are now entitled to receive it with prioritization amongst households with lactating mothers and infants which would be done by the village

organizations. A mix of essential commodities such as rice, pulses, Edible Oils would be procured by the VOs to meet the nutritional requirements. The above strategy has the potential to cater to the needs of more than **50,000 Village Organizations** and more than **25,00,000** members of Self-helps groups in the village organizations. Funds worth INR 150 Crores have been proposed to meet the needs.

Health Risk Mitigation

All the village organizations that have not received the health risk fund will receive the same on priority basis to meet the health requirements in distressing times. Further, no interest would be applicable to the loans taken against the HRF component for the period of **March 2020 to September 2020** as well as previous loans as per office order no. BRLPS/Proj-FI/497/14/Vol-VI/5257 dtd. 31.3.2020. An investment of INR 150 crores. has been envisaged for health risk

Way Forward:



As this unseen enemy grips the world, fear of tumbling over looms. A concerted and unified effort is needed to mitigate the danger. JEEViKA has given itself the direction to introduce measures that would help the community and the state at large to combat this situation. With its robust presence, far outreach and dedication, JEEViKA has proven its strength time and again. Be it natural disasters, or epidemics in the past, JEEViKA has stood firmly on their way to protect the people. To battle the pandemic JEEViKA is taking necessary and dynamic measures everyday, and would

continue its endeavors till this battle with the unseen enemy is won.



Honorable Minister of Rural Development (Government of India's) Interaction with our didis on International Women's Day

Honorable Minister of Rural Development, Government of India interacted with Self-Help Groups of SRLMs across the country on the occasion of International Women's Day. Shri Narendra Singh Tomar said that the women's Self Help Group (SHGs) is the backbone of poverty alleviation programmes and the entire focus of Department of Agriculture, Cooperation & Farmers' Welfare and Departments of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj is oriented towards women's emancipation. "Since communities can be more influential than individuals, the role of SHGs as change makers is critical in the development process sweeping across the rural landscape," he said. Shri Tomar said that the Government is providing funds and training to SHGs for livelihood missions, linking them with banks for easy credit flow and the

Rural Development Ministry has instituted awards for SHGs to encourage them to perform better. More than Rs. 2.75 lakh crores credit has been provided to SHGs during last six years to make women self-dependent.

From Bihar, Pashu Sakhi, Bank Sakhi and Poshan Sakhi had participated in the experience sharing, they told about their nature of work and how they're extending their services to the community.

Ministry of Rural Development team visits Bihar for video shooting of film on JEEVIKA

A team of experts from Ministry of Rural Development,



Workshops and Events

visited Samastipur to capture a video film on activities of JEEViKA's community members, the focus of the film was on financial inclusion and the activities being undertaken to promote it. The customer service point run by JEEViKA Bank Sakhi in Patori block of Samastipur was covered in the video shoot. They also captured interviews of didis and how financial inclusion activities have helped them in moving towards financial independency.



Village Immersion of Young Professionals

Transforming Lives

The WASH warrior

Kundan Devi, a resident of Kishunpur block in Supaul, has been actively engaged with JEEViKA as a community mobilizer and is trained in activities pertaining to hand-wash, sanitation among others.



various preventive measures, 'Dos and Dents' at length.

After the announcement that meetings of community institutions wouldn't take place due to COVID-19 outbreak, Kundan Devi who administers operations of 13 SHGs in Nathwari Village decided that she would talk to the villagers and raise awareness on the pandemic. She disseminated information about the pandemic through the leaflet provided by JEEViKA and discussed the various preventive measures, 'Dos and Dents' at length.

She demonstrated handwashing techniques among the SHG members and advised them on using sanitizers, masks and the likes. The SHG members in return took these messages to their homes. She also gave information to villagers on phone and also answered their queries through the same platform. She has in past fifteen days, interacted with more than 160 SHG members and other households through phone and home visits and has given them necessary information and told about the various preventive measures that need to be taken care of. Ever since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, JEEViKA has been tirelessly working on awareness generation and preparedness so that the community at its disposal can take the necessary precautionary measures. On the similar lines JEEViKA's cadres and community professionals have stepped in with their selfless service and have contributed with their skills and expertise on topics pertaining to sanitation, health, hygiene and other aspects that need to be taken care of during a pandemic. Community Professionals like Kundan Devi ensure that people remain safe and healthy.

Munni Devi, a master book keeper of Unnati CLF in Brahmour block of Buxar is a true corona hero and a mask prodigy. Ever since the lockdown was imposed she has been disseminating information and awareness on usage of masks and social distancing. She also influenced her cluster level federation for mask manufacturing. She has been supplying these masks personally on her moped. Munni Devi has also trained other SHG members on mask manufacturing. She supplies mask cloth to 20 households, collects the manufactured masks from them. She then brings the masks to the CLF office for packaging and thereby goes out to supply them. She says that she's been using the leaflet prepared by JEEViKA for awareness. Munni Devi further adds that she got this idea upon witnessing the rising demand for masks and realized that even didis can do the same, and the stride is continuing.



April

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April 01-30 : JEEViKA expedites its response to the COVID-19

April 01-30 : Continued awareness on COVID-19 Outbreak

COMING UP IN THE NEXT EDITION

- JEEViKA's CORONA Warriors



JEEVIKA

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