

COVID-19 Response Newsletter



From the CFAR Team

City after city, state after state it is the same saga of hunger, despair, not knowing who to turn to and some waiting as long as two months to get enough ration to feed their entire family and some even pinning their hopes on a miracle happening! An 80-year-old woman supporting her ailing son, persons with disability who were struggling to survive in the best of times, widows, single mothers, elderly persons – always on the fringes of society, never part of the mainstream. In the fourth month since the pandemic stopped the sluggish wheels of their lives, we continued to find them, with some living in the outskirts of the city

with no connect with any government institutions, others who had mastered skills that was keeping them going in a modest but meaningful way found their little world crumbling, not getting any work and not knowing where to get the next meal from and many elderly people with absolutely no hope had resigned themselves to a fate of hunger and extreme privation. It is in the midst of all this suffering that we reached out to them. We supported them with grocery, ration and in many cases even cooked food, help them find some stability in an otherwise period of great flux. We found, for instance, Galla, an 80-year-old man from a tribe in Rajasthan who has not had any documents to get government entitlements. The pandemic has brought more such people to us – people without documents or government support. Through our regular programs, the Single Window system and Help Desks, we have made every effort to locate such people and connect them to the entitlements that would help them –pensions given to widows, person with disability, the elderly, among others. The pandemic is telling us in no uncertain manner that the excluded will not survive another jolt if they are not included with the utmost urgency. Our newsletter carries some of their stories from across the length and breadth of India for you.

No documents, no ration or relief for 80-year-old man



Kundal Dhunimata, Udaipur: Galla, 80, lives in Dhunimata village in Udaipur district of Rajasthan. He has no documents, no proof of identity. He has lived for 80 years without a single piece of paper, and has no pension, ration or any other support from the government. “I could not get a single grain of wheat or rice from the government as I could not produce my citizenship document,” he said.

Galla lives in a small hut. The moment you set your eyes on the hut which he calls his home you will know the hardships he faces. The relief team learnt that the hut is on the land which belongs to the forest department and can be razed to the ground anytime.

There are many Banjara nomadic groups in this part of Rajasthan. Since older times

members of Banjara community sold salt travelling from one place to another and living up to their name Ghumantu – one who is fond of travelling and does not stay in one place. These days, members of this community work as daily wage workers or sell cots, blankets, mats, gum and other produce collected from forest areas.

Galla had run out of food and was facing an acute shortage when the team visited him. His tired eyes lit up when he saw the team with a packet of food grains. “I had never expected that someone will think about us or care for us,” he said, taking the packet in his shaky hands, then kept it safely in one corner of the hut and offered the team water.

Why did he not seek the help of the Gram Panchayat or public representatives? “I approached them several times but they did not help me. I am too tired to go over the same request over and over again. It is too late now,” he lamented.

“No one listens to the poor. And now I don’t have the strength to go from office to office to ask for my rights and get documents. What you have given us will help me tide over a few weeks and I bless and thank you for this support. I will eat well for a few days. After that I will see what fate has in store for me,” he added.

In Udaipur, CFAR reached out to 500 HHs in 8 settlements with dry food kits and soap

A hearty meal after two months for Paras Bai and her 7 grandchildren





Kalbelia Basti, Nangawali (Chittorgarh): Paras Bai also comes from the Kalbelia community. Kalbelia is a well-known community and a part of the Ghumantu nomadic group. Kalbelia are also known as sapera, jogi, kanifaav. They are traditional snake charmers. They are also famous for their traditional folk songs and dances.

Paras Bai has had several tragedies in her life. She lost her husband three years ago. As if that was not enough, she also lost her daughter and daughter-in-law soon afterwards. She has since lived in a small tarpaulin hut, which exposes the family to rain, heat and hostile weather conditions of the desert state. Her son got remarried, but his wife was not willing to take care of his five young children. As a result, Paras Bai began to take care of her seven grandchildren and took over the responsibility of their food, clothing and shelter.

Paras Bai said, “I am an old widow with no regular income except a widow’s pension and a monthly ration from the PDS shop. But, this is not enough for all of us. I collect alms from the neighboring villages and make ends meet. But the new disease has stigmatized my community. People stay away from us as they feel we carry the virus because we are nomads and wander from place to place. This is a very difficult time for us. We are not even able to beg to survive.”

It is ironical that despite the Palanhar scheme of the Rajasthan government (which helps orphan children), her seven grandchildren (belonging to her daughter and daughter-in-law) are not entitled to avail the benefits as their fathers are alive but want to have nothing to do with their children.

She was glad to see the dry ration kit and happily said, “These 10 kgs of flour, pulse, potatoes, onion, soap are a luxury for us. After a period of two months, we will all eat to our heart’s content. My children will be very happy that they do not have to sleep on an empty stomach today. I will also not have to collect alms for 10 days. This is like a godsend blessing and all of us are grateful to you who have thought of us.”

The local volunteers went a step further and approached the panchayat to get the cash transfer of Rs 2500 from the COVID cash assistance which was being provided by the

Rajasthan government to Paras Bai. Despite this support, we are in a dilemma. How long will this last? Some answers have to be found by all concerned!

In Chittorgarh, CFAR reached out to 500 HHs across 11 settlements with dry ration kits

Earnings come to a halt for rickshaw-puller's family



New Delhi: Mohammad Harun worked as a rickshaw-puller and lived in Shiv Vihar with his family, which included his wife, his daughter and two grandchildren who came to stay with him after the death of his other daughter and son-in law in an accident when a gas cylinder burst in Kantinagar in Delhi. Originally from Arariya in Bihar, he has been in Delhi, living on rent, for more than 25 years. “In the recent riots in North-east Delhi, my house was ransacked. We lost everything. I filed an application for compensation and registered a first information report (FIR) but the authorities were not convinced, so we received nothing. Now during the lockdown, we filled for an e-coupon and visited the school twice, but due to shortage of stocks we returned empty-handed,” he said.

A few days before the riots, Mohammed Harun had a surgery for his hump. This operation was at done at a Government Hospital and since then he is unable to do any heavy-duty work. “I occasionally pull the rickshaw which I hire for Rs 60 daily. My wife lives in the village and my 17-year-old daughter supports me. She works in a junk factory where she separates silver wires from electronic items,” he said.

Sharing the family’s struggle to survive in the pandemic, his daughter Subi says: “I used to work in the factory with my younger sister, and sometimes use to bring the unused electronic motor parts home to take the silver wire out. We use to earn Rs. 10,000 per month from selling this wire. When the riots happened, our factory was gutted and all work

came to a stop. We are now entirely dependent on whatever support we are getting from individuals and NGOs like CFAR.”

For the last three months, the family has not paid the house rent. “The landlord is reminding us every now and then. But we don’t even have a penny left,” she says. CFAR provided dry ration kits to the family and persuaded the landlord to waive off the rent.

Reaching those living on the margins



New Delhi: When Silly Souls Café, Chhattarpur, reached out to CFAR with a proposal to provide cooked lunch for 180 women from the most excluded groups, it was a perfect opportunity to provide meals to sanitation workers, persons with disability, elderly persons who lived by collecting alms, and ragpicker families from Gautampuri, BIW Camp, Subhash Camp, Tughlakabad and Shakti Vihar areas.

Those selected for this support were 12 unregistered women sanitation workers and 32 ragpickers who had been collecting waste in these areas on day after day without fail. CFAR also included 37 pregnant women and 64 nursing women who needed at least one complete meal and who were struggling to make ends meet. In addition, we provided meals to 17 persons with disability who were not able to access community kitchens, four single women with no source of income and 13 destitute elderly persons.

Cooked meal was provided for 17 days to 180 women by 13 volunteers from May 14 to May 31. As many as 3,240 thalis were distributed. Tara Devi, a sanitation worker, said, “It was very difficult for us to survive without any source of income during lockdown. Thanks to

this-service, we are able to get food at least once a day.”

Babita, a pregnant woman said earlier she had been having only two meals in a day. “Now I am getting this healthy food every day and I am having three meals,” she said. One of the recipients of cooked meals, Hansmukhi, a PwD, said she had fallen in a crowded food distribution centre run by the government. “Thanks to this service, I am getting healthy and hygienic food every day,” she said.

Additionally, supplementary nutrition was provided to 150 children below six years. Families were given 850 milk packets, 299 Eid nutrition kits including sewai, gram, biscuits, juice, ORS packets, and 100 packets of cornflakes in Gautampuri, BIW Camp, Indira Kalyan Camp, Subhash Camp, and Badarpur. This initiative was in partnership with the Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights (DCPCR) and McKS Food for Hungry Foundation.

Apart from this, CFAR teams helped women fill e-coupons to avail ration through the government-supported school outlets. As one of the beneficiaries Krishna said her son is disabled and felt helpless not being able to do anything for the family. “He lost his job due to the lockdown and to add to my woes I met with an accident and had to undergo surgery for which we took a personal loan on a high rate of interest. Members of the CFAR team took a lot of care of my family and helped me go to the hospital. They also provided us with dry ration kits so that the family does not go hungry,” she said.



In Delhi, CFAR reached out to 34140 HHs across 63 settlements with dry ration, hygiene kits, cooked food, PDS ration, and supplementary nutrition kits

Voices from Jaipur

Manju, 65, Single woman, Bapu Basti

I am a single woman living alone in Bapu Basti. I earn my living by working in nearby

houses as a domestic worker. I do not have anyone to take care of me at this age. I used to get some money through my work with which I was able to get food supplies to fill my stomach and get some medicines. However, due to the pandemic and lockdown, everything is shut down. I do not have any work or income since I am not allowed to enter people's houses for domestic work. I have been suffering a lot since I am left with no food supplies and I do not get any support from the government since I don't have proper documents. The food supplies which I get from CFAR will be extremely helpful to me in these days of difficulty. I can use this ration for one month and fill my stomach. This is indeed a great support at this time. Thank you.

Teeja Devi, 60, Elderly, Swami Basti



I live with my physically disabled husband and two sons. One of my sons is physically disabled and the other is an alcoholic. We live in a small room which has no roof. My husband and son cannot move. I am also an elderly woman and I cannot leave my family and go a long distance for any work. So I collect alms, or some kind people support us. I need to feed my family and I cannot see them suffering. For how many days can people help us? During the lockdown, we got a little support from the government, which was not sufficient for all three of us. The ration which I got from CFAR now will be of great help to my family and me and feed us for a few days. We all are grateful to you.

Khushboo, 16, Adolescent, Baba Ramdev Nagar

I live with my family in Baba Ramdev Nagar. We are six in number and include my mother,

father, two brothers and myself. My father sells steel vessels in exchange for old clothes and my mother works as a domestic worker in nearby houses. This is the only source of income for my family. My parents used to somehow manage with whatever little they got but my father's small business has totally shut down with the lockdown and mother cannot go for work. We face a lot of hardship to manage one meal in a day. My parents have no money and we are left with no food supplies. We did get any support from the government or any other source. Now that we have got this support from CFAR, this might not be a huge support but my family and I can eat some food for a few days. Thank you.

Kaali Devi, 45, Community Management Committee, Transport Nagar



I am a member of the Community Management Committee set up by CFAR. I support my community in addressing sanitation issues. I reach out to persons with disability, as I am one of them. I have seen people suffering as they lack basic food supplies and I decided we cannot sit quietly and let people suffer. So I prepared a list of needy families and approached Ms. Rekha Meena, Block Level Officer of Jaipur Municipal Corporation with the support of CFAR, and requested that cooked food be sent to families every day at least two times in a day so that they have something to eat. I found the officials supportive and they did what was within their reach to ensure that the support is reaching the right people. The sub-inspector of my area, Mr. Giasuddin helped by visiting the settlement and arranging for the distribution of food with the support of the CMC members. He also appreciated our efforts. He said that being a person living with disability I am a source of

inspiration for others as I am spirited and eager to help. With his support, the block-level officer increased the number of food packets from 30 to 60 every day. I feel I am fulfilling my responsibility as a CMC Member and as resident of Transport Nagar.

Rozi, 36, Homemaker, Bengali Basti



I live in Bengali Basti. My husband is a waste collector and earns his daily bread by collecting and segregating dry waste and selling them in the market. Most of the families living in Bengali Basti are waste collectors or rag pickers who work daily. They do not have a regular source of income. If there is no work, there is no food.

We managed for 10-15 days after lockdown as most of the families had a little saving. But after 15 days, the situation changed. The money finished and people started compromising on food. People started approaching me for support. But I myself am struggling, what support can I give them?

This is the reality of our lives. We have no support or regular work or employment. CFAR supported us with 70 packets of cooked food daily, twice a day, but this is not enough. We are grateful for this but we need regular work to be able to lead a life of dignity. If this is not possible, we should be supported to go back to our village where we can get some work as daily labour under MNREGA. Here, we are feeling helpless.

Raju, 40, Person Living with Disability, Manoharpura



My wife and I are both physically disabled. We live with our two children in a slum. I am a tailor and stitch clothes. This is our only source of income. We do not get pension or any other support from the government's welfare schemes as we do not have documentary proof to prove our citizenship. The lockdown has aggravated our hardships. We struggle a lot to feed the family, especially the children. What we got from the government was some wheat grain, which cannot meet the needs of the family. Now that we got this dry ration support from CFAR, we will be able to eat some food at least for a few days.

In Jaipur, CFAR reached out to 5399 HHs across 19 settlements with cooked food, dry ration and hygiene kits

Voices from Bengaluru

Gangamma, Single woman, Nagarabhavi



My name is Gangamma, and I am 33 years old. I live in Nagarabhavi with my two children. My husband died of heart attack on 9 February, one month prior to the lockdown. My husband was a daily wage labourer and I stayed at home to look after my children. The sudden death of my husband made our life miserable. My landlord threw us out of the house and retained the entire deposit we had paid in lieu of the pending five month rent. I was not able to get any support had to manage with a lot of difficulty for one month through the PDS ration. We even struggled to buy vegetables and milk for my children. None of my family members offered to help us. Through the CFAR Help-desk I was introduced to Single Window and the team helped me to get all the documents so that I could apply for Widow Pension and secure Rs 20000 as part of the National Social Assistance scheme. The Anganwadi worker helped me find a house with a lower rent and also gave me ration. I now want to get a job so that I can look after my children. I have studied till SSLC and have basic computer skills. But no one is willing to take on new candidates at this time.

Haseena, Home-based worker, Vallavapuram

My name is Haseena. I am 45-years-old and live in the Vallavapuram slums with my four children. My husband is an autorickshaw driver. I used to work as a domestic worker but stopped going to work from March 21. Thereafter, both of us have been at home without any earning. Before lockdown, I shifted my house from Ambedkar Nagar to a neighbouring ward. CFAR gave a ration kit which has helped me feed my children for 10 days. CFAR also helped me register for financial assistance for my husband as the government announced Rs. 5000 for autorickshaw and taxi drivers. I wish the government would release this

money soon so that I can pay my house rent. I thank CFAR for reaching out to poor families like mine.

Nethravathi, Anganwadi worker, Nagarabhavi-128 Ward



During the lockdown, the Single Window team not only supported us by giving us take home ration (THR) in the ward area around my anganwadi, but also reached out to many other families and distributed hygiene kits and nutrition. The team distributed daily packets of food, dry ration, medicine as well as support those needing to go to the hospital. We are very happy to work with the team and will continue our support in reaching poorest of the poor in the ward.

Sowbhagya, Development Inspector, Karnataka State Women Development Corporation



In the beginning, we found it very difficult to support sex workers and transgender persons with relief support for food. Then I coordinated with CFAR and they have helped us distribute dry ration the within sex worker community and transgender group. We were able to support around 2,647 sex workers and 320 transgender persons with food relief. However, CFAR has also helped us to list the sex worker community to distribute dry ration with the support of Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike and the Labour department.

Mohan Kumar, Councilor, Nagarabhavi-128 Ward



CFAR has stood with us from the day one. We had no idea of who to contact and how to address the issue of food relief in our ward. The CFAR team contacted each construction worker in the ward and helped them get 450 cooked food packets twice in a day for more than two months. They have submitted a list of 188 migrant construction workers and helped them get dry ration. Due to local level planning and coordination, the distribution system worked very well and I appreciate all the efforts of the CFAR team.

Srinivas, Ward Committee member, Subhash Nagar-95 ward



The Single Window team helped us get trained on COVID-19 by experts and made five to eight help desks in each settlement. They also listed all the households who were in need of food relief. Proper planning done by CFAR with the support of Help-desk members and volunteers on the ground helped us reach every nook and corner of the ward. This helped us to distribute relief properly.

Yashoda, Director, Munnade

Munnade is one of the members of the joint committee for unorganized workers' rights steered by CFAR. The platform helped us reach many garment workers during the crisis. We have listed around 650 migrant garment workers living in the hostels in Nandini Layout who do not have proper documentation, including identity cards. During the crisis, CFAR is continuously supporting us to take dry ration, hygiene kits to them, and coordinated with the networks working with marginal communities to reach garment workers, domestic workers, street vendors and construction workers.

In Bangalore, CFAR reached out to 55473 HHs in 39 settlements with dry ration, cooked food, supplementary nutrition, Antodaya ration, and hygiene

Voices from Pune

Surekha Vitkar, 35, is a disabled domestic worker in Barmashel



I was earlier working in 10 households and getting adequate money for survival and to meet my daily requirements. But I did not get a single rupee in the last two months. How we can manage our lives? We got rice from the fair price shop only once. After that no one came to our settlement to distribute cooked food or dry ration. We got a call form CFAR – Sahay Single Window and got ration for a month which includes around 10 kg of rice, wheat, sugar, oil and hygiene kits for our family which is sufficient for more than a month.

Dhyamd Shabuddhin Shaikh, 55, is a sanitation worker in a private hostel living in Indira Nagar



Due to the lockdown, we are not allowed to work in the hostel. For around 10 to 15 days, we managed our food and groceries. We approached to nearest fair price shop to get free ration on our ration card but it was not available.

For three days, we depended on cooked food from our neighbor. Now, we have sufficient food and hygiene kits given by CFAR and Sahayy Single Window. We are really blessed to have such people who are helping us in this critical situation.

Seema Devruthe, 44, is a widow who lives in Laxmi Nagar, Yerwada, with her three children



My elder son, 17, is physically challenged. I have been working in eight houses as a

domestic worker, but due to the lockdown I have not had work for the past two months. I have not been paid my fixed monthly wages by any of the people I worked for.

I approached the local corporator of the Municipal Corporation and got dry food ration which lasted two weeks. I regularly approached many people in the settlement and got some cooked food only once in a day from the department of social development of PMC. Then, Jaishreetai from CFAR called me collected necessary information for dry food ration and hygiene kits. After two days, we got the 10 kg of rice, 5 kg of wheat, an oil packet and other food items along with a towel, hand-wash, soap, disinfectants, etc.

This ration is will easily last us a month. But what after the lock-down? If we do not get work, it will be difficult for my three children and me to survive.

In Pune, CFAR reached out to 39134 HHs in 27 settlements with dry ration, cooked food, supplementary nutrition, Antodaya ration, and hygiene kits

For Meramma and many persons with disability Sanjay is *bhagwan ka doot*



Jodhpur: Meeramma, 65, lives in Choti Bhil Basti, located in ward 13 of Jodhpur walled city. This basti is situated on a steep slope and many houses including mine are on the upper part of the hill. I am a widow belonging to the Bhil community. We are very poor and most of us were originally dependent on the produce we collected from the forest. We sold it to get money-mulberry, plums, ber, gum, tendu patta, ker, sangria and many other medicinal herbs. My husband was a hakim. He would use these herbs and fruits to make medicines and concoctions which he stored in colored glass bottles. After he passed away due to a chronic heart disease, I am dependent on alms for my living. I live with my son who does odd jobs and earns money as a daily wage worker in a stone quarry.

With the spread of corona disease most of the families living in the basti lost their work.

Men and women both sit at home waiting for the lockdown to be lifted. We had no work, no money and no food to eat. All of us were feeling helpless.

But Surendra did not lose hope. He himself is a construction worker who works in homes to construct toilets and tanks. There was no work for him but he ensured that all the eleven disabled people in the basti did not suffer or go without food. He collected money and cooked food which was given to all needy households in the community and in neighboring slums. When the Corporation began to distribute food packets, he collected and delivered, twice a day. He also submitted online documents to help us get the financial cash assistance of Rs 2500 from the government. When the money was distributed, he picked me up and with the help of a neighbour took me to down to the ward office so that the officials could verify my existence. May God bless this young man, who has looked after us like his own family.

Kaushalya, is hopeful that these difficult times shall soon pass



Jodhpur: Kaushalya, lives in Mata ka Kund, a *kutchi* basti located in ward 13 in the heritage town of Jodhpur. She belongs to the Jhingar artisan community, traditionally famous for handiwork of decorating chunri with sparklers and lace and making purses, batua and other small pouches. During the lockdown she provided forty vulnerable households living around the hill dry rations with her own money. She also asked the sanitation workers to give her the disinfectant and their machine and sanitized all the forty

houses to ensure that the community is safe against the disease

My mother in law and I are traditional karigars and we stitch lace and decorate colourful odhnis and chunri at home. We complete 3 to 4 odnis per day and earn two hundred rupees. My husband works as peon and we are dependent on our joint earnings for our household expenses. But this lockdown has directly influenced the artisan community. With export orders reduced, tourism getting affected bulk production has stopped in factories. As a result, we are not getting any work. All of us sit at home waiting for the lock down to be lifted. Is a relief that my husband has a government job but there are many families who have no source of income and whose homebased work has also stopped. We don't know what to do but hope that things will normalize soon.

In Jodhpur, CFAR supported 10917 HHs in 15 settlements with regular cooked food and dry ration kits

We are waiting for government to give us food grains



Sambalpur: Naseema Begum is a young widow who lives with her children, age eleven

and 13 in Danibandh slum of Sambalpur. She works as a domestic worker. The income is barely sufficient to cover rent, food and expenses for her children's education.

“As soon as the fear of Corona infection spread all three households where I was working asked me stay at home. I got the salary for the few days that I had worked but next month was dry. My children need food to eat thrice a day. I can go hungry but how can I explain to them? We got some cooked food packet twice a day with help of Shahnaz didi but those were not sufficient. So, I decided to borrow money from some relatives. They were very hesitant to give money as I could not give them any assurance for when the money would be returned. We were in a fix and did not know what to do. Shahnaz didi helped me with five kg rice, 5 kg flour, 2 kg pulses, 2 kgs sugar, oil and some spices. We do not have a ration card of any documents. With support of CFAR we met the ward officials, they verified everything but we are still waiting for ration. How will we survive the next few months?

In Sambalpur, CFAR supported three HHs in one settlement with regular cooked food and dry ration kits

A friend of transgender community



Bhubaneswar: Rakhishree, a transgender leader and member of the transgender self-help group Sweekriti, made a firm resolve to fight the pandemic. She started a small business of selling vegetables. Rakhishree has also been assigned the role of a tax collector by the Municipal Corporation.

However, she needed a mask and a sanitiser so that she could keep herself safe while selling vegetables. These items were in short supply due to an increase in demand. With CFAR's support, Rakhishree and other transgender persons got hygiene kits. The masks and the sanitizers were of immediate help to transgender leaders like Rakhishree who have been stepping out despite the pandemic.

The pandemic and the lockdown have affected everyone, including transgender persons, who are dependent on their daily earnings. The transgender community has been in a state of struggle. CFAR has helped them with supplies of dry ration and hygiene kits. “We were overwhelmed with the feeling that someone is looking after us during our adversity,” said Rakhisree.

CFAR helps frontline workers to be safe



Bhubaneswar: Banki Rani Swain is a Covid warrior. A popular person in Barabhuja Basti of Ward 63 in Bhubaneswar, she is much more than an Anganwadi worker. A single mother of two children, Banki Rani was appointed in 2017 for opening the mini Anganwadi center with 16 children. She has been performing her duties with great devotion as she takes care of children, pregnant and nursing women. She has also been collecting information for the government, right from household data, labour card data to ration card entitlements.

Banki Rani played an active role during the Fani cyclone, and has continued to support the community during the pandemic. She has also been supporting CFAR in creating a foot-operated hand-washing station in Barabhuja, Bhubaneswar.

However, she did not have a safety/hygiene kit before she embarked on the household survey to assess the situation as a part of the health survey for Covid-19, or facilitated the health check-ups of 190 persons. CFAR's Covid-19 relief team in Bhubaneswar provided a hygiene kit by CFAR. The kit has two Sanitizers, one bottle of hand-wash liquid soap, two masks and a pair of gloves. CFAR has been supporting Covid-19 warriors various ways, particularly in helping them be safe during the pandemic.

Hygiene kit will help my family be safe



Bhubaneswar: Gitanjali Pradhan, daughter of Satyanarayan Pattnaik, was married of before the age of 10 years to a man in Ganjam district. She now has two children – an eight-year-old son and a five-year-old daughter. Suffering from a troubled marriage, she left Ganjam five years ago to live in Kargil Basti with her parents. To support her family, Gitanjali works as a domestic worker at several households. For additional income, she makes ‘lados’ (sweets) at her home and supplies it to retailers. Due to Covid-19 and the national lockdown, Gitanjali has faced many problems. While her work as a domestic worker has been discontinued, her supply of laddu has been affected because of the shops and markets being shut, thus affecting her income. CFAR, supported by seeds India, delivered relief packages to her household. The hygiene kit included soap, phenyl, detergent powder, soap, etc. Having never purchased such cleaning products before, Gitanjali felt very happy receiving the kit.

Gitanjali says, “Coronavirus has badly affected our income and there is fear everywhere. The hygiene kits supplied by CFAR are a really good help to fight against coronavirus. We are happy to get such relief. Now my family can use the hygiene kits and be safe.”

Ration and hygiene kits for Sarojini’s family



Bhubaneswar: Sarojini Senapati, wife of Natabara Senapati, lives with her seven family members in Pallaspalli slum in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, for the past 25 years. The family is from the neighbouring district of Nayagarh. They live in a house which has a polythene-covered roof shed. Her husband is a driver but due to his health problems, he rarely works now, which has worsened their economic condition. Sarojini's father-in-law and one of her daughters have been ill for some time. The family has a ration card but it is registered in Nayagarh district. Due to the lockdown, they could not travel to Nayagarh and collect ration. There were no sources of income possible.

Sarojini shared her plight with Lipina Subudhi, the Outreach Worker (ORW) of CFAR. Soon after that CFAR approached the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) and helped her family get ration for three months and also helped her elderly father-in-law get dry ration from HelpAge India. CFAR not only helped Sarojini's family in getting ration, but also provided sanitation kits and Horlicks to her family.

Sarojini says: "I shall remain obliged to CFAR and will not forget their timely help in the crucial period of the lockdown. Without their help, we would have gone hungry. May God give them the strength to help more needy people like us."

Widow, living alone, gets ration



Bhubaneswar: Shambhari Pradhan, 60, and a widow of Late Umakanta Pradhan, lives in Kelasahi where she has a house. Shambhari has only one daughter, who got married 24 years back. Shambhari has a ration card and gets ration and widow's pension from BMC. Earlier, she used to work as a manual labourer but now she prefers to stay at home. As she is an elderly person who lives alone, she faces many problems and depends on others for day-to-day household work and cooking. During the lockdown, her problem increased as she got no help to purchase even essential items. When Help Age India contacted CFAR to distribute relief to the needy and aggrieved, Shambhari was identified as a beneficiary. Shima Swain, CFAR's Outreach Worker enlisted her for relief. Accordingly, a dry ration packet with food and a soap was handed over to her on 25 May.

This made Shambhari very happy. She said, "You have helped by putting food in a poor person's mouth. God will definitely help you as and when you wish."

Tila Das, 70, Widow



Bhubaneswar: Tila Das, a widow of 70 years, lives in Sakaleswar Basti for last 20 years in a rented house with her sick 35-years-old daughter. Her son used to neglect and torture his mother and sister, so Tila and her daughter moved. Her daughter began to work at a construction site to earn some money. In due course, Tila Das was issued her monthly pension entitlement of Rs 500 and 5 kg of rice. Due to the lockdown, construction work stopped, resulting in her daughter losing her work. They approached BMC for help but did not get support. Her case came to the notice of help desk members of CFAR who requested the ward officer of the BMC to provide dry ration to her for a month. They also arranged for a dry ration kit for them which gave some respite to the mother and the daughter.

D. Salama, 80, domestic worker

Bhubaneswar: D. Salama is an 80-year-old woman who lives with her son near the old station bazaar at Mochi Sahi under Ward 42. She was working as a domestic worker for her living but due to the pandemic and lockdown her employers do not want her services. Her son is an alcoholic. Her ration card has been also cancelled due to official bungling. Her food security has therefore become precarious. She is an elderly and distressed woman. This came to the notice of the help desk members of CFAR who arranged for a dry ration kit to her provided by HelpAge India as an immediate help keeping in view the requirement of the old woman and her son. Needless to say she felt happy with this and thanked the help desk team.

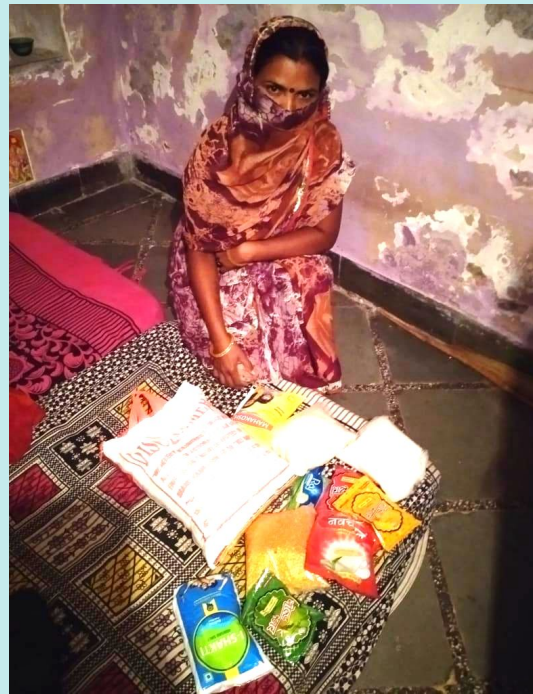
Puspanjali Nayak, 32, daily-wage worker



Bhubaneswar: Puspanjali Nayak ran away from her parents' home and got married to Trilochan Nayak six years ago. But this strained their relationship with their families. So nobody helps them. They have a three-year old son. Her husband can't work because he is suffering from heart disease. Puspanjali, runs the house. Puspanjali used to work for daily labour to earn for her husband's medicine and the cost of feeding the baby. She can't go to work anywhere due to the lockdown. Short of resources, the family did not have enough to eat. She was given ration support for 15 days by help desk members of CFAR.

In Bhubaneswar, CFAR reached out to 4,440 HHs in 62 settlements with dry ration, Antodaya ration, hygiene kits, cooked food and supplementary nutrition kits

People in need get relief, connected to entitlements in Ajmer



Ajmer: The Help Desks and Single Window teams of CFAR have connected hundreds of people in the city to government benefits, while also supporting them with CFAR's own COVID 19 relief supplies. Many of the people who have been supported include widows, single women, daily-wage workers, migrants, the elderly and persons with disability.

One of them, Ganga Devi, is a 52-year-old woman who lives in the Nagfani Basti of Ajmer. Her family of eight includes her chronically ill husband who needs medicine for Rs. 1,000 every month, which depletes the meagre resources of the family significantly. Her daughter who had a job with a private establishment has been left jobless.

CFAR has connected Ganga Devi to one of the initiatives of the Government of Rajasthan, in which she has received financial assistance of Rs 2,500. Ganga Devi was not aware of this benefit and was supported by a Help Desk member. The volunteers helped her to go to the bank and got an entry in the passbook. She withdrew the money and purchased medicine for her husband and some grocery for her family.

The Help Desk also had her family added to the list of households who would receive cooked food distributed by the Ajmer Municipal Corporation everyday with the help of Single Window.

Another beneficiary, a single mother named Salma who has been separated from her husband, and has been living with her two children in a rented house, found herself without work with the pandemic raging. She was barely managing to get a meal or so in a day when Single Window found her and provided 15 days of ration twice to her. She was supported in starting a small vegetable-selling business. "Now we are learning from CFAR team how to fight for our rights and entitlements," she says.

A widow, Kiran, was without means when she was provided ration by a local donor through the Single Window. She has been connected with the Nagar Nigam dry ration scheme, which gave her ration for a month. Single window is helping her to apply for a Jan Aadhaar Card and widow pension. "I am very happy to get support in this difficult time," she said.

In Ajmer, CFAR reached out to 38969 HHs in 28 settlements with cooked food, dry ration, Antodaya ration, ART medicines and hygiene kits

When no one helped us, CFAR did



Chilakaluripeta (Guntur): The transgender community in Chilakaluripeta lives on alms (*basti*) it collects in markets and trains. Since the lockdown, with Chilakaluripeta in the red zone, the transgender community lost their income. Some of the community members include people living with HIV (PLHIV). They made a lot of effort to get ration supplies but could not as they did not have ration cards or Aadhar cards.

The Community approached Haseena, a HELP (local NGO) Volunteer, and Sharmila, a Community Volunteer, who contacted CFAR. CFAR team managed to get the support of Mr. Kalyan Chinthala, Government official who immediately promised to support at least 20 households.

Poornima, a transgender, says, “We live on *baksheesh* (alms). In our time of need, no one helped us. The administration did not recognize us, and we remained excluded. Not even NGOs helped us. CFAR understood our issues and extended its hand in support. We now have ration which will feed us for some days, but the intention of CFAR to help us is what we will always remember.”

Sharmila and Haseena have helped the community apply for Aadhar and ration cards.



Guntur: Sex workers are most at risk during the pandemic. Most of the female sex workers in Guntur city have been struggling since the lockdown which has put an end to their opportunities of work and income. There are also HIV positive people in the community, whose families have been affected by the pandemic. They have been running out of savings and food.

Shehnaz, a community volunteer, approached CFAR for support. The team has been working since March to support the most vulnerable and marginalized in Andhra Pradesh. CFAR team mobilized local donors such as Mr. Kalyan Chintala and Ms. Anupama, a lawyer and with their support CFAR supported these families by providing them with dry ration for a month.

As Sudha (name changed), an FSW said, “We have no work or income. Our families are starving now. We had no support from the government or from an NGO. Thanks to CFAR and the donors who have supported us with dry ration,” she said.

In another initiative, CFAR supported people living with HIV and other vulnerable groups such as elderly persons by providing dry ration to them. District AIDS Prevention and Control Unit (DAPCU), Guntur, said, “DAPCU has been working with NGOs to provide ART drugs and nutritional support to PLHIV and children living with HIV (CLHIV) without a gap even during the pandemic. However, providing nutrition has become a difficult task. CFAR has come forth and facilitated this process,” he said.

In Guntur, CFAR reached out to 1833 HHs in 31 settlements with dry ration and supplementary nutrition kits

His faith deepens as Alexander gets relief



Madurai: Alexander is a tailor who specialises in stitching blouses, churidars and salwar kameez for women. He is the breadwinner in a family of four, which includes his wife and two daughters. “I earn around Rs.12,000 while my wife sells pickles and masala packets, making close to four to five thousand rupees every month,” he said.

Following the lockdown and pandemic, the family stopped getting business. “As you see both our jobs depend on others,” he said. Soon, he ran out of supplies. “Hunger was even more difficult for us to manage than Coronavirus itself. With no money, we were dependent on the provisions provided by a ration shop, but the quality of rice was not so good.” Alexander and his family were contacted by CFAR’s team in Tamil Nadu. They received dry ration and hygiene kits.

Alexander says the Covid-19 pandemic has taught him two lessons – that one must have faith in humanity, and that one should never give up in life as a miracle can happen even at the last moment.

“I understand that the materials I am getting may not last for ever – but I also know that even Coronavirus cannot last forever. I still hope it will change soon,” he added.

Timely help helps a poor family of e-commerce delivery agent



Madurai: Praveena, 24, a resident of Thirunagar, got married last year and recently gave birth to a son. Living with her husband and her in-laws, her means are extremely limited. Her husband, a delivery agent who earns around Rs 12,000 with a private e-commerce company, is the sole earner in the family. The family pays a monthly rent of Rs 4,000.

“We have very little money to manage the expenses in. The lockdown hit us very hard. We were poor, but now we were not even able to get basic food,” says Praveena. The family borrowed small amounts from various people but everyone was going through a hard time. “What is the use of keeping coronavirus away if it keeps you hungry?” she says.

CFAR, with the support of SEEDS India, reached out to Praveena and her family, and provided them with dry ration and hygiene kits. “This is a very useful support to us. We will manage for the next 20 days. I am grateful to all those who came forward to support us during this crisis,” she says. She says life has taught everyone a lesson: to be humble and to live with hope. “Many are risking their lives to save others, and finally we will win the battle against coronavirus,” she says.

In Madurai, CFAR reached out to 15965 HHs in 15 settlements with dry ration, supplementary nutrition and hygiene kits

Relief Status Phase-wise

Period	April 11, 2020	April 30, 2020	May 31, 2020
CFAR Supported-raise funds, procure, pack, distribute door to door	416 Hhs, 3 cities	1207 Hhs, 11 cities	4134 Hhs, 6 cities
Other Relief Agencies-facilitate collection, distribute door to door	84,174 HHs, 390 settlements, 10 cities	250, 759 HHs, 403 settlements, 14 cities	163,688 HHs, 340 settlements, 15 cities
Supplementary Nutrition for children 0-6 years, most at risk women	NA	695 children, 13 settlements	1462 children, 180 women, 16 settlements

Relief Status Cumulative

Period	As on May 31, 2020
CFAR Supported-raise funds, procure, pack, distribute door to door	5757 Hhs, 13 cities
Other Relief Agencies-facilitate collection, distribute door to door	498,621 HHs, 1133 settlements, 17 cities
Supplementary Nutrition for children 0-6 years, most at risk women	2157 children, 180 women, 16 settlements

For more information
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