

# The Influencer Bulletin

VOL III | ISSUE 2 | May 2020



**Even as the pandemic continues and along with it the physical lockdown, our partner NGOs have been at the frontline consistently responding with all possible means of support and exploring optimal ways of reaching out to the community. In the wave of increased social challenges, they have drawn on the power of Information and Communication and Technology (ICT) to ensure continued outreach and communication, continuum of operations, knowledge building and advocacy. This bulletin highlights how partners have leveraged technology to bridge systemic gaps, shares highlights of a survey by Ibtada on the success of the Government-engineered COVID relief through Jan Dhan accounts and gives a glimpse into the life of one of CORO's grassroots leaders.**

## e-Witness: The Last mile connectivity

Adapting to the dynamic environment, some of our partner NGOs have been advancing their program delivery mechanisms to achieve a wider coverage. Working remotely, they are using digital means of outreach to engage and support communities whose lives have been disrupted through keeping them accurately informed and helping them cope with new realities.

**CORO:** has published an article **“A day in life of a Grassroot Leader”** that highlights the intervention of a Mahila Mandal (Women's group) network in Marathwada whose members spend most of their time on phones, figuring out solutions for women who reach out for assistance of various kinds. Mediating the supply mechanisms through this mode, the Block *Sahelis* have been assisting in delivery of essential commodities from the shopkeepers to the needy.

### COVID-19 relief update

**CORO:** The organisation has distributed rations to more than 10,168 families in Maharashtra and Rajasthan; facilitated production and distribution of 7000 reusable and cost-effective masks in Marathwada and Mumbai.



## e- Spaces: Erasing boundaries

**ANANDI** with its **Jagya Aapni ('this space is ours')** campaign led by young women from Adivasi, Muslim, DNT and OBC communities of Gujarat unveiled nuances about a young woman's reality who has limited avenues of choice, consent and agency.

50 champions of change were selected by ANANDI who participated in a training on video-making in the local language using their mobile phones. A two-day training workshop covered basics of videography, while the research and shooting spanned over a month in four blocks of Gujarat. On 14<sup>th</sup> February campaign went public. The nine films were shared with over 2500 people over Whatsapp, viewed by 5000+ on Facebook, and the total outreach number went to 10,500. The campaign enabled a more virtual presence of these women whose voices are rarely heard.

Check out the making of campaign video [here](#)



## e – Voice: Drawing attention for policies

Advocating for the need of enhanced security of the migrant workers whose lives have been ever so more in upheaval in the face of the crisis, our partner NGO, Jan Sahas has published an article, “Making Labour systems work” highlighting creation of more balanced and equitable systems of labour and profit. Proposed interventions like provision of portable worker identity cards compatible with technology to enable real-time tracking of employment, registration and accrued benefits, have been suggested along with stressing on accountability of companies by aligning contribution and expenditure of cess fund in the public domain.

### COVID-19 relief update

**Jan Sahas:** A 25-member relief team is currently ensuring food support to at least 2500 migrants on a daily basis.

## e – Learning: Networked knowledge building

Our partner NGOs have been attempting to put their best foot forward for pursuing with their operations as usual. Switching to Online Collaboration tools like 'Zoom calls'; Partner NGOs have furthered knowledge sharing and learning.

Our partner NGO, **Milaan** conducted sessions respective to COVID -19 with the Girl Icons and Sahyogis.

**Mann Deshi** held a training on making bamboo products for the women entrepreneurs.

**ANANDI** has been organizing capacity building of internal staff through the networking platform.

## Grassroot Leadership: Ibtada Survey on PMJDY Scheme

To resolve the issue of financial inclusion for the remote and underserved areas, the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) scheme was launched that facilitates digital delivery of payments through the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) system. The Rapid Community Response to COVID-19 coalition conducted a rapid assessment survey to get more clarity on this regarding the situation on the ground. Below are some key highlights of survey initially piloted by **Ibtada**, that points out to the discernible gaps in implementation in 12 blocks of Alwar district respective to coverage.

- **Status of Jan Dhan account:** Over 90% of the Jan Dhan accounts are active.
- **Status of Cash transfers to Jan Dhan account:** Of those who had active accounts, 57.7% of JD account holders said that they had received INR 500 in their accounts. Nearly 16% said that they had not received any money. Over a quarter had no idea about it.
- **Knowledge on money transfer:** Of those who knew that they have received the amount, 40% mentioned it was through the SMS received on their mobile number, 23.4% by visiting their banks, nearly 25% from the e-mitra centres, while the rest through Banking Correspondents, neighbours or visiting ATMs etc.
- **Reasons for not withdrawing cash from the bank:** 27% of those who received money in their accounts have not withdrawn it. Of these, 34% were not able to go out owing to lockdown and even banks were distantly located. 7% did not step out for fear of the pandemic. Crowded banks dissuaded 13% of them. 20% of them said they were too busy with harvesting activities, while 16% also said that they didn't need money right away.

## Violence Against Women: The shadow pandemic

Violence against women (VAW) cases have increased at an alarming pace in the country and globally post lockdown evident from the National Commission for Women (NCW) complaints. This is in line with the reports that cases have also increased exponentially across the globe. Interestingly, some states like Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and Delhi witnessed a rather contrasting situation with decrease in calls for help during the period as against the previous months. This may be however, since the data is not being captured in its entirety, and the increase in cases is not being proportional to the actual rise of violence. A probable cause for this could be that not everyone has access to mobile phones and especially those who are subjected to abuse. While domestic violence does not pose itself as a pandemic and therefore not a priority, it becomes more so critical that we reach out to these hapless survivors.

To read more click [here](#)

Watch this space for updates on the emergent VAW risks and realities.