

The Influencer Bulletin

VOL IV | ISSUE 3 | JUNE 2020



As the COVID-19 outbreak continues unabated, women are increasingly impacted by its adversities like violence, financial fragility along with uncertainties that have clouded their lives. Emerging ground evidence from our partner NGOs like AALI has been strongly reiterating Violence Against Women (VAW) as a priority and the need to plan responses to address these findings.

Gender inequalities have been inevitably intensified with the pandemic and the unprecedented cyclone altogether; Sanjog and Nishtha in West Bengal, have been enabling recovery efforts to ensure that the most affected individuals are reached. Accentuating the role of women entrepreneurs and women networks, Mann Deshi Foundation's founder Chetna Sinha penned her thoughts on a World Economic Forum platform, emphasising the need for investing in women entrepreneurship and networks, to navigate the crisis and enable economic resilience.

Access to Justice

Violence Against Women: A look at the closer picture in the lockdown

While the pervasiveness of Violence Against Women (VAW) has been increasingly noted globally and has been even lately part of discussions and media debates, the issue continues to remain largely unaddressed in the country. Drawing attention for immediate remedial action to enable social support and health services for survivors has, therefore, become ever so critical.

Our partner NGO **AALI** rolled out a rapid telephonic survey to reflect the ground realities and understand the scale of the increased vulnerabilities of women during the nationwide lockdown. Covering 45 districts and 890 respondents in the states of Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand and Haryana the survey had some alarming findings to reveal, respective to women who were undergoing violence:

- Of the respondents undergoing violence, **92.5%** were married
- **60%** were victims of intimate partner violence where the perpetrator was the husband
- **42.5%** were between the ages of 28 and 37 years
- **67%** of women have no access to cash
- **74%** did not have adequate and accurate information about government policies and schemes
- **26%** of the women did not have access to any functional healthcare facility
- **88%** of women who called the helplines did not receive any response

To read details of the complete survey, please click [here](#)

COVID-19 Relief Update

AALI has been enabling stranded migrants and transgenders through food relief, along with covering travel expenses of migrants for their way back homes. As part of their awareness campaign, the organisation has been actively participating and organising webinars based on the National Commission for Women (NCW) survey along with providing information on seeking legal assistance. Advocating for measures against domestic violence, AALI has filed a writ petition to the SC legislature for enforcing stringent post COVID-19 laws in view of threatened safety amongst survivors, with the release of the prisoners in view of the contagion.

Grassroots Leadership

Pandemic Stressors: Understanding mental health of front-line workers

LEADERSHIP IN THE TIMES OF COVID PANDEMIC

Experiences of frontline social workers



PARTNERS FOR ANTI-TRAFFICKING | SANJOG

'Needs are so much more. Services and supplies inadequate. I am also severely tensed about health, death and the future that lies ahead...'

Read more about similar experiences of the frontline workers of **Sanjog** and get a glimpse of how they are dealing with the stresses, uncertainties and fears of the pandemic in its report, Leadership in the times of COVID-19 pandemic.

To read this report click [here](#)

COVID-19 Relief Update

Sanjog has reached out to 200 survivors of trafficking through its 30 grassroots frontline social workers with food relief, supporting community leaders to facilitate safe return and quarantine for the returning migrant women. Participants of the Anti-Trafficking Bijoyini Survivors Collective, encompassing young women in Bengal, were also trained to use the **Uttar by Uthtan Technology** to track rehabilitation and reintegration services for the trafficking survivors.

Leadership in Times of Crisis: A day in the life of a youth leader

Championing women's roles at the grassroots, towards building resilient communities, **Ibtada** narrates the case of one such of its leaders Imrana, in Alwar district, Rajasthan. Refused point blank for a receipt of employment application of 25 workers under MNREGA, her unwavering determination led her to escalate the issue to the Block Development Officer (BDO), who thereafter ensured that the issue was resolved. Notwithstanding the backlash she has been facing, she has also been supporting the innovation of the local self-help groups like the **'grain bank'** that has been collecting wheat from the village and distributing it amongst the needy households. Sanitary napkins lying unused owing to closed schools have also been distributed to the girls in the village along with stitched masks. To read more on her story click [here](#).



COVID-19 Relief Update

Ibtada team through its local self-help groups facilitated relief of 292 quintals of wheat to 1,100 families across six blocks of Alwar district identified through its conducted survey. Observing Menstrual Hygiene day, the team also distributed about 1,110 packets of sanitary napkins to 505 women and girls in 18 villages.

Financial Empowerment

Spurring Alternate Livelihoods: COVID-19 masks

Single women as sole earners have continued to be most affected with the financial burden imposed by the lockdown. While women across the country continue to be distressed with these challenges, **CORO's** women leaders have sought this as an opportunity and enabled livelihoods through stitching face masks, an essential COVID-19 commodity that has found its widespread usage with the pandemic. Facilitating women for receiving orders for creating these masks, they have also distributed these to those who cannot afford it. To read more click [here](#).



COVID-19 Relief Update

CORO has distributed rations to 15,951 families from 612 communities across 36 districts in Maharashtra and Rajasthan; along with 2,18,400 meals provided to urban & rural needy including single women, transgender, sex workers. 2,317 masks, 1,967 gloves and 416 sanitizer cans have been distributed to sanitation and health workers, and toilet operators in Mumbai.

Enabling Economic Resilience: Investing in Women's network and entrepreneurship

The **World Economic Forum** published **Mann Deshi Foundation's** founder Chetna Sinha's article on better positioning of women's networks to build grassroots resilience and enable emergent innovative ground-up solutions. The article also highlights these networks as opportunities for both state and non-state actors to engage productively with large groups of grassroots women as partners, that will build goodwill and trust in local and external capacities, and expertise to design mutually beneficial solutions together. To read her article click [here](#).

COVID-19 Relief Update

286 women in Mann Deshi produced over 3,00,000 high quality masks to combat the outbreak along with ensuring livelihoods through this. Supplementing the activities of the ASHA workers, it has been in provision of masks and sanitizers to about 1,200 women and is in the process of setting up a counselling and support service for them.

Call to Action: Cyclone Amphan

Our partners **Sanjog** and **Nishtha**, based out of 24 Parganas, one of the worst affected regions by Cyclone Amphan in West Bengal, have been faced with yet another challenge in the face of the ongoing pandemic. With the destruction of over 40,000 kaccha houses, and no provision for food, shelter or clean drinking water; the flood centres in the districts are forced to exceed beyond their capacities to shelter innumerable stranded labourers and migrant workers at once. The supplies provided as a part of the COVID-19 relief programme have either perished or washed away in the extreme flooding. Our partner NGOs have therefore been ensuring a series of responses towards the aftermath of this unprecedented disaster.

Sanjog



Sanjog has set up relief centres in three villages to distribute food kits to 2,000-3,000 people every day. Thirteen housing applications have been facilitated for submission to the Block Panchayat Samiti towards compensation of destructed houses.

Pledge your support to Sanjog's **#HomesForHundreds** campaign, that aims to restore more houses and livelihoods, ensure food and medical aid, and encourage reporting of domestic violence.

Nishtha



Team Nishtha immediately started critical relief intervention by distributing dry rations amongst the families who have been severely affected. It aims to also provide meals through community kitchens and has been also decisive towards restoration of 800 houses and reach out to 2,000 vulnerable families with dry foods, soaps and napkins.

Pledge your support towards Nishtha's relief mission [here](#).