



JEEViKA's Newsletter

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JEEViKA's enterprising efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic



Ever since the announcement of the lockdown, enterprises associated with JEEViKA have stood up to the situation and have been helping the communities that they cater to. JEEViKA's enterprises in the non-farm, livestock and farm sector have been working actively and continuously improvising their services as per the requirements of the community in the pandemic situation.

The already existent Didi Ki Rasois, Customer Service Points (CSPs), Rural Retail Shops, Custom Hiring Centers have risen to the occasion whereas new enterprises of face mask production, hand sanitizers and disinfectant manufacture have also been initiated.

These enterprises have augmented the income generating activities of the members associated, and have helped in sustenance of the rural economy too with regular work and earnings.

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From a Swabhimani to a Corona Warrior

\ Enterprising amid crisis



JEEViKA's enterprises were also affected severely by the lockdown, and to adapt and survive was the biggest challenge, while small enterprises pertaining to essential commodities were open, community members engaged in non-essential services were adversely affected.

To adapt to the pandemic hit society, the community members started venturing into new areas. While several members got engaged in mask production, others started herbal sanitizer manufacture, vegetable selling among others.

Turning the tide with Mask Production



To mitigate the shortage and crisis, JEEViKA's community members started working rigorously on mask production, this not only catalyzes the number of masks available but also proved to be a source of income for didis whose livelihoods got affected by the total lockdown.

Many of JEEViKA didis were already trained and indulged in stitching and tailoring business, while others helped in purchase and procurement of loins, cutting as well as sales and awareness on usage of masks. The venturing didis of JEEViKA are supplying masks to various government departments, MGNREGA workers, JEEViKA officials and other community based organization at a competitive

cost compared to what's available in the market. Upping the production capacity, the JEEViKA didis produced 20 lakh masks by the end of April'2020. A total of 2300 JEEViKA didis are engaged in the task.

Bank Sakhis leading the Banking services from the front



The lockdown affected the mobility of the people and as such people were restricted to their homes and villages amid a shortage of steady flow of cash and limited banking services. In this situation the Bank Sakhis upped the ante and being enlisted as essential services, kept their CSPs up and running. They faced several challenges pertaining to cash withdrawal, gathering information on the financial packages announced by the central government, maintaining social distancing practices amongst customers, proper sanitization activities and the likes. Some of the Bank Sakhis have to travel over 25-30 kilometers to withdraw cash so as to keep their CSP running, but the bank sakhis resilient actions against the have synergized the entire rural banking ecosystem.

620 Bank Sakhis worked rampantly during the lockdown period and realized transactions worth 75 crores by the end of April, 2020.

Agri-Produce business through producer companies and individual shops



Capitalizing on the listing of fruits and vegetables as essential products, JEEViKA's producer companies as well as individual sellers decided on retail sales of vegetables, while producer companies innovated their sales through vegetable carts, door to door sales, retail marts and the likes. Many individual sellers converted their existing outlets to vegetable selling outlets and also initiated sales through makeshift shops in permissible village haats while maintaining social distancing norms and other precautionary measures.

Nalanda's Sahyog JEEViKA Women farmers' producer company adapted all sales mediums varying from setting up of stalls for its members, supplying to various colonies through mobile carts, as well

as a dedicated retail center. These retail centers registered sales of over 13 lakhs.

Stepping into the new venture of Sanitizer and Disinfectant production



Adapting to the needs of the crisis, JEEViKA didis also ventured into sanitizer and disinfectant production. Didis of Annpurna VO, Udwan Nagar, Bhojpur have initiated preparation of WHO recommended alcohol based Hand Sanitizer and chlorinated surface disinfectant at a production facility. This is a first initiative of its kind by our didis. They've been trained by experts from UNICEF. The products are being supplied to JEEViKA officials and several other departments for their usage, this has also enhanced the livelihood opportunities of the didis engaged in production.

Catalyzing rural markets through rural retail shops



The rural markets during the lockdown have been catalyzed by JEEViKA nurtured 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 other prescribed measures. 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 not to 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. The quality of goods and their variety has ensured that customers keep turning in.

All our Rural Retail Shops have registered for a 'Suraksha Store' certificate. A retail store will have to comply with a health and safety checklist, which includes mandatory measures of social distancing of 1.5 metres outside the shop as well as billing counters. Use of sanitisers/handwash by consumers before entering shops, provision of masks for all working staff and sanitization of high touch areas twice a day.

The rural retail shops did a business worth 50 lakhs in April and catered to 800 small retailers and 1500 households. These shops registered a cumulative sales of 30 lakhs by the end of April.

Agriculture services through custom hiring centers and village toolkit banks



The harvesting of the standing crops (Wheat, gram, mustard of Rabi Season) was getting delayed due to non-availability of workers and agricultural laborers rising from the lockdown. The Custom Hiring Centers and Village tool banks promoted by JEEViKA are coming to the rescue of the 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. Rotavators, harvesters, brush cutters, reaper binders, threshers and the likes.

Currently 106 Custom Hiring Centers are operational in Bihar, they're extending various services and lending tools to the farmers at nominal rates amid the crisis of labourers. More than 500 households have been benefited from these hiring centers.

Importance of Awareness and Preparedness in times of a pandemic. How JEEViKA used its robust strength of Community Professionals and CBOs to battle the pandemic before it reaches the villages



The importance of awareness and preparedness is pivotal in combating the pandemic, but the challenge in reaching out to the people amid a crisis where movement and gatherings are restricted.

Capitalizing on the expertise of its community professionals as and past experiences of its CBOs in handling crises, JEEViKA decided to reach out to the last mile of Bihar's rural premises and the communities it caters through mediums that were directed towards raising awareness and preparing the people's actions for facing the pandemic.

Usage of leaflets



Leaflets still play a huge role in raising awareness in the rural areas, people refer to them and follow instructions. JEEViKA designed and started distributing a dedicated leaflet within a week of declaration of COVID-19 as a global pandemic and printed over a million leaflets during the lockdown and ensured their delivery to the intended. In the first week itself, JEEViKA reached out to 5,000 self-help groups for awareness. The community professionals of JEEViKA adopted a two pronged strategy to reach out to the SHG households, the professionals made door-to-door visits as well as gave phone calls to members to disseminate information on the pandemic. Apart

from general awareness on the pandemic. The community professionals also trained the members of sanitizing practices, maintenance of hygiene, hand washing techniques among others.

Integrating Digital Platforms



JEEViKA has developed a presentation and a 3 pager (Frequently Asked Questions) FAQ sheet on methods of protection from Covid-19 for virtual training of Staffs and cadres. The content was adapted from Ministry of Health's advisories and was made crisper and customized for JEEViKA's context so that maximum information can be shared on Covid-19.

A Zoom based virtual training was given to district thematic officials. The managers further organized virtual training with Health Nutrition & Sanitization-Master Resource Person and Block Project Managers. The content was also circulated through WhatsApp groups to all BPMs and was further disseminated to project staffs and cadres and SHG members also those having access to Smartphone's.

After the training of HNS-MRPs they were played the role of trainers to train the community nutrition resource persons and community mobilizers through phone calls. The CMs in turn trained the BoD members of the SHGs. 67,000 community professionals have been trained by JEEViKA, who are further imparting knowledge to 30.65 lakh households. A series of webinars was also organized to disseminate information about the pandemic to JEEViKA's officials as well as cadres.

Usage of Graphic ICT



JEEViKA's awareness mascot Badki Didi transformed herself into a corona warrior for the current editions of Badki Didi, a two chapter comic of Badki Didi on COVID-19 awareness has been designed for generating awareness through visual media, and the series has received positive response for its storyline and stellar narration.

Incorporating music for awareness

JEEViKA has recorded a COVID-19 awareness song, and several audio messages that are being disseminated through several platforms. The audio clips have also been shared through JEEViKA's social media platforms.



The combined efforts of JEEViKA has shown positive results in breaking the chain of the pandemic in the rural areas, people have ardently followed the social distancing norms, have adapted properly to usage of masks and have taken extra care in sanitizing their homes and maintenance of general hygiene. 67,000 community professionals have been trained by JEEViKA, who are further imparting knowledge to 30.65 lakh households.

COVID-19 Messaging through Mobile Vaani

Mobile Vaani is a social media platform equivalent to Facebook/YouTube/Twitter for rural areas. We have built an intelligent IVR (interactive voice response) system that allows people to call into a number and leave a message about their community, or listen to messages left by others. The deployment in Bihar now has over 100,000 monthly unique users that call over 10,000 times per day, and discuss wide ranging issues on culture, local updates and announcements, government schemes, and information sharing. JEEViKA has collectivized cellphone numbers of 9,00,000 households for dissemination of virtual information on the COVID-19 pandemic.



Transforming Lives

A Lifesaving Step...



Amid the global crisis, a lot of people have fled the cities and have moved towards villages. This transition has caused a huge exhaustion of resources as many people spent their savings on their way to home. The necessary lockdown meant that no new income generation would take place, hence a lot of people were being pushed towards starvation. This is where JEEViKA stepped in with the Satat Jivikoparjan Yojana and ensured that no one in sleeps with an empty stomach. Such families were identified and have been given a cash grant of Rs. 2000 each for immediate relief and stress reduction.

Sarita Devi's family from khewli village of Chausai block in Buxar was facing a similar crisis. Deepanshu, Sarita's husband returned from Haryana on 30th March, 2020, where he works as a daily laborer. He spent his savings on his way to home and upon reaching the village, he was sent to the quarantine center. Sarita, a member of Aarti SHG couldn't go out to work and earn something that would satiate their hunger, she borrowed some groceries from a nearby shop to cook for herself and her child, but this couldn't last long. She didn't have a PDS card either, slowly they started spending days without food. Her situation was then recognized by her SHG during the awareness campaign. They took the matter to JEEViKA's officials. Soon Sarita was visited by JEEViKA's officials and was given the cash grant and some groceries by the village organization. She could finally cook some food and feed her only child after days.

From a Swabhimani to a Corona Warrior

Arti Kumari, is presently working as a Swabhimaan Supervisor (SS) in Jalalgarh Block of Purnea District of Bihar. She's a resident of Mahiyarpur Village of Chack Panchayat. Arti's journey is one that of a transformation. Arti gathered knowledge on the pandemic through the IEC materials given by JEEVIKA. Which was very similar to the PLA sessions in the modules of Swabhimaan Project to practice basic hygiene. Mask was one of the effective ways of keeping away the infection. She already had the skills pertaining to mask making. She thought of preparing the mask for her entire family and she did so. As the news spread that the virus COVID-19 can spread through community contacts she decided to prepare the masks for all the target beneficiaries. She has till date prepared over 700 masks. She doesn't charge any money for the masks and is entirely doing it on service basis. Apart from mask distribution, she is also working on educating the people on the COVID-19 pandemic, its preparedness and measures.



May

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May 01-31 : JEEVIKA's continued response to the COVID-19

May 01-31 : JEEVIKA steps in for service to In-Migrants

COMING UP IN THE NEXT EDITION

- JEEVIKA's initiatives for resettlement of In-Migrants in Bihar



JEEVIKA

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