

COVID-19 Response: Awareness and Relief Program Ration Distribution to Most Affected Poor Families

A Narrative Report (August – September 2021)

Submitted to: Dalyan Foundation
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Context

The impact of COVID-19 pandemic has been unprecedented, since it affected a large number of populations in India as well as whole world in multi-folds. The second wave of Covid-19 pandemic continued to stay strong in India during the months of April and May, 2021. Every single day infection was rising exponentially and had placed a major strain on the healthcare system and also wreaked havoc on the daily lives of people especially the daily wage earners, migrants and poor villagers. In these unprecedented difficult times, it was our responsibility to help victims of this deadly disease with all our might through providing ration, medical help and correct information.

As a social organization we identified a significant gap between resources and those who are in dire need of it. **Dalyan Foundation** with financial help and **CULP-Centre for Unfolding Learning Potentials** with field support, took initiative to extend their support in the need of the hour as a part of their COVID response. To begin with, CULP team, present in Tonk and Dausa districts, did a survey of villages and identified most vulnerable population as eligible beneficiaries in 150 villages of 58 *Gram Panchayats* of four blocks of both the districts and distributed ration kits to the needy families.

In Dausa district 800 ration kits were distributed in 75 villages of 33 *Gram Panchayats* of 3 blocks whereas in Tonk district 800 ration kits were distributed in 75 villages from 25 *Gram Panchayats*. To carry out the task, identified team of 68 experienced Community Volunteers as field workers in both the districts worked along with two district coordinators one each from the district.

Orientation of Team

A virtual orientation of 'Cluster Coordinators' (designated as Community Facilitator Heads' and two district coordinators under our existing program (named 'Heroes for Humanity') along with the Community facilitators of both the districts was held in two phases in August 2021 to brief about the Dalyan Foundation supported COVID Relief program and



Virtual meeting with field workers

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preparation needs to be done, information to be collected during the beneficiary identification and the criteria of selection. A meeting with field coordinators was held at CULP office on September 14, 2021 to discuss the modalities of the distribution, procurement of the ration and plan preparation with time lines of each activity. It was also decided to conduct COVID and Vaccine awareness sessions in the villages identified for ration distribution through our Community Facilitators.

The entire distribution was planned in six clusters, three in each district. Each cluster is headed by a Community Facilitator Head (CFH) under which on an average 10 Community Facilitator's (CFs) work. So, each CFH oriented CFs on the ration distribution and prepared the plan of action for her/his cluster from 16 to 18 September 2021 as per the plan. The consolidated plan of action was sent to the coordinators, who finalized the same.

Identifying the Beneficiaries

Owing to the prevailing poverty situation in the villages and presence of a large number of poor people, it was a difficult task to identify the neediest families to provide ration kit for which we determined the basic criteria like; no earning member in the family or earning member died of COVID, Job lost due to COVID lockdown, prolonged illness of earning member, widows, physically disabled earning member, old aged persons living alone etc.



Community facilitators' orientation & planning meeting at CULP field office, Jhilai block, Tonk district

Our team of 'Community Facilitators' present in almost 58 *Gram Panchayats* of both the districts surveyed about 200 villages for identifying families fulfilling at least one of the above mentioned criteria and put the desired information in the developed format. We received information of around 2500 such families. We filtered the information and finalized a list of 1600 families to whom we planned to distribute Ration kits.

Vulnerability of the Beneficiaries

While identifying the target population, CULP collected information on set criteria of eligibility of families for ration support / assistance in the prescribed format through rapid survey. The collected data were consolidated in computerized system and data of the beneficiaries were further analyzed as per their social, Gender, income source and income category-wise and

Exhibit.1. Social category-wise beneficiary Families		
Social Categories	Number of beneficiary families	
	Absolute number	Percentage
GEN	110	7%
MIN	113	7%
OBC	391	24%
SBC	87	5%
SC	481	30%
ST	418	27%
Total	1600	100%

GEN: General poor class; SC : Scheduled castes; ST: Scheduled Tribes; MIN: Minorities; OBC: Other Backward Class; SBC: Special Backward Class



children affected by losing parents / the earning member. The data of Exhibit.1 shows that out of 1600 beneficiaries, 63% were from

Exhibit.2. Gender category-wise beneficiary population distribution in two districts				
Gender category (all age groups)	District		TOTAL	
	Dausa	Tonk	Absolute number	Percentage
Female	1795	1828	3623	55%
Male	1469	1478	2947	45%
Total	3264	3306	6570	100%
Percentage	50%	50%	100%	

socially excluded communities namely Dalits (SC), tribals (ST), Minorities (mainly *Bajara, Luhar, Mirashi, Kalbelya Muslims* inhabiting in isolated pockets away from main habitation). Other 37% beneficiaries were also living below poverty line and affected most by the COVID Pandemic.

The data of Exhibit.2 shows that 6570 persons (in all age groups) of 1600 households have been benefitted from this program but we also found that there was big gender gap of 10 percent in the targeted population looking

after this difference we decided to provide the ration kit to the woman members of the families, so

Exhibit.3. Income source of beneficiary families		
Income source of families	Beneficiary Families	
	Absolute	Percentage
Small income from rain fed Agriculture and cattle rearing	420	26%
Temporary Job in private sector & pension (old-age, widow, disability)	52	3%
Daily wage labor	956	60%
Self-employed (running small grocery shop and broom-making)	14	1%
No permanent source of income or un-employed	158	10%
Total	1600	100%

Exhibit.4. Income category-wise beneficiary families		
Income (INR per month)	Number of beneficiary families	
	Absolute number	Percentage
No income	130	8.14
Upto 1000	132	8.26
1001-2000	345	21.57
2001-3000	640	40
3001-4000	221	13.82
4001-5000	132	8.00
Total	1600	100

more than 90% women collected the ration kits.

Exhibit.3 depicts the source of income of the beneficiary family. Major beneficiaries constituting 60% of the families were from daily wage labor and

another large number were from rain-fed small agriculture and cattle rearing work. Both the categories were the most affected of the pandemic. The beneficiaries selected ranged between no income to up to 5000 rupees per month per family and as per the Exhibit.4, 40% beneficiaries had per month family income up to Rupees 2000 (27 USD).

Exhibit.5. Affected Children in Beneficiary families				
Affected by loss of	Name of district			
	Dausa	Tonk	Total	Percentage
Job / earning member(s)	97	80	177	38%
Both Parents	63	5	68	15%
One of Parents	151	72	223	48%
Total	311	157	468	
Children of 29% of total beneficiary families affected by the Pandemic				

We also tried to assess the number of children affected due to the Pandemic (Exhibit.5). 223 children have lost one of their parents (48%) due to the pandemic and 38% have lost job earning members of their families leaving them in a difficult situation and need long term solution to their problems.

Cases of Some of the Beneficiaries

Case-1: One of the beneficiaries Manju Rajput lives in Gram Panchayat, Gothra in Dausa. Widow for seven years,



lives with her 5 daughters aged from 8 to 17. A school dropout, Manju Works as laborer to meet both ends meal. During the COVID lockdown she finds herself in deep trouble as the work she got under the NAREGA was stopped and savings ran up and the ration too. Her daughters too were at home due to the school closure. The ration kit gave them some respite and she wants government to arrange regular

work and ration for them in this situation.

Case-2: Geeta Devi is a widow aged 36 years. She lives in Gahanoli village of Mahwa subdivision. Geeta Devi has three children, a son of 12 years and two daughters aged 10 and 9 years. 8 years ago Geeta Devi's husband died due to kidney disease. Since then, Geeta Devi has been working hard in some way or the other to feed herself and her family. Everything was going well before Corona. Children were also studying. But from last 2 years the condition of Geeta Devi has become very bad. Due to lack of work, even two times food is hardly available. Children's education has also stopped, when the workers of the CULP approached Geeta Devi's house for a survey of ration distribution, she found that her condition was



very pathetic. The roof of Geeta Devi's house was leaking due to rain. After a few days, when the ration was given to her by CULP, tears could not stop from her eyes. On repeated inquiries, she told that if she gets any employment or any government scheme benefit from the organization, then she will be able to support her family.

Case-3: *Seeta Devi Swami is a widow whose husband died of CORONA this year as they did not have 100000 rupees to get treatment in a referred hospital in Jaipur owing to his deteriorated condition. Due*



to COVID protocol she and her children could not even conduct the last rites. She has 5 children three girls and two boys aged between 7 to 17 years. Her husband was a driver and the family was living in a rented house in village. They don't even have agriculture land to support the family. Her health does not permit to work as laborer neither she can send her young girls to government NAREGA program as they are minors. She is facing acute financial crisis and dependent on help and relief.

Case 4: *Kishore, aged 65 a widower, has 3 sons two of them Ramvatar (37 years) and Jagdish (25 years) are disabled since childhood. He had 1 elder brother who passed away a few years back.*

While talking to Kishore he told that he worked as a sweeper in Banasthali Vidyapeeth (Girls University in



Tonk district), from which he gets 3 thousand rupees a month. With this money, he fulfills the needs of his family and takes care of his two disabled children and runs the whole house.

When the lockdown was imposed due to Covid-19, there was a crisis in the family of Kishore, when Banasthali Vidyapeeth was closed due to Corona, then Kishore had no option to earn his living. During the Corona period, he earned his living by borrowing money from others. Even at present, they are called to work in alternative month, due to which it is very difficult to bear the expenses of their

household, yet Kishore is taking care of his home and children in this old age. Due to the lockdown, Kishore has been in debt, due to which he is in great need of ration and financial assistance.

Links of videos of beneficiaries interacted during the distribution: <https://youtu.be/r4kegwGyL0s>, <https://youtu.be/pX1hb1Fphog>

Procurement & Distribution

It was decided that the ration material should be procured centrally at the competitive prices, for which we decided to procure from Dausa district headquarters from reputed vendors to be delivered in the Dausa district itself as well as the adjacent Tonk district. We obtained quotations from three vendors (As per our procurement policy) and a designated committee of three persons from the organization selected one vendor for the supply by ensuring the quality of the material and timely delivery.

The plans were prepared at clusters and accordingly the arrangements were made to store the kits at different locations. 25 distribution points in Tonk district and



Ration being loaded from storage point to the villages in 'Tonk' district



Ingredients of each Ration Kit

33 points in Dausa district were identified, mostly government establishments (Gram Panchayat, Government Schools, Anganwadi Centres or community building) and some are personal houses (our field volunteers) by taking all safety measures of the ration where the kits were stored and from these storage points, kits were transported in specified numbers to the villages where distribution took place. The identified beneficiaries were intimated to reach to a specified place in the village and time to receive the kits.

The distribution was carried out as per the families identified during the survey. It was duly supported and monitored by the government school teachers / Principles / Village heads / local body Sarpanches / ward members, Anganwadi Workers and frontline workers of government and CSOs as per their availability. They were present at the time of distribution and also handed over the kits to some of the families. Also the ration kits were distributed to the families living in the tents / huts along roads as they were facing acute financial crisis. More than 90 percent ration kits were collected by woman members of the families from the camps. The entire distribution was carried out between 20 to 24th September 2021.

Awareness Sessions



COVID awareness session with village community

Apart from the ration distribution, field team in both the districts conducted COVID & Vaccination awareness sessions with the gathered community as well as the beneficiaries of ration at almost all the locations of ration distribution. In this process these sessions were conducted in 150 villages with almost 4000 persons including the government school children. The Community Facilitators were oriented

on the awareness content and the communication technique. Each of them was also provided illustrated material printed on a flex sheet to display during the session. The content of the awareness revolved around the basic information on COVID-19 virus, how it spreads, precautions, prevention methods and testing, importance of vaccination and motivating them to get vaccinated as soon as possible at the nearest Primary Health Centre or the location as suggested by the government. After COVID restrictions, recently opened government schools showed interest in organizing such awareness sessions with children.



COVID awareness session with government school girls

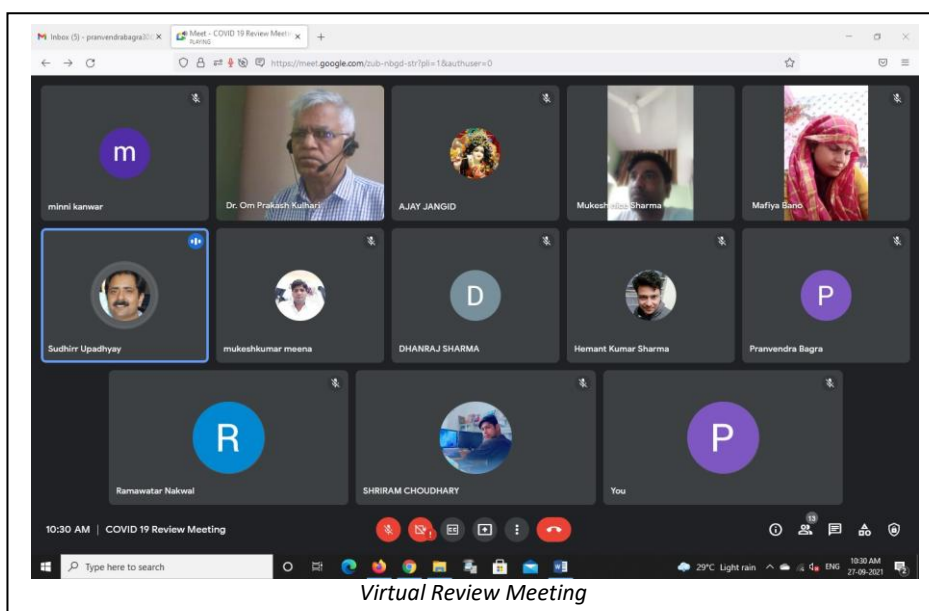
The community people, from socially excluded and economically vulnerable community (Dalits and tribals, migrants), youth, and adolescents were also made aware and shared information about various social protection schemes and their legal entitlements, how they can access the benefits of the schemes or government provisions.

Adequate protection measures were taken by following the government safety protocols in contact meetings and organizing ration kit distribution and awareness camps with the target population at village level, used sanitizers and face masks by both volunteers and beneficiaries and maintained social distance.

Reviewing the program

There was a virtual review meeting of all the CFHs, CULP office bearers and coordinators on 27 September 2021 to review the ration distribution program. The key outcome of the meeting were

1. The distribution was smooth and as per the plan. Beneficiaries were happy to receive the ration.
2. We could only cater to the need of 1600 families but the demand was high.
3. People desire that efforts should be made



Virtual Review Meeting



to provide long term employment to the people in need as the ration would last only for few days.

4. Young women especially from the rural areas desired to be imparted with some skills through which they could support their families in difficult situations.
5. The team members came across hundreds of girls who are out-of-schools due to COVID closure and were not able to attend the schools even after the reopening, due to engagement in house hold chores and other petty works. They also need to be associated with the mainstream education through alternative means.

Emerged needs observed and documented during the awareness and ration kit distribution campaign for future interventions

1. Learning Centres for girls facing learning gaps due to these COVID times;
2. Adolescent girls and young women (15 to 25 years) aspire to get vocational education for attaining employability schools;
3. Health Check-up camps for both children and women since they most sufferers during the COVID;
4. Adolescent girls and young women require hygienic kits;
5. About 1000 most vulnerable families still require support of ration kit;
6. Need to work closely with both community and government system to make it possible to access the benefits of various social protection schemes as legal public entitlements by the vulnerable eligible population in remote and isolated habitations where government systems reach to the vulnerable people is not effective.

Way forward

Basis the continuous feedback from our field team and the present interaction with community members during the distribution program, there are two prominent areas which need immediate attention. Though these issues have been cause of concern but the COVID situation has made them more prominent and they need to be addressed on priority. One is employment at local level and another is the issue of education of out-of-school adolescent girls.

CULP has been constantly working for the education of the above mentioned important section of the society through providing them an alternative to complete their basic education along with the opportunity to enter mainstream education. But due to COVID situation the limited financial resources could not able to sustain the program. CULP is trying its best to attract funding for the education of adolescent girls through different means but could not get the enough funds. So, there is a need to focus on the education program otherwise the already deteriorated condition of women in the state would slip to new low.

We have also partnered with the Desai Foundation Trust for a vocational skill development program for the young girls to make them economical self reliant, but on a small level, which need to be cater to a large number of women at a time with more additional support.

Glimpses of the program



An old lady receives the kit



An old villager gets the kit from village head

कल्प द्वारा जरूरतमंद परिवारों को राशन किट का वितरण दोसा भास्कर 25-09-2021

जरूरतमंद परिवारों को राशन किट का वितरण किया

परिवार (1 किंगडम परिवार) कल्प द्वारा जिला मुख्यालय के कार्यालय में निर्माई परिवारों को 25 ग्राम परिवारों के 75 ग्राम में 600 परिवारों को वितरण करने की योजना से प्रभावित परिवारों को राशन किट वितरण किया गया, पंचायत को राशन पंचायत समिति में स्वयंसेवकों की मदद से राशन किट वितरण किया गया।

600 जरूरतमंदों को किया वितरित

निर्माई परिवारों के 75 ग्रामों में 600 परिवारों को वितरित किया गया।

दैनिक नवयौती

जरूरतमंद परिवारों को राशन किट वितरित किया गया।

दोसा भास्कर

जरूरतमंद परिवारों को दिया राशन सामग्री के किट वितरित किया

परिवारों को राशन सामग्री के किट वितरित किया गया।

कोरोना प्रभावित परिवारों को राशन किट वितरित किट

निर्माई कल्प द्वारा 75 ग्रामों में 600 जरूरतमंद परिवारों को राशन किट वितरित किया गया।

राशन सामग्री वितरित

परिवारों को राशन सामग्री वितरित किया गया।

News appeared in local newspapers



A family receives ration living roadside



Women beneficiaries with ration kits



Awareness Session in a village