

FINISH Society's efforts to fight COVID-19



Spread message about COVID-19 through IEC campaigns to >2 lakh people in 10 States



Collaborated with Local Government & International partners to generate awareness



Distributed food and hygiene products to the vulnerable



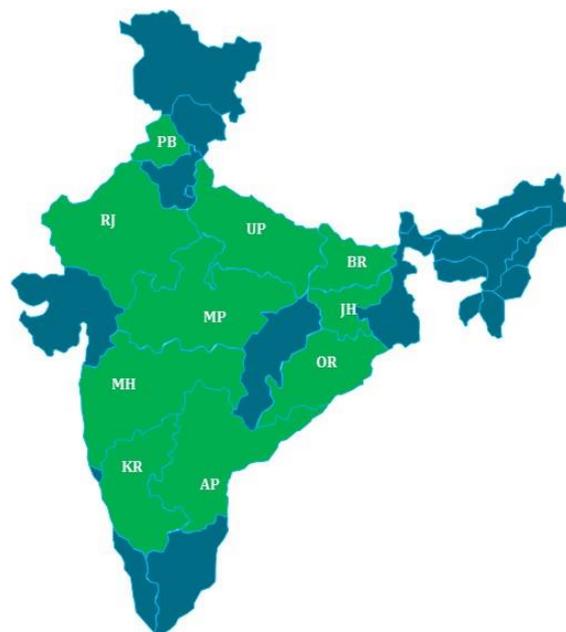
Screening and surveying susceptible people with Government aid



Supporting & encouraging our frontline sanitation workers



Ensuring employee wellbeing & safety



In late 2019, an acute respiratory disease emerged, known as novel corona virus disease. Corona viruses are a group of contagious, flu-like viruses and they cause symptoms that can be as mild as a common cold but in some cases can be fatal. With specific treatments or a vaccine not yet available, preventing its spread from person to person is vital to reduce the outbreak's impact on people's lives, health, livelihoods and the healthcare systems that we all rely on.

As India began to grapple with the COVID-19 pandemic, on 24th March 2020, Indian Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, announced a complete nationwide lockdown for 21 days till April 14th 2020- one of the strongest national measures to prevent the spread of the pandemic. Keeping in view the exponential increase in positive cases, this lockdown was further extended to 3rd May 2020. As on 30th April 2020, India reports nearly 35,043 cases and 1159 deaths (<https://www.covid19india.org/>).

When the lockdown was announced, millions living in poverty and migrant workers were left with no means to travel to their respective homes, and some have reportedly died making the precarious journey to their home. Millions of migrant workers move to cities looking for economic opportunities and live in diabolical conditions,



FIGURE 1 MIGRANT WORKERS BEING TAUGHT SOCIAL DISTANCING & SCREENING

but never able to call it home. Migrants form the largest part of India's vast unorganized work sector and regions like UP and Bihar have been known for rural migration for decades.



FIGURE 2: FINISH VOLUNTEERING FOR SUPPORTING MOVEMENT OF MIGRANTS

FINISH Society has been working with the local Government and communities in Mohania, Bihar to make Mohania open defecation free under Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM). Working in close relation with the Block Development Officer (BDO), FINISH Society team in Mohania is supporting the local administration in the relief work. Mohania is located on NH-2, the gateway to enter Bihar through UP. While maintaining the principles of social distancing, the FINISH Society team seeking help from the BDO and the Health Department, started managing and screening the crowd and arranged buses for them to return to their respective homes. The teams worked hard enough to screen and arrange transportation for more than 3000 migrant workers.

The informal workforce of India is most affected by the nation-wide lockdown. As many as 92 percent laborers have already lost one to three weeks of work, according to a rapid assessment survey by Jan Sahas. Jan Sahas also reported that, many of them worry that they will not be able to find work once the lockdown ends. The Jan Sahas report also suggested that over 40% of migrant workers surveyed, did not have any food supplies and only a handful of them had ration to support their households for two to four weeks. In the eventuality of the extended lockdown, many reported that they would barely have enough money to support basic household expenses.

In lieu of this, the FINISH Society team in Bihar started identifying the worst effected people, including the migrant workers, MNREGA laborers, widows etc. and distributed ration packets that included rice, wheat, cooking oil, etc. and medicines. Through IEC activities, our team in Bihar is making the communities aware on the importance of hygiene and social distancing to fight the pandemic.



FIGURE 3: RATION DISTRIBUTION

Not only this, the provision of safe water, sanitation and hygienic conditions is essential to protecting human health during all infectious disease outbreaks, including the COVID-19 outbreak. Thus, ensuring good and consistently applied WASH and waste management practices in

communities, homes, schools, marketplaces and health care facilities will further help to prevent human-to-human transmission of the COVID-19 virus.

FINISH Society field staff fanned out in the various districts to help raise awareness about the spread of the pandemic & the importance of handwashing in Bihar (Gaya & Darbhanga), Karnataka (Mysore), Rajasthan (Kota, Jhalawar, Udaipur, Dungarpur) and Andhra Pradesh (Guntur). IEC campaigns were developed and replicated to spread the message in larger communities where we are working with and other associated stakeholders using various communication platforms.

Apart from our own IEC campaign, FINISH also partnered WaterAid India in an intensive 8-day campaign in 7 languages using digital posters, audio messages and video messages on 'Good Hygiene Practices to Prevent COVID-19' to create awareness in our project areas till the last mile.

The FINISH Kapurthala team went from door to door spreading awareness about the Corona virus thus winning the trust of the District Administration and the local population. The team members volunteered to screen possible COVID positive cases in the districts of Jhalawar, Dungarpur, Kapurthala and Guntur.



FIGURE 4: FINISH SWM TEAM FACILITATED BY LOCAL RESIDENT COMMITTEES FOR THEIR SERVICES IN UDAIPUR

Amidst these tough times, there is a silver lining of gratitude and gratefulness that FINISH has to express to our beneficiaries. In all our solid waste management project areas of Guntur (Andhra Pradesh), Udaipur and Dungarpur (Rajasthan), where we are reaching out to more than 2 lakh people, we saw an unprecedented approach towards sanitation workers. Residents/ households honored and felicitated waste collectors and green workers for showing courage to come out and collect waste from their houses every day.

This shows that India stands united and is grateful to all the front-liners during this time of crisis. FINISH joins hand with Government of India to help people especially vulnerable and weaker sections of the society by providing information, generating awareness, distributing food and hygiene products, encourage frontline green workers and take care of their safety and wellbeing.