



# COVID-19 Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) and Stigma & Discrimination Communication Campaign

An initiative of COVID-19 response

*From:*

**Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF)**

New Delhi





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## KEY OBJECTIVES

- Mitigate rumours and increase awareness, knowledge and understanding of people on preparedness, prevention, and response practices against COVID-19 through established resources and various communication channels
- Effective engagement of communities in response to control the outbreak

## DEFINITION OF RISK COMMUNICATION

Risk Communication is an exchange of information, advice and opinions in real time between experts or leaders and the community facing a threat (danger) to their survival, health or economic or social well-being (UNICEF, 2020).

## DEFINITION OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community Engagement is a mutual partnership between COVID-19 response team and individuals or communities in affected areas whereby community stakeholders have ownership in controlling the spread of the outbreak (UNICEF, 2020).



## Introduction

### ***COVID-19 Risk Communication and Community Engagement and Stigma & Discrimination Communication Campaign***

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) was declared a “pandemic” by the World Health Organization (WHO) in early March 2020. Around that time, globally, extraordinary measures were adopted to combat the formidable spread of the on-going outbreak. Under such conditions, people’s adherence to preventive measures is greatly affected by their awareness of the disease.

### **United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF)**

UNICEF works in over 190 countries and territories to save children’s lives, to defend their rights, and to help them fulfil their potential, from early childhood through adolescence.

### **Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF)**

Established in 2002, Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF), a not-for-profit, is a pan India ICT for Development Agency. It is one of the leading practitioners in the field of Information and Communication Technology for Development (ICT4D). With the belief ‘Inform, Communicate and Empower,’ DEF finds sustainable digital interventions to overcome information poverty and development exclusions in rural and remote locations of India, and empower communities with digital literacy, digital tools & solutions and last mile connectivity.

### ***Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF) and United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF) Partnership***

Digital Empowerment Foundation in partnership with UNICEF implemented COVID-19 Risk communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) in 550 locations across 71 districts. It has been one of the UNICEF’s priority areas of intervention towards informed decision making related to personal risk, mitigate rumours, share information and advice between experts, communities and officials, and also to effectively involve communities in the response to control the COVID-19 pandemic. The programme reached out and engaged vulnerable population comprising of:

- General Public- community members, panchayat, representative, line department officials, youth & SHG women
- Vulnerable and marginalized population (Pregnant and Breastfeeding women, children 0-18 and people with co-morbidities like diabetes, hypertension etc.)
- Network of Digital Entrepreneurs present across the intervention areas.
- School Teachers
- School Children
- Frontline Health Workers
- Opinion leaders/influencers/Panchayat representative

“Digital Empowerment Foundation in partnership with UNICEF implemented COVID-19 Risk communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) in 550 locations across 71 districts.”

# Geographies Covered

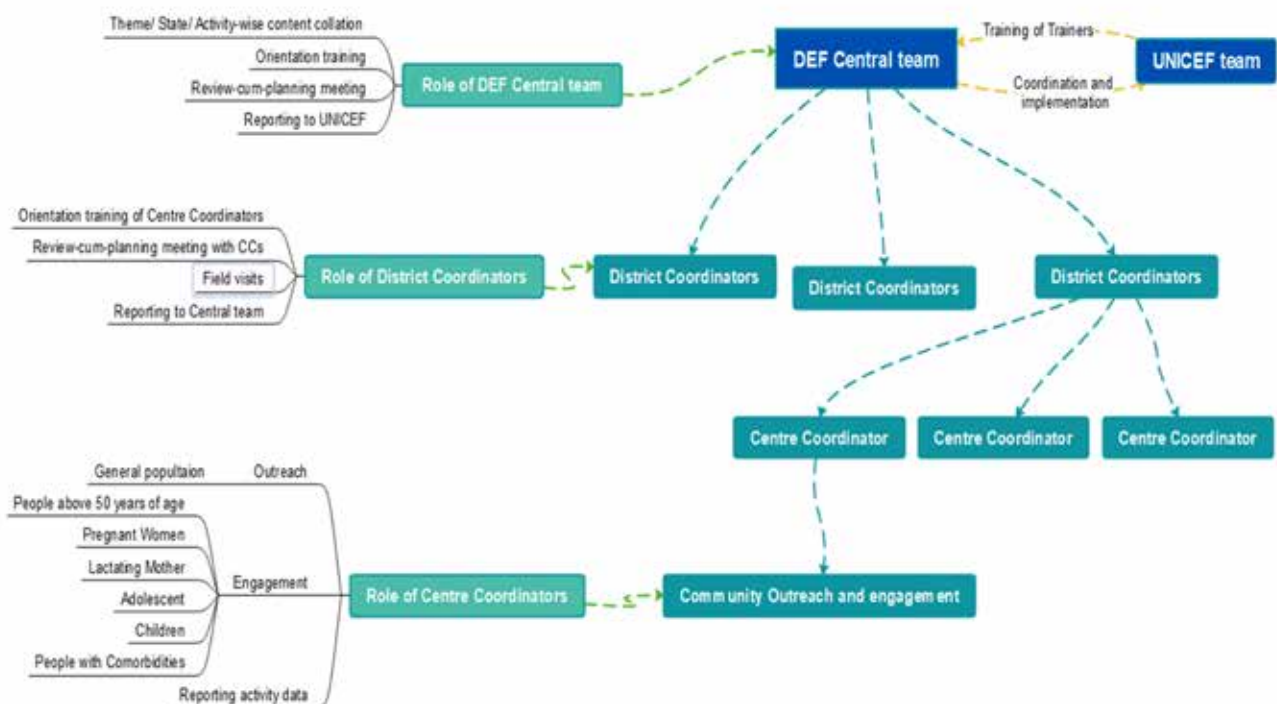


# Programme Design

## PHASE I- Planning

The idea of organizing Risk Communication and Community Engagement took shape in the month of June 2020, when UNICEF and DEF brainstormed on a community outreach plan to address the issues of COVID-19 among Vulnerable groups (Pregnant and Breastfeeding women, children 0-18 and people with co-morbidities like diabetes, hypertension etc.). The team held multiple meetings to design a layout for the entire project. The project layout entails:

- Selection of locations
- Enrolment of District Coordinator (DC)
- Identification and enrolment of Centre Coordinators (CC)
- Collating and finalizing the Training content State wise and Theme wise.
- Creation of ODK Monitoring Form.
- ODK Training
- Documentation (Photos/ Videos, Data verification State & District wise).



### Moreover, RCCE planning was based on the following guiding principles-

- Community Centered — Different groups in communities were involved with the understanding of their knowledge, capacities, concerns, structures and vulnerabilities to enable adaptation of approaches, improve outcomes and impact.
- Participatory — Community stakeholders were a part of the RCCE action and were supported to lead in the planning, design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of RCCE activities.
- Transparency — Audience-tailored, adapted to the local language-based content was adopted to mitigating risk, and engaging communities. Acknowledging and communicating transparently, about what is known and not known, was a critical aspect while disseminating information
- Informed by Data — Data was generated to inform RCCE approaches, and the response more broadly. Both qualitative and quantitative data have been captured which informs about the structural factors responsible for driving behaviours e.g., social norms etc.

## PHASE II- IMPLEMENTATION

The RCCE interventions in the target locations were reached to the people through Community Information Resource Centres (CIRCs) present across 550 locations in India. Since 2007, Digital Empowerment Foundation has been setting up CIRCs in rural and semi-urban areas as its main access point for achieving digital inclusion, providing digital literacy and rolling out its various ICTD interventions. Community Information Resource Centres (CIRCs) are community-oriented infrastructure and space built to create digitally literate, information-empowered and equitable communities across the country. The CIRCs primarily offer digital literacy, digital services, information services, citizen services and business development services to create information-rich society under a sustainable model.

The centres are managed by Centre Coordinators/District Coordinators who acted as “COVID-19 Soochnapreneurs” during the time of pandemic. Centre Coordinators reached out to families and communities with Covid-19 specific information on preventive awareness and de-stigmatisation through message dissemination (social media, announcements, wall messaging, WhatsApp groups and leaflets) and engagement (community meetings, youth meetings and door to door visits). In this process of information dissemination and addressing stigma & discrimination, centre coordinators/district coordinators were able to create a sustained engagement and communication with the community people that helped them build trust and confidence in response efforts, and enabled community participation and action for the COVID 19 response.

“Centre Coordinators reached out to families and communities with Covid-19 specific information on preventive awareness and de-stigmatisation through message dissemination (social media, announcements, wall messaging, WhatsApp groups and leaflets) and engagement (community meetings, youth meetings and door to door visits)”

# KEY MESSAGES

The programme was planned to implement the following key themes:

## **COVID-19 Appropriate Behaviours – Prevention & Practices**

The activities around the theme were carried out to emphasize on the COVID or CAB (frequent and thorough hand washing using soap and water, wearing a mask/face cover and physical distancing of 6 feet) for personal safety and prevention of community transmission. Leveraged existing WhatsApp groups, social media handles and Community based organizations (CBOs) to disseminate key messages of CAB. The messages were also promoted at state and regional levels using content in vernacular languages.

## **COVID-19 Stigma and Discrimination**

Social Stigma associated with COVID-19 was also addressed by disseminating the facts about the disease through reaching out to the people with the help of wall messaging, public announcements and engaging them through community meetings & door to door meetings.

## **COVID-19 Sensitive Health**

COVID-19 exacerbated the physical and mental health of the people therefore DEF with UNICEF worked towards dissemination health information through WhatsApp groups, leaflets, social media, community meetings & door to door visits. DEF used communication packages designed by UNICEF to ensure information dissemination and awareness building among communities and specific target groups

## **COVID-19 Sensitive Nutrition**

For COVID-19 sensitive messages on nutrition, different communication methods were used to disseminated information on nutrition for women and adolescent girls. The topics covered were: Immunisation, Breastfeeding and complementary feeding, Nutrition for women, Diarrhoea management, Iron and Folic Acid (IFA) supplementation and Hygiene and sanitation behaviours.

“The programme was planned to implement the following key themes- COVID-19 Appropriate Behaviours – Prevention & Practices, COVID-19 Stigma and Discrimination, COVID-19 Sensitive Health, COVID-19 Sensitive Nutrition ”



# CHANNELS & ACTIVITIES

**Two-pronged strategy was applied to implement the programme in the field loactions:**

- **Outreach-** One way to promote mass communication on a regular basis. The activites under outreach includes: Wall messaging, Announcement, Whatsapp messaging, leaflet distribution, Social media posting.
- **Engagement-** Two-way communication to promote participation and inclusion on a regular basis. The activites under engagement includes: Door-to Door, community meeting, Youth group meeting

S. No	State	Districts	Performance Indicators	
			Number of People reached on COVID-19 through messaging on prevention and access to services.	Number of People engaged on COVID-19 through RCCE actions.
1	Andhra Pradesh	3	130876	26813
2	Assam	6	175248	38332
3	Bihar	6	314255	41836
4	Chhattisgarh	1	83456	15829
5	Gujarat	1	31339	4221
6	Jharkhand	2	191950	29145
7	Karnataka	1	45403	10214
8	Kerala	7	73566	18578
9	Madhya Pradesh	15	770903	83380
10	Maharashtra	2	76327	7582
11	Odisha	4	138724	16510
12	Rajasthan	4	561303	41596
13	Tamil Nadu	5	49610	21384
14	Telangana	8	223065	19552
15	Uttar Pradesh	3	173919	29220
16	West Bengal	3	149054	21523
<b>Total</b>		<b>71</b>	<b>3188998</b>	<b>425715</b>



## ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

### Community Meeting

Community meetings were conducted with an objective to involve all the key community stakeholders-SHG leaders, religious leader, front line delivery personal, school teacher, ASHA worker, local representatives and discuss around CAB, COVID Sensitive Health and COVID Sensitive nutrition. It helped to established an effective Dialogue with the affected population.

**Community Meetings engaged 39,782 people through 550 centers spread across 71 districts in 16 states.**

### Door to Door Activity

Door to Door activity was designed to especially focus on the vulnerable population comprising of old people, PwDs, Children, pregnant women, lactating mother, adolescent. For each and every theme, centre coordinator got engaged with 30-50 families. Door- to- Door visits of the centre coordinators/district coordinators helped them to create an avenue for two-way communication by interacting and answering the queries at household level. It helped them to dispel the myths and rumours around COVID 19 and thus acting as myth busters.

**COVID- 19 Soochnapreneurs reached out to 3,80,513 people through door-to-door activity**

### Formation of Youth clubs

Youth are an integral part of the country, therefore recognising the importance of their role in the community, youth clubs were formed in 71 districts of India. One of the objectives was to protect themselves and their community against COVID-19. Each youth club had ten members who reached out to the community through wall messaging, door-to-door visits and engaging fellow youth from their communities through youth meetings.

**COVID-19 Soochnapreneurs formed 542 Youth Clubs with 5420 youth members in the targeted locations.**

S. NO	State	No. of Districts involved in HWWs	No. of DCs Aware	No. of CCs Implemented HWWs with their Youth groups and in community meetings
1	Andhra Pradesh	3	3	25
2	Assam	3	2	23
3	Bihar	6	1	33
4	Chhattisgarh	1	1	20
5	Jharkhand	2	2	32
6	Karnataka	1	1	7
7	Kerala	7	1	20
8	Madhya Pradesh	13	4	107
9	Maharashtra	2	1	10
10	Odisha	4	2	31
11	Rajasthan	3	3	48
12	Tamil Nadu	4	2	22
13	Telangana	7	3	25
14	Uttar Pradesh	2	3	23
<b>Total</b>		58	29	426

## OUTREACH ACTIVITY

### Wall Messaging

The wall messaging was done around three themes- CAB, COVID Sensitive Health and COVID Sensitive Nutrition. The messages were collated through UNICEF 's IEC warehouse in Hindi, English and other regional language.

The messages were written down by the centre coordinators on public walls. The Wall Messaging was one of the effective activities that created awareness among the community people. 2,778 Wall Messaging, reached 11,59,075 people.

### Announcements from loudspeaker

In a setting where a high percentage of the population is illiterate, a public announcement is an essential way to reach the last mile especially, during a crisis similar to COVID-19. The COVID-19 Soochnapreurs broadcasted the messages in the most adapted and suitable way for local populations.

Announcements were made through loudspeakers installed on a bicycle and information vans (Soochna Vans). Radio was also used as a platform to impart critical Information on COVID-19 in the community.

8271 Announcements were made throughout the programme.

## Information Dissemination through WhatsApp groups

To combat the fake news around the COVID-19 disease, the COVID-19 Soochnapreneurs used the community group on WhatsApp to stay connected and ensure the timely flow of relevant information. The groups were used to disseminate the RCCE messages comprised of audio, video, text, images. During the programme period, 5,07,478 people were provided with information through WhatsApp groups.

## Leaflet Distribution

Leaflets were disseminated during door -to- door visits, community meetings and youth meetings within the people.

Information/message on COVID Appropriate Behaviour, COVID Sensitive Health and COVID Sensitive Nutrition were disseminated to **3,73,319** people through leaflets.



Further, to commence the **GLOBAL HANDWASHING** event, DEF Central Team organized the orientation training for 31 District Coordinators, across 16 states comprising of 71 districts.

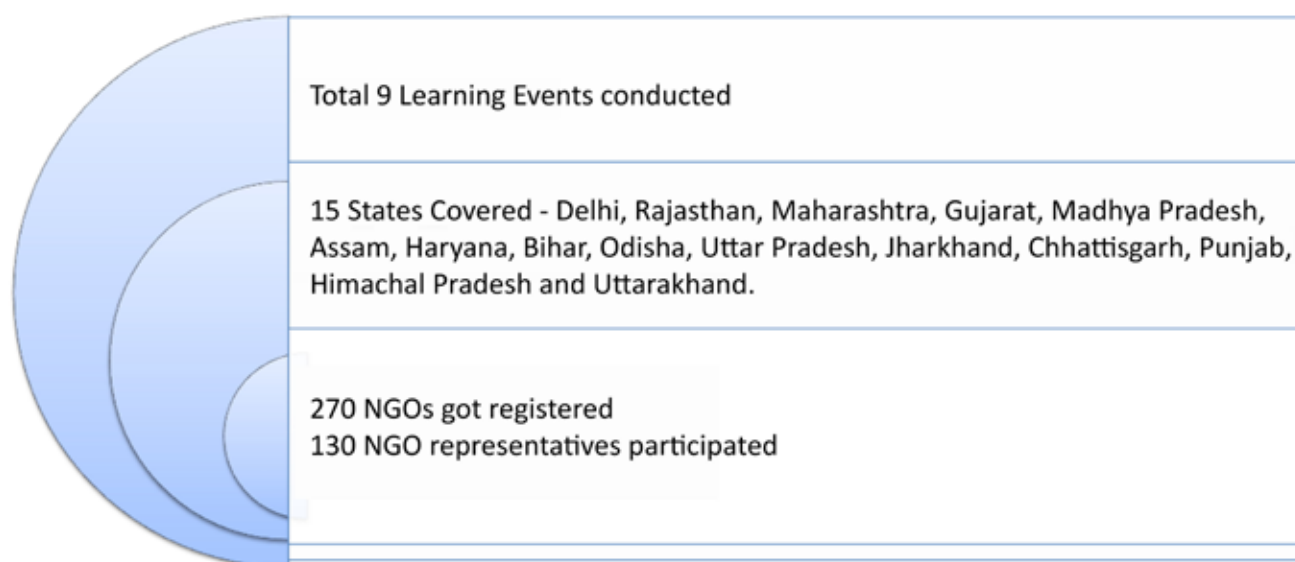
- Orientation Training of Volunteers were conducted by District Coordinators.
- Field Activities regarding Hand washing with Soaps HWWS took place in October.

### **COVID-19 Stigma & Discrimination communication campaign learning event**

Apart from Hand washing with Soap activity, DEF Central Team have also conducted COVID-19 Stigma & Discrimination communication campaign learning event to talk about concepts and principles to risk communication and communication engagement – it is about being first and fast with information and communication with people – why? To provide right information at right time to increase awareness on the pandemic, understanding about situation, especially among civil society organisations and Community based organisations.

#### **Objectives**

- Raise social awareness about combating Stigma
- Build sensitivity and solidarity, encouragement and support to all healthcare workers and sanitation staff on COVID line of duty.
- Create an enabling environment for people with mild symptoms to seek help and go for testing and persons affected with COVID-19.



# Reporting and Monitoring system

To capture the field level activity and reach out, in discussion with

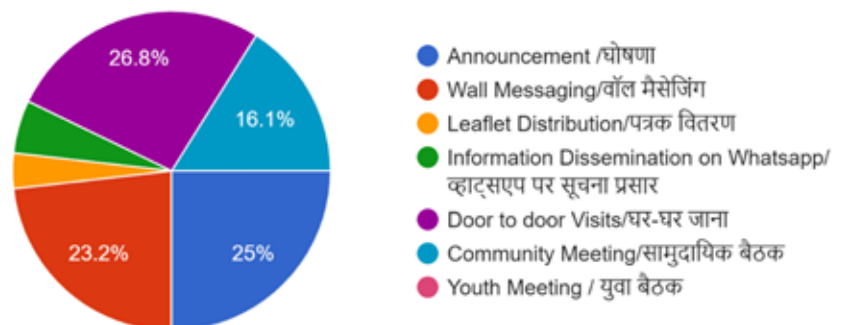
UNICEF, the format was created using ODK. The training was provided to COVID-19 Soochnapreneurs to report the progress of the field activities through ODK. District Coordinators also created a WhatsApp group for that COVID-19 Soochnapreneurs whom they were supporting and monitoring. The activity photos were shared timely by the COVID-19 Soochnapreneurs on the WhatsApp group.

For monitoring and evaluation, a monthly review-cum-planning meeting was organised by the central team for District Coordinators. All the DCs conducted the review-cum planning meeting for their respective CCs. The central team reported the progress on a fortnightly/ monthly basis to UNICEF.

## Assessing Impact

The measures adopted to spread awareness about the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in lower negative attitudes towards the disease.

## Key Findings



**Door-to-Door campaign (26.8 percent respondent) proved to be the most effective way to raise awareness within communities followed by Announcement (25 percent respondent), Wall messaging (23.2 percent respondents), Community Meeting (16.1 percent respondent), Information Dissemination on WhatsApp (5.4 percent respondent), Leaflet Distribution (3.6 percent respondent).**

**Few some qualitative feedback received through the surveys regarding the effectiveness of door-to-door activity:**

"Through the personal interaction between community members and our COVID-19 Soochnapreneurs, the message becomes customized for each of the targeted families," Pooja, a 30-year-old pregnant woman, appreciated the personal visits and said, "The house visits were helpful to me because many of us did not have access to the internet or other information sources from where we could access the information about the disease".



**“We are able to answer their specific questions and dispel various myths circulating within the community.” - Meera, Madhya Pradesh, Centre Coordinator**

People often had questions about common myths circulating within the community, which concern the use of alternative medicines and natural remedies to cure COVID-19. “People sometimes believe that eating garlic and onion increases their immunity and prevents them from being infected by the virus, Other common myths were that drinking lemon juice, rich in vitamin C, decreases the chance of getting the virus, or that drinking warm water can prevent or treat the disease.”

Before the home visits, Prema and her 10 family members received all of their COVID-19-related information from TV, or through phone messages from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. “RCCE Centre Coordinator Subhadra very kindly answered our questions and concerns; it was useful since we do not have access to the internet,” says the 50-year-old housewife. “We received new information on good handwashing practices. We are now also aware that good handwashing techniques and staying at home decrease the risk of getting sick.” – **said by Prema, Cuttack district, Orissa**

“Despite the negative impact of COVID-19 on the economy, many people were finding ways to help their community and earn an income at the same time by sewing face masks, making soap and hand sanitizer and hence we also got the opportunity to earn a little through this awareness programme during this unprecedented time.– **Gayathri, Kollegal, Karnataka**

# Key Challenges & Solutions

## **Navigating the programme through highly unpredictable and uncertain field situation**

Amidst unprecedented pandemic situation, on and off movement restrictions from the local administration to restrict the COVID spread, the offline field activities got severely affected, but the programme was designed in such a way that has the flexibility to accommodate offline and online mode of implementation.

## **Reluctance of centre coordinators to take up the field work**

- Due to the pandemic, sometimes it led to a situation in which COVID-19 Soochnapreneurs were reluctant to work in the field. They were afraid to get infected. To tackle the issue, the peer influence was used to create a positive outlook for the community outreach and engagement work.

## **Online capacity building training**

- Due to pandemic the offline capacity building was not possible and most of the capacity building training was done online. To address the limitations of online training, multiple online follow-up/refresher training was done.

## **Online Monitoring**

- Considering the COVID-19 spread, as a preventive and safety measure the physical monitoring was avoided and, all the monitoring was done online. The Online mode include-review cum planning the meeting, activity pictures and videos shared on WhatsApp and activity implementation detail capture through ODK.

## **Drop-out of centre coordinators due to personal/family problem**

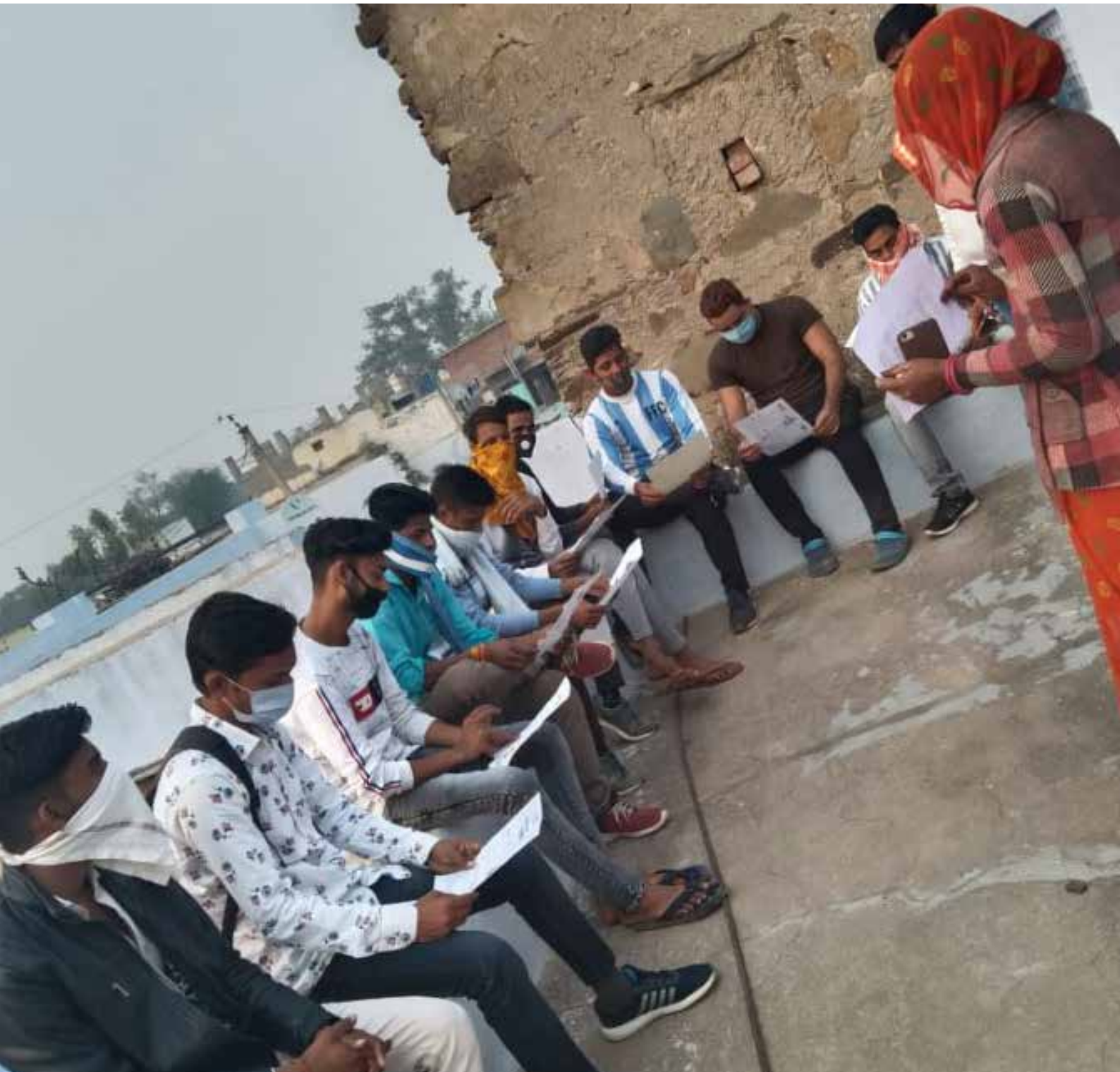
- During the programme, some of the COVID-19 Soochnapreneurs got infected and dropped out, while some of them faced restrictions from their family and eventually opted out.

## **Engagement with youth**

- Forming a youth group and engaging them in a meeting on a regular basis was a bit challenging. Forming a youth group and engaging them in the meetings was a bit challenging. Though, as per the feedback received from COVID-19 Soochnapreneurs, the concepts introduced through demonstration proved effective to attract the youth members.

# Recommendations

Continuity of such kind of programme at the ground level to help the community for better preparedness and response as well as tackle the misinformation/rumors related to such kind of diseases by leveraging the network of trained centre coordinators created through programme.



# Way Forward

Continuation of COVID-19 specific communication to sustain COVID Appropriate and Sensitive behaviour along with promoting vaccine eagerness and reducing vaccine hesitancy. Old and new locations to be involved to strengthen and increase the programme effectiveness and reach around the key thematic area will include:

- Sustaining COVID Appropriate Behaviour
- Promoting vaccine eagerness and reducing vaccine hesitancy
- Sustain COVID sensitive behaviours

The next phase of programme will address and ensure the three critical components which are gender, equity and sustainability through following measures:

- Ensuring women engagement.
- Building the capacity of the programme staff i.e., the centre coordinators and volunteers to address the gender inequalities.
- Promoting equitable, inclusive community engagement
- Local people will be involved so as to sustain the programme efforts beyond programme period.

## Implementation Phase



Some Glimpses



Rafiqul Islam, December 2020, Community meeting, Covid Sensitive Health, Nagaon district, Assam



August 2020, RCCE Centre Coordinators training held in Barabanki, Uttar Pradesh



VARLAKSMI, December 2020, Awareness on Covid Sensitive Health, Community Meeting, Vizag, AP



Jyothi, September 2020, Awareness on Covid appropriate behavior community meeting, Kollegal, Karnataka



Veerender, September 2020, Awareness on Covid appropriate behavior through community meeting, Betul, MP



Veerender, September 2020, Awareness on Covid appropriate behavior through community meeting, Betul, MP



Pratap singh, October 2020, Awareness through Wall Painting on Covid sensitive Nutrition, Alwar, Rajasthan



RAJANI KHOND, September 2020, Awareness on Covid appropriate behavior through Door to door visit, Gadchiroli, Maharashtra



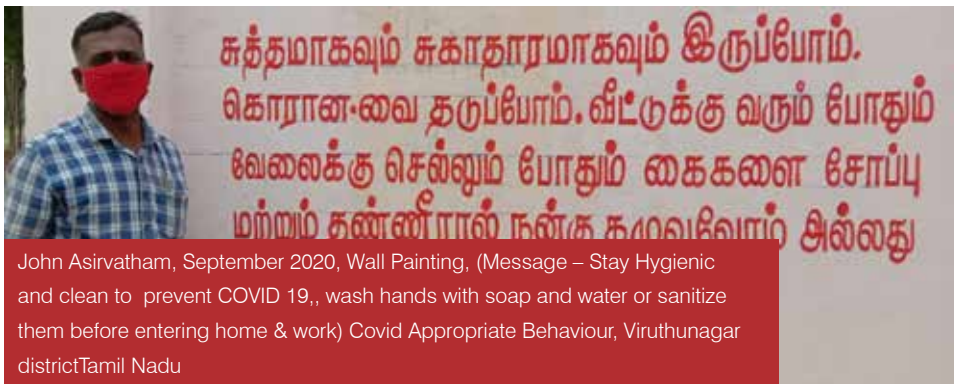
Pratap singh, October 2020, Awareness through Wall Painting on Covid sensitive Nutrition, Alwar, Rajasthan



August 2020, COVID Appropriate behaviour, Youth Meeting, Nagaon district, Assam



Rohit, September 2020, Awareness on Covid appropriate behavior through door to door visit, Hoshangabad, MP



John Asirvatham, September 2020, Wall Painting, (Message – Stay Hygienic and clean to prevent COVID 19, wash hands with soap and water or sanitize them before entering home & work) Covid Appropriate Behaviour, Viruthunagar district Tamil Nadu



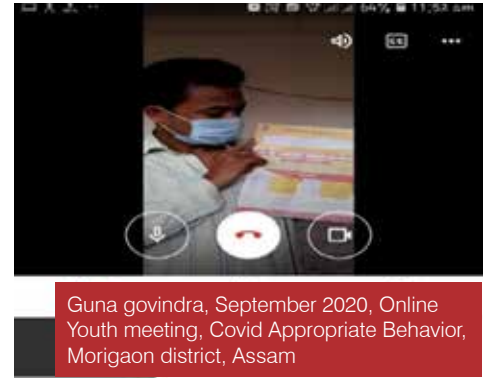
August 2020, During door to door visit & leaflet distribution in Nadia district, West Bengal



Lakhyajyoti kalita, September 2020, Wall messagaing(Message – Don't spit in public places). Covid Appropriate Behavior, Nagaon district, Assam



Gelabhai Satiya September 2020, Wall painting (Message – Wash hands with soap & water or sanitize them before entering the centre, before and after work) Covid Appropriate Behaviour, Kutch, Gujarat



Guna govindra, September 2020, Online Youth meeting, Covid Appropriate Behavior, Morigaon district, Assam



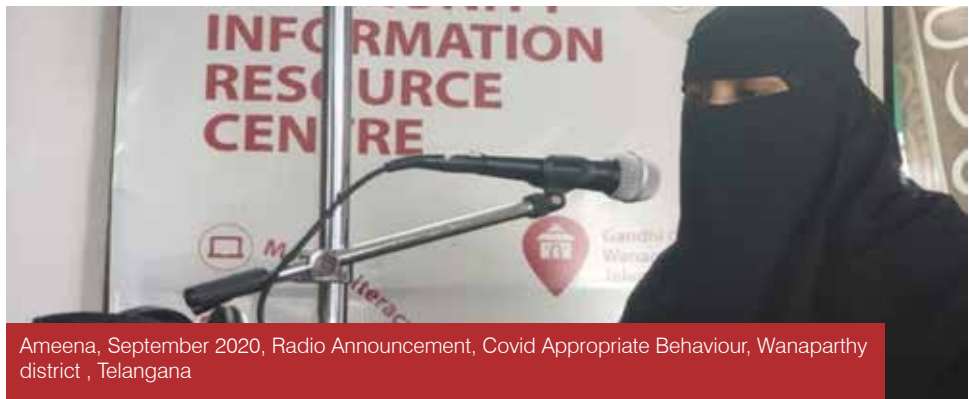
Liza Naik, September 2020, Awareness on Covid appropriate behavior through Announcement, Cuttack Odisha



Walenter johnasirvatham.d, September 2020, Announcement, Covid Appropriate Behaviour, Virudhunagar District, Tamil Nadu



August 2020, COVID Appropriate Behaviour, Announcement, South 24 Praganas, West Bengal



Ameena, September 2020, Radio Announcement, Covid Appropriate Behaviour, Wanaparthy district, Telangana



Arun September 2020, Awareness through whatsapp to 95 people on Covid Appropriate Behaviour, Pallakd, Kerala

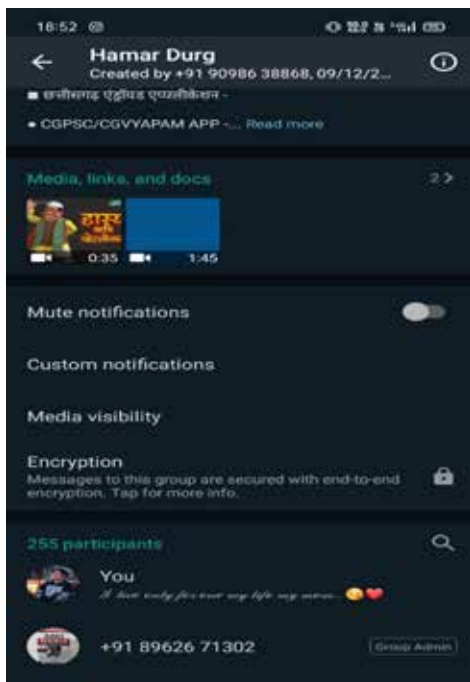


Shakshi, September 2020, Awareness on Covid appropriate behavior through wall messaging, Gadchiroli, Maharashtra



Swati, October 2020, Awareness on Handwashing Covid appropriate behavior through Youth Meeting Gadchiroli, Maharashtra





Suraj Sahu, September 2020, Awareness through whatsapp to 255 people on Covid Appropriate Behaviour, Raigarh, Chattisgarh



Bhakta, September 2020, Awareness on Covid appropriate behavior through leaflet distribution, Bargarh Odisha



Baba Khan, September 2020, leaflet distribution, Covid Appropriate Behaviour, khamam district , Telangana



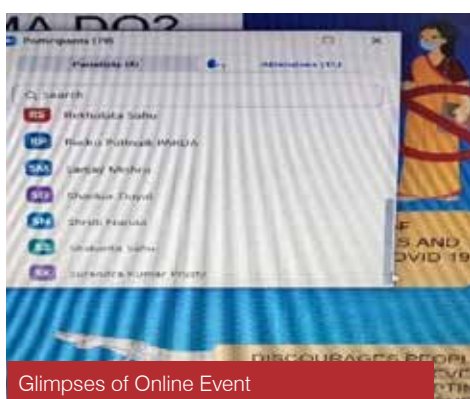
September 2020, door to door & leaflet distribution Covid Appropriate Behaviour, West Bengal



August 2020, COVID Appropriate behaviour, door to door, Barmer, Rajasthan



Poonam, September 2020, Awareness on Covid appropriate behavior through Youth meeting, Gadchiroli, Maharashtra



Glimpses of Online Event



Centre Coordinator Training, October 2020, Awareness on Handwashing Covid appropriate behavior, Barabanki, Uttar Pradesh

## STORIES FROM THE GROUND

### Jyoti Singh, Rewa, Madhya Pradesh District Coordinator

**I am Jyoti Singh**, age 30, from Rewa district of Madhya Pradesh state. From very early age, I started working with the community members. I have worked with women who were physically and mentally challenged as well as financially weak and also for women's education.

But this time it was huge, it was a pandemic and I realized that it requires an empathetic approach when communicating with diverse people from the community.

Coronavirus had put the whole country in an abysmal condition.

As I was already working with the community and had good relationships among them, I could leverage this and contribute in creating awareness regarding the COVID-19. Therefore, I got the opportunity to monitor the RCCE program. In this program, I was looking after nine districts including 55 Centre Coordinators to create awareness on the outlined seven activities based on four themes.

RCCE Program was not easy to handle. Initially, I faced a lot of challenges during the monitoring. The team also got changed many a times. This impacted the planning and conducting briefing, training, review meeting with all the coordinators, as it was my primary role.

Responding to the continuous queries from the centre coordinators has made me a person of patience. I would also like to add that this project has helped people in managing their homes by bringing in financial stability, as this project provided incentives for the work done.

At last, I would say, humankind is still alive, which was very much visible during this pandemic as people become united and empathetic towards the underserved and the poor.



## Meera Gautam, Siddhi district, Madhya Pradesh COVID-19 Soochnapreneur

**I am Meera Gautam** resident of Siddhi district, Madhya Pradesh. Ever since the word Corona came into our lives, it has changed the lives of many, especially the poor. As I am a part of the SHG Group and have been working in it since years and had a credible presence among the community, I got an opportunity to work in RCCE program. RCCE was a program which was about creating awareness with respect to COVID-19 and making nurturing a sensitive approach towards fellow beings during these unprecedented times.

There were seven activities in the RCCE program. The first of the seven activities were about 'wall messaging'. At first, none of the community people allowed us to paint their walls. We realized that there was a need to sensitize people before directly involving in wall painting activity. So, we started awareness drives through public announcements. Further after the completion of first and second cycle, people themselves came forward and started engaging and willingly gave permission to paint their walls with COVID awareness messages.

**In the beginning, we encountered a lot of challenges and strong opposition from the community. But by the end of December, I could observe the change in society, not just in the people's mindset with respect to COVID protocols but also being sensitive towards each other.**

In the 4<sup>th</sup> Cycle, the theme was COVID-19 Sensitive Nutrition. This helped me to engage with many women and understand their stories. One of them was a six-month pregnant woman who was supposed to visit hospital for her medication but was in fear of contracting the COVID-19 and was not ready to go to doctor. Through the RCCE training and my field experiences, I explained and instilled faith in her to visit the doctor and get medical check-up done, as there's no risk involved if proper precautions are ensured.

Through RCCE Program, I reached around 5000 people approximately. The program not only created community awareness but eased the load of economic burden during this pandemic, as the project provided with a monetary support for conducting of activities. At last, it has also enhanced my personality by building in confidence to engage with the community.

“Highlights .....  
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**Subhadra Patra, Cuttack district, Odisha**  
**COVID-19 Soochnapreneur**

This pandemic is a life-time experience and I pray that this situation never comes again. While working and making people aware through this Risk Communication and Community Engagement Programme I witnessed the pain of families unable to meet their basic needs as they were in financial crisis, every life was going through struggles. This whole experience has taught me to value life despite all the problems and to cherish and appreciate whatever we have in our life. The first two months were very challenging on the field as people were not ready to understand the sensitivity towards COVID 19 especially the Old Age People. Though i have completed all the activities but while implementing the Announcement activity I have faced a lot of challenges as I was implementing the activity by bicycle and simultaneously making people aware. One of the important and crucial activities I feel was Door to Door where meeting directly with the people added values and message becomes stronger and clear. Being RCCE Coordinator was one of the best experiences of my life, so far.



Subhadra, Centre Coordinator, Door-to-Door, Cuttack district, Odisha



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