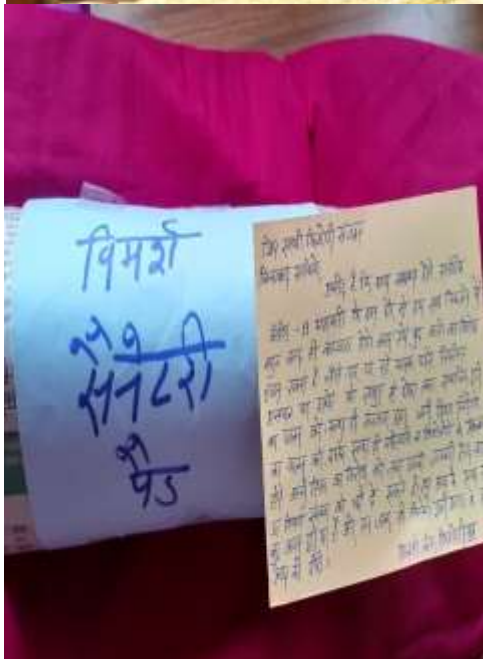




2020

Emergency Response to Pandemic Covid-19



AMAN & VIMARSH

UTTARAKHAND- INDIA

Emergency Response to Pandemic COVID-19

Background

The COVID - 19 has set foot in India as across the globe and it has severely impacted economically underprivileged, socially marginalized and folks became deprived of their opportunities of their earning sources. The unprecedented situation emerged due to the lockdown which was declared on March 25 2020 for three weeks to see the unforeseen circumstances the government has extended and kept continue the state of lockdown.

The life of the most vulnerable people such as widows, physically challenged, ill, infirm, elderly, wage worker and deprived migrant laborers were adversely affected. To see the vulnerability and plight of these most needy people of the mountains Aman and Vimarsh have decided to start aid work to bring relief in their lives by providing essential groceries and hygiene kit. The VOC has ensured the relief is provided to those with actual needs while maintaing strict adherence to social distancing norms. Volunteers have been educated on the risk factors and on the precautions to be taken during the distribution.

The relief and aid work was carried out with the generous support of TRAS. The solidarity of the TRAS with the people Himalaya at this time of great need is overwhelming.

Selection of the Beneficiaries-

Both organizations identified the most needy and vulnerable people which were severely affected by the Covid-19. With the support of head of local self governance, Aganwadi workers, VOC volunteers prepared the list of vulnerable people

Coordination with Administration-

AMAN and VIMARSH coordinated with district administration and nodal officer of district cell of disaster and shared the list of selected beneficiaries and had also shared the ideas of distribution of hygiene kit and dry ration kits. District administration appreciated the distribution of ration and hygiene kits to the most needy and underserved people of mountains of Uttarakhand (VOC) at this hour of crises.



In Nainital District, District administration provided two vehicles for transport of relief Material to VOC area, and representative of district administration also participated at the time of relief operation. In Almora district Sub divisional magistrate facilitated the support of local village administration to help in relief distribution work with VOC volunteers. The support of the three committed local administrative officers and their staff was instrumental in aid distribution work. Collaboration with district administration was valuable in proper distribution.

Volunteers and VOC team Help

Relief operation had executed by the help of volunteers and members of VOC team. Both organizations taken the permission and travel pass under the distribution of essential services and also followed the WHO's advisory and established rules of the government. Purchasing committee negotiated with the shopkeepers and convinced them the cause of relief work for the most needy. We got special discount on ration kits. This special discount has given us the opportunities to reach out to some more needy people. Volunteers helped in packaging and distribution.

Distribution of Relief Material



Emergency relief operation in covid-19 pandemic was operationalized in Betalghat block of Nainital district and Hawalbag block of Almora district. Organizations distributed the dry ration kits with the thought of “No one should have to sleep hungry “. One month dry ration kit comprised of items such as a combination of basic staples such as wheat flour, rice flour, two types of pulses, cooking oil, sugar, salt and spices etc. The relief kits were distributed to the 248 people having adversely affected in Covid-19 in Betalghat block of Nainital District and Hawalbag block of Almora District.

VIMARSH distributed the 134 Dry Ration kits to the most vulnerable families from the villages of Pangkatara, Sakdeena, Tadi, Simalkha, Khalad, Gairkhet, Talla Dhaniyakote, Basgaon, Maliyal Gaon, Jinouli, Soangaon, Gonedhar, Patoli, Batherkote, Pangkatara, Gairkhal.

AMAN distributed dry ration kits to 114 beneficiaries in these villages - Silani, Rikhe, Kesta, Vajgal, Gallibasura, Pathura, Rarkhila, Nakuta, Shreenagar, galiek and Dangikhola oof hawalbag block of Almora district.



In the health and hygiene terms women, girls and children are the biggest sufferer. Due to the lockdown, there is a huge crisis of sanitary napkins. To provide the hygiene alternatives, 400 hundred personal hygiene kits distributed to adolescent girls and women of VOC field area. VIMARSH provided the 200 hygiene kits including one sanitary pad, soap, toothpaste, toothbrush and mask to girls and women. In AMAN field area, 200 young girls listed and provided them hygiene kit including 2 sanitary pads, soaps and Mask.



Lockdown means no work opportunity which means no food for the daily earners but timely support with relief material has ameliorated the pathetic conditions of the deprived family.

Lachima Devi a homeless widow mother of three children hails from the marginalized sections of Rarkhila village of Almora district. Her husband was died of cardiac arrest in January 2020.

Poverty forced her two sons to work to make both ends meet for the family. The unfortunate and sad demise of their father made them to come back to perform the last rites of their father. The sudden demise of the head of the family has bereaved the family emotionally and financially. Both her children emotionally supported their mother for one month. Due to lockdown, their financial health has gone bad to worse. They have no work to support their family and all these unforeseen circumstances brought them on the verge of starvation.

The timely support provided by the TRAS to this destitute family has saved them from hunger and ameliorated their pathetic conditions.



Kiran Devi is the resident of the Silani Village of Almora district of Uttarakhand. She is living along with her husband and two kids. Her Village is situated on top of the hill. She has to climb 5 kilometers to reach her village from the paved road. Both husband and wife suffered from Tuberculosis due to the

poverty they couldn't go the doctor timely. When they visited the doctor it was quite late and doctor asked them for a proper medication, rest and balance diet.

With the medication they recovered but their poor financial condition forced them to work to support the family. The tuberculosis has impacted their physical health adversely and they started small and light daily work to support the family.

The COVID-19 pandemic has completely marginalized and deprived this family from all sources of wage and income. These unforeseen circumstances made them vulnerable and destitute.

When she received the relief material the tears were rolling down on her cheeks and sobbingly she said "this relief material is a life saving relief for my family. For nights I couldn't sleep with the thought that how would I feed my family".



Current scenario and challenges

The COVID -19 pandemic and lockdown have presented unprecedented, unforeseen and extraordinary circumstances before the masses. With the expatriation of the migrant laborers the situation has become quite challenging for aid workers, administrations and for the community.

The migrant laborers are returning to their villages in desperate and depressed conditions. The administration has laid the guidelines and asked them for home quarantine without any financial and other support. The hard reality of the villages is that houses in the mountains have generally two room's accommodation. These rooms are designed a single common entry and people use these two rooms for kitchen, living room and bed room. They have only one toilet for the family and common community tap for water. Downstairs they keep livestock. It's practically not feasible and possible to quarantine a person who is coming from red zone (highly infected area of COVID - 19).

People are paranoid with all these circumstances and living in constant fear. The migrant laborers are completely exhausted financially and physically to travel hundreds of kilometers on foot back to their villages. Here in mountains people are already under financial duress and emotional stress because of losing job opportunities due to the lockdown.

In some places community came forward to support the migrant labor with bedding to accommodate them for quarantine period in community centers and schools. For such a long quarantine period community doesn't have resources such as sanitation facility and food supply.

Losing jobs and lockdown is a double whammy for the community and migrant laborers who are returning to their villages. It has become a great challenge to sustain and stand with these circumstances.

The most needy beneficiaries whom we have supported with essential food items and hygiene kit for a month are again on the verge of starvation and destitute because of the extended lockdown. The women, children, elderly, ill, infirm are worst hit and are in dire need.

The children are psychologically stressed and infants are nutritiously deprived. We have also observed a significant increase in the incidences of domestic violence towards women and children. All these things are negatively impacting their lives.

As an organization and team our heart goes out to the needy and looking forward to express our solidarity with them at this hour of need.