

COVID-19 INTERVENTIONS

With the World Health Organization declaring Coronavirus as a global pandemic and the number of cases skyrocketing in various countries, the emergency situation calls for concerted efforts by the Government, corporates, developmental organizations and the society at large.

This pandemic is particularly challenging for India because of its population density and poverty, and stressed public health systems. Experts agree that the best way of dealing with this crisis is through preventative measures to combat the spread of corona virus but also to mitigate the impending economic and nutritional crisis.

The Economic Survey of 2017 reported, about 9 million workers in cities are working in other states, from where they can only go home by train or bus. These nine million must be the government's first responsibility.

Keeping them safe is not an act of charity. If even one in ten of the country's 139 million migrant workers gets home, and only one in a thousand of them is a carrier of the virus, then India's villages will be inundated with nearly 14,000 new focal points for its spread. If that happens we will learn the true meaning of that much overused word, pandemic."

Action Against Hunger is responding in a holistic manner, combining a preventive and curative approach to covid-19 and the impending nutrition crisis in both rural and urban areas in Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan.

A) ASSISTING AND SUPPORTING THE GOVERNMENT

1) DISTRIBUTE PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE) TO GOVERNMENT HOSPITALS

At the forefront of this fight against Covid-19 are our frontline health workers such as doctors, nurses and support staff who are working tirelessly every day to screen and treat affected people and probable cases. This puts our healthcare workforce at an extreme risk of contracting Covid -19. It is imperative that we support their efforts by providing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) kits to safeguard their health and protect them from contracting infections.

These PPE kits include: Face Mask, Goggles, Body Suit, Breathable surgeon Gown, gloves, shoe leggings, waste disposal bags, hand sanitizer

Number of kits required: 300,000 (3 months)

Cost of each kit*: 1200 INR

Total cost of kits: 36,00,00,000 INR

*cost per kit includes costs of items, logistics, insurance and human resource

2) TECHNICAL TRAINING AND AWARENESS BUILDING IN PUBLIC STRUCTURES

Action Against Hunger has been a constant support to the national government, as technical partners in the Poshan Abhiyan Jan Andolan roll out in Rajasthan, as well as contributing to the formation of the National Nutrition Mission Plan 2018. Action Against Hunger not only works at the national level but our impact trickles through the layers: from national to state, district and finally village level.

We will ensure the following activities to enable these services to re-start and continue:

- Advocate to Governments to start nutrition services including THR (Take Home Ration) services as per the guidelines issued by the WCD Department. Our advocacy will help ensure that the nutrition services remain an important part of essential services for the community.
- Sensitize 100 Panchayati Raj Institutions representatives at the village level on essential nutritional services, health and hygiene practices against Covid-19 and involve them in delivery of services in coordination with frontline workers
- Raise awareness on nutrition sensitive issues (clean water, sanitation, agriculture, health, livelihood etc.) by engaging vernacular media to focus on rural areas and publishing relevant articles in the coming weeks.

B) SUPPORTING THE COMMUNITY TO MITIGATE THE EFFECT OF CORONA VIRUS

An unfortunate consequence of the necessary lockdown in India has been instability of nutrition availability to vulnerable families. Poor urban and rural families need consistent wholesome nutrition to recover, remain healthy and not fall prey possibly fatal health risks. The Government is working locally to keep supplying Take Home Ration (THR) to these families as incomes diminish and migrating families are forced back to rural areas with no earning opportunities. However, it may not be enough.

1) PROVIDE COUNSELING SUPPORT TO HIGH RISK FAMILIES

Working with more than 6000 families a year, Action Against Hunger has collected their phone numbers and continues weekly calls with all the program participants. During these calls, families are provided with emotional support concerning the current crisis but are also receive information on hygiene habits, myth busters on Covid-19 and guidance on what to do in case of high-risk pregnancies, malnourished children and nutritional advice.

2) DISTRIBUTE HYGIENE KITS AND FOOD BASKETS TO THE COMMUNITY

The hygiene kit includes Soaps for handwashing, clothes and utensils, sanitizers and nail cutters

The food basket includes: 2 kg Cracked Wheat (Daliya), 5kg Rice, 2kg Semolina (Suji), 1kg Ground Nuts (dana), 3kg Green Gram (Mung Pulses), 1kg Sugar, 1kg Jaggery, and 1.5 kg Oil

Number of kits and baskets required 25,000

Cost of Hygiene kits: 500 INR

Cost of Food baskets*: 1000 INR

Total cost: 3,75,00,000 INR

*cost per kit includes costs of items, logistics, insurance and human resource

Why Action Against Hunger?

- 40 years of expertise on nutrition and in emergencies including supporting local Governments for epidemics such as Ebola.
- Over 190 full time on ground staff with direct access to vulnerable families.
- Direct working contact with public governing institutions from Panchayati Raj Institutions to the National Consortiums on Nutrition.
- Supporting the State Governments in Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan.