

Pradhan



Supporting
Administration in

COVID-19 Relief Response

April-June 2020

Our mode of engaging and strategizing during the Pandemic was a diversion from the usual way of working which has been largely driven by sector specific projects and their mandates. There was little or no time to brainstorm or prepare. Yet, PRADAN delivered.

“This Pandemic was not a project with log frames, milestones and deliverable. In COVID-19 we framed our own project indicators and managed to deliver.”

- PRADAN

“State administration realized that the current situation needs extra hands and the CSOs were making these available. Ultimately, the state [BDO] has to do the work. The extra hands were a huge opportunity.”

- BDO, Basia, Jharkhand

“Being the President of the Federation, it’s my responsibility to support the administration during this crisis time. I stepped out and helped them to distribute ration and safety equipment to the vulnerable people.”

- President, Nari Shakti Mahila Sangh, Abu Road, Rajasthan

The lockdown curtailed movement that was necessary for small-marginalised farmers to sell their harvested crops. At another level, several ultra-poor or the very vulnerable families became visible.

Rumours, information asymmetry and misinformation, coupled with a complete ban on mobility aggravated the situation further. Eventually, the villages saw a spurt of returning migrants from the cities. That these returning migrants could potentially be carriers of the Coronavirus led to undesirable social behaviour of exclusion and avoidance.

CSOs were directed by the NITI Aayog, to coordinate and work closely with state, district and block administrations to ensure that ‘no one goes without shelter and food.’

Major interventions to support administration during COVID-19 relief work



16,097 hamlets

Awareness Generation about the Pandemic and Safety measures



5,529

Surveillance of returning migrant labourers through community cadres



334

Helping cadres set-up Community Kitchen



175

Supporting Quarantine Centres



1,04,103

Distribution of Ration among vulnerable families



1,36,201

Distribution of Safety kits to community and line workers

The Way Forward

Expanding the Safety Net to cover the Ultra-poor: identifying, mapping and visibilizing this segment through linkages with bank accounts, ration cards, MGNREGS job cards and other such documentation to avail state benefits

1

Public Health: Moving beyond awareness on safety and hygiene issues, the need for behavioural change amongst communities, bridging gaps in vaccinations and other medicines, especially for the ultra-poor, women and children while ensuring food and nutritional security is an emerging imperative.

2

Enhancing Employment through MGNREGS: PRADAN has worked extensively with state and district administrations to provide employment to not just resident rural workforce, but also to the numerous returning migrants. Not only have the teams engaged with the administrations to open up new and enhanced number of works, while connecting numerous job card holders to these works, in many states, teams are actively engaged in advocating policy changes in making MGNREGS more responsive and context specific. For instance, we are advocating 100 – 200 days work per household.

3

Addressing the needs of the Returning Migrants: Mapping of skills-sets with industries and sectors while also identifying alternative livelihood options in villages is the need of the hour. PRADAN is exploring self-employment opportunities whereby it plans to groom and promote 10,000 such youth as Entrepreneurs or Self-employed (YSE).


4

Enhancing and Strengthening Sustainable Agriculture Economies: PRADAN will expand its engagement with the FPOs (100 FPOs) or similar organised farmer groups to support agriculture economies. Experiments such as 'food on wheels' and 'seeds on wheels' needs to be improved further for creating a direct pick-up facility from the farm with direct linkages to the final consumer. Shift from the current chemical-based agriculture to adopting sustainable eco-friendly agriculture practices.

5

Working with Tribal Population on Forest Based Economies: There are schemes under TRIFED for MSP of forest produce (Pradhan Mantri Vandhan Yojana) however, the access is not very smooth due to information deficit and other issues. The Village Organisations or similar collectives formed by SHGs could be supported for aggregation and produce selling to the TRIFED channels so that forest produce gatherers have better and fair price realisation.

6



“During this crucial time, we engaged with PRADAN’s team and surveyed the areas to assess the ground realities. PRADAN’s team through their focused lens have identified vulnerable families and together we supported 690 families.”

- - Member of Legislative Assembly, Bankura, West Bengal

“The pandemic necessitated a multi-dimensional response. It called for a re-orientation of PRADAN’s way of thinking, working and managing the challenge. We realised that collaboration was no longer a choice. PRADAN had to re-imagine itself to work in a campaign mode with the local administration.”

- PRADAN

“We had to work shoulder to shoulder with the Police during these trying times and we don’t fear the administration or the police. *Pehlae bhi thana mein chai aur thanda piya hai abhi bhi achhe se kaam kiye. Rishta pehlae sae hai.*”

- Federation member, Mahila Vikas Mandal, Basia, Jharkhand

