

RESPONSE BY TORPA RURAL DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY FOR WOMEN

MAY/ JUNE 2020



Community Helps Community

COVID-19

Ever since the lockdown began stories of migrant workers have haunted the country. These stories of suffering and hardship have become the face of the coronavirus disease in India's megacities. Migrant workers across the country made the punishing journey from big cities to small towns and villages. The absence of basic amenities, the inability to feed their children without ration cards of the particular geography they were locked down in, and the lack of a security net to protect themselves from Covid-19 made them desperate. Men, women and children on highway after highway, walking on foot, unwilling or unable to wait any longer for trains and buses. Or chasing trucks with folded hands, begging for a ride, offering anything the driver wanted in exchange.

In this update we share with you some heartwarming stories of our relief work in Torpa and Rania Block of Khunti district, Jharkhand.

Family spent 2 nights and 2 days under a tree at Koitoli village Rania block



Rode Topno and his family

Three years ago Rode Topno left his Poze village in Kamdara Block to work in a brick kiln in W. Bengal. On 17th May 2020 he returned with his family - wife and 3 small children - to Poze village. The community did not allow Rode Topno to enter the village so he took his family to his in-laws house at Koitoli, Rania Block. The in-laws have a small house and Rode Topno knew that he first had to be tested. His family tested negative. Rode Topno chose to live in isolation 2kms away from the village under a tree. TRDSW intervened and reported the information to the BDO, Rania Block, who took prompt action. He personally accompanied the family in his vehicle and handed over the case to the health care official at Kamdara Block.

Awareness programs

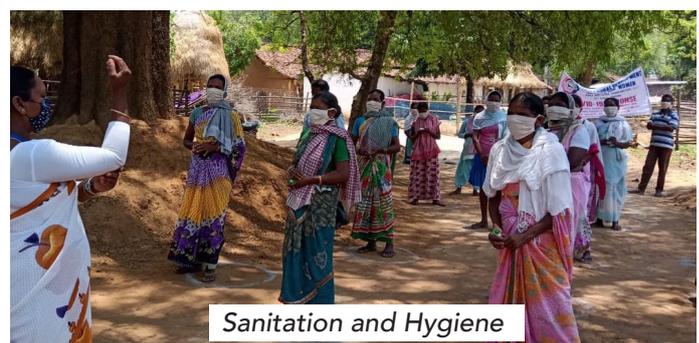
During the month of May 2020 the TRDSW team worked for the prevention of COVID-19. The team covered 26 villages in Torpa and 24 villages in Rania in order to create awareness about the pandemic crisis: the need to maintain social distancing, demonstration on washing of hands, how to wear a mask, when to use a mask, easy method of making your own reusable mask and preparation of herbal sanitizer.



TRDSW Awareness Banner



Awareness Drive



Sanitation and Hygiene

TRDSW creates awareness to combat stigma

There are 10 families at Digri Badkatoli Rania block, Khatanga Panchayat. Vimal Horo worked as a hired labourer digging tunnels in the state of Karnataka. There are 7 members in the family whom he has to take care of. So he chose to earn a livelihood in the city.



Meeting to address stigma

Vimal Horo alongwith 17 other migrant workers hired a private vehicle for Rs 2,10,000 and set out on 17th May 2020 They arrived in Digri badkatoli Rania block after a 4 day journey. (2 days without any food)

The hired vehicle was intercepted by the police and the group was dropped at Marcha mode around 12kms away from Vimal Topno's village. Vimal was sent to Rania for testing and the others were sent to their respective villages in a packed vehicle. Vimal Horo tested negative and he was told to be isolated in the village itself in a room around 2kms from his family.

At night he broke the lockdown rules and he visited his family. The next day, the community called an emergency meeting and decided to exclude the entire (COVID-19) family from the common spaces in the village including filling drinking water from the common handpump. TRDSW intervened with an awareness drive to combat stigma, explained the myths and facts of COVID-19, held an interactive discussion with the community alongwith the mukhiya and asked the community to strictly maintain the government guidelines. There are 10 families at Digri Badkatoli, Rania block, Khatanga panchayat. Around 42 community members attended the meeting and jointly agreed to resolve the issue.



Mukhiya joins awareness drive

Stitching Reusable Masks

Seteng Guria, Jagrani Topno, Sangeeta Topno, Prabhawati Devi, Shobita Minj, Stella Horo and Anita Guria have stitched 2400 masks during May 2020. The inputs were provided by TRDSW. The masks were used for distribution in the awareness drives conducted in Torpa and Rania.



Reusable cloth masks

Providing a cooked meal to the vulnerable families

There are backward uneducated munda speaking hamlets, with poor sanitation and hygiene – an isolated community who live in the hills. They earn their daily living by catching fish and selling forest produce like mushrooms, mahua etc. in the local market.



Meal provided for the elderly

Due to the extended lockdown and no local market this vulnerable community had very little to eat. TRDSW staff with support from community volunteers cooked and provided food to 500 persons including children in 6 hamlets in Rania Block.



Meal for children and women

Distribution of dry ration kits



Dry Ration Kit for widows

Dry ration kits were provided to 140 households. Before the distribution, a survey was conducted to identify needy families especially the handicapped and the elderly. Simultaneously data was being captured of migrants who have returned and are currently isolated in quarantine centres and who may soon need rations.

Updating the District administration

Daily reporting on a WhatsApp group of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) created by the district administration and weekly online reporting to the central administration have been our accountability to the government during the lockdown period.

Restoring livelihoods through MGNREGS



Trench-Cum-Bund (TCB)

The program team identified those agricomunity members that are willing to avail the rights and entitlements through trench-cum-bund (TCB), fruit plantation, etc. TRDSW continues to intervene, support and follow up the community members and the migrants after quarantine, in order to restore livelihoods and to effectively engage the community.



Community Helps Community



Social distancing



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Sanitation and hygiene for children



Sanitation and hygiene for children and women



Awareness on social distancing



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How to make and use a mask



Awareness on following government guidelines for COVID-19



Support for the elderly