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NEWSLETTER AUGUST 2020



Dear Friends,

The COVID-19 situation is worsening with rising cases and fatalities in the country. This comes with despairing stories of migrant workers trapped without work in cities or in their villages, from the daily news and rapid assessment reports.

Frontline workers around the world have taken the mammoth responsibility of caring for people and saving lives. We applaud their heroic efforts, and remain grateful to them. Amidst the gloom and uncertainties, we dedicate this newsletter to the **Corona Bravehearts** of MC!

Each person we introduce to you here, and many more (behind the scenes), have responded to the call of humanity, for supporting each other during a very difficult period.

MC continues to remain in touch with children, through a responsive parenting programme, running remotely. We are distributing special nutrition, and early education materials to all children, periodically, as we wait for crèches to reopen.

Please come forward to know more about our redesigned plans and activities. Your support means a lot to the entire MC community.

Donate to MC

Your donations will go a long way in sustaining MC's programmes during this difficult period



Volunteer with us

MC has a long tradition of volunteer engagement. Join us today for a rewarding and life changing experience!



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Best wishes,

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Sumitra Mishra
Executive Director

MC's CORONA BRAVEHEARTS

The ongoing struggle of a parent



Rajesh's family, consisting of his wife, and an eight-year-old daughter and two-year-old son, depend on his income for their survival. Rajesh works at a construction site in Gurgaon and lives with his family in a labour camp. He had never thought that they would have to face such a crisis. While the pandemic was a real threat, starvation was an immediate, and even bigger threat.

Rajesh had a couple of thousand rupees when the lockdown was announced. He bought some food provisions from the nearest *kirana* shop and was only left with a few hundred rupees to last an indeterminate period. Unable to meet the nutritional needs of two growing children, they didn't know where their next meal was coming from. Relief aid became their sole source of survival during this time. The family received dry rations and cooked meals from MC and other relief groups.

"I remember staying up at night, hoping tomorrow will be better. I am glad no one has suffered corona infection. But I will not lie; the pandemic pushed us to starvation. I was here to work, and take care of my family, and now there is no work," Rajesh shared.

Rajesh and his wife followed daily instructions of MC's creche *didi* to play with their children and do learning activities together. Rajesh also spent hours meeting other families to assess their food needs, supporting in the distribution, and painstakingly listing the families covered.

A journey taken together

Sapna, a creche worker with MC for over five years, and stationed at the Bawana-6 construction site centre in Delhi, recounts her challenging and yet fulfilling experience of the COVID-19 lockdown. "MC was already preparing safety measures for the centres before the lockdown was announced, trying to ensure that children's daily learning wasn't interrupted. I am glad we had some time to prepare ourselves for this new normal, especially the ones like me, who aren't technologically adept," Sapna informs.



Sapna stays connected with the families, to make sure the nutritional and developmental needs of each child is taken care of. While it involved a period of adjustment and a fair amount of counselling from Sapna, as parents themselves were in difficult situations, they welcomed the relief kits (banana, *anaj mishran*, *channa*, rice and *dal* and milk) provided for children. Sapna assured parents that the needs

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Both Sapna and the parents went on a shared journey of navigating and learning in these difficult circumstances, and Sapna now proudly shares the videos parents send her of their children engaged in learning activities. "I miss my creche children, I am responsible for 15 children from my centre and try to stay apprised of all their conditions. None of these children have faced a crisis in this time, and I thank the parents for their cooperation in such trying times," shares Sapna.

"No help is small help."



Tough crises demand relentless action. Govind, a security guard at a construction site that is home to 300 families, undertook many such actions. Trying to adopt to the new restrictions in place, Govind devoted all of his hours caring for the needs and safety of these families, especially their young children. He kept a check on the health of the families residing on site.

Govind ensured that the relief kits being supplied to the site were sanitised, social distancing was maintained, and that the process went without a hitch, each time relief distribution took place. The drives took place regularly aided by the builder and other NGOs. Govind ensured the safety of aid workers and kept a strict vigil on the entry and exits.

"Fear of losing our family due to hunger and disease can make us blind to the pain of others, but it is important for all of us to care for each other, especially in trying times like these. It was a tough job, but regular aid helped the situation a lot, and I am happy to do my bit in contributing to this aid. No help is small help."

A true leader emerges!

Acting as a true leader of her community group in Trilokpuri, Delhi, Sakuntala cared for each family in her community personally and made sure none of them were left behind in receiving aid by going door-to-door and making sure that they received the dry ration kits.

She made her community aware of the looming and very real threat of the virus and urged all the members to sanitise their hands, use masks and keep their homes clean. She also advised members to consult staff at PHC or *Mohalla Clinics* in the area if they noticed any COVID-19 symptoms. She extended her help in spreading awareness of all the programmes the government launched to help those whose livelihood was affected by the pandemic.



"I believe people who lost jobs or income should get relief from the government schemes soon. People are suffering. But they have also become alert and responsible, and are trying to make ends meet. The best possible way to combat this pandemic is in believing our shared sense of *insaaniyat* (humanity)," says Sakuntala.

25 years of pursuing a single mission

Sunita Rawat, a Project Leader at MC, stood as a pillar for her entire team and for the families she was responsible for during this period. Having 25 years of field experience, Sunita knew how difficult this time

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She worked almost 24-hours days herself, and encouraged her team to overcome every logistical obstacle so that the needs of the families could be met. “I understand the immense responsibility of working with children, and I cannot ever neglect that. My only concern was to stay in touch with the families. I am grateful that they trust us and believe in us. I hope the crèches open soon and all of us are united,” says Sunita.

A team is always a sum of its parts

Disaster response operations require strong logistics and supply chain planning to ensure timely relief reaches the most vulnerable families. The success of MC’s relief drives, depended on an integral team member - Hari Krishan a Programme Officer. Hari left no stones unturned while arranging the relief kits from genuine suppliers, when everything was under lockdown, and making sure they reached every site that needed it.

Hari arranged transport, and permission for the vehicles to move, and made sure that proper sanitisation methods were followed while packing the relief kits. Several sites in Delhi Noida, Gurgaon, Mohali, and Patna received aid smoothly, despite many last-minute hiccups, thanks to Hari.



“I have always tried to uphold MC’s vision, but when the lockdown was announced, I knew it was the time to really step up. I tried to operate in a manner that allowed help to reach anyone who was suffering and motivated everyone to act in the same way. The pandemic might be temporary, but the call to serve is forever,” added Hari.

MORE COVID-19 RELIEF RESOURCES

Read about MC’s COVID-19 Relief Report [here](#).

To support nutrition, education, COVID prevention activities, donate [here](#).



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