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In this newsletter we've included a few of the many news stories related to India this week, updates from our partners, and news of our onging Solidarity Appeal for communities suffering from the latest onslaught of Covid-19 related hardships. Our appeal has remained open to donations.  We thank you for your ongoing interest and support.  Warm wishes from all of us at AVI | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | Website, calendar  Description automatically generated | | As we all have been witnessing, the crisis in India is deepening and spreading. The second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic is affecting almost two-thirds of the population directly or indirectly. This second wave comes on the back of widespread food and financial insecurity amongst the poorest households in India. According to an estimate (by the Indian Institute of Technology), the pandemic may cause serious hunger, unemployment and medical emergencies this year.   The situation is precarious in extremely polluted cities like New Delhi where many people have died, mostly due to lack of oxygen and access to timely treatment. Lockdowns have been imposed in the States of New Delhi, Karnataka, and in many parts of Maharashtra, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Gujarat. As we saw with the first lockdown, thousands of migrant workers have again started to return to their home villages. The so far uncontrollable spread of Covid-19 is reaching the already vulnerable communities in rural India, home to 800 million Indians.   We have been in touch with our partners in India and they are expecting the coming weeks to get much worse. They continue to work tirelessly to support the communities they work with and to strengthen community, humanity, and solidarity.   We continue to offer support to our partners and raise funds through our solidarity appeal which we started at the beginning of the pandemic in 2020. If you want to offer your support, you can do so [here](https://actionvillageindia.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f086f4b042063bfab99786fc4&id=464c7a2810&e=85eff3d211). Thank you.   **Updates directly from partners**   **ASSEFA, Tamil Nadu** The situation in Tamil Nadu is getting from bad to worse and nearly 16,000 people are getting affected by coronavirus every day. The state government and civil societies are taking all measures to control the spreading of the virus. These include imposing a lockdown, either partially or fully, depending upon the status of the areas, strengthening hospital infrastructure and facilities to treat the covid patients and increasing the vaccination drive. To date, vaccinations have been carried out for doctors, nurses and other frontline workers, elderly people and now, above 45 years old. The people are gripped with uncertainty and do not know what to do.   ASSEFA is planning to work with local panchayat (which has a minimum population of 5,000), with the following actions:   * Awareness creation amongst the public on preventive measures against covid 19 – wearing masks, hand washing, social distancing and vaccination. * Strengthen primary Health Centres’ (PHCs) campus: Staff and materials are available in PHCs, but the resources are limited. It is proposed to fill up the gaps to make the PHCs congenial to the patients with facilities such as availability of safe drinking water, medical waste disposal, wheelchairs, special facilities for people living with a disability, planting tree crops, fencing, etc. * Support sanitation workers with the supply of preventive kits – masks, sanitisers, sterilised cover coats and other essential supplies. * Supply of food pack materials. * Provide safe drinking water. * Promotion of tree crops in the community lands as well as in interested farmers land to create a healthy environment.   **CRUSADE, Tamil Nadu** Although the infection rate is increasing in Tiruvallur district where CRUSADE is operating, the rise is visible and more pronounced in urban locations than in interior villages, and District hospitals are overcrowded with increasing cases. The field staff noticed people having a mild fever in several villages, but it is managed at home with home remedies and paracetamol without seeking hospitalisation. The State Government is looking into lockdowns for the most affected states. In case the district is subjected to a lockdown, there will be loss of employment as most of them are working in an unorganised sector. The loss in nutrition may come as a consequence of people losing their jobs and/or being pushed into lower income brackets. It is clear that households have not had a chance to rebuild after the first wave, and with many completely exhausting their savings and facing massive debt, they are bound to be more severely hit in the current wave than last year. CRUSADE is directly working with around 7400 families which include Women SHG members, elderly women and people living with a disability. Last year we identified 2500 families for relief work which included some outside the project villages who were identified by Panchayats. This time around, CRUSADE is looking to provide one kg each of two types of pulses, oil, jaggery and ragi flour to 2000 families, test the community for fever and oxygen levels to limit the spread of Covid, and provide health supplements and masks.  **Ekta Parishad, Nationwide** As one of the largest people's movement, Ekta Parishad is looking to initiate emergency relief operations in the worse affected areas and assist the poorest people. Ekta Parishad has its extensive organisational and operational presence in about 12 thousand villages across 17 states of India. Highly trained field activists and volunteers are capable to carry relief operations efficiently. The previous experiences of such relief operations were highly appreciated by people and the State. The relief will focus on:  1. Ensure food materials to the poorest of poor people and protect them from hunger or physical illness that emerged after food shortages:   * our strategic focuses are destitute, old aged, physically challenged, single women, tribal, dalit, fisher folks, nomads etc. * other migrant workers who were unable to earn anything during migration. * special nutritional supplements to pregnant and lactating women (selected cases). * special assistance to the remotest villages and poorest people who are unable to get any support from State.   2. Ensure emergency medical assistance to the poor people:   * provide emergency Ambulance services to the Covid affected people (especially in the remote locations/rural areas). * provide direct financial assistance for Vaccine and Oxygen Cylinders (through Government and private hospitals) for emergency treatment (especially for the poorest people). * provide small financial assistance to Ekta Parishad's frontline activists in case of medical treatment for themselves (only in selected cases). * distribute double-coated cotton masks to everyone.   **EquiDiversity Foundation (EDF), West Bengal** Anindita from EquiDiversity shares the following message with us: ‘‘We, at Equidiversity Foundation, are all free from the virus for the moment but many of our close family members are down with the virus. We are feeling a little overwhelmed at the moment.  Kolkata is testing positive in massive numbers and it is only a matter of days that the health system will collapse. Our election results will come out on 2nd May and only then can we expect our local government to become visible. We also expect a lockdown soon’’.  EquiDiversity is focussing their work on:   * Work with the government health team (BMOH) at the Block level for vaccination drives. EDF will be able to make people aware, mobilise the community and support the health team on the days of the campaign for refreshments. * Provide one-month dry rations for families with covid positive patients and those who will be hit hard due to the lockdown. * Revival and strengthening of the Covid Isolation Centre in Sreenarayanpur Purnachandrapur Gram Panchayat, Pathar Protima. * Nutrition garden programme, agriculture/horticulture seed and sapling distribution for the affected families. * Psycho-social support to women, children, youth and EDF team to deal with the calamity and strengthen resilience- telephone connection support.   **NBJK, Jharkhand and Bihar** The second wave of Covid-19 in India is much worse than it was in the 1st wave in 2020. The infection rate and death rate are much higher. There are queues in the crematoriums. People have to wait for 8 to 16 hours to be able to do their rituals – which was never heard of before. The situation in Jharkhand is the same.   The worst part is that there are no hospital beds available for most of the new patients coming in, there is a great scarcity of oxygen, there are long queues in medicine shops, and many desired medicines and life-saving medical equipment are not available in the local market.  The coronavirus is spreading very fast and most of the families in town and villages are getting affected. It is again the poor who will suffer the most, as they are not able to purchase the required medicines nor are able to afford oximeter and steam-inhalers.  NBJK is providing the following relief:   * NBJK has turned one ward in their eye hospital into a Covid ward where they will provide 30 beds for Covid patients. Twenty of them will be provided with oxygen. * An emergency pool of oximeters, steam-inhalers, nebulizers, and Oxygen Cylinder/ concentrators will be made available for the patients in the Hazaribagh district. Through newspapers and other communication tools, Covid-patients from marginalised backgrounds will learn of these services and encouraged to make use of them for urgent situations. * Support to Covid patients who can’t afford care will be given through mobilising essential medicine kits required for the treatment of Covid. These will be acquired from manufacturers/stockists as they are not available in local medicine shops or in government Community health centres or public health centres. * Leaflets in the local language will be printed and distributed with useful telephone numbers and information about safety against Covid and steps to take for immediate relief at home or whether to have a consultation with doctors online and, in serious conditions, to go to hospital. * To provide PPE Kits, hand-sanitisers, general masks, oxygen masks and other essential materials to health workers in need and to patients as per their needs.   **RCDC, Odisha** Kailash from RCDC shares the following message with us: ‘‘We have also been affected. Five of our office staff have recovered. Two are still suffering, one from the field and the other from the head office. Our field activities have been affected. Currently there is night curfew everywhere. Weekend shutdowns have been enforced in 10 districts, and in towns of every district. Our Head Office and Field Offices are now facing these restrictions. There are plans to have containment zones in the hotspots. A lockdown cannot be ruled out.  As the media is constantly harping on the crisis people are getting affected by the news. This has accentuated the panic. Our communities are fearful of their fate. The hospitals are full and getting a bed is beyond difficult. The patients are lying on the floor. The situation is grim.  Our staff have cooperated with the administration in the first wave and are getting ready to help again. The Government is in the process of reopening the temporary medical centres. As the migrants start returning the State's burden will increase. If the situation worsens our staff will again be engaged in awareness and relief activities. They will also look after the temporary medical centres as well as look after the needs of the incoming migrants.  In Balangir and Nabarangpur we are in the process of setting up herbal gardens. In Nabarangpur we are working with the local herbalists. We are also looking at strengthening nutrition gardens and exploring possibilities of having counselors to help the worsening mental disorders we observed during the first lockdown.’’  RCDC’s work will focus on:   * Relief and awareness activities. * Providing mask and sanitiser kits, and if lockdowns are imposed, provide personal hygiene kits to women. * Looking after the needs of the elderly and disabled. * Arranging treatment and hospital admission for the sick. * Counselling those affected by disease and livelihood impairment/ loss. * Integrating government schemes and programmes that seek to address the needs of people under lockdown. * Guiding the in-country migrants and looking after their testing and quarantine needs. * Ensuring livelihoods options for in-country migrants. * Setting up herbal gardens and engaging with local herbalists. * Strengthening home-based nutrition gardens. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | [**Please Donate to the Solidarity Appeal**](https://actionvillageindia.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f086f4b042063bfab99786fc4&id=b0c3169799&e=85eff3d211) | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | A picture containing text, person  Description automatically generated | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | A selection of news items related to the Covid-19 crisis in India:   * [India Covid-19: Deadly second wave spreads from cities to small towns](https://actionvillageindia.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f086f4b042063bfab99786fc4&id=333896d554&e=85eff3d211) * [Why India's Covid crisis matters to the whole world](https://actionvillageindia.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f086f4b042063bfab99786fc4&id=d94f349968&e=85eff3d211) * [COVID-19: India's coronavirus crisis in 10 stark photographs](https://actionvillageindia.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f086f4b042063bfab99786fc4&id=7bf84c450d&e=85eff3d211) * [As India helped others, so must we in their time of need, says Prince Charles in Covid-aid appeal](https://actionvillageindia.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f086f4b042063bfab99786fc4&id=f31656992e&e=85eff3d211) * [UK sends India oxygen concentrators and ventilators – but no Covid vaccines](https://actionvillageindia.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f086f4b042063bfab99786fc4&id=3af61b0060&e=85eff3d211) * [Covid-19: UK Indians rally to help during Covid crisis](https://actionvillageindia.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f086f4b042063bfab99786fc4&id=f235abe434&e=85eff3d211) | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | A picture containing person  Description automatically generated | |  | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **New Products in the AVI Ethical Gift Shop**  AVI had a plan to launch a Spring Shop full of new and exciting products from talented artisans in India.  However, due to the current Covid-19 crisis and lockdowns, we were unable to get most of the products we'd ordered from India.  We hope to get them soon and in the meantime here are a few new things now available in the AVI ethical gift shop.  Have a look at our new hand block printed table cloths and napkins from Ekta Parishad and our new bunting made from recycled sari material. | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | [Background pattern  Description automatically generated](https://actionvillageindia.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f086f4b042063bfab99786fc4&id=86140abc78&e=85eff3d211) |  |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | [A picture containing indoor  Description automatically generated](https://actionvillageindia.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f086f4b042063bfab99786fc4&id=632b48b82d&e=85eff3d211) | | Have a look at how our hand block printed table cloths and napkins are made. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | [**Go to the AVI Gift Shop**](https://actionvillageindia.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f086f4b042063bfab99786fc4&id=3aeba8a997&e=85eff3d211) | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | A picture containing vegetable  Description automatically generated | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | [**Curry Night raising money for the Solidarity Appeal**](https://actionvillageindia.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f086f4b042063bfab99786fc4&id=ef7ccdb63f&e=85eff3d211)  Join our fundraiser, Simon, for a night of cooking, good food and a quiz about India. Online and free to attend (with a suggested donation). Simon hopes this will be a fun way to raise some support to help rural families to eat now and in the future.  Read more and join at [https://currynight.org/](https://actionvillageindia.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f086f4b042063bfab99786fc4&id=48d2b6d355&e=85eff3d211) | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | [**Virtual London Marathon - Looking for Runners!**](mailto:info@actionvillageindia.org.uk?subject=Running%20for%20AVI!)  AVI has 2 places available in the Virtual London Marathon on Sunday 3th October 2021. We are looking for runners to fundraise a minimum of £250 per place. The virtual marathon is 26.2 miles to be completed over a 24 hour period on Sunday 3rd October 2021, wherever you might be in the world. Please get in touch if you are interested in supporting us. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | Thank you for reading the Action Village India newsletter. Take care and we hope to be in touch with you soon.    Warm wishes, Action Village India | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | [**Please Donate to the Solidarity Appeal**](https://actionvillageindia.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f086f4b042063bfab99786fc4&id=d0be7d596b&e=85eff3d211) | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | [View this email in your browser](https://mailchi.mp/c924d98e0f37/april2021?e=85eff3d211) | | | | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | [Logo  Description automatically generated](https://actionvillageindia.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f086f4b042063bfab99786fc4&id=6022f83838&e=85eff3d211) | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | [Twitter](https://actionvillageindia.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f086f4b042063bfab99786fc4&id=59ed9c63c4&e=85eff3d211) | | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | [Facebook](https://actionvillageindia.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f086f4b042063bfab99786fc4&id=ed512fbf9a&e=85eff3d211) | | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | [Instagram](https://actionvillageindia.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f086f4b042063bfab99786fc4&id=5d4e9a12dd&e=85eff3d211) | | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | [Website](https://actionvillageindia.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f086f4b042063bfab99786fc4&id=8f3550afe6&e=85eff3d211) | | | | | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | *Copyright © Action Village India, All rights reserved.*  **Our mailing address is:** 5 Balls Pond Road, London N1 4AX  Want to change how you receive these emails? 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