

# WOTR Responds to COVID-19 Pandemic

(Updated till April 30, 2020)

*Building capacities and providing relief across rural India*



For more information about our work and to support us contact [info@wotr.org](mailto:info@wotr.org)



## **CONTEXT**

As of May 8, 2020 India has over 56,000 confirmed COVID-19 cases with over 1,800 deaths. Since the time of the first lockdown in March 2020, the severity of the COVID-19 pandemic has only grown, both in intensity and in spread across the country. The most vulnerable sections of society like migrant workers, children, women, the elderly and the very poor are the worst affected. The fact that every state in the country has its own strategy in dealing with COVID-19 has made matters more challenging. However, despite all the difficulties, WOTR is doing all that it can to support the rural communities in our project areas. A description of our strategy is given below.

## **WOTR's STRATEGY:**

At present, there are five main challenges faced by rural communities. These are: firstly, the lack of reliable and correct information, secondly, food security and food supply, thirdly, supply of and access to protective masks, fourthly, effective coordination between government authorities and NGOs, and fifthly, the lack of labour and livelihoods in the villages. WOTR's efforts are therefore aimed at tackling the above challenges, with the support of our donors. WOTR's geographical spread of the COVID-19 related work is given below across 7 states of India. The figures of households in the table below refers to the total households we have reached as of April 30, 2020.

<b>States</b>	<b>Districts</b>	<b>Blocks</b>	<b>Total Villages</b>	<b>Total households (HHs)</b>
7	25	39	645	1,21,476

## Highlights of WOTR's work

### A.) COMMUNICATION & AWARENESS CREATION

The first step in any effort to tackle the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic is to provide timely and correct information and dispel myths and miscommunication. At WOTR, we have provided this information in a wide variety of ways: from our Wasundhara Sevikas conducting awareness campaigns on social distancing and correct hand washing techniques, to writing messages on walls, to producing communication outputs in the local language for our field staff and the communities.

In terms of the extent of our outreach, we have conducted 1,962 awareness and communication sessions, reaching 1,42,565 people across the 7 states we work in.

Photos of our efforts are given below:



*Paintings of messages on walls in Rayagada district, Odisha urging people to stay at home and take all precautions against the COVID-19 pandemic.*



*An awareness session being carried out in Ahmednagar district, Maharashtra on the importance of correct handwashing techniques.*

## **B.) MASKS DISTRIBUTION AND PREPARATION**

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One of the key components of the fight against the COVID19 pandemic is the distribution of masks to the affected communities. This mask distribution is happening across all our states, and our Self-Help Groups as well as the local community are involved in the sewing and production of these masks as well.

Till date, across the different states, we have prepared 64,675 masks, distributed masks to 66,115 people and also trained 244 tailors in mask making.



*Mask preparation going in full swing in the villages of Khunti district, Jharkhand.*



*WOTR has distributed masks in the villages of Osmanabad district, Maharashtra. A photo of some of the beneficiaries is given above.*

### C.) FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION

A major challenge in the current times is the lockdown's impact on food security and nutrition. The most vulnerable sections of the rural communities, in particular, struggle to get even essential food items like milk, fruits, salt and spices. WOTR and the WOTR group is currently working to ensure that the food security in our project areas is maintained to the extent we can. Our efforts include: first, distributing food packets through our Mahila Pravartaks or women Self-Help Groups (SHGs), second, distributing meals to migrant workers stranded without any recourse to food, third, kitchen gardens which supply vegetables to the needy families and fourth, multi-layer farming.

In terms of our outreach, we currently have 8,995 kitchen gardens, 396 multi-layer farms, benefitting 23,719 households. Besides this, we have also distributed grocery kits to 2,540 households and sanitisation kits to 26, 646 households. We have facilitated PDS and rations to 11,421 households.



*Food supplies being handed over to the needy, in Ahmednagar district, Maharashtra*



*Essential food items being distributed in Mandla, Madhya Pradesh.*

## D.) EMPLOYMENT GENERATION

In the current times, employment generation is a key need of the rural communities. To that end, WOTR has promoted employment generation activities, generating 34,684 labour days, employing 4,572 people and benefitting 2,385 households. We have taken up these efforts under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA). Protocols like wearing face masks, and maintaining physical distancing have been maintained.



*Watershed development work going in Jalna district, Maharashtra. The Ambad Tahsildar, Rajv Shinde, appreciated WOTR's adherence to all protective norms like physical distancing and wearing masks even during the work.*



*WOTR assisting in MNREGA works in Mahbubnagar district, Telangana.*



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