COVID-19 Rapid Response
Based on data gathered till July 31
Last week, India registered over 2 million cases of COVID-19 and over 44,000 deaths. Behind these statistics, there is a great deal of pain and suffering. Here is a glimpse of how WOTR is helping to address the pandemic effectively.

With the support from our donors, ground staff at various regional centres, Watershed Organisation Trust along with community-based organisations, gram panchayats, self-help groups and local civic bodies has been mobilising support for the needy. WOTR and its partners have been collaborating on all fronts to help the poor and vulnerable rebuild their lives and start again.

WOTR is on the ground mobilising informed and measured rapid responses to the pandemic through various modes such as the distribution of essentials, creating awareness, social messaging, generating employment and other livelihood support across its seven states -- Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, Jharkhand and Telangana.
WOTR has been reaching out through its village-level workers raising awareness in the project villages on prevention and safety measures to fight the coronavirus since the early days of the pandemic. With fully operational and staffed regional centres in seven states, WOTR is better informed and prepared to tackle the fallout of the pandemic in its project areas.

As of July 31, 2020, we have reached **124,258** households, **657** villages, **26** districts benefitted
Considering the unprecedented challenge of COVID19, awareness creation is very critical to curbing the spread of coronavirus. WOTR’s Wasundhara Sevaks/Sevikas, Anganwadi Karyakartas and Mahila Pravartaks have been facilitating in creating awareness on the spread of the coronavirus while also instilling the importance of wearing a mask and maintaining social distances at public places.

An SHG meeting in progress in Odisha

Till date, **3,081 awareness sessions were organised by WOTR**, impacting **164,101** people, **32** structured and formal training sessions were attended by **1,418** participants, of which **726** were women and **692** men. **216**-gram panchayat members, **393** Village Development/Health Committee members, **447** SHG members, **142** community members, **192** Wasundhara Sevikas/Sevikas and **28** government officers attended the training sessions.
As migrant workers across the country return to their villages, rural India's dependence on Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act or MNREGA has increased manifold. Since the partial lifting of the lockdown in some parts of the country, various state governments have started MNREGA activities in some measure, WOTR has been creating employment opportunities in villages where its projects are underway.

WOTR, through MNREGA, generated **346,591** labour days for **20,288** labourers generating **Rs 8.13 cr** in wages which helped **12,341** families
Tens of millions of migrant workers, forced to return hometown because of the COVID-19 pandemic after losing their jobs, face unemployment and poverty. Many who made it home states faced police action and were stigmatised by local authorities and communities.

WOTR has been keeping a record of the return migrant in its project villages. As of July 31, 18,304 returning migrants have arrived in WOTR’s project villages of which 3,597 are in quarantine. We have provided support for 997 migrant returnees as of July 31.

In Karanka village, Murhu block in Khunti district, Jharkhand, the migrant returnees are being quarantined at a local primary school.
With the onset of the Kharif season, WOTR has been working to make its communities resilient to the climate crisis. Below are the list of few measures adopted by WOTR in its project villages:

- SCI crops in 2,906 acres of 4,716 farmers
- SRI paddy in 505 acres of 1,006 farmers
- 11,963 farmers adopted organic formulations
- 2,049 farmers benefitted by composting
- 1,354 farmers adopted green manuring
- 3,071 farmers received seeds
- 1115 acres under micro-irrigation

Of the 21,506 farmers, 3052 farmers planted fruit species like Mango, Guava, Sapota, Custard Apple, Drumstick, etc. on 252 acre land and 18,454 farmers planted forestry species like bamboo, glyricidia, banyan, bhendi, neem and many others on 813 acre area and 2 km of riverbank. Apart from this, 36,512 saplings of various species were planted by individuals wherever possible making the total plantation of 122,828 trees in the season.

Till date, we have helped **21,506** farmers to undertake plantations.

Weather based crop advisories were issued to **15,667** farmers.

**9,423** farmers are registered in the FarmPrecise mobile app developed by WOTR.
The COIVD-19 pandemic has disrupted the local food supply systems. Those already living in poverty are pushed back further into economic uncertainty and hence face greater risk. WOTR is assisting in the distribution of essentials and helping needy families who are struggling to get rations while distributing sanitisation kits.

As of July 31, WOTR has distributed essentials such as grocery kits, sanitary kits and protective face masks at the village-level. 341 tailors made 88,626 face masks. 98,097 individuals received face masks.
38 Year old Sumi Pahanai is a widow residing in Surunda village of Godatoli in Murhu, Jharkhand. Following the demise of her husband, she inherited 4 to 5 acres of agriculture land. Earlier, Sumi has been helping in household chores and rearing livestock which mainly involves goat rearing and poultry. She has recently sold the buffalo as Sumi was not equipped to plough the fields. During lockdown, it has been difficult for Sumi to sustain and support the family of 5 members, including her daughters and her mother.

WOTR has been supporting vulnerable families like Sumi with the provision of ration and necessary grocery items. WOTR’s team in Jharkhand has provided Sumi’s family with an essential kit containing 10 kg rice, 4 kg potato, 2 kg pulses, 1-litre mustard oil, 2 kg salt, 200 grams turmeric powder and 4 soaps, along-with other 16 most vulnerable families of Surunda village. Sumi Pahanai is thankful to WOTR for timely support. Besides she is also involved in the selling of paddy, peas and grams in Murhu market and weekly local market of the village, to sustain from a financial crisis.
WOTR’s multilayer farming and Kitchen Garden initiatives have proved to be beneficial for small and marginalised farmers especially when supply chains are largely cut off due to the pandemic.

As of July 31, **34,031 households** have benefitted from **18,808 kitchen gardens** and **1,061 multilayer farms**.
The pandemic has severely disrupted the sale of the farm produce. WOTR has been facilitating the sale of these farm produce goods, thereby generating a means of income for many farmers.

In the states of Jharkhand, Maharashtra and Telangana, 1,913 families have received support through FPOs selling over 12,895 quintals of rice, wheat, paddy, fruits and vegetables amounting to Rs 2.5 crore.
WOTR’s ground staff — Wasundhara Sevaks along with other village-level workers including the Panlot sevaks, Jal sevaks, Mahila Pravartaks, Village Development Committees and Self Help Groups — have risen to the extraordinary challenge to combat COVID-19. They have been actively supporting village communities through providing lifesaving hygiene essentials, awareness campaigns, sewing and distributing face masks and sanitisation kits, besides providing essential supplies.

As of July 31, 2020, WOTR has 3,521 active personnel on the ground of which 2,052 are women.
WOTR is grateful for the generous support of our donors, friends and colleagues who have made possible all of the above interventions. We would like to thank Becker-Cordes Stiftung, Bread for the World, EATON India Foundation, Education for Employability Foundation (E2F) through Rapid Community Response to COVID-19 Group (RCRC), Hindustan Unilever Foundation, IDH Sustainable Trade Initiative, IndusInd Bank Ltd, AXIS Bank Foundation, Khandke Wind Energy Pvt. Ltd, Rotary Club of Pune, Supraja Foundation, Tata Steel Foundation and American Friends of WOTR, and WOTRians who have spontaneously contributed a part of their salaries.