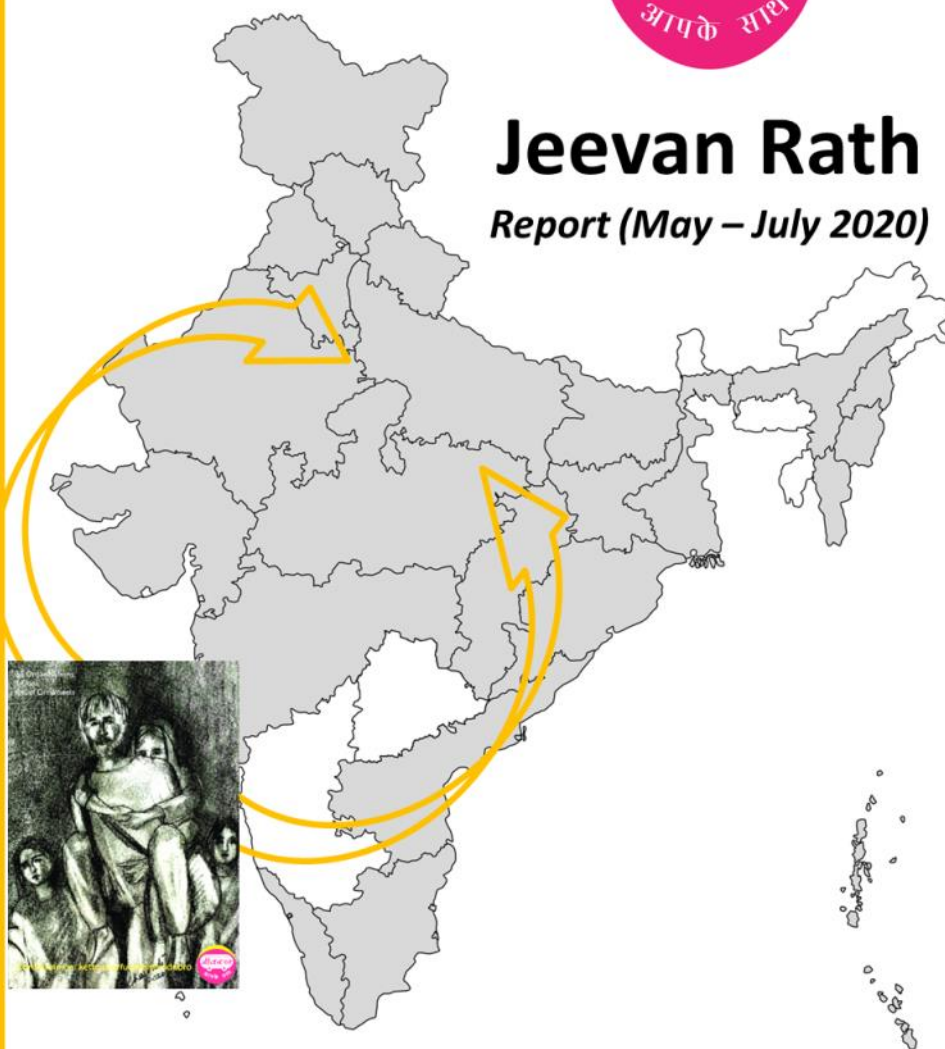




Jeevan Rath

Report (May – July 2020)



unicef  for every child



Table of Contents

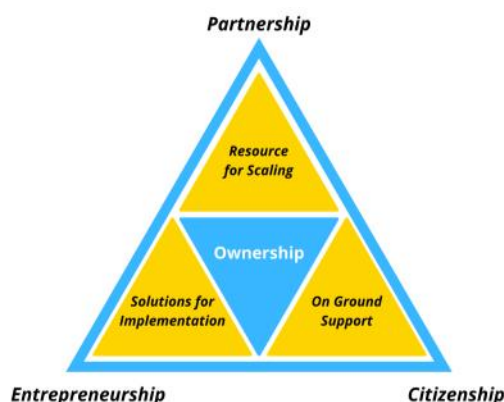
1. BACKGROUND.....	3
1.1 UNICEF MAHARASHTRA MIGRANT CRISIS RESPONSE	3
2. JEEVAN RATH PROGRAM RESULTS AT A GLANCE.....	4
2.1 JEEVAN RATH 1.0	5
2.2 JEEVAN RATH 2.0	6
3. JEEVAN RATH NODAL PARTNER REPORT.....	7
4. CRISIS MANAGEMENT CENTRE.....	8
4.1 MIGRANT TRAVEL TRACKING	9
4.2 MIGRANT DIRECT ASSISTANCE	9
5. PARTNER AND STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT	10
6. KEY ACTIVITIES OF THE PROGRAM	12
6.1 VIRTUAL CALL CENTER	12
6.2 CALL CENTER DATABASE MANAGEMENT	13
6.3 TRANSPORT SUPPORT	15
6.4 DRY RATION KIT DISTRIBUTION.....	17
6.5 CASH TRANSFERS.....	19
7. SOCIAL PROTECTION.....	21
7.1 STATUS RELATED TO EMPLOYMENT, RATION AND CASH	21
7.2 EQUITY, GENDER LENS, REACHING THE UNREACHED.....	22
8. SPECIAL INITIATIVES & INNOVATIONS	23
8.1 VIRTUAL CALL CENTER.....	23
8.2 NEED BASED DISTRIBUTION.....	23
8.3 DOMESTIC VIOLENCE.....	23
8.4 SPECIAL DIET FOR LACTATING MOTHERS	24
8.5 PUBLIC REPORTING TOOL FOR DISTRIBUTION	24
8.6 SUSTAINABLE FOOD SOLUTIONS.....	24
8.7 GIVING IT FORWARD	25
8.8 MCGM FOOD DISTRIBUTION COLLABORATION	25
8.9 EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE.....	25
8.10 SUPPORTING SHGs AND ARTISANS	26
8.11 PALGHAR DISTRICT LEVEL PLAN	26
9. CASE STORIES	27
10. POLICIES AND PRACTICES	34
10.1 CHALLENGES	36
10.2 LEARNING'S.....	37
11. WAY FORWARD	38
TABLE OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	40
INDEX OF TABLES	41
INDEX OF CHARTS	41

1. Background

A total lockdown was announced in India on the 24th March 2020 without any warning to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic, giving very little time for anybody to prepare. As a result, thousands of migrant and daily wages workers suddenly found themselves unable to earn money or feed their families, leaving them with no choice but to return to their home states — literally carrying all their belongings on their backs, often accompanied by children and elderly parents. More than 12,00,000 migrant workers in Mumbai, left for their native homes - either by private buses, trucks and most times by foot. Approximately 30,000 - 40,000 migrants were leaving Mumbai daily, without food and water, in a desperate bid for survival leading to a heart breaking mass exodus seen for the first time since partition.

1.1 UNICEF Maharashtra Migrant Crisis Response

In an attempt to streamline a response to the COVID-19 pandemic and connect with actual needs on the ground, a Learning Exchange session was hosted by UNICEF, Maharashtra and Idobro Impact Solutions to share ideas and avoid duplication in the relief efforts within their NGO networks. Further deliberations amongst these partners gave birth to the idea of the Jeevan Rath program, a relief-on-wheels initiative. The attempt was to collect and distribute non-perishable food, hygiene materials, water, and sanitary napkins and provide basic medical support to migrant workers using mini mobile trucks, which could operate in areas where a large number of migrants gathered to travel back to their home states.



The initiative transitioned from Jeevan Rath 1.0 to Jeevan Rath 2.0 based on the evolving needs of the migrants from food to travel and social protection as depicted above. This was the genesis of the **MAHA C19 PECOnet**, a UNICEF Maharashtra facilitated multi-stakeholder alliance of Partners (**P**) who support with resources for scale, Enterprises (**E**) that provide solutions and innovation, and Citizen volunteers (**C**) who provide traction on the ground. These are held together by the joint Ownership (**O**) of the cause and mission of the network.

2. Jeevan Rath Program Results at a Glance



The Jeevan Rath program led by UNICEF, Mumbai, went through two phases as the program kept evolving with the needs of the migrants. What started as a small WhatsApp group, quickly grew from 20 to over 60 members overnight and a movement took shape in mid-May, with a pledge to raise funds and support the needs of migrants. Some of the activities that were undertaken include:

- **Jeevan Rath 1.0 (May 13th – May 31st)** – Food trucks that took food and essentials to migrants as they travelled on foot, buses or trains. The idea was that the migrants could pick up the food, and preserve it for a few hours as they walked.
- **Jeevan Rath 2.0 (June 1st – July 31st)** - A virtual call centre to track the movements of migrants and ensure they reached their destinations safely and/or received help in case of distress. Physical assistance provided to migrants for travel as well as relief measures to unreached families in need through food & ration, transportation and cash assistance for exigencies and medical expenses.



Jeevan Rath (Relief and Response on Wheels) Report

2.1 Jeevan Rath 1.0

The Jeevan Rath was a truck, which provided essential support, including basic medical support to anyone who was walking home. In order to make provisions easily available to migrants, the 'Jeevan Rath' was stationed at strategic locations like the toll nakas in the cities.

Initially, two trucks were stationed, which provided 2500 vada pavs twice a day, water and fruits such as bananas, apples and pears throughout the day. They were also provided with basic ointment to be used to heal their cuts and wounds sustained due to the long walk.

The places covered by the trucks included Thane, Dahisar, Nashik, Pune, LTT, Vasai, Bandra Station, Vasai and Borivali station



Results of Jeevan Rath 1.0

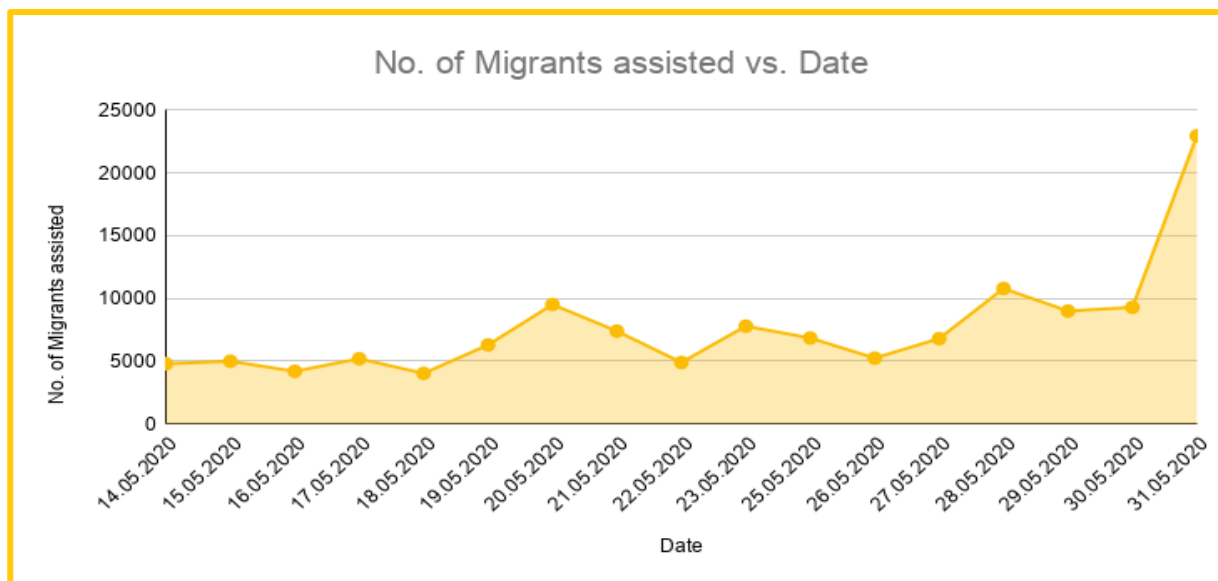
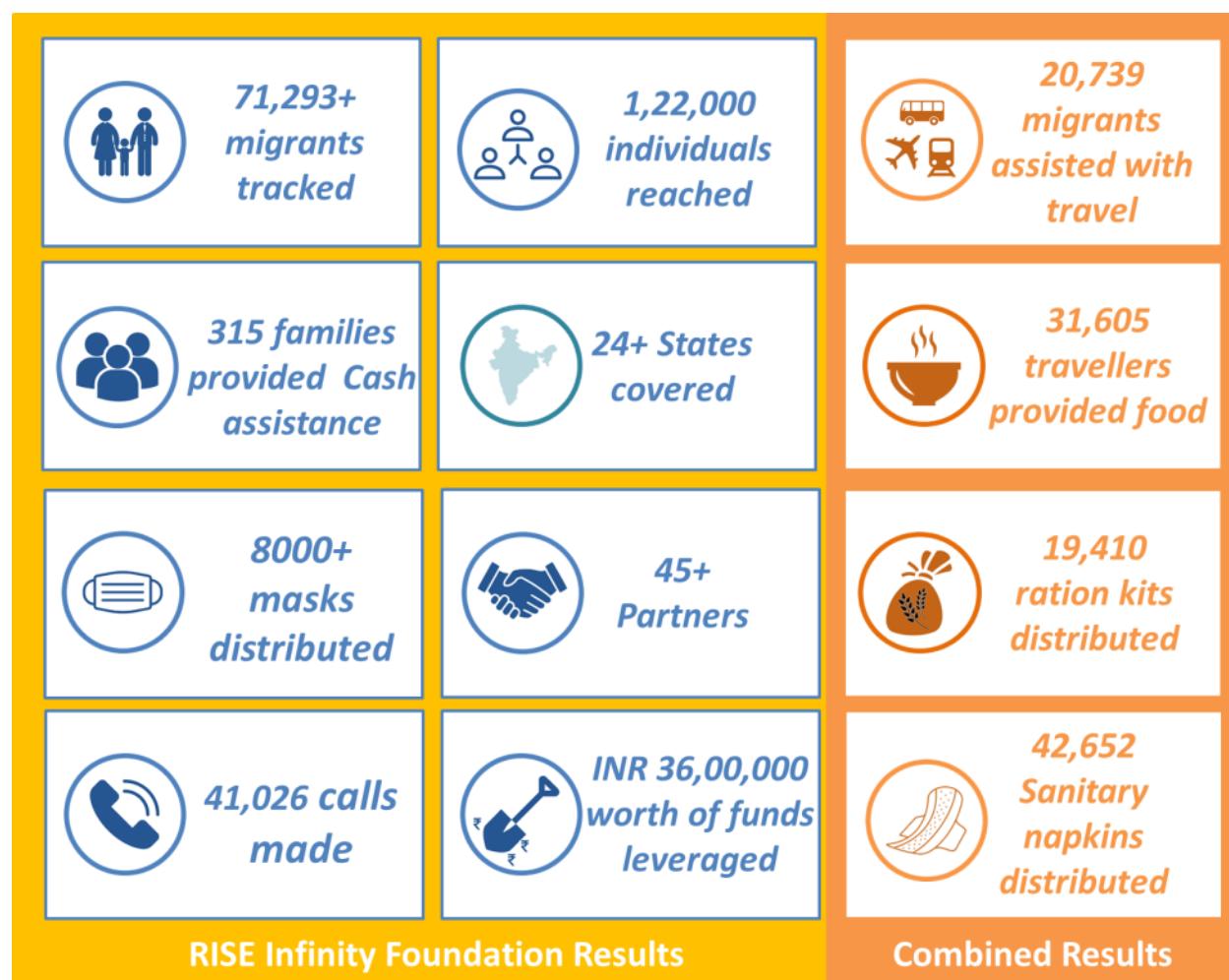


Chart 1 – Daily distribution during JR 1.0

2.2 Jeevan Rath 2.0

As the needs of the migrants evolved so did the initiative, from cooked food to travel assistance to ration kits and finally social protection in the form of cash transfers for medical and other forms of exigencies. The 2nd phase of the program, Jeevan Rath 2.0 saw the launch of a call center with a 15 x 7 helpline to provide the migrants with assistance as per their needs. The call center continuously made outbound calls to reach out to stranded migrants identified by the partner NGO's and document their needs. The team also resolved the needs and issues, wherever possible, through immediate assistance by other NGO partners and individuals providing on ground relief. The Jeevan Rath initiative led by UNICEF, Maharashtra was a joint effort of 7 key partners. The results of this coalition led to a significant outreach and relief to over 122,000 individuals.



3. Jeevan Rath Nodal Partner Report

UNICEF Maharashtra Covid platform included multiple interventions that were managed by RISE Infinity Foundation as the Nodal Partner and Secretariat to meet the needs of migrants and to provide support to its partners on the ground. This document is a report on the interventions detailed below:

❖ **Crisis Management Center**

- Setup of a migrant war room to track and coordinate with different transit points of 70,000 migrants (as direct reach), their needs and connecting with resources as required
- Compiling a database of local NGO network, other call centers in Maharashtra and other states, Hospitals, Police Stations, Rescue Homes and others, who could provide any psycho social need support for migrants during their journey
- Setup of a protocol to register grievances and responses of migrants for partner NGOs to act upon

❖ **Project Management**

○ **Partner coordination for**

- Food and ration kits for families in need
- Communication and Design
- Direct cash transfers to cover household expenses including rent or for food in areas difficult to reach physically and deliver ration kits
- Direct cash transfers for medical relief

○ **Donors and other Stakeholder engagement to leverage additional funding for**

- Cash transfers
- Dry rations
- Livelihood engagement

❖ **Communication**

- Documentation of key cases related to migrants & the assistance provided, for analysis and learning
- Design of IEC material for awareness generation on the initiative

❖ **Volunteer Management**

- Provision of Covid specific insurance policies for on-ground volunteers
- Sourcing and distribution of protective gear like masks, face shields, gloves, sanitizers, etc for on-ground volunteers engaged in food distribution
- Documentation and set up of a formal process for payment to volunteer coordinators for migrant interaction and assistance
- Coordination of the entire program and platform for a month

4. Crisis Management Centre

A Crisis Management Centre (CMC) was established by RISE Infinity Foundation to track migrants to ensure that the migrants have reached home safely. This was a unique attempt as most organizers and supporters were ending their association once the transportation reached the destination or a group leader confirmed arrival. This end-to-end approach adopted by Jeevan Rath helped to gain insights into the issues migrants were facing as well as livelihood patterns for recovery.

The call center under the JR-CMC was operational since 27th May, 2020 from 8 am to 11 pm in 3 shifts and could be reached through a single number - 08061933074. Collateral (Annexure) was designed to spread awareness on the same and was available in 7 languages as well.

The CMC Org Structure

The Crisis Management Center had a program Manager overseeing the entire operation.

The Call center team was a key component of the CMC. The team worked as a key linkage between the JR partners and the migrants, and assisted in identifying the needs of the migrants, and mapping them accordingly to partners, who could resolve them.

A resolution team was also formed under the CMC to reduce the time taken to resolve the cases coming in through the call center. The resolution team consisted of a resolution manager, a travel associate (who assisted with cases related to travel) and a food associate (who assisted with cases related to food and ration kits).

The resolution team ensured that the cases received by the call center were acted upon and resolved at the earliest following the required protocols.

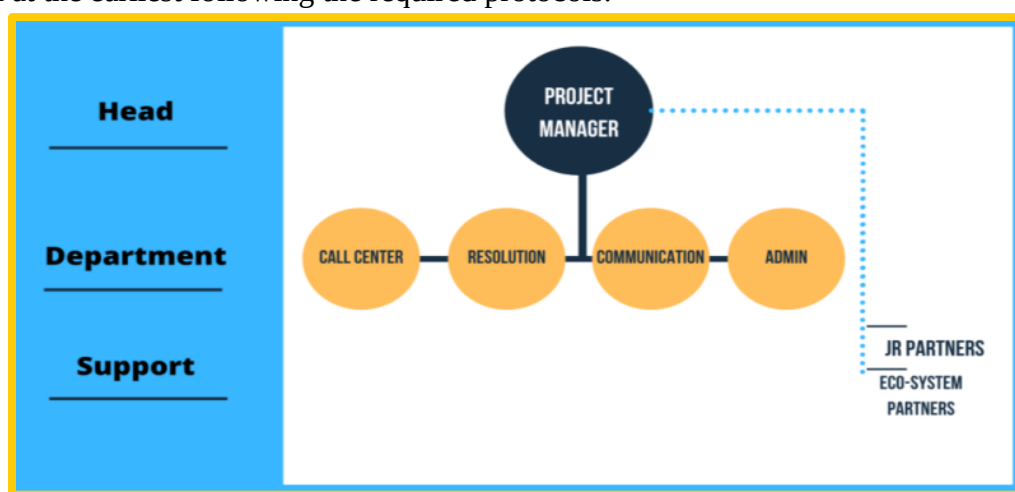


Chart 2 - CMC Organogram

4.1 Migrant Travel Tracking

The call center tracked the journeys of 70,000 migrants end to end, till they reached their final destination, with an objective of providing any help required throughout the journey.

Below given is the status of the persons reached out to by the call center who had either already reached home or were on their way back.



Chart 3 - Travel Status

Travel Status	
People reached home	65808/ 71293 (92.31%)
In process	528/ 71293 (0.74%)
Not yet started	3239/ 71293 (4.54%)
Not wanting to Go	68/ 71293 (0.10%)
Status pending	1608/ 71293 (2.26%)
Miscellaneous	42/ 71293 (0.06%)

Table 1 - Travel Status

4.2 Migrant Direct Assistance

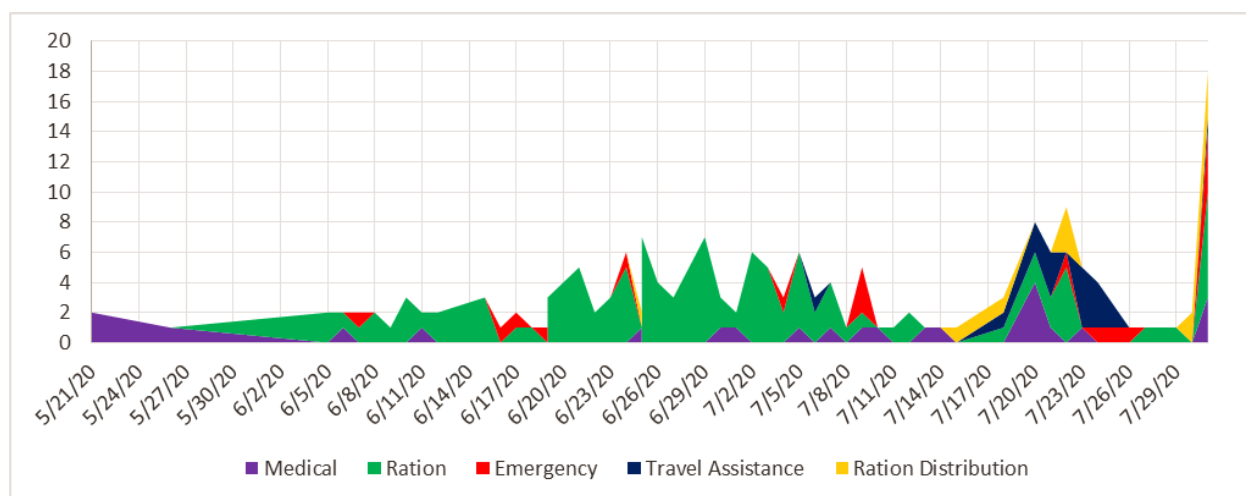


Chart 4 - Migrant Assistance provided across time

The above graph shows the assistance provided to individual's from May to July 2020. Ration distribution and travel are the key support activities throughout.

5. Partner and Stakeholder Management

RISE Infinity Foundation as the Secretariat of the Jeevan Rath initiative was responsible for collaboration between multiple partners with the same objective; providing assistance to migrants.



The program has been an exercise in coordination and collaboration with various organizations for the following activities:

- Collection of data from migrants on the field,
- Distribution of food items among stranded travelers,
- Identifying people in need and linking them to the call center,
- Liaisoning with the local administration for travel permissions
- Organizing buses, trains & other transport assistance
- Providing support both monetary and in kind for medical and other exigencies

RISE Infinity Foundation has been working with:

- ❖ ***The UNICEF Team*** – for issues related to DRR, Social policies and fundraising as well as nutrition, domestic violence, health and WASH. Meetings along with government officials were also attended for further insights and future planning.
- ❖ ***The Jeevan Rath Partners*** – Fortnightly meetings were organized with the JR partners for reviewing the efforts being done on ground and to plan the way forward. Based on partner feedback, 5 reports were generated to capture perspectives and potential way forward at each stage of the program. A special advocacy campaign on change.org was led by YUVA for appropriate response and suggested measures to provide relief to migrants. Multiple channels were adopted for smooth coordination and updates between the Jeevan Rath Partners.

Jeevan Rath (Relief and Response on Wheels) Report

<i>Arghyam</i>	<i>United Way Mumbai</i>	<i>Citizens Association for Child Rights</i>	<i>The Resilient Foundation</i>
<i>Centre for Youth Development and Activities</i>	<i>Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action</i>	<i>Red is the New Green</i>	<i>Swayam Shikshan Prayog</i>
<i>Society for Promoting Participative Ecosystem Management</i>	<i>Rotary Club of Mumbai</i>	<i>Vibha Foundation</i>	<i>Life Foundation</i>
<i>Alert Citizens Foundation</i>	<i>Helping Hands</i>	<i>Habitat for Humanity India</i>	<i>Geo Roti Ghar</i>
<i>Triratna Prerana Mandal</i>	<i>Bright Future</i>	<i>Hungry Wheels</i>	<i>iCALL</i>

Table 2 - Jeevan Rath Partners

- ❖ **Ecosystem partners** – Substantial effort was required for execution on the ground and outreach on the scale as planned. Hence RISE Infinity Foundation tapped into a network of partners from the migrant travel eco-system. Partners were of immense assistance for required permissions from local administration, access to information and above all sharing and leverage of resources for logistics and direct support to migrants. Some of the key partners are listed below:

<i>Freudenberg Gala</i>	<i>Shapoorji Palonji</i>	<i>Za'atar Restaurant</i>	<i>Glenmark Foundation</i>
<i>CoAST India</i>	<i>Ghar Bhejo Ghar Bachao Andolan</i>	<i>ELSA, Mumbai</i>	<i>FICCI FLO</i>
<i>Karwan-E-Mohabbat</i>	<i>Project Mumbai</i>	<i>The Stranded Workers Action Network</i>	<i>Migrant Travel Support Network</i>
<i>Aahan Vihaan</i>	<i>IIMA Women Alumni</i>	<i>JGU Covid Support</i>	<i>IJM</i>
<i>Write To Recognise</i>	<i>Hungry Wheels</i>	<i>Apne Aap Womens Collective</i>	<i>Indo-Global Social Service Society</i>
<i>Earth Angels Foundation</i>	<i>Khana Chahiya</i>	<i>Need Vikas Sanstha</i>	<i>India Water Portal</i>
<i>Citizens Voice</i>	<i>Pravasi Sahyogi Team</i>	<i>Switch India</i>	<i>Jai Bajrang Mitra mandal</i>
<i>Tata Institute of Social Sciences</i>	<i>Vasai Cha Raja</i>	<i>Vikalp Sutra</i>	<i>Inner Wheel</i>
<i>Hunger Collective</i>	<i>Police Force</i>	<i>Railway Officials</i>	<i>State Government</i>

Table 3 - Ecosystem Partners

6. Key activities of the program

6.1 Virtual Call center

RIF established a virtual call center under the Crisis Management Center to tide over the social distancing restrictions for the pandemic.

The call center was run in 3 shifts, for 15 hours with 12 executives attending to calls from migrants requiring assistance related to travel, food, medicine and shelter. The call center executives attended

inbound calls and also made outbound calls with a real time system for documentation of cases and resolutions.

The calls made by the executives were based on the databases compiled through the primary and secondary data collected on the ground by the various partner organizations.

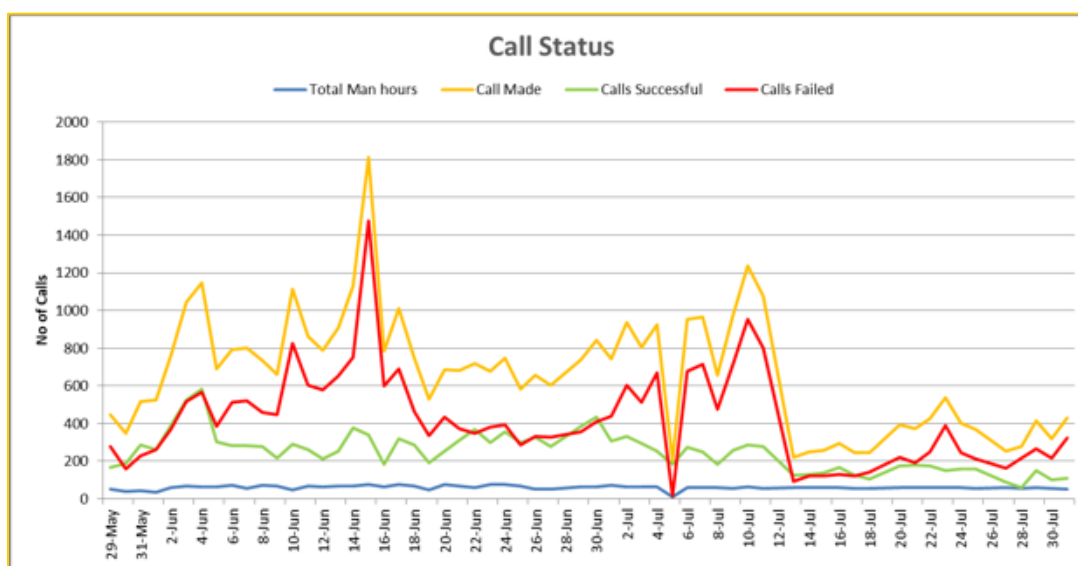
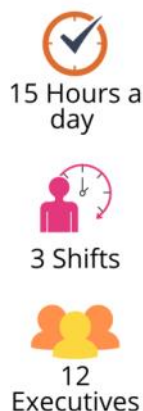


Chart 5 - Call Status

Call Made - 40,270	Calls Successful - 14,974	Calls Failed - 25,296
Total Man Hours spent - 3,608		Hit Rate - 40%*
*Wrong numbers and no network coverage were the primary reasons for the failed calls Other was mandatory quarantine at destination or change in phone numbers		

6.2 Call Center Database Management

Representative analysis of Primary Data Received

Jeevan Rath partners on the ground collected data from the migrants continuously to build the databases for further tracking by the call center and provision to help them.

DISTRIBUTION OF AGE AND GENDER

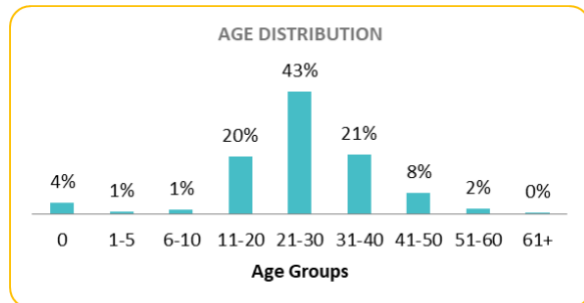


Chart 7 - Age Distribution

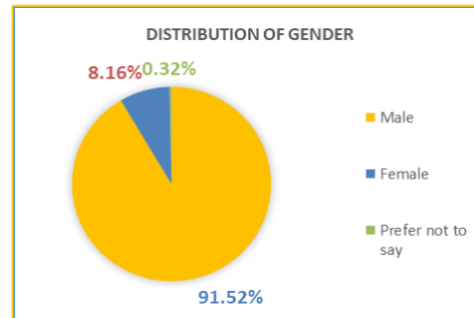


Chart 6 - Gender Distribution

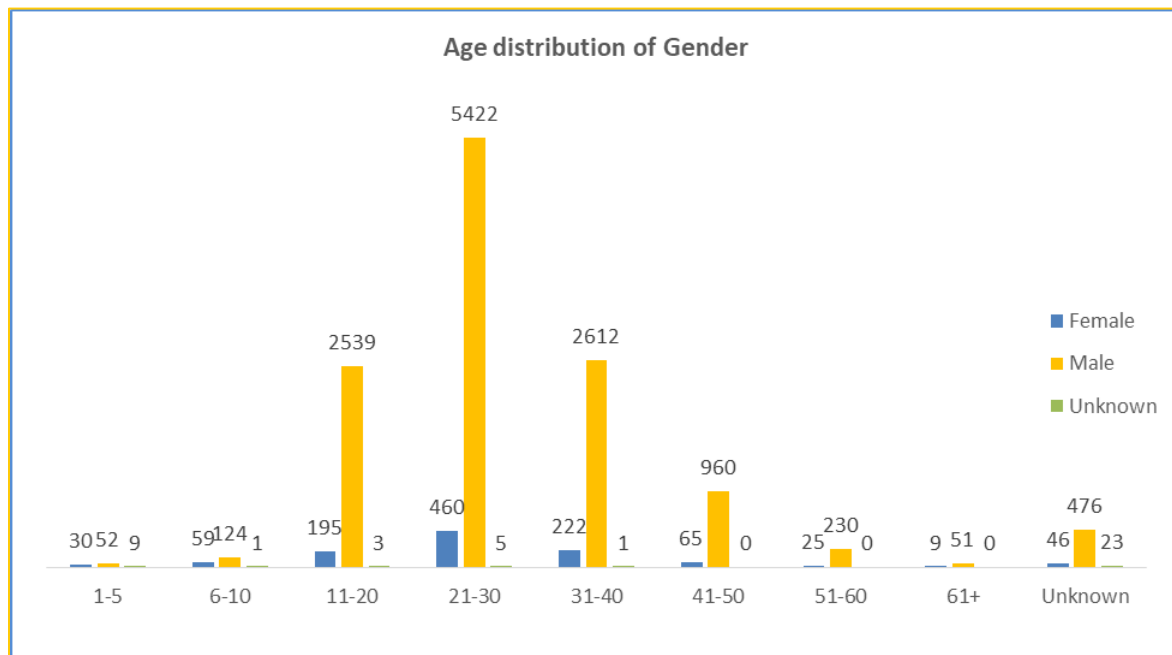


Chart 8 - Age vs Gender

43% of the total migrants tracked are in the age group of 21-30 and 92% were male. This confirms that daily wagers demographics who were left without any jobs post the lockdown.

Destination of individuals

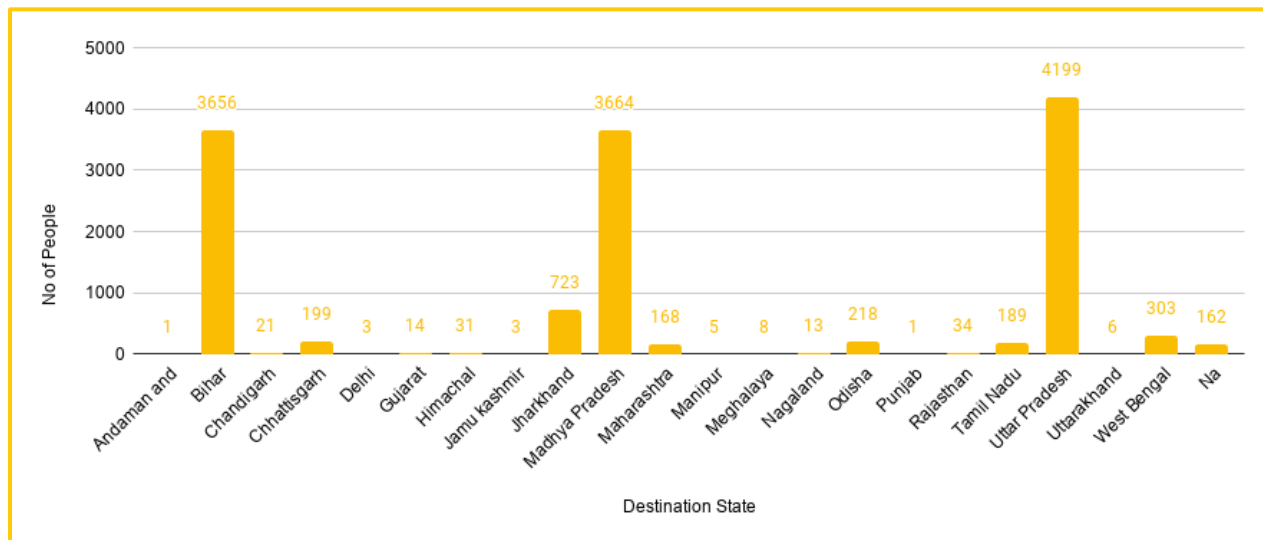


Chart 9 - Destination of individuals

Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand were the predominant destination states of the migrants

Occupation Status

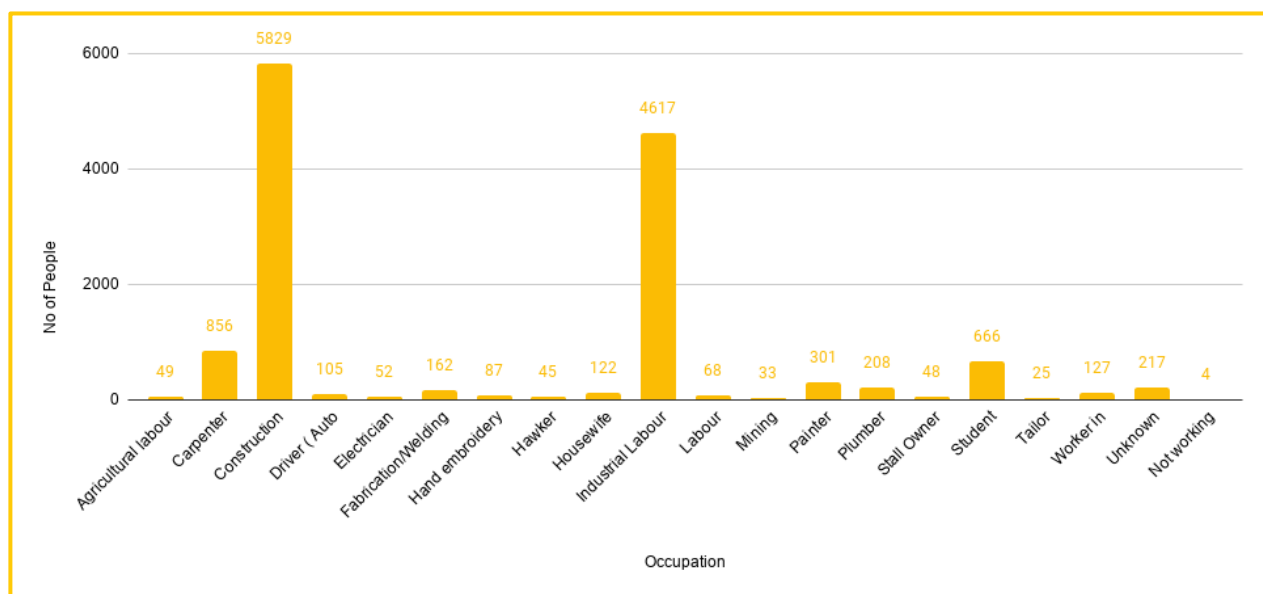


Chart 10 - Occupation status

Industrial labor and construction were found to be the two key occupations of the migrants.

6.3 Transport support

At the peak of the migrant exodus, help with travel back to their villages formed the majority of the requests received by the call center. The call center coordinated with its network of supporters, government authorities and other partners and identified various ways and means to arrange for the travel of these individuals. Shramik trains, run by the government, private buses and even flights in some cases were used for ensuring the safe travel of the migrants.

The travel help was not limited to only the identification of the trains or buses. The call center executives also ensured that:

- The migrants were provided with food and water for their long journeys
- Taxis and other private vehicles were arranged from remote areas to ensure that the migrants reached the train and bus stations on time
- With the lockdown underway, there were instances of the migrants needing to be picked up by specially arranged vehicles from containment zones as well, as there was no travel facility available.
- Cash transfers were also made to help the migrants to have some money when they reached home

In some cases, several groups of people could only reach the nearest town of their remote villages through the trains or buses. In such cases vehicles were arranged for this last mile connectivity as well by the call center executives through the JR partners.

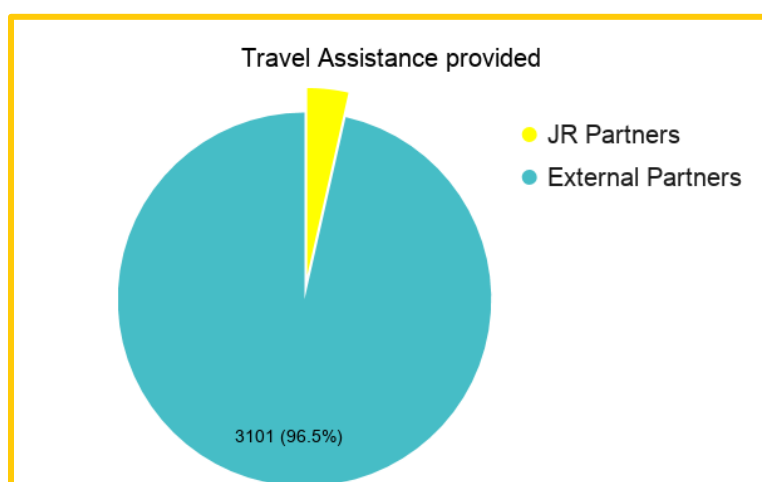
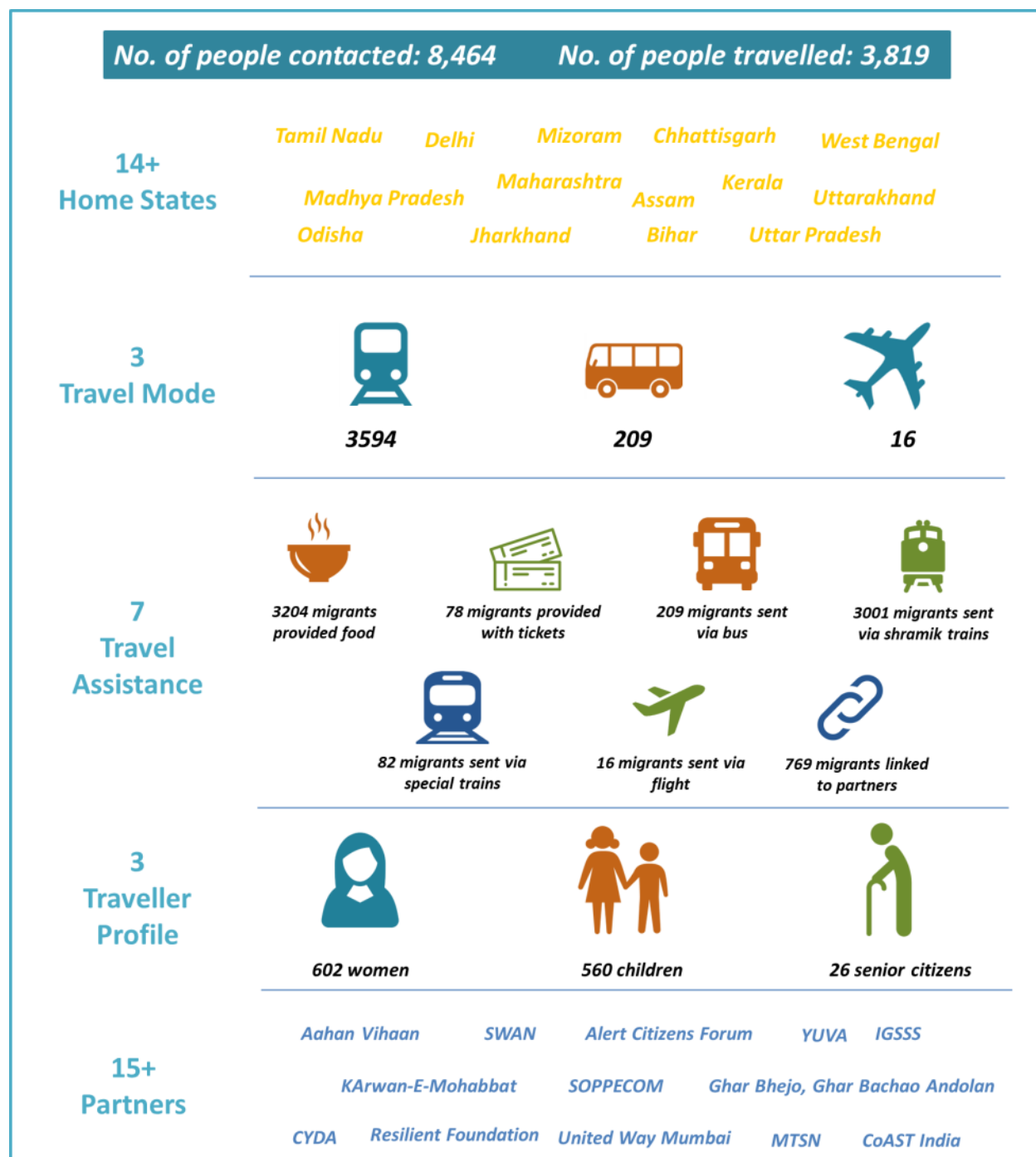


Chart 11 - Travel Assistance provided - Partner wise

The chart above shows the significant role that eco-system partners played to fill the gap caused by the absence of Jeevan Rath partners working on travel logistics in Mumbai. Jeevan Rath partners in Pune (CYDA and SOPPECOM), Nashik and Nagpur (YUVA) were linked with travelers as well as connected to CoAST and MTSN for travel funding and/or support.

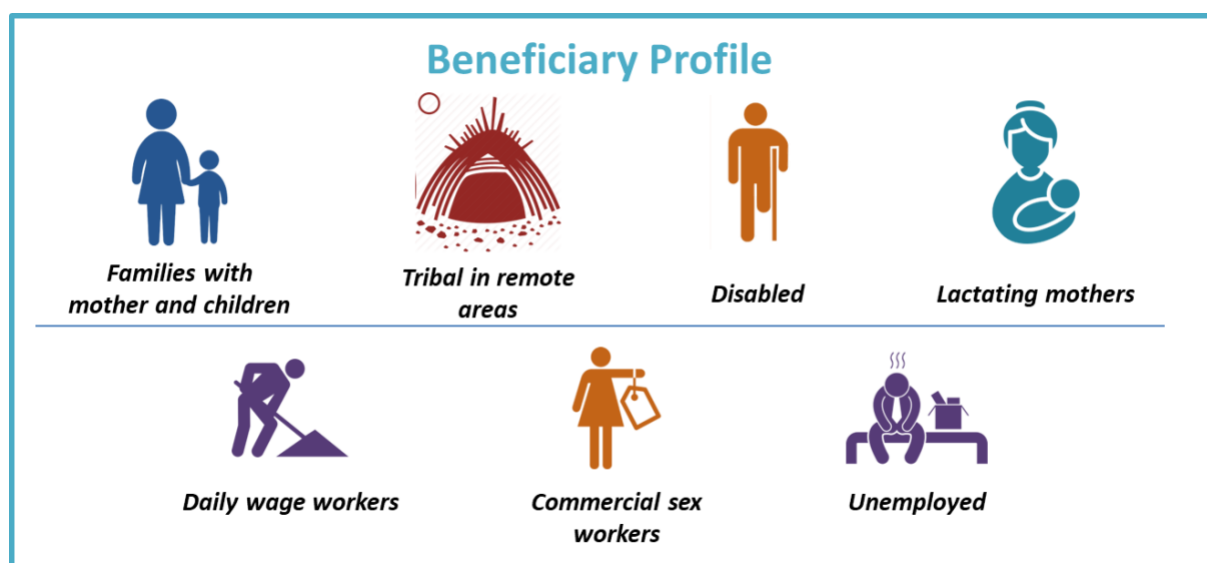
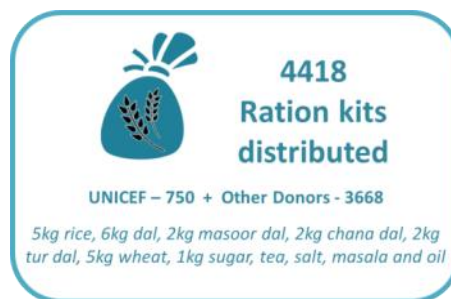


CoAST India, Ghar Bejo, Ghar Bachao Andolan, United Way Mumbai and the Migrant Travel Support Network (MTSN) were our key partners who provided both financial and in kind assistance to over 3819 travellers and guidance to over 8464 migrants.

6.4 Dry Ration kit distribution

The migrant population was being given the same kind of cooked food by various organizations. This monotony along with cultural issues of regional taste for the food led to the introduction of distribution of dry ration kits. This helped the people to cook their own food as per individual tastes.

The dry ration kits included rice, dal, oil, pulses, salt, sugar and some spices. While a part of the kits was financially supported by UNICEF, RISE Infinity Foundation also reached out to its partner network of donors to get support for additional ration kits.



The dry ration kits were distributed by Jeevan Rath Partners - CYDA, Resilient Foundation and Alert Citizen Forum as well as by RIF with the assistance of other external partners working on-ground for the relief work.

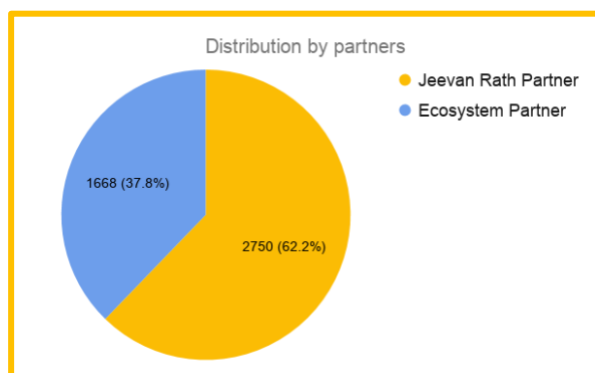


Chart 12 - Ration Distribution by partners

Vulnerable groups of families with mother and children were the key priority for the distribution, apart from other tribal groups living in far off locations and below income groups.

Special distribution of nutrition kits made especially for lactating mothers and children were also arranged and distributed in partnership with Jeevan Rath partner CACR.

Jeevan Rath (Relief and Response on Wheels) Report

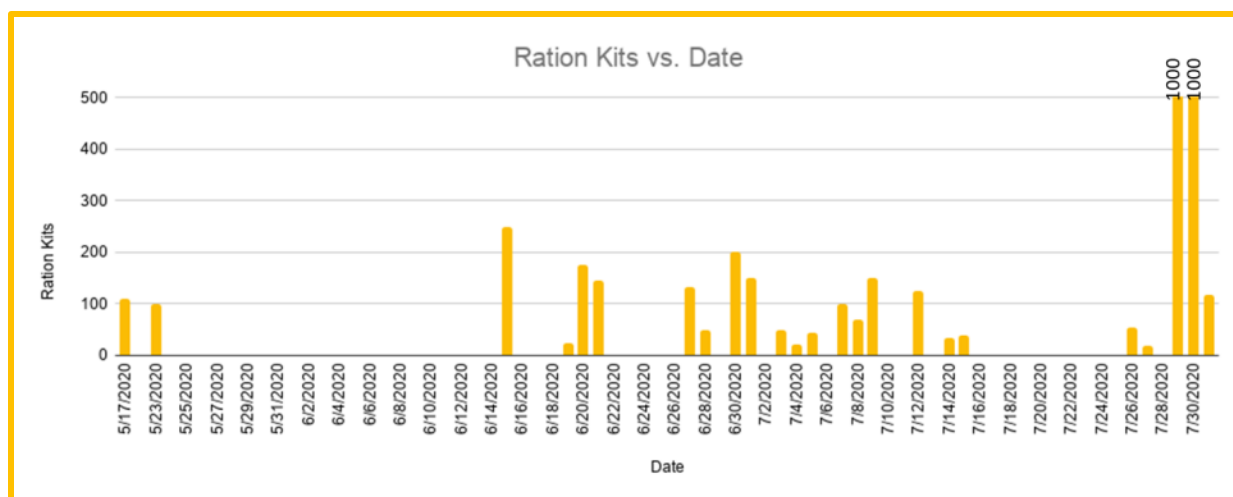
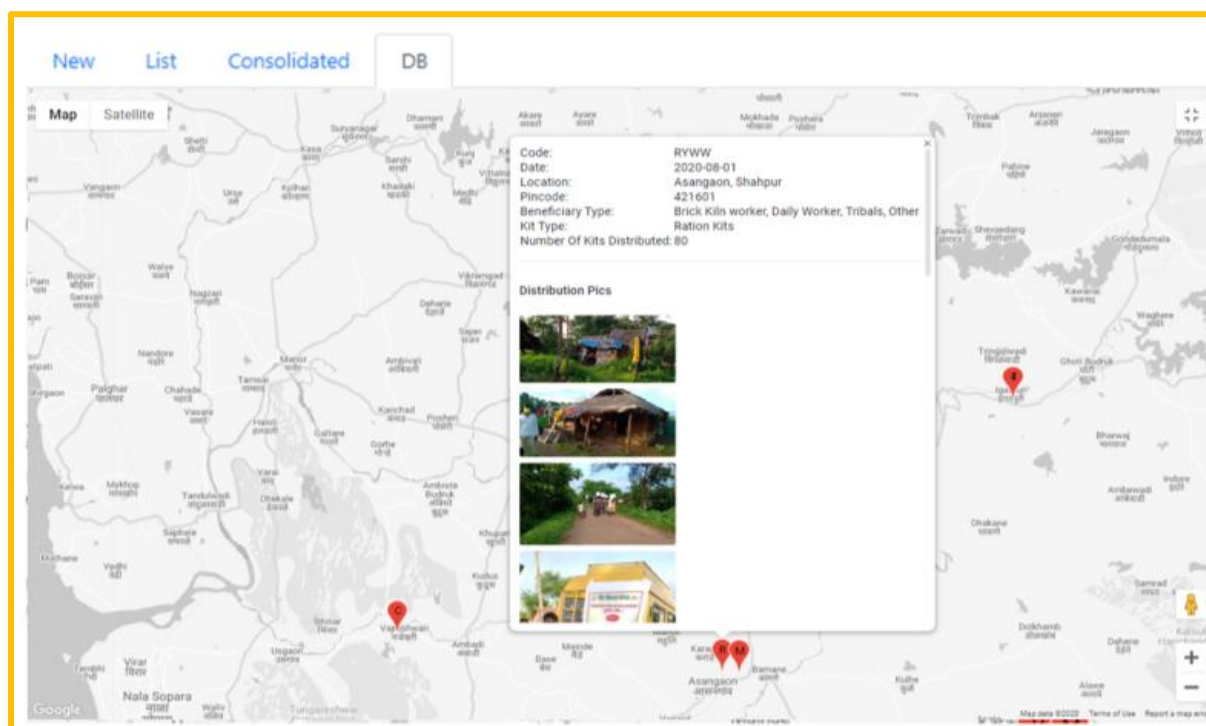


Chart 13 - Ration kit distribution

The chart shows the spread of the ration kits distribution across time and as seen a major part of the drive was started post 16th of June which remained consistent till the end..



A public reporting tool has been designed that tracks the distribution data by means of which an NGO partner can look up the dashboard and find if ration kits were distributed in a particular location earlier and hence identify areas which are underserved. This would not only reduce duplication and optimize resources, but also help in ***“reaching the unreachable”***.

6.5 Cash Transfers¹

The pandemic has taken a toll not only on the health of individuals but also affected everyone economically in a very big way. The resulting lockdowns has taken away the means of livelihood for the migrant workers as well. Many received assistance in the form of ration kits from various social organizations, though it is also possible that many in difficult to reach areas would not have received any assistance at all. But the people required money for other basic necessities like house rent, medicines for the sick and aged, recurring medical procedures like dialysis, blood transfusions, etc. The call center received a lot of requests for help towards these facets as well.



Hence a direct cash transfer mechanism was developed to cater to such needs as below:

1. **Food** – to provide ration kits, where the shopkeepers were paid directly after submission of the bills and completion of the due diligence through Aadhaar cards of the beneficiaries
2. **Medical** – to pay for expenses incurred for hospitalization, medicines, etc. after submission of prescriptions, hospital bills and completion of the due diligence through Aadhaar cards
3. **Travel** – to cover payment for bus tickets, taxi to the bus/train stations for migrants traveling back to their home states after due verification
4. **Emergency** – to pay for any other exigencies

The actual cash transfers were done by a separate finance team post verification and data checks of the verification team.

Implementation

In order to ensure uniformity, effectiveness and transparency, a minimum SOP was discussed and policies were established for identifying beneficiaries and documentation pre-requisites for the 3 main relief measures. Policies were established for:

- Criteria: for selection of beneficiaries
- Amounts: the maximum amounts to be transferred per category
- Verification: the process and documents for due diligence and verification of the needs and identity of the beneficiaries
- Actual payments: the mode of payment to the vendors or end beneficiaries

¹ SOP for cash transfer and list of beneficiaries attached in annexure

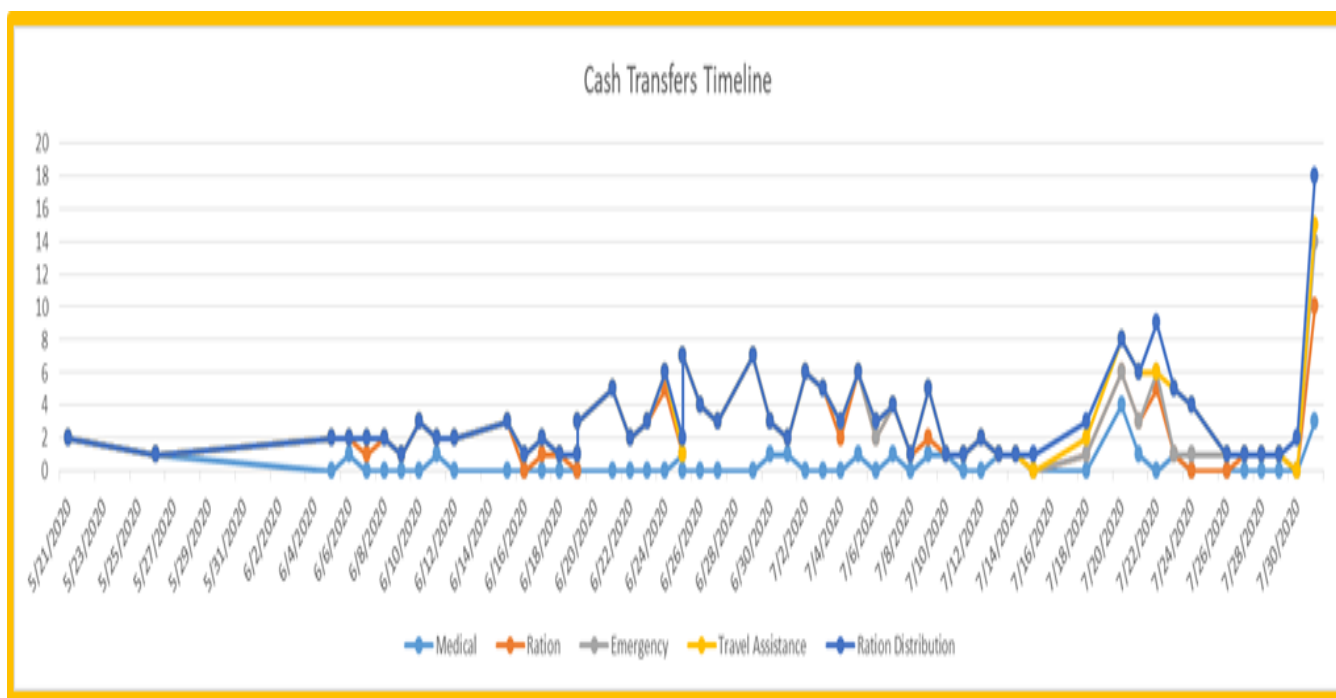


Chart 14 - Cash assistance cases

As seen in the graph above ration distribution was a continuous requirement across the project duration. Other cash assistance related to travel was seen to be more in the second part of June and in July as Shramik trains has stopped by then.

Spread of the cash assistance provided from 22nd May to 31st July

Reason for Assistance	Numbers (UNICEF + Others)
Rations, Emergencies and Travel	182 + 100
Medical	25 + 13

Total persons reached out to: 320*

5 cases were provided by Jeevan Rath Partner CACR

7. Social Protection

7.1 Status related to Employment, Ration and Cash

As the lockdown got imposed, everything came to a grinding halt. Some citizens that had the means were able to stock up on supplies, and self-sustenance was not a challenge for this population. However, a large percentage of the country, often referred to as the ‘unorganized sector’ did not have the means to stock up on essential items, or order things online.

Construction sites stopped work. Street vendors were not allowed to sell goods. Domestic help was not allowed to enter societies that they used to be employed at. The same ‘unorganized sector’ that built our houses, roads, or sell the pani puri that we enjoy, were at a cross road. No source of income, no way to pay rent, no savings to sustain basic life necessities. Also, as the migrants reached their villages, there was a distinct dip in requests for travel support. It was also noted that there were frequent requests at the call center for employment.

Hence a process was initiated to understand needs for social protection interventions. This was undertaken for a limited period of 2 weeks and the results were as given below.

As the call center continued to accrue information on basic needs such as food and shelter, the team also started to collect information about education, skills, and employment history of the callers. The thinking was that when jobs would become available, a wealth of information about people’s employability would be available which could then be matched with the open positions. As recruitment and placement are primarily HR centric skills, a HR experience person was sought to be on-boarded on to the team. In parallel, all the JR partners were also reached out to inquire about jobs availability.

This would help to enable citizens to go back to work, earn a living, and live a life with dignity.

Total Calls made: 1974

Ration: 621

Cash Transfer: 13

Employment: 831

- Employed (part or full time): 100
- Unemployed, seeking employment: 5
- Student: 6
- Not interested in employment: 20
- Retired: 1

Not sharing info: 509

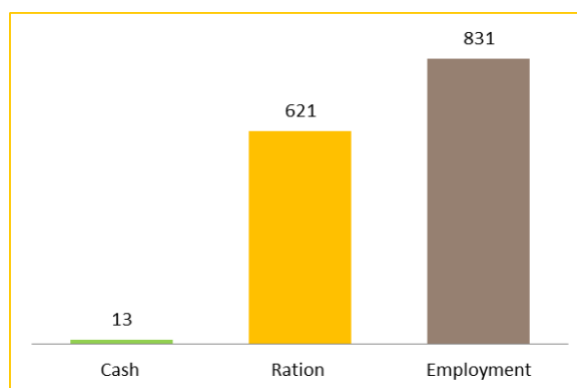
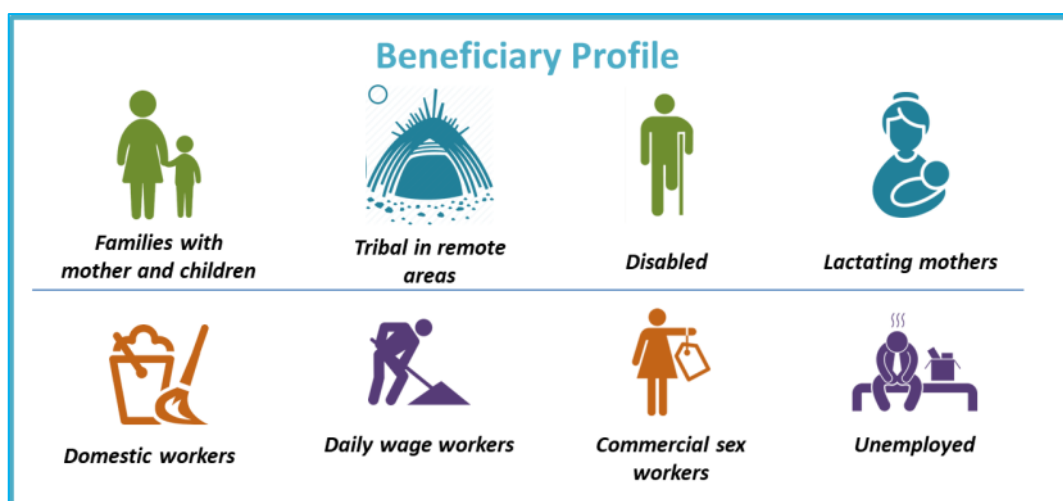


Chart 15 - Employment Status

7.2 Equity, Gender lens, Reaching the Unreached

The objective of the Jeevan Rath program was to reach out to ***the unreached vulnerable***, which means disregarded slum communities, tribal belts, remote locations and generally vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities, women and children and senior citizens. There was a critical need for resources for immediate relief. However, it was also realized that there was a need for sustainable solutions that provided ***short term assistance and assisted in medium term recovery***. The lens appropriate to ***practical execution was used while taking appropriate decisions***.



Throughout the program the key focus has been to serve the underserved section of our society the ones who have not been provided any sort of assistance as well as others who would need support; women, children, the elderly and disabled. An effort was also made to reach out to tribal communities living in remote areas and villages.

Entitlement & Employment

The YUVA team also helped lead a petition on Change.org, supported by Jeevan Rath partners, which amplified migrant workers' needs and demanded for state-led efforts to be strengthened for their safe and dignified travel home.

However, from a medium term perspective, it is clear that employment was important as a support mechanism for recovery efforts. This would require co-ordination with government for data on returning migrants, unemployed youth and others in need of employment. Reskilling programs with NSDC and MSRLM could also be explored. Social security was another key policy and entitlement issue. MNREGA and other government schemes need more awareness and accessibility by the target groups. Urban and Rural issues are also linked as migration will reduce if rural opportunities are increased.

8. Special initiatives & Innovations

The Jeevan Rath initiative had been an immediate response to the crisis faced by the migrants due to the pandemic and was executed within tight timelines. Due to this there were significant challenges that were recognized as the situation on the ground became clearer. A problem-solving approach was adopted by the team and the program evolved with new mandates and innovations. Some were implemented or initiated as time and budget permitted, few of which are presented below along with their current status.

8.1 Virtual Call Center

A war room is typically a fixed operating space. However, the restrictions of the lockdown and measures related to social distancing were a severe constraint to start the Crisis Management Center. Moreover, the need was for a quick turnaround and an economical approach to infrastructure. Keeping all these factors in mind, RIF established a virtual call center, recruiting and training executives 12 executives within 3 days.



The VCC operated in 3 shifts, for 15 hours seven days a week, with both outbound and inbound calls with a real time system for documentation of cases.

8.2 Need based distribution

While the mandate of the project was to focus on food, travel and medical exigencies, there were other items that were being requested of by both community members as well as frontline workers. Hence efforts were undertaken to provide sanitary napkins and masks for community workers, while raincoats and oximeters were organized for the police and frontline workers.



8.3 Domestic Violence

Cases related to domestic violence saw a rise during the lockdown especially with respect to women, children and domestic workers. An Effort was made to provide relief to the affected individuals in such cases by linking to UNICEF Social protection team who in turn reached out to relevant government departments and partner NGOs for appropriate solutions.



8.4 Special Diet for lactating mothers

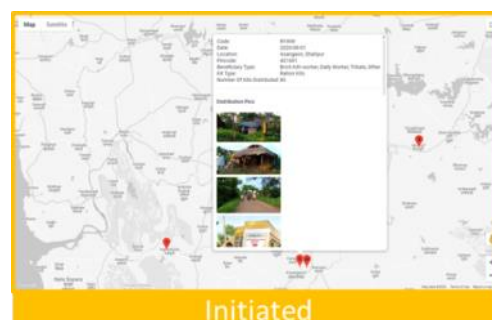


On-going

A special nutrition drive was planned with high nutritive value food items for pregnant females, lactating mothers and children below 5 years in areas such as Shivaji Nagar, Govandi in M (east) ward, who are at the risk of developing severe malnutrition and impaired immunity. This was done in coordination with the local Anganwadis' Sevikas. The Nutrition kit contained high nutritive value food grains such as Ragi, Chole Chana, Roasted plain Chana, Black Beans (Gevda), Rajma and eggs. Body soap and sanitary napkins were also provided along with these kits.

8.5 Public Reporting Tool for Distribution

A technology platform has been identified and onboarded which will provide us with a reporting tool for any kind of distribution. The Map will display the location, Beneficiary profile, type and number of the distributions conducted by partner NGO's. It will also allow for a display of associated images. This will not only assist in avoiding duplication and identifying gaps or under-served areas, but will ensure that resources are utilized efficiently and effectively.



Initiated

8.6 Sustainable food solutions

The standard food that was provided during lockdown, whether, cooked or dry ration revolved around rice, wheat and pulses. Hence, an initiative is being planned to introduce fresh and leafy vegetables to increase the nutritional value in the diet as well as to increase diversity of food. Micro-greens are also to be explored with the communities, that have been provided ration kits. Implementation of kitchen gardens or Nutri-gardens to provide essential nutrition to the entire community are also being encouraged in rural spaces to have a healthy population.



Initiated

8.7 Giving it Forward

RISE Infinity Foundation is experimenting on a “Give it Forward” program to encourage the individuals, who have received help from others, to in turn, help their own communities in whichever manner possible and relevant to their own situations. This will ensure that each person, who receives any assistance from Jeevan Rath will start a multiplier chain reaction for community development and positive impact.



8.8 MCGM Food Distribution Collaboration

Jeevan Rath partners are interested in working with the government and exploring alternative means of engaging with officials. They are also convinced that the linkage to the Government PDS is critical for ration distributions to the community.

MCGM themselves has been working with three initiatives,

- Helpline – A number that people could call and provide information
- Mahadanya App – This app has been developed by the BMC to track ration kit distribution by select NGO partners who register themselves and voluntarily offer to provide data on any distribution they may undertake with funds from their own donors
- Milkar Platform – A fundraising platform by select NGO partners backed by a consortium of Corporate donors.



Discussions are underway for Jeevan Rath to work with MCGM to strengthen processes and build capacity to scale these initiatives and make it available to a larger number of beneficiaries.

8.9 Employment Assistance

One of the key change in migrant conversations as the lockdown continued was that of requests for employment as there was no source of income for the past 3-4 months and people were going into depression having to accept charity for their very survival. To understand the scope and potential of such an activity, RISE Infinity Foundation started a concerted effort to collect additional data points on interest in job opportunities and other factors that can lead to or hinder employment. Simultaneous discussions were also held with partners and other networks on efforts at



rehabilitation and recovery. Options such as Job Melas (virtual), reskilling, government schemes and donor support are being explored.

8.10 Supporting SHGs and Artisans



Masks have become the new normal due to the pandemic now. This initiative aims at providing hand painted and hand crafted masks to the community and thus support artisans with a source of income and livelihood.

The artisans can typically be micro, home based entrepreneurs and also Self-help groups.

This will help in creation of friendly and nurturing ecosystem for these artisans to thrive and create value

8.11 Palghar District Level Plan

Palghar Action Group

Initiated

A meeting of Jeevan Rath partners working in the Palghar region and other stakeholders having a presence in the area was organized by the Jeevan Rath team. This objective of the meeting was to understand the developmental work being undertaken by various NGO's and explore any possible collaborations amongst themselves.

The discussion focused on the below points;

1. Food & ration distribution – to ensure adequate and nutritious food for all
2. Water – to encourage agriculture, by ensuring enough water is available through various means
3. WASH – addressing sanitation and health issues that drain their resources further
4. Employment – map skills and job opportunities for income generation
5. Emergency needs – identify critical areas, communities and families and provide support

Based on these discussions, key actionables were identified and an action plan is being developed in consultation with UNICEF, CTARA – IITB and others.

9. Case Stories

A few cases amongst the many resolved by the Crisis Management Center are documented below:

1. **Dipak Kumar – Assistance related to Medical, travel and emergency**

“At that time of need, I felt RIF was the only family I had”

- Dipak Kumar, Tatanagar, Jharkhand

Like several thousands of migrant labourers, the imposed lockdown on March 25th following the COVID-19 pandemic, rendered a 22-year-old Dipak Kumar jobless and broke. Dipak, hailing from Tatanagar in Jharkhand, worked in a small jewellery making unit in Malad, Mumbai - a city he arrived in with his wife to make a living as it became increasingly difficult to survive back home. Mumbai is known for being tough teacher when it comes to survival, and Dipak learnt it the hard way. He struggled for a livelihood every single day. To add to his misery, the manufacturing unit where Dipak worked had shut up shop due to the lockdown and he found himself without any income. With recurring expenses of rent and electricity bills and mounting medical expenses of his wife's (Jagruti's) complicated pregnancy, he could not even return to Jharkhand.

In June, when his life began spinning out of control, he sought help from some NGOs providing free food and ration to the needy. He also sought help from RISE Infinity Foundation (RIF), for financial assistance. RIF, which has been working with Jeevan Rath and their partners, together supported Dipak with his medical expenses, rent and electricity, after verifying his situation. A verification team member Jitesh found out that the building where Dipak lived was disconnected from the main town. Dipak and Jagruti lived in a tiny house in Nalasopara and there was no *pakka* bill for water or electricity charges; but still he had to pay Rs 500 for water charges and approximate Rs 1,200 for the electricity. Hence the timely financial help lightened his burden a bit.

However, Dipak's ordeal didn't seem to cease. We got an urgent call from Dipak after 15 days as he was worried for his pregnant wife, who was suffering from severe pain and cold. RIF then arranged for a vehicle for him to take his wife to the hospital. After being refused treatment by several hospitals in the middle of the pandemic, KEM hospital in Parel took Jagruti in a labor room on an emergency basis; but was discharged in the next 15 minutes as the doctor conveyed that the pain was because of cold that she had. Throughout this process, we were constantly in touch with Dipak over the phone to check on him and his wife. He later said, “At that time of need, I felt RIF was the only family I had.”

RIF then arranged for a consultation with a gynecologist - wife of one of our team members Mahantesh - who suggested to admit Dipak's wife in a hospital. Due to the complications,

Jagruti had to undergo an emergency C-section and she gave birth to a healthy baby boy on the 22nd of June at a local municipality hospital in Nalasopara. Thankfully, despite the emergency C-section, both the mother and child were in good health. So after braving all the odds, Dipak and all of us involved in helping him finally were able to breathe a sigh of relief and satisfaction looking at the pictures of his baby which he shared with us on the same day.

However, the relief was short-lived. With the staggering COVID-19 cases in his neighbourhood, daunting expenses of the new born child, and to escape risk of infection, Dipak decided to head home in Jharkhand. He thought it would be better to stay with his mother and close ones during these trying times as they could take special care of both the mother and the baby.

RIF team again swung into action and managed to book the tickets for him and his family. He was again provided emergency financial aid for use in the journey. According to Hema, one of the team members who kept a track of Dipak's journey, "The Kolkata-bound train, which Dipak and his family boarded, did not halt at Jamshedpur from where he could have easily reached home. However, the train stopped directly at Kharagpur station in the middle of the night due to some technical reasons. Dipak decided to get down at Kharagpur. After 2-3 hours of long wait, he managed to rent a taxi at 4 am and reach his hometown in Tatanagar. Taking advantage of his helplessness, the taxi driver charged him an exorbitant sum of Rs 4,000 for the journey and Dipak had to spend almost all of the travel allowance provided to him by us for the cab fare."

Dipak and his family quarantined at Tatanagar town since they were coming from Mumbai and went home only after a few days. His sister and mother were elated to welcome Dipak, Jagruti, and their little one back home.

The writer Victor Hugo had once said, "There is always more misery among the lower classes." Similarly, Dipak, coming from one of the poorer sections of the community and the sole breadwinner, might not see an end to his struggle soon. Back in Tatanagar, companies do not tend to employ the locals, says Dipak, as "there are a lot of thieves in the area." However, when we asked him about his further plans, he seemed clueless but said that he will keep an eye out for any suitable jobs. He might return to Mumbai once the restrictions of COVID-19 are eased and situation is under control, but this time it would be without family.

COVID-19 pandemic has adversely affected the informal sector and RISE Infinity Foundation along with UNICEF Maharashtra and over 50 partners have been striving hard to bring in some relief in the lives of people like Dipak and Jagruti. It's heartening to see our efforts being acknowledged and blessed by the ones we helped.

2. Megha Bannerjee - Assistance related to emergency & domestic violence

***How RISE Infinity rescued a widow and her son
who were forcibly evicted during COVID-19 pandemic***

Megha Bannerjee, a 45-year-old widow, was forcibly evicted from her home in Nalasopara on a fateful evening of 22nd June, along with her son, who is undergoing treatment for tuberculosis. She was evicted from her rented apartment as she and her son had lost their jobs and were not able to pay rent. With nowhere to go and no help, she took refuge in a small 'gala' at a remote location, which had no kitchen or toilet, a leaking roof and only a small window for ventilation.

Megha and her son belong to a lower middleclass family. Before her husband's death, they lived in South Mumbai. But eventually, after he died, she had to move further away from the city. Prior to the lockdown following the COVID-19 pandemic, she lived in Nalasopara and worked as a cook. Her son worked in a IT company. However, as fate would have it, they lost their jobs due to the lockdown which complicated their lives even more. The uncertainty of them getting any jobs, especially during the lockdown and deferred payments, was a reason enough for her landlord to evict her.

Megha was resilient to overcome this situation and contacted COAST representatives, who connected her with RISE Infinity Foundation (RIF). After assessing her situation, RIF decided to support her by arranging for the deposit money so she could rent another suitable home. But it was easier said than done as it's always a struggle to find a rented apartment in Mumbai; and things had got worse during the pandemic. In some cases, the rent was too high, or the place was too far away from the station; or in other cases, the society was not allowing a new tenant during the pandemic.

When she had no money left even to buy groceries; RIF promptly helped her. Finally, after a long search, she found a suitable flat, and the payment for the deposit and documentation charges was taken care of by RIF by contributing Rs 15,000 of the total charges for the deposit and registration of Rs 23,500.

Hopefully this will end her ordeal. Megha has moved into her new flat on the 6th of August. She is now again hunting for a job as a cook and is hopeful to get one at the earliest. RIF has been assisting her in the job search as well. Being compassionate and helpful is the most needed virtue that every human must possess, especially in such uncertain times today.

3. Migrant couple, Matunga - Assistance related to travel and emergency

“I am alive only because of you,”

- Essaki Thai, 64, Matunga labour Camp resident

This is the story of how RISE Infinity Foundation and its partners, countering lockdown challenges, rescued an elderly lady of Matunga Labour Camp from ending her life and helped the camp residents reach home in Tamil Nadu.

Do you recall seeing people hovering around the stalls and cycles selling hot dosas, idlis, vadas early in the mornings for quick breakfast before the lockdown? These vendors usually hail from southern states of India. The Matunga Labor Camp in Mumbai is filled with mostly Tamilians, who run such small pavement shops and on-the-go stalls by selling the south Indian breakfast. While the women start their day as early as 4 am to cook idlis, vadas, chutney and sambar, the men ferry these items all over Mumbai to sell near railway stations and offices. These people work almost as human restaurants feeding the people residing in a city which keeps them always on their toes. But the never-ending lockdown, following the COVID-19 pandemic, made their lives difficult with each passing day.

With Tamil as their first language, they struggled in communicating their problems while dealing with the authorities concerned for their travel back home. They were clueless on whom to approach for help and were running pillar to post to make someone pay attention to their woes. One of our volunteers, Catherine Fernandes, visited the area along with her team and was able to empathize and grasp the fear in their minds.

The poor and hardworking migrants, who have been living the city for the last 10 to 15 years technically call it their second home. Some stay for 9 months and go back for the rest of the period, while some have brought their families here in Mumbai, especially to help with the work. Some of their kids are studying in the government schools nearby and others are helping their parents. They live in tin-sheeted houses in a slum area but have to cough up a monthly rent of around Rs 3,000 to 5,000. The lockdown was a huge blow to their small ventures and it made difficult for them to survive. RIF team tried to connect with the local ration shop vendors; who showed them that the ration is already issued in their names back in their states.

An old couple Nambi Thevar (65 years old) and Esakki Thai (64 years old) rushed towards Catherine and her team with some hope and shared their grief. With tears gushing from her eyes, Esakki Thai shared how they were unable to attend the funeral of their granddaughter, who had died due to brain tumor recently in their native place. They wanted to be there with their widowed daughter who was left all alone. Many of them feared that they will not go home but die here as the area was sealed earlier because of three deaths in the neighbourhood.

Following this assessment, RIF team worked on the travel logistics and arranged for a bus for migrants from the area who wanted to travel to Tamil Nadu. These migrant labourers held hopes

of reaching their hometown sooner with this intervention. However, with the increasing COVID-19 cases in the city, a total lockdown was declared. As a result, the team had to face difficulties in securing e-passes and this trip got cancelled.

Already depressed, Esakki Thayi lost all the hopes of ever going back and attempted suicide. Our volunteer Catherine rushed to her house on hearing this news at 7am one morning. She spoke to Esakki and assured her that she will be definitely sent back to her native place and counselled her. However, the Tamil Nadu government too had declared a total lockdown. The whole RIF team got to work; they convinced the officials of the Kerala as well as Tamil Nadu governments for a clear passage and immediately booked train tickets on the Trivandrum-bound Netravati Express.

The RIF team then provided them with packed breakfast, lunch and dinner for the next 2 days till the time they could board their train. They were also given some cash for use till they reach their native place along with snacks, water, and food to eat during the journey. A bus was arranged to escort them from their house till the station and then again from the Trivandrum station to their native towns of Tirunelveli and Madurai. The RIF team had to do some rigorous follow ups with the authorities to get the e-passes for them to go through Kerala and then enter Tamil Nadu.

These migrants were quarantined for 14 days after reaching, as per the protocol. The RIF team was in constant touch with them during their travel and made sure they were safe and happy. The migrants acknowledged the team's efforts and were really thankful and grateful to every member of our team.

While departing, Esakki Thayi had tears in her eyes. As Catherine consoled her and told her to not cry anymore, she said a few touching words lovingly, "These are tears of joy. I don't have anything to give you but this every drop of my happy tears is rolling out to bless you and your team. You might have helped many people to reach their native but you won't know how much it means to me. I am alive only because of you."

4. Litan Ali: A depressed daily wage labourer from West Bengal- who wanted to kill himself and his family

Story of a daily wage earner, who wanted to go back home

Jeevan Rath Helpline was notified of a critical case of Litan Ali during their daily calls during the pandemic in June. Originally from Malda in West Bengal, Litan had been working in Mumbai for many years. When the RIF team contacted him, they could make out that he was extremely depressed about his situation, so much so, that he even mentioned about killing himself as well as his pregnant wife and a sick child.

Litan was extremely distraught over the lack of work and had exhausted his savings. He and his family were starving for almost 8 days and he had sold his wife's last piece of jewelry to reach Malda, to his village, in a truck.

An RIF team member then counselled him several times and assured him assistance. The very next day, he was provided with basic ration at his doorstep, which helped his family to stay afloat for some days. This came as a timely relief to Litan, as his wife was pregnant, and she had to feed herself and her foetus to stay immune and support him in this difficult time. The RIF team also provided him cash assistance and followed up with him to ensure his mental state was stable and his family was fed well.

Fortunately, Litan and his family survived this critical situation and are safe now having reached Malda. The long journey with a pregnant wife in a truck was again a task for him, however, for him to reaching home was more crucial.

Even now, Litan's expressive eyes are enough to convey how thankful he is to the whole Jeevan Rath team for rescuing him and his family.

5. Sorna Durga: Thrown out of her in-law's home

RIF and team saved the life of a suicidal woman suffering from domestic abuse

Sorna Durga, a 25-year-old catering professional, working as a chef on a cruise ship, fell in love with a colleague. They got married without the consent of both of their families as they both were from different religions which was not acceptable for both of their parents.

During the lockdown, both Sorna and her husband landed in Mumbai after signing off from the ship and went to stay with the husband's parents. She was not accepted by her in-laws who repeatedly ill-treated her. However, she continued staying with her husband as she believed that he was supporting her. But, one day in a drunken state, her husband too became violent and thrashed her black and blue.

After a long fight, she was ultimately thrown out of the house. She had no cash or savings left, as she had exhausted all her savings to repay her in-law's debts and for other expenses. Though educated, she was completely shattered, and had no place to go. She was absolutely clueless and literally sitting on a footpath near Marine Lines Station not knowing what to do next since her parents and family were in Chennai and due to lockdown, there were no means to travel.

Finally, she got in touch with RISE Infinity Foundation through one of the migrant labourers whom we had helped reach home along with 28 others to Tamil Nadu under the Jeevan Rath initiative. He also requested our team to counsel Sorna as she was in a terrible state of mind and he feared she was contemplating suicide. When Cathy, one of our team members, called her, and spoke to her in Tamil, she broke down and cried incessantly. She conveyed her problem to the team and we promptly took action. Cathy made sure that she was counselled enough as she was totally broke, and positively wanted to end her life. RIF contacted a shelter home at Saki Naka in Andheri East and they were ready to accept her.

Then we guided her to file a written complaint at the Marine Lines police station against her husband and in-laws. After persistent advocacy, the police were convinced and went along with her to her husband's house to collect her belongings. The team then helped her to reach the shelter home.

After spending a sleepless night thinking hard on her situation, Sorna called Cathy the next morning and sounding positive and confident. Sorna said that she will never cry again in her life and did not want to go back to her parents to give them more pain. In a determined tone, she said that she would look for a suitable job in Mumbai till she gets her next call on the cruise. Currently, Sorna is helping out at the shelter home and still considers us as her moral support and keeps sharing all what happens in her life with Cathy as a big sister.

It was a proud moment for the entire RIF team to see Sorna back on her feet. We hope and wish her all the best for her journey ahead.

10.Policies and Practices

As the effects of the pandemic continued to cause distress and suffering for millions, the largest group and perhaps most heart rendering situation was that of the migrant labourers. Jeevan Rath as a coalition of Partners, Enterprises and Citizen Volunteers made by the Maha C19 PECOnet led by UNICEF responded to this unprecedented situation through its collective efforts.

Core Committee for Governance

Governance Running a coalition-based project requires a significant degree of transparency and respect in order to build trust and deliver effectively. This was the basic tenet on which the PECOnet functioned from the beginning, every individual and institution realising their own role in the project while recognising the contribution of the others. A committee of core partners and UNICEF was formed to take decisions after debate and discussions.

Throughout the project, the team continued to assess the situation on the ground and charted the way forward based on the evolving needs and the dynamics of government and civil society efforts. Thus, there was a need to re-strategize constantly so as to adopt the optimum option to meet real needs of the community quickly. Policies, Processes and Practices were established to further ensure smooth operations and financial allocations. Some of the documented processes have been attached as annexures to the report.

Beneficiary Profile

One of the first decisions was to go beyond migrants travelling home, and to focus on helping migrants/people who:

1. were yet to leave for various reasons (pregnant wife, illness, senior citizens etc) and do not have funds to travel or need food and rations while they wait to get transportation
2. who stay back and need assistance for food, rent, medical, etc while they find jobs
3. those coming back to Maharashtra (in-bound migration) and need to re-settle
4. those migrating within the state (reverse migration), a significant number in itself and whose skill mapping was critical for advocacy on recovery efforts.

One of the significant pivot in the program was to also add multiple vulnerable groups to the migrant population, viz. who were “COVID affected” and “indirectly affected with need”, such as:

1. Slum communities and
2. Tribal belts and rural areas to reach the unreached

Planned intervention

The five key aspects that were decided upon as means to continue our assistance to the above groups were:

- I. Food & dry ration kits, that would include rice, dal, oil, pulses, salt, sugar and some spices. Hygiene items were to be included based on budgets and donors available
- II. Transportation - train and bus tickets as possible
- III. Cash transfers to cover household expenses including rent, medicines, quarantine, etc

Locations

Mumbai, Thane, Kalyan, Palghar, Vasai, Virar, Pune, Nashik and Nagpur and nearby areas

Fund Allocation

UNICEF provided an initial seed amount to RISE infinity Foundation for cash transfers, food and travel assistance. RISE Infinity Foundation has reached out to its vast network of corporate and other partners to leverage support for the Jeevan Rath program, both in terms of monetary and in kind assistance. All partners were to continue their efforts to raise additional funds to supplement the above. Partner Allocation was made as per previous process adopted for Ketto fund by UNICEF and RISE Infinity Foundation in consultation with partners for transparency and effectiveness.

Implementation

In order to ensure uniformity, effectiveness and transparency, a minimum SOP was discussed and established for the identifying beneficiaries and documentation pre-requisites for the 3 main relief measures.

While a conditional cash transfer along with ration kit was okayed as part of relief measures, it was agreed that cash would be given only in exceptional cases depending on the vulnerability and need. It is one time transfer and we can ensure beneficiary listing as per the criteria. Any additional amounts and recurring assistance would be discretionary based on the severity of the situation, averaging of cases and availability of resources.

Based on the above policies, RISE Infinity Foundation formulated process and practices to go with the same as documented in Annexure.

10.1 Challenges

- I. **Uncertainty:** The uncertainties of the pandemic, be it the spread of the virus or the timing of the lockdown have resulted in a tremendous amount of anxiety for most if not all stakeholders. This has resulted in proving to be a huge challenge to plan for any activities to return to a Business As Usual situation.
- II. **New normal:** This quickly was visible to all involved in Jeevan Rath. There was limited face to face interaction, and stemming from the new normal of Zoom meetings, planning, collaboration and coordination had to be figured out on the fly. There was no SOP, nor was it feasible to design an SOP as the ground situation was constantly changing.
- III. **Unpredictable state machinery:** While all the stakeholders were (and still are) committed to assisting all in need, there were (and still are) things that were not in our control. Ranging from random decisions about ration card necessity, to Shramik train availability, it was evident that the state machinery was far from stable and predictable in terms of services/assistance available to citizens.
- IV. **Infinite demand, limited supply:** Whether it was a meal, or ration kits for families, the demand of those in need by far outstripped the availability of any supplies. Ranging from food to hygiene products, to availability of seats on trains/buses, the demand was exponentially higher than the available supply.
- V. **Multifaceted complexity of crisis's:** The hardships that were encountered had complexities that were unprecedented. Travel for some was of paramount importance to their home states, but associated with that was the lack of any income upon reaching home. Hunger was widespread, and was easily alleviated by providing a meal, but there was always the question about the next meal. And meals one month from then as it were the loss of jobs, and the highly virulent environment that threw everyone off globally.
- VI. **Logistics:** Even when there were solutions, due to travel restrictions, combined with areas that were containment zones, delivering of the solutions was never easy, thereby, further stretching the 3 most precious commodities – time, manpower and finance. Challenges eased off some as lockdown opened partially, but just the unavailability of transportation made these times more challenging than ever before.
- VII. **Team Morale:** With the ongoing lockdown, uncertainty and fear of the corona virus, maintaining team morale for a normal team has been difficult for most organisations, but for an organization providing disaster relief it is even more difficult. Solutions are not always available nor perfect. Exposure to human suffering can demoralize most fellow human beings and even lead to depression. This was compounded by the fact that most team members (other than the call centre executives) were working 14-15 hours a day on average and were expected to be available round the clock for emergency response. Co-ordination post mid-night was a norm and on occasion have been all night long. Under these circumstances counselling and team spirit was the key to boosting team morale.

10.2 Learning's

- I. **Constant monitoring:** Given the nature of the times, we learned very quickly that a solution designed for today, may not work tomorrow. Whether it was train schedules, or policies being rolled out by the state, things were changing constantly. Having the pulse on the situations became the necessity during such times.
- II. **Knowledge management:** The world has seen much innovation occur during these times, and while some solutions are public knowledge, it is of significance to have a forum by means of which both quantitative and qualitative data associated with finding solutions is shared in large groups. While social media did this to some extent, development of a repository for such matters will be extremely valuable.
- III. **Team management:** With no face to face contact between most team members, and the absence of hallway conversations, these times has shown us that there is much need for structured communication, both transactional and social in nature. Furthermore, there has been much anxiety about the pandemic, the economic impact, and this can have an impact on the performance and productivity of team members. In line with this, is the clarity of team responsibilities, and necessary changes to existent policies and flexible working hours.
- IV. **Rapid Design of solutions while defining problem:** As time unfolded, it was clear that new problems kept emerging, and new solutions had to be designed. Whether it is data collection forms, or mechanisms to avoid duplication of efforts, solutions had to be designed rapidly, even though the full nature of the problem may not have been understood. This rapid reaction became essential at the times of such situations.
- V. **Prioritization:** There will be no debate on the demand by far exceeding the supply. In such situations, there must be mechanism that allows prioritization such that maximum impact can be delivered to those that are most in need.
- VI. **Collaboration:** In times of disasters, the importance of collaboration cannot be over emphasized enough. Without the support of networks both individuals and institutions, all bound by the single objective to support migrants, a pan India effort would have been neigh impossible.
- VII. **Volunteers:** The incredible selflessness of time and effort by volunteers speaks volumes of the good that exist in our world and gives hope to build back better. A key insight was also about a difference in perspective and approach of volunteers as compared to paid staff. This is not about good or bad differences nor about right or wrong, but it is critical to understand that the mindset of each can be contrasting and so you need to work with each group in a very subtle yet clearly demarcated boundary lines.
- VIII. **Distress lines:** While there were a plethora of helplines during the crisis, most shut down or moved to whatsapp, IVR and google forms. This was because of the focus on inbound which at times became overwhelming. Moreover, helplines are manned for a specific period of time, weekends, evenings etc. Distress lines on the other hand have to be available whenever required and hence is almost operational 24*7. Moreover, in times of distress, you cannot wait for them to find help, assistance needs to reach them. With this in mind, the Jeevan Rath Call centre focused primarily on Outbound calls to reach out to migrants as they travelled so as to track whether they have reached their destination safely and offer support in case of problems.

11. Way forward

The Jeevan Rath program was started as an emergency response to provide disaster relief measures. The program is now entering an early recovery mode and there is much to be done to ensure further progress post 31st July 2020, the project end date. It was unanimously agreed by the group, that there was a clear need for the continuation of the current assistance for the immediate critical needs of our target groups – **food and cash transfers**. In addition, we should work on **Employment and WASH** as both have financial consequences – one on inflow, the other on outflow. **Skill development and Entrepreneurship** would be the tools for rehabilitation and reintegration of unskilled, semi-skilled and skilled workers into the economy.

It was also reiterated that we need UNICEF's assistance to leverage the government as well and to bring visibility to our efforts thus far. Systems are also required that can be used in emergencies and over a wide time lens. A common database where all can get details of distribution to avoid duplications, would be the need of the hour. Technology would be a key enabler of such processes backed by appropriate MIS.

We will need to expand the partner network to have more hands on ground as well as increase resources available for the program and relief packages. The budget provided by UNICEF Mumbai is to seed the program, it will be necessary for all partners and stakeholders to build on the same. Formation of sub-groups such as the one for Palghar along with a multi-sectoral approach was an example of how the group can evolve and yet stay manageable as it grows and multiplies its impact.

Between 1 and 15 June, the government spent Rs 557.7 crore on distributing ration to NFSA card holders through the Public Distribution System. A total of 1.51 lakh MT of rice and wheat was distributed to 152.59 lakh card holders in the first fortnight of June. Further, through the PMGKAY 0.51 lakh MT of rice and dal was distributed to 28.72 lakh card holders for this period. Under the 'Shiv Bhojan' scheme, aimed to provide one square meal a day to poor and needy populations, 15.3 lakh thalis were distributed, and the state spent Rs 1.94 crore. The state is trying to increase NFSA coverage by encouraging people to register, by self-declaration of income. Rationing Dakshata Samitis in villages and District Takrar Nivaran Samitis are being activated to monitor the PDS. A Data collection initiative can be drawn up post 31st July to create a list that segregates NFSA and no rational card holders to whom we distributed ration kits under Jeevan Rath 1.0. Also collect basic information regarding access to government schemes (having Jan Dhan account, job card, etc). The program going forward can then establish linkages with PDS and add to the existing PDS with supplies recommended so that it complements the existing schemes.

It is recommended to understand how the Jeevan Rath program could be complementary to government response and next steps to strengthen the program outcomes for long term impact. **Documentation - Reporting – Amplification** would go a long way in putting in place appropriate ***policies, processes and practices*** for an efficient coalition ready to respond to real needs. **Advocacy & Action through and for Employment & Assistance** would be the framework for **Jeevan Rath 3.0.**

Table of Abbreviations

JR	Jeevan Rath
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
RIF	RISE Infinity Foundation
CMC	Crisis Management Center
IEC	Information Education Communication
NGO	Non-Government Organization
PECONet	Partners, Entrepreneurs, Citizen, Ownership Network
MCGM	The Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai
CBO	Community Based Organizations
NFSA	National Food Security Act
PDS	Public Distribution System
MIS	Management Information System
MT	Metric tonne
PMGKAY	Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana

Index of Tables

Table 1 - Travel Status	9
Table 2 - Jeevan Rath Partners.....	11
Table 3 - Ecosystem Partners	11

Index of Charts

Chart 1 – Daily distribution during JR 1.0.....	5
Chart 2 - CMC Organogram	8
Chart 3 - Travel Status	9
Chart 4 - Migrant Assistance provided across time	9
Chart 5 - Call Status	12
Chart 6 - Gender Distribution.....	13
Chart 7 - Age Distribution.....	13
Chart 8 - Age vs Gender	13
Chart 9 - Destination of individuals.....	14
Chart 10 - Occupation status.....	14
Chart 11 - Travel Assistance provided - Partner wise	15
Chart 12 - Ration Distribution by partners.....	17
Chart 13 - Ration kit distribution.....	18
Chart 14 - Cash assistance cases	20
Chart 15 - Employment Status	21

We thank UNICEF and all our Partners and collaborators, staff and volunteers for their unstinting support and efforts to meet the needs of people in distress in this unprecedented situation of the pandemic and the ensuing humanitarian crisis.

RISE Infinity Foundation Team



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