



## Umang Vaani | Newsletter

Year: 2 | Issue No. 1

COVID-19 Special

May 2020

### UMANG Program : Community Outreach for COVID-19 Response

		Godda	Jamtara
Team members and adolescents engaged in awareness generation		28 UMANG team members + 50 adolescent girls	27 UMANG team members + 75 adolescent girls
Number of villages covered by awareness generation campaigns		26	56
Outreach for awareness generation	Women	305	1481
	Adolescents	518	1246
	Others	170	1219
Distribution of sanitization kits (inclusive of masks, soap, sanitizer and Dettol)		257	725
Distribution of essential supplies/ration		x	100

Data shared as on April 28, 2020

“The COVID-19 pandemic has had a severe impact globally. As it follows, India has also been struggling with it. I request readers to follow the instructions issued by the government and stay at home; we shall win the battle soon. In these challenging times, I am heartened by the support coming in from the UMANG program. Let us all fight this battle together and through collective efforts. ”

**Ganesh Kumar, IAS**  
Deputy Commissioner, Jamtara

Dear readers,

I hope you and your loved ones are safe and healthy. This edition of **UMANG Vaani** comes to you in a time of global crisis. The spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) has brought nations to a halt and has drastically changed the way we live our daily lives. Offices, schools and other economic, social and cultural institutions have been temporarily closed and people have been asked to practice social distancing to keep themselves and others around them safe.

Although this may be the “new normal” in the times to come, we must remember that we are united through a shared connection and a sense of belonging, and must work together toward achieving the goal of social justice.

In compliance with the lockdown restrictions, and in the interest of public health and safety, the field-level activities of the **UMANG** program – with adolescents, parents and community members – have been put on hold.

While considering the magnitude of the crisis at present, it is crucial to be cognizant of the unique vulnerabilities of various groups, particularly women and girls. Disconnected from schooling due to the nationwide lockdown, adolescent girls are finding themselves confined to their homes, bearing the burden of domestic work and caretaking. They face a heightened risk of violence and early marriage. Given prevailing social norms and gender inequalities, it is likely that many adolescent girls may be deprived of the opportunity to complete their education because of the COVID-19 fallout.

Our **UMANG team** is working tirelessly to reach out to adolescent girls and their families, and to develop strategies and interventions for mitigating the adverse impact of the lockdown. I am happy to share that **UMANG team members** from **ICRW Asia** and our partners **SATHEE, Badlao Foundation** and **Project Concern International (PCI)** have been at the forefront of community assistance and response activities in **Godda** and **Jamtara** districts of Jharkhand.



We are working closely with the government, district administration authorities, and other partners and stakeholders to provide support in various ways. Through a range of activities, including preparation and distribution of essential supplies, awareness generation campaigns on hygienic practices, etc., **UMANG team members** have been amplifying and strengthening the reach of government response activities.

It is heartening to share that many adolescent girls, who have been part of the **UMANG program**, have been actively leading and participating in response activities in their respective communities. While taking the necessary health and safety precautions themselves, they have done commendable work in ensuring that people in their communities also follow similar measures by making and distributing home-made protective masks, spreading awareness through social media, etc.

This special edition of **UMANG Vaani** highlights the response efforts of our team and partners in **Godda** and **Jamtara**. It also showcases a few brilliant initiatives by adolescent girls to help their communities in these difficult times.

We hope that this newsletter encourages and inspires others, and serves as a resource for all.

Wishing you all good health,

**Dr. Ravi Verma**  
Regional Director, ICRW Asia

### Khushbu Kumari Helps Her Village Gear Up Against COVID-19

**Khushbu Kumari** is a student of grade 8 at Budhikura Middle School in **Godda, Jharkhand**. She is a member of the adolescent girls' group in **Budhikura village**, which is about 30 kilometers away from Godda. This is the farthest village from Godda in terms of access to resources and communication.

Energetic and passionate, Khushbu has been an active participant in the school- and community-based sessions of the **UMANG program**. The 14-year old has always been enthusiastic about attending the sports and group activities organized as part of these sessions.

When the UMANG sessions were halted on account of the lockdown, Khushbu was quite upset that she could not meet with her group and play with her friends for a while. As she watched the news on TV, she learned more about the danger that COVID-19 poses and about the health and safety precautions that must be taken to protect oneself – using protective masks when going out in public or interacting with others, following social distancing measures, and washing hands and maintaining hygiene.

Khushbu immediately contacted **Shabnam**, the **UMANG peer mentor** leading her adolescent girls' group, to understand how her family and others could get masks since the lockdown made it difficult for anyone to leave their village. Shabnam shared with her a few online videos on how to make masks at home. Inspired by the videos, Khushbu tried to make a few masks at home using the resources available – some



leftover cloth and her mother's sewing machine.

Once she succeeded in making the first one, Khushbu gave it to her mother. She began making more to share with her family members and with other adolescent girls from her group. With encouragement and support from Shabnam, Khushbu began making masks and distributing them in her remote village in exchange for nominal charges to help make more masks for community members.

So far, Khushbu has made and distributed about 120 masks. Through her brilliant initiative, Khushbu is helping members of her community safeguard themselves from the threat of COVID-19.



## UMANG Assists with Jharkhand Government's Efforts

UMANG team members in Godda and Jamtara districts, Jharkhand, are working closely with the respective district administration authorities to strengthen ongoing efforts and response activities to combat the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on villages.

Volunteers and team members are spreading awareness on government programs and schemes launched as part of prevention and response efforts. They are also helping with the implementation of response activities and supporting awareness generation on entitlements for vulnerable and affected families under various relief schemes.

UMANG team members are monitoring social distancing at public distribution system (PDS) kiosks and are trying to ensure that the ration/supplies are being distributed as mandated by the government.

UMANG team members are working along with frontline community healthcare workers – Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) and Sahiyyas. AWWs are involved in running Integrated Child Development Service

(ICDS) centers, while Sahiyyas are community-level volunteers from the health department, also known as Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs). Together, they are orienting people on proper ways of hand washing as well as on sanitization.

In Godda, the district administration organized a one-day district level orientation on measures to respond to the pandemic. The event was facilitated by the health department. Around 15 UMANG volunteers from SATHEE also attended the event. Post the training, all trainees undertook field visits to help identify people with symptoms of COVID-19.

Badlao Foundation has been designated as the "Mother NGO" to work on COVID-19 response activities along with the district administration in Jamtara. The Rural Development Department, Government of Jharkhand has been notified about the same by the district administration. In addition, Badlao Foundation's team is focusing on livelihood linkages and working with the district administration for provision of jobs within the Panchayat through the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS).

UMANG has an MoU with the Jharkhand State Livelihood Promotion Society (JSLPS), Government

of Jharkhand, for the implementation of the UMANG program. UMANG team members from PCI undertook an assessment to understand the impact of the lockdown on the daily lives of community members. The team from PCI interacted with women representatives from 45 Self-Help Groups (SHGs) across Godda and Jamtara. The women reflected on the severe economic impact the crisis has had on them and their communities as for most daily wage work was the main source of their livelihood. The closure of local shops as per the lockdown restrictions has resulted in a further loss of earnings for them. They shared that they are living through their savings, which are depleting as well.

As a response to this crisis, the state government launched "didi kitchens" at the panchayat level. Women from SHGs are leading these kitchens and at present, it is their only source of income. They are also engaged in the production of masks and sanitizers.

UMANG team members from PCI have also been supporting the government in identifying and listing migrant workers. Further, they are assisting in circulating knowledge and information on "bank didi" (representatives from SHGs helping with bank linkages to avail direct cash transfers as part of the state government's COVID-19 response scheme) and didi helpline numbers.

# UMANG Team Members Raise Awareness Against COVID-19

A report on various efforts made by the UMANG team to circulate information on recommended measures to prevent infection...

- ICRW Asia's partners for the UMANG program – SATHEE and Badlao Foundation – are working closely with district administration authorities and program team members to support behavior change communication campaigns to reduce risk of infection at the community level. Efforts include orienting villagers to the concept and practice of social distancing; raising awareness on proper techniques of washing hands as well as wearing masks; and discussing ways to enhance self-efficacy.

- Badlao Foundation has taken steps to enhance awareness levels in villages of Jamtara district in Jharkhand through UMANG field facilitators and peer mentors, who are currently residing in their respective villages due to the nationwide lockdown. Many of these field facilitators and peer mentors have also volunteered their time to join COVID-19 response initiatives being implemented in their respective locations.

- As part of supporting the government's joint response activities, UMANG team members have been reaching out to frontline community health workers – such as ASHAs – and orienting them on preventive health and safety measures as well as use of sanitizers. The ASHAs, in turn, are reaching out to and educating households and community members.

- UMANG team members have also been reaching out directly to community members by organizing and conducting awareness generation activities, while taking adequate safety precautions and gearing up for protection against risk of infection. In Afzalpur village of the Nala block in Jamtara district, UMANG team members have been working closely with government appointed ASHAs and AWWs to raise awareness among community members, adolescents and their families on the restrictions of the lockdown and the importance of social distancing.



- UMANG team members visited 150 households along with ASHAs and AWWs, while maintaining appropriate safety measures, to inform and educate the families on washing hands and social distancing. A small meeting was conducted (with adequate precautions) at the village temple, with a few frontline workers and the head of Gram Panchayat (village level elected body for governance) in attendance, to discuss the relief schemes introduced under the ambit of the Jharkhand Chief Minister's Office (Mukhya Mantri Manav Sewa Yojna) and provision of health support to migrant workers returning to their villages. During such community-level sessions, UMANG team members have been distributing face masks and training people on their proper use.

- UMANG team members have also been educating community members on how to practice social distancing in various activities on a daily basis. Collection of drinking water is an essential daily chore for most and requires a visit to the community tap or hand pump. There is likelihood of a crowd gathering around water sources, which, in turn, increases the risk of infection. UMANG team members aided villagers in marking clear positions with chalk circles (6 feet apart from one another) near water sources. This has helped people in keeping adequate distance from each other and avoiding contact while waiting for their turn to collect water.

- In Godda district, UMANG team members distributed sanitization kits to 250 families across 11 villages of Godda and Mahagama blocks. Team members supported a few adolescents in the distribution activities (with adequate health and safety precautions) so that they could reach out to families in their neighborhood regarding preventive health measures, with a special emphasis on care for the elderly.

- Brief sessions were organized in villages on proper ways of hand washing and social distancing. Across villages of Godda and Mahagama blocks, 30 adolescent girls' groups took part in such initiatives their respective villages (with adequate safety and health precautions). The girls helped UMANG team members in identifying vulnerable families in their region. Later, the girls were trained on how to use the sanitization kits (containing soap, face masks, hand sanitizer, Dettol and phenyl) being distributed to everyone. These girls wore face masks and gloves during the distribution of sanitization kits. They also spoke to families regarding various components of sanitization kits as well as hand washing, use of face masks and social distancing.





# UMANG Partners Support COVID-19 Relief Initiatives

UMANG partners help in the distribution of food, essential supplies, and sanitization kits...

About 73 percent of the population of **Godda** and **Jamtara** districts, **Jharkhand**, lives in rural areas. The primary sources of livelihood in these areas are agriculture and daily wage work. The lockdown on account of the COVID-19 pandemic has had a severe impact on people here and, it has brought all activities to a grinding halt. Among the residents here, migrant laborers, farmers, women and girls have been the most affected. On April 12, 2020, **UMANG team members** distributed ration/essential supplies, protective masks (made of khadi cloth), soap and sanitizers among the most vulnerable families at **Kewatjaali Ashram** in **Jamtara**, supported by **Badlao Foundation**. Further, similar sanitization kits and rations were distributed among another 65 vulnerable families currently residing near railway tracks at **Mihijam** in **Jamtara**.



UMANG team members assisting at the didi kitchen in Chandradheepa village, Jamtara



Sathee & Badlao Foundation distribute sanitization kits and other essentials among families during an awareness generation campaign

**Badlao Foundation** also came to the aid of adolescent girls living in 27 **UMANG** intervention villages in **Nala** and blocks in **Jamtara**. Protective masks and soap were distributed among adolescent girls. Adequate safety and health precautions were taken and information about such measures were shared with community members during the activity.



An adolescent girl hands out a sanitization kit

**UMANG members** from **SATHEE** also distributed sanitization kits among 250 families across 11 villages in **Godda** and **Mahagama** blocks in **Godda** district. Team members encouraged adolescent girls to participate (while observing adequate safety practices) in the training sessions on the distribution and use of these sanitization kits so that they could inform and educate their families and community members, particularly the elderly.

In addition, **SATHEE** also supplied sanitization kits, ration, oil and other essentials to about 500 families in **Boarijor** and **Sunderpahaari** blocks.



UMANG team members from Sathee distribute sanitization kits, ration and other essentials

**UMANG team members** have been assisting at "didi kitchens", instituted at the community level by **JSLPS, Government of Jharkhand**. These kitchens have been supplying cooked meals on a daily basis to vulnerable individuals and families. **UMANG team members** have been volunteering their time to help cook and serve meals while ensuring that people attending follow the prescribed health and safety practices.



UMANG team members help ensure social distancing at the government-run Grahak Sewa Kendras (Customer Help Centers)

The government has implemented multiple measures to ensure that essential supplies and commodities are regularly available to vulnerable populations through its **Grahak Sewa Kendras** (Customer Help Centers).

**UMANG team members** have been generating awareness on such government support and relief schemes as well as health and safety practices at the centers. They have also been assisting people in accessing the relief cash entitlements provided by the government and helping them get it credited to their bank accounts.

## Young Inspiration: Yasmin and Nasima Step Up Against the Pandemic!

Yasmin and Nasima are two 15-year-old girls who, reside in **Samri village** of **Godda** district, **Jharkhand**. The girls are close friends and enthusiastic participants in the community-based group sessions organized for adolescent girls under the **UMANG program**.

Yasmin pursued school education up to grade 7 and Nasima up to grade 8 before dropping out. After they began attending the **UMANG** group sessions and interacting with other girls, Yasmin and Nasima felt that they should return to school and continue their education. They were encouraged and supported by **Ishrat**, a peer mentor from the **UMANG** program, who took the initiative to reenroll them in school. Now, Yasmin is also the leader of her adolescent girls' group.

Recently, the **UMANG** group sessions were halted in compliance with the nationwide lockdown restrictions. Despite the circumstances, Yasmin and Nasima remained in contact with each other and with **Ishrat**. They engage regularly in discussions on various issues including their studies, the lockdown and its impact, among other matters.

As part of the response efforts and activities, **Ishrat** was asked to prepare a list of vulnerable people and families in the village to aid the distribution of sanitization kits and essential supplies. Together, Yasmin and Nasima, took on the responsibility of coordinating and collating the list based on their knowledge of their community and its members. They also went the extra mile and assisted with the distribution of the kits.

Both girls took all the necessary precautions themselves while reaching out to their community members and helping with the distribution activities. These girls have inspired other adolescents like them to step up and contribute to their community.

### उमंग ने किया मास्क का वितरण



मास्क वितरण कर कोरोना की जानकारी देते महिला सदस्य.

मिहिजाम, बदलाव फाउंडेशन व आइसीआरडब्ल्यू की संयुक्त पहल में महिलाओं के सदस्यों ने...

### दैनिक भास्कर



उमंग कार्यकर्ताओं ने किशोरियों के बीच खादी कपड़े से बने मास्क व साबुन का किया वितरण

बच्चों तथा उनके माता-पिता को कोरोना संक्रमण से बचाव के लिए किया जागरूक



## Zainab's Insight Helps Spread Awareness

*"One cannot calm the storm, the effort is in vain; Calm yourself, the storm will abate on its own."*

My name is Bibi Zainab Khaton and I am a resident of **Ghat Gamharia village** of **Mahagama** block in **Godda** district, **Jharkhand**. I work as a peer mentor with the **UMANG program** and I lead group sessions for adolescent girls in the community. I strive to be in regular contact with the adolescent girls attending my group, particularly in the current scenario.

Ever since they learned about COVID-19, people in my village have not been meeting with each other and have been practicing social distancing. However, in my conversations with the adolescent girls in my group, I learned that in a hamlet in the village, people were not adhering to the health and safety precautions as suggested. In the densely populated tola, people had been continuing to meet with each other.

I felt that someone should take the time to reach out to the residents of the hamlet to explain the dangers of COVID-19 and the need for maintaining caution as well as following health and safety practices. However, I was afraid of what would people say or think about me if I step out of my house during the lockdown. Would they think I was being negligent and irresponsible?

I thought I had to overcome my fear and step out because it was important to meet the people of the hamlet and discuss and explain the situation to them as

they did not understand the gravity of the threat. So, I went to meet these people, had a long talk with them about the dangers of the novel coronavirus, and appealed to them to follow health and safety measures.

Then, I invited some adolescent girls and their parents, drew circles on the ground with white chalk, requested them to stand in one circle each and explained the concept of social distancing. I also demonstrated the correct technique of washing hands and emphasized the importance of washing hands properly with soap as well as maintaining cleanliness and hygiene.

I requested everyone to practice social distancing, to not gather or crowd at any place, and to not meet with anyone without adequate safety measures – maintaining a safe distance from one another, wearing a face mask, and washing hands with soap or handwash afterward. The residents of the tola were happy to discuss this. They shared they were not aware of all these things earlier. They promised me that they would follow social distancing norms, avoid crowding and practice caution.

Now, the residents of this hamlet are circulating this information with people in other villages as well.



## COVID-19 Fallout : A Quick Assessment of the Situation at the Community Level

**Badlao Foundation** undertook a quick assessment to understand the prevailing situation owing to the COVID-19 pandemic in **27 villages** in the **Jamtara** and **Nala** blocks in **Jamtara, Jharkhand**. The assessment focused on the migrant laborers who returned to their villages (due to loss of employment) before and during the lockdown. The objective was to document the challenges faced by communities and to share the details of the same with local elected representatives for expediting solutions. The organization conducted a survey on the health facilities and essential services made available to the people. Key findings of this assessment have been highlighted in the table.

Status of migrants in the surveyed communities			
Number of villages surveyed	Number of migrant laborers in the surveyed communities	Numbers of migrant laborers who returned (out of total)	Number of returned migrants with cold, cough and fever
27	240	102	22

**UMANG team members** in these villages, Anup Mandal and Savitri Soren, informed the block level health team at Nala about the 22 migrants with complaints of cold, cough and fever. They were counselled and referred to the nearest District Hospital in Jamtara, where they underwent thermal screening and were provided with suitable medication. Later, it was reported that they are recovering post treatment.

It was also observed that besides the 22 migrant workers (who were identified as ill), there were 36 other community members who were sick but had not sought medical help as they feared being screened and quarantined. They were counselled and taken for testing with assistance from the local healthcare departments. None of them have health issues at present.

Across these 27 villages, about 389 families were living in extreme poverty and hunger owing to loss of employment. Daily wage work was the main livelihood for most of them. **UMANG** team members made a note of these families and tried to ensure that they get essential supplies/ration along with supportive cash entitlements in their respective bank accounts. These facilities are being provided by the Government of Jharkhand in the wake of the ongoing crisis.

**UMANG** team members are also reaching out and circulating information on government helpline numbers for health and safety concerns. Some of the helplines have been shared here in the newsletter. We request readers to circulate this information through their network.



## Helplines

SERVICES	JHARKHAND HELPLINES	NATIONAL HELPLINES
<b>Women's Helpline Domestic Abuse</b>	<b>9060754410</b>	<b>181</b>
<b>State/National Commission for Women</b>	<b>6204261096</b> (Amit Kumar: PS to Chairperson of Jharkhand State Commission for Women)	<b>7217735372</b> (For WhatsApp)
<b>Mental Health Helpline</b>	<b>980114493/9801133966</b> Timings: From 12 noon to 5 pm (A Ranchi district administration initiative)	<b>08046110007</b> (NIMHANS helpline)
<b>Jharkhand Police Helpline for Women</b>	<b>9771432103</b>	
<b>COVID-19 Lockdown – Jharkhand State Helpline for irregularities during distribution of ration/ essential supplies by the Jharkhand government</b>	Toll-Free: 1967 & 1800-212-5512	
<b>Corona Control Room</b>	<b>Godda District : 9297878447/9297878390</b> <b>Jamtara District : 06433-222245</b>	<b>104</b>

## Acknowledgements

All the activities mentioned in the newsletter are financially supported by **UMANG**, a joint initiative of **ICRW** and its partners – **Badlao Foundation**, **SATHEE** and **PCI**. **UMANG** works closely with the **Government of Jharkhand** and is supported by **IKEA Foundation**.

We thank the following **UMANG Team members** for their support in the conceptualization, development, and circulation of this newsletter :

**ICRW** – Dr. Ravi Verma, Amajit Mukherjee, Pranita Achyut, Dr. Nasreen Jamal, Rajendra Singh, Tanvi Jha, Ketaki V. Nagaraju, Paras Verma, Nalini V. Khurana, Binit Jha and Triloki Nath; **PCI** – Ankita Kashish and Nawab Parvez; **SATHEE** – Dr. Neeraj Kumar and Neha Sarkar; and **Badlao Foundation** – Arvind Kumar and Dinesh Yadav.

**For information about this newsletter or the relief work highlighted here, please contact the following :**

Point Person	Organization	Mobile Number
Dr. Nasreen Jamal	ICRW Asia	9431391359
Sushmita Mukherjee	PCI	8920132942
Dr. Neeraj Kumar	SATHEE	7004905488
Arvind Kumar	Badlao Foundation	8210932507



**ICRW Ranchi Office:**  
405, 4th Floor, Krishna Mall, Ashok Nagar,  
Between Road No. 1&2, Opposite Central GST Office,  
Ranchi - Jharkhand - 834002  
Tel. - 0651-2244416/2244417

**ICRW Asia Regional Office:**  
C-59, South Ext. Part II, New Delhi-110049  
Tel. : 91-11-4664.3333 ,  
Fax : 91-11-2463.5142  
Email : Info.india@icrw.org