





healthcare



**community
empowerment**



environment



education



**financial
inclusion**

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Transforming lives in the slums of Delhi





From the Director's Desk



Thank you, Asha team and all our supporters around the world to help us to combat the Covid pandemic among the slum dwellers in Delhi

Dear Friends,

The past year has been a period of one of the greatest challenges the world has ever faced. It may be a time to fight, a time to question, a time to mourn, but there is always one thing we can hold on to: hope.

How shall I thank the many Asha friends who have supported us during these hardest of times, even while you yourselves are going through so much uncertainty and are hurting? The Asha family is thinking of you all and remembering you in our prayers during these unprecedented and deeply uncertain circumstances. I can imagine that many of you are suffering different kinds of hardships. We empathize with you and hold you in our thoughts every day.

The effects of COVID-19 have been devastating in our slum communities. Most slum residents are daily wage earners, earning daily and spending daily. They are too poor to have any savings. The Prime Minister of India announced a complete national lockdown from midnight of March 24, 2020. This sent our slums into economic and financial shock. The police patrols were severe, and residents were beaten if they dared to step out of their homes.

Social distancing was impossible with 6 to 7 people living in one room of about 50 to 60 square feet. There was no money to buy soap to wash hands. The public toilet blocks became filthy because the sanitation workers stopped coming for fear of COVID-19. There was garbage everywhere and a terrible stench in the air. The sense of despair was everywhere. The little kids were frightened. All schools were closed. Public transport was shut down, so our Asha centers had to be shut down as well.

As the situation evolved, I saw that all the food containers in the homes were empty. No one had food. No one had money. The very poor had not a single rupee. The government began distributing rice and lentils at various locations in the city. People had to stand in a long line and wait for hours before they could get a bowl of rice and lentils. The elderly, the disabled, women with little children would get crushed in the massive crowds that fell upon the food as soon as it arrived.

Asha stepped in immediately on the first day of the lockdown. None of the staff members could go to the communities, so in every slum I formed teams of Asha's university students, calling them Asha Corona Warriors. These brave young girls and boys showed exemplary courage at a time when not a soul entered the slums. They went from home to home explaining the importance of social distancing, hand washing, and staying at home. They faced the ire and abuse of frustrated slum residents but did not give up. I got them to work with the local police of the areas, so that lockdown could be enforced with humane treatment.

I felt compelled to address the hunger that was seen in every home, in every family. I began a massive hunger relief operation by procuring grocery kits containing wheat flour, lentils, oil, salt, curry powder, tea leaves, sugar, and soap. Hundreds of grocery bags were sent all over the city, and the Asha Corona Warriors distributed them at home to the poorest and neediest families. I began to distribute cash to starving families and those with sick patients who desperately needed medicines. Tears of relief and

gratitude poured down when they saw the money in their hands.

The young children began to fall into malnutrition because there was no food. I immediately prepared Child Nutrition Kits containing high-calorie and high-protein items. Food and funds were distributed with dignity and respect. They are all hardworking people who have fallen upon terrible times.

The Asha Warriors also visited every home and offered emotional support, aside from all the public health and cash assistance. People were extremely lonely, anxious, frightened, and uncertain about their future, as all of them had started to run out of funds. The Asha Warriors also worked alongside the police and government elected officials to maintain peace and order in all of Asha's slum communities.

Our daily presence in the Asha slums is evidence that the dark clouds of disease, hunger, and joblessness prevail; problems that continue to bring much misery to the poor. Common and disturbing sights are rickshaw pullers returning without any rides for the day, construction workers coming home without work, factory workers being paid a fraction of an already meager wage, loaders and cart pullers returning empty-handed, hawkers and ware sellers sitting at home.

Asha is continuing to provide grocery bags as much as possible and is running special clinics for vulnerable groups. Asha's Supplementary Nutrition Programme is critical to providing nutrients to those falling into malnutrition. Treatment for non-Covid illnesses is extremely hard to access for the poor because the Covid-19 crisis has absorbed the already stretched resources of the public health services. Routine immunizations have been discontinued, and the risk of the return of vaccine-preventable childhood illnesses is high. Where will they go? Asha has begun baby clinics and clinics for non-Covid illnesses.

At a time like this, you have walked with us through the lanes and alleys in the Asha slum communities, standing up for the marginalized, the oppressed, the downtrodden, for those without hope and love, forsaken and left alone. Together, we have shown tenderness towards their fears and anguish, consistency in their insecurity, and have never abandoned them, never been too busy for them.

Our togetherness in this vast mission has touched and saved thousands of lives. This emergency is long and uncertain, and we must continue our interventions with loyalty and commitment for as long as is necessary. Your choice to live by the highest and noblest of values gives me so much encouragement. I receive the strength to lead my team with boldness and enthusiasm.

Thank you for always lending us your support in times of crisis such as this. We are thinking of each one of you, and pray that you will stay safe and well.

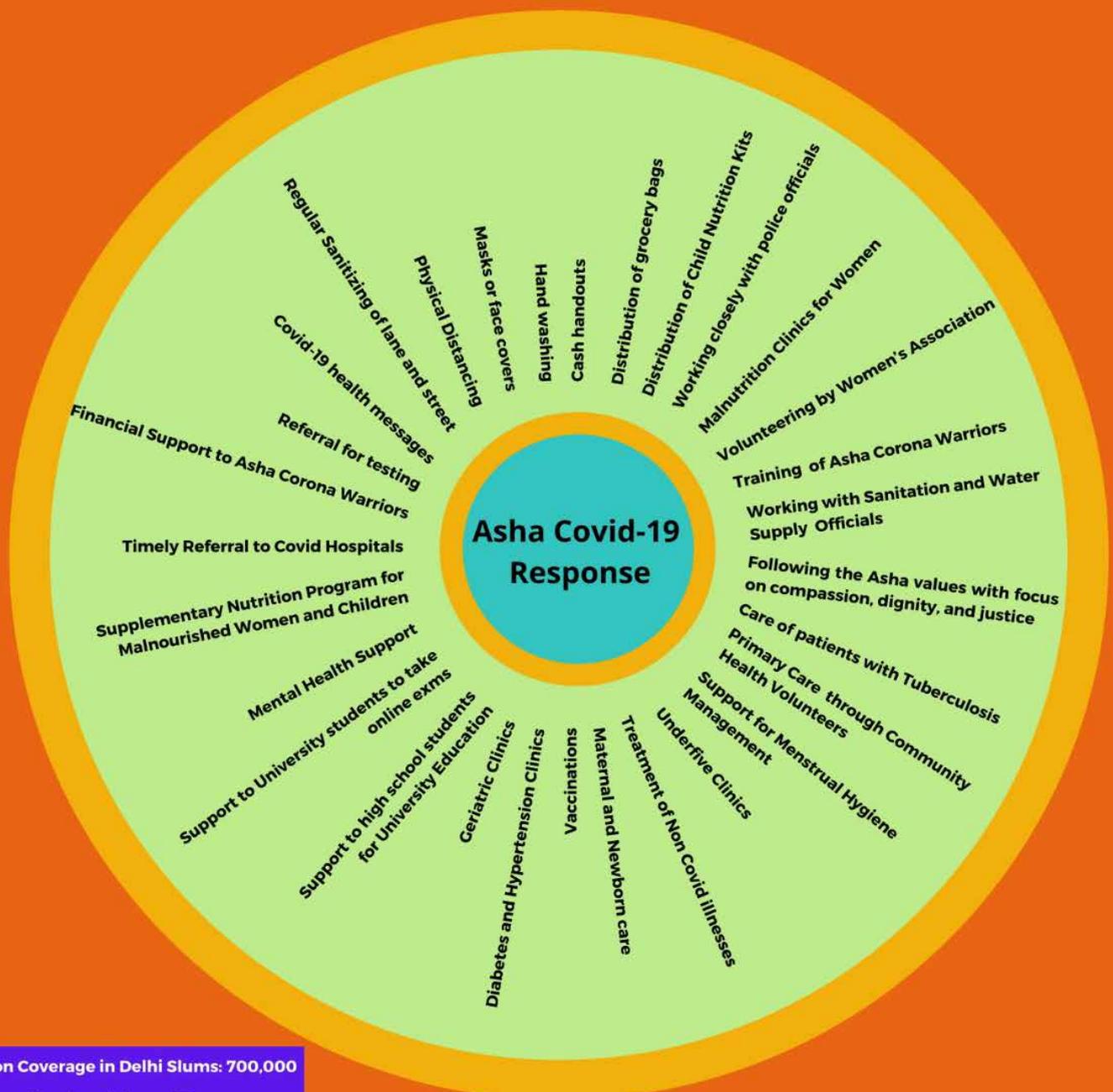
Warm regards,



Dr Kiran Martin

Asha's Interventions: Visual Circle

ASHA COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAMME IN DELHI SLUMS



Population Coverage in Delhi Slums: 700,000

Number of slums: 91





ASHA CLINIC AND COMMUNITY CENTRE

Mayapuri Phase II, New Delhi- 110064

Our Mission



The mission of Asha is to work with the urban poor to bring about long term and sustainable transformation to their quality of life.

Through a practical expression of the christian values of faith, hope and love, we aim to provide holistic community-based healthcare, empowerment, financial inclusion, education and environmental improvements by training, resourcing and encouraging the community to receive and enjoy their basic human rights. Asha also aims to influence the lives of its international audience by sharing local practice, experience and vision and facilitating partnerships where awareness and association between different cultures can impact and change individuals globally.

We believe that

- All human beings are created in the image of God and are of equal worth. Therefore, the poor have the same inherent dignity, and rights that deserve our protection. Every person has a right to affordable healthcare that will allow them the best possible chance of living.
- Every child has a right to an education that will give them the opportunity to reach their potential, earn a living and grow in self-esteem.
- Shelter, safe water and sanitation should be available to all, regardless of their background or status within society.
- Women have equal rights to those of men, and those rights should be protected by both men and other women.
- Communities working together are capable of achieving great change and can influence others to also strive for change.
- The poor deserve the chance to improve their financial status and their quality of life, and to break free from the cycle of poverty.

We are committed to

- Working among the poor without discrimination of any kind such as that based on sex, caste, religion, language, race, colour or other status.
- Being at the forefront of the pursuit of justice and peace for the poor and dealing with the systems that make and keep poor people in poverty.
- Challenging oppressive social structures and responding to injustice through non-violence and active peace-making.
- Empowering the poor to lead full and meaningful lives, and building vibrant communities through the advance of love, neighbourliness, forgiveness and reconciliation.
- Practicing a liberating generosity towards the poor and giving them the opportunities they deserve.
- Demonstrating earnestness in prayer for the needs of the poor and for all our partners.
- Valuing diversity and the skills and gifts of each team member.
- Maintaining excellence in the quality of our programmes.
- Exhibiting good stewardship of limited resources.
- Fostering effective partnerships with the government, funding agencies and other NGOs.
- Becoming a force for liberation and transformation of poor communities.

Our History

Founded in 1988 by Dr Kiran Martin, a paediatrician, Asha has travelled the journey from providing primary healthcare to a single slum, to today serving the interests of 700,000 people in over 91 Delhi slums through our holistic approach to slum development.

Our ground-breaking community development programmes in health, education, empowerment, environment improvement and financial inclusion have placed us firmly at the forefront of urban community transformation in the developing world and beyond.

From the humble beginnings of treating patients under a tree in response to a cholera outbreak, the Asha Healthcare Model has grown to address both direct and indirect factors and covers both curative and preventive approaches to improve the standard of health in the slums. The communities have been empowered to lobby for infrastructure like clean water, sanitation and paved pathways to prevent diseases.

Asha's slum based primary health centres and partnerships with local hospitals ensure that all slum residents are able to access quality healthcare services while the Community Health Volunteers provide advice and information to prevent illnesses in the community.

Committed to empowering slum communities to work in partnership with both state and national governments, we have seen much progress through developing this relationship. Having already secured the provision of safe water supply and drainage systems for a number of slums, under the leadership of Dr Martin, the 1990s saw Asha collaborate with the Government of Delhi to pioneer a slum housing project which resulted in slum dwellers being awarded their own land titles and permanent brick housing.

Though widely praised initiatives such as this, government policy has been greatly influenced to the benefit of hundreds of other slum residents, and Asha has enjoyed fruitful working relationships with various state government officials at all levels.

The 2000s brought with them the exciting endeavour of facilitating slum dwellers' access to banking services through our highly successful financial inclusion scheme for the urban poor. Devised in partnership with the Government of India's then Minister of Finance, the launch of this initiative heralded a previously unimaginable increase in slum communities' financial security. The subsequent availability of education loans opened the doors of higher education to our slum children.

The first initiative of its kind, our Higher Education programme has to date seen over 3000 slum children gain membership at

some of the country's most prestigious educational institutions. One of the most relevant achievements of this year was the enrolment of Asha Students at Imperial College, London and University of Sydney, Australia.

In recent years, the programme has grown to provide mentorship and internship, and job placements to the students. Asha has welcomed prominent political figures from India to witness the transformation in their constituency's slums, for which they have since become strong advocates.

Numerous overseas political leaders and visitors have also accompanied Dr Kiran on slum visits to Asha project areas and enjoyed a similar experience. Global support has been garnered for Asha through the establishment of formal and registered Friends of Asha societies in Great Britain, Ireland, the USA and in Australia through, which supporters regularly fundraise and spread the news of our work.

Dr Kiran has lectured at some of the world's leading universities and presented the Asha model at the US House of Representatives and the British House of Commons. In 2002, the President of India presented Dr Kiran with one of India's highest civilian awards, the Padma Shri. This year, as Asha completes 32 years, its contribution to the field of urban development continues to gain recognition worldwide.

“Our ground-breaking community development programmes in health, education, empowerment, environment improvement and financial inclusion have placed us firmly at the forefront of urban community transformation in the developing world and beyond.”

Our Presence

West Delhi

Block-A, Savda Ghevra Slum community, Savda	1
Block-B, Savda Ghevra Slum community, Savda	2
Block-C, Savda Ghevra Slum community, Savda	3
Peeragarhi Slum community, Peeragarhi	4
Indra Camp Punjabi Bagh	5
JJ Colony Punjabi Bagh Club Road Punjabi Bagh	6
JJ Colony Udyog Nagar, Paschim Vihar	7
N-86 Slum community, Lawrence Road	8
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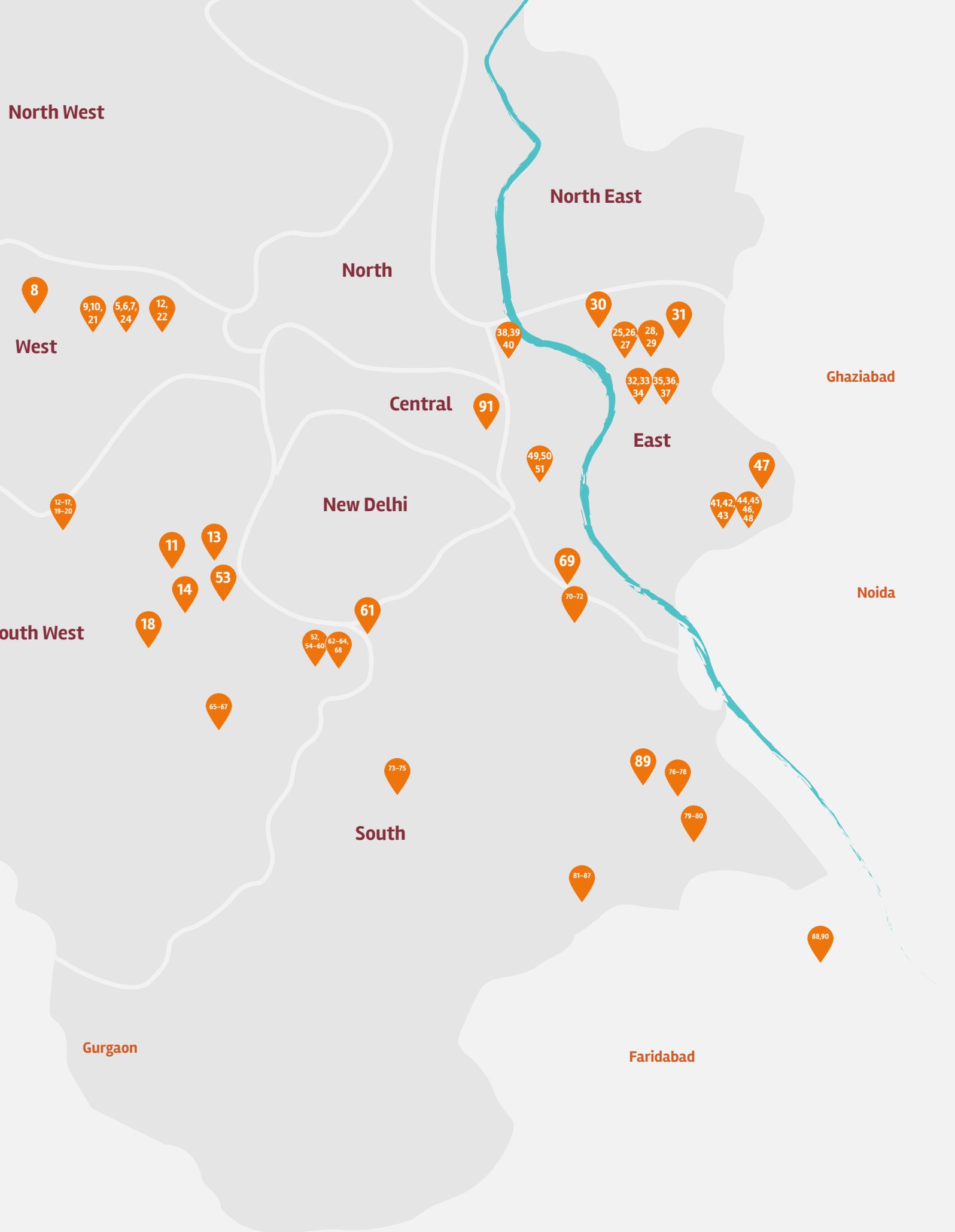
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सिलाई सेंटर



Members of Children's Association in Kusumpur slum community

Our Values

Through a practical expression of these values, Asha aims to provide access to holistic community-based healthcare, education, empowerment, environmental improvements and financial services to some of the world's poorest communities. Beyond the improvements to circumstances that come about through their application, these values bind us together – they define our identity and that of our communities.

Dignity

We respect and value the innate potential within everyone.

Justice

We challenge social structures that deny basic human rights.

Generosity

We give freely because we desire to, not with the idea of receiving a reward in return.

Compassion

We recognize and identify with the suffering of all.

Affirmation

We give individuals a heightened sense of value, courage and security.

Gratitude

We make a conscious choice to focus on the positive and block negativity.

Non-violence

We completely reject aggression and confrontation in everything we do.

Touch

We demonstrate good will, warmth and love by the way we interact with people.

Optimism

We help people to see possibilities rather than problems.

Empowerment

We seek to unleash the potential of individuals for the greater good.

Simplicity

We encourage people to engage with and focus on the purpose of their lives.

Joy

We find contentment in recognizing and celebrating all that is good in life.



ASHA CLINIC AND COMMUNITY CENTRE

COVID-19 Emergency Response (First Wave)



श्रीमती शकुन्तला
शाहजहाँ
सोहलता
ममता
समिता
शाहजहाँ बेगम
कुषणा
ममता
आकश्या

How It Happened

When the COVID-19 pandemic struck India in March 2020, the government immediately declared a national lockdown to curb the spread of the virus. Everything was shut down overnight. This had an immediate catastrophic impact on those living in the slums. The poorest of the poor, these people were mostly dependent on daily wages and other temporary jobs to survive. They lost their income with no warning: no work in the community meant no money and the possibility of starvation. Within days, people from the slums started migrating to their native villages as a means for survival through the biggest health crisis of the century. The migration had other effects such as mental stress in the slum dwellers who decided to stay on. How would they survive? If they decided to go away, they faced an uncertain future.

The slum dwellers were at higher risk because they were unable to maintain social distancing. The living conditions and infrastructure in the slums made them vulnerable to a large-scale community outspread of the disease. These densely populated locations had very poor Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) facilities and there was no or poor awareness on behavioral practices to lessen their exposure to COVID-19. Hesitancy to wear masks and wash hands frequently was rampant. One can easily imagine the situation regarding health, hygiene, social distancing, and other basic precautions needed to prevent the spread of the virus. The situation called for emergency action to control the crisis. There was no support system in the slums during that period as everything including the machinery of government and non-government organizations were unable to function because of lockdown.

The pandemic also put severe strain on the medical infrastructure of the city. The poor and vulnerable patients from the slums had no access to healthcare as public hospitals, healthcare centers, and dispensaries were closed as there was no manpower to operate them. The large hospitals were turned into special covid centers and OPD for general patients were not functioning. Most of the private hospitals, nursing homes and healthcare centers were either closed or functioning with minimal infrastructure and manpower, which exacerbated the crisis. The large private and corporate hospitals were beyond the reach of the slum community. Even the local community clinics which provided access to primary care in the community stopped functioning, as doctors and healthcare staff were not available. There was chaos and pain everywhere and even people with medical emergencies had no access to healthcare.



Asha's Strategy



Immediately after the declaration of lockdown by the government, Asha, under the guidance of its Director, designed an emergency strategic plan of action for awareness and protection against COVID-19 for implementation across its project locations.

Asha formed a dedicated team of volunteers: high school and college students from the slum communities were trained, counselled, and prepared to work in the community as Corona Warriors. The task was difficult initially, as the parents and family members were reluctant to let their children visit the communities amidst the pandemic. However, the Asha team explained to them that the young people were less prone with all the precautions in place. They reassured them about their safety, and were able to get their consent. They were also provided with good quality PPE for their protection and given training on covid appropriate behavior while working in the community. Within two days, a dedicated team of 300 Corona Warriors were ready and working on the ground. The Asha team continuously counselled the families to stay put. They and the Corona Warriors visited every house in their respective communities and implemented Asha's Emergency Action Plan with passion, commitment, and dedication. The mission was simple: to save lives.

There was no public transport available because of the lockdown. Asha rushed its key team members to the project locations using Asha vehicles, after seeking special permission from the government, as movement of vehicles was restricted due to disaster management notifications and the curfew imposed in the city.

Whilst the government eventually set up 'feeding stations', these were on the outskirts of the slums and were largely inaccessible to the most vulnerable in the slums. The Asha team knew they had to react immediately to stave off a humanitarian disaster. Based on existing relationships and goodwill, they developed supply chains to obtain and distribute essential survival items and medicines. The team in each community prepared a list of key beneficiaries for priority intervention: families who had lost their income, the elderly, widows, pregnant women, children under-5, and differently-abled people. Asha activated its donor support base in the UK, US, and Australia to generate the necessary resources for this extensive emergency programme.



Asha's Interventions



Disseminating urgent Covid related messages

The Asha team and the Corona Warriors immediately started spreading urgent covid related messages in the communities. People were told to stay at home, wear masks, maintain social distancing, and adopt regular handwashing to ensure their own as well as their family's safety. Initially, there was some resistance when the team conducted home visits, but soon, the community realized that these were essential safety measures and Asha was their only friend in the crisis. The people were counselled not to panic and leave their homes, as this would accentuate the crisis. The team convinced them that Asha would support them and the worst period would soon be over. The community was educated regarding Covid appropriate behavior and risk reduction measures, and masks were repeatedly distributed free of charge.



Working closely with Police and Sanitary officials in the project locations



To ensure smooth functioning of Asha's Emergency Covid Relief Activities, the Asha team worked in coordination with the local police and the sanitary officials. Asha's organizational credibility and long years of presence amongst the slum communities helped to establish this partnership. The police authorities supported Asha in its endeavors and even accompanied the team and Warriors during the house and lane visits.

Asha ensured regular cleaning and sanitization of drains, lanes, public toilets, common spaces, and garbage removal in coordination with the sanitary inspectors to keep the area clean and sanitized to reduce the spread of the virus. Asha's strategy to work in coordination with the police officials, sanitary officers, and government officials enhanced the impact and effectiveness of the emergency covid relief programmes.



Screening, Identification, and Testing of COVID-19



The Asha team and the Corona Warriors repeatedly visited every home in the community with thermal scanners and pulse oximeters to screen and identify patients with flu-like symptoms. People with any of the symptoms were advised immediately to self-isolate and go for RT-PCR testing in coordination with the authorities at the nearby testing centers. Asha ensured significantly higher testing compliance across its project locations in comparison to non-Asha slums.



Treatment and Referral

Patients with mild symptoms were provided treatment as per the covid treatment protocol. Severe patients, or patients having comorbidities, were referred to nearby hospitals. The Asha team and the Community Health Volunteers accompanied the patients to the hospital or the dedicated covid treatment centers and ensured their admission. Asha maintained a regular database of COVID-19 patients screened, identified, tested, treated, and referred to hospitals and dedicated covid centers. The families of the covid positive patients were asked to isolate too and the warriors made sure that they did not roam freely in the community and spread the virus. The Asha team made sure that separate toilets were assigned to the covid patients. The warriors ensured that the families in quarantine were provided with essential items and were not snubbed by the community at large.



Distribution of Grocery bags and Cash handouts



The start of the pandemic and immediate declaration of lockdown had a huge financial impact on the lives of the Asha slum communities as most people lost their jobs and income. Moreover, slum dwellers could not access the government ration shops as there was a huge rush and supply was limited. The elderly, widows, differently-abled, and other vulnerable groups faced severe problems as they could not move out of their house because of the pandemic and arrange for life's necessities. The crisis was so huge that most families were on the brink of starvation. Asha procured groceries and put together packs consisting of cereals, pulses, cooking oil, tea, soap and other essential items and distributed them to every home, to get them through the crisis. Along with emergency food supplies, Asha also gave them cash to meet their other day-to-day needs like cooking gas, medicines, and other essential items. The Asha team and Corona Warriors visited every home in the community and ensured that the emergency supplies reached each and every family. In addition, they helped the community residents to register for the government welfare schemes through an online registration process.



Other Public Health Interventions



Supplementary Nutrition Programme for Malnourished Children and Women



The social, economic, and healthcare impact of the pandemic manifested itself in more ways than one. There were rising cases of malnutrition amongst children and women as they were not getting proper nourishment or a balanced diet. To address the rising cases of malnutrition across the slums, the Asha health and nutritional experts developed high energy, high protein, high calorie laddoos and organized special clinics to distribute these sweet supplements daily. The health of the children and women were regularly monitored and it was observed that the weight and other parameters of the beneficiaries improved tremendously.

To control cases of malnutrition and anemia among women and girls, the Asha healthcare and nutritional experts developed a high energy, high protein, high calorie drink (sattu) and organized special clinics five days a week to administer it throughout Asha's slums. The BMI of the ladies was calculated and cases of anemia were classified into mild, moderate, and severe. This high energy drink reduced cases of malnutrition and anemia amongst women. Those suffering from anemia were also provided micronutrient supplements to improve their health.



Raising Immunity

Building immunity has been one of the key ways of preventing severe covid infections.

The Asha team and the healthcare workers had a special focus on building immunity within its slum residents. The community members, especially the more vulnerable, elderly, and sick patients were provided micronutrients to enhance their immunity. During the period of lockdown, CHVs went from house to house to distribute these supplements and ensure that they were consumed. Along with educating people on Covid appropriate behavior, the Asha team also advocated exercise, a balanced and healthy diet, adequate sleep, reduction of stress, controlling the consumption of tobacco and alcohol to boost immunity levels.



Menstrual Hygiene Management



According to UNICEF, poverty makes it harder for women to access menstrual hygiene supplies and care. People living in poverty face barriers to obtain menstrual hygiene supplies and related health services. Asha ensured menstrual hygiene in adolescent girls and women through the monthly distribution of feminine pads in all its communities.



Mental Health Support



Ensuring mental health support has been one of the key challenges of the pandemic. The problem has been very severe in the case of the poor and the underprivileged slum residents because along with the healthcare crisis, their acute social, economic and livelihood challenges accentuated the problem. As people lost their incomes and were confined to their homes, there were rising cases of domestic violence, mental stress, anxiety, depression, loneliness and sometimes these even lead to suicide. The Asha team and the Corona Warriors visited every house in their respective communities and provided people with comfort and support. They always carried a message of hope and optimism and the community looked forward to their visits. Asha's Mahila Mandal (Women's Group) members also went to houses in their lanes and provided support in cases of domestic violence.



Vaccinations



When the vaccination for frontline workers began in January 2021, Asha registered its field team and the warriors for vaccination and ensured that everyone got their vaccination on time. It is heartening to note that the entire Asha team and the Corona Warriors received the required two doses of vaccine for protection against the virus. Asha also promoted a vaccination drive in the slum communities according to agreed eligibility criteria and the warriors accompanied the residents for vaccination. The Asha team also educated the community on the importance of vaccination and reduced much vaccine hesitancy.



Training of Asha Team members and the Warriors



Training sessions were organized in all Asha slum centers for the Asha warriors and health team members in topics such as infant health, immunization, and nutrition, along with the causes and treatments of illnesses such as malnutrition, diarrhea, diabetes, hypertension, and anemia, etc. These sessions were highly useful in the training and capacity building of the Asha team and the warriors, equipping them with the correct knowledge to diagnose and treat hundreds of slum dwellers. The training material was developed after an assessment of their training needs. The training helped to enhance the knowledge of the Asha team and the warriors and increased the impact and effectiveness of the interventions across the slum communities.



Non-Covid Healthcare Programmes



Maternal and Newborn Care

Alongside the emergency covid response, the Asha programme for Maternal and Newborn Healthcare provided healthcare to pregnant women and newborns in their own homes, at the doorstep as hospitals were not providing non-covid healthcare services to the patients.

Regular monitoring and check-ups of pregnant women were done by the Asha team and CHVs in compliance with Covid protocols. It was ensured that all the pregnant women across Asha's slums undertook three mandatory ANC check-ups. The Asha team and the CHVs identified cases of high-risk pregnancy and took care to regularly monitor their progress. They also made sure that women were taken for deliveries to non-covid hospitals.

The Asha team also conducted regular postnatal check-up visits to monitor the health of mother and newborn.



Care of Under Fives



Immediately after the reopening, Asha started to organize clinics for children under 5, in compliance with covid protocols, to monitor their health. Their weight, height, and other vital parameters were measured, and remedial action was prescribed where necessary. Children across the slums were provided with doses of iron, zinc, and other vitamin supplements.



Geriatric Care



The problems for the elderly increased during the pandemic. Along with their physical ailments, they experienced mental tension, loneliness, and fear of being isolated, all of which contributed to their situation worsening. The Asha team and the Corona Warriors recognized this problem and took special care of the elderly across its communities. A team member was assigned to each elderly person, who they then visited daily, spending time with them, engaging in conversation about their well-being, and providing much needed companionship. In addition, they helped them with their day-to-day activities including cleaning, shopping, helping them with their daily chores and ensuring that they take their medicines regularly. These senior citizens, in the twilight years of their life, looked forward to these visits which reenergized them. Having the Asha Warrior’s mobile number to call anytime in an emergency was also especially valuable during this unprecedented pandemic.

When the lockdown restrictions were relaxed, Asha started operating Geriatric Care clinics. Asha’s Community Health Volunteers (CHVs) also visited the elderly at home and accompanied them to the clinic, where they received a complete medical check-up and were given necessary medicines. Elder abuse, particularly verbal abuse, increased during COVID-19. Asha advocacy groups intervened when they observed any elderly residents being treated unfairly or poorly by family members.



Chronic Disease Management



Asha also started a Chronic Disease Management Programme during the start of the unlocking phase of the pandemic. The Asha healthcare team conducted special clinics to screen people for diabetes and hypertension. After screening, identification, treatment and medication, monitoring and follow-up were given on a regular basis. The Asha healthcare team educated the patient on the importance of a balanced diet, proper lifestyle management, and exercise along with medication for controlling both hypertension and diabetes.



Management of Tuberculosis



The Asha team continued to accompany TB patients to the nearest government-run DOTS center despite all the difficulties, so that the treatment regime continued without any interruption. 99% of TB patients across the Asha slums have successfully received treatment and the death rate due to the disease has been less than 1%.



What happened after the first wave of the Pandemic was over

After the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic receded and lockdown restrictions were gradually lifted in Delhi, Asha started phasing in its regular activities again. Programmes re-started whilst observing necessary covid appropriate behavior. The Asha resource centers across the slums were opened in compliance with covid protocols and restricted entry was permitted after thermal scanning and proper sanitization. Asha team and the Corona Warriors continued to use their PPE and adopted all the necessary safety and precaution measures. They were also given medicines and supplements to enhance their immunity.

Asha also resumed its Empowerment Programmes through the forums of the Bal Mandal and Mahila Mandal groups. The children visited the Asha centers in small numbers with strict compliance with covid protocols and participated in various activities. They used the computers and IT facilities to attend online classes and complete their homework. The Asha team and the senior students helped them in their academic studies.

The Mahila Mandal meetings were organized with limited numbers and with strict observation of covid protocols. Social and community development issues were discussed in the meetings and members participated in activities like the identification of symptomatic covid patients, distribution of covid relief material, and solving community problems. They visited Government Officials and MLAs with petitions for community development work like repairing drains, water and electricity connection, and other such activities.

Asha organized training and capacity-building sessions for the members of the Asha team, CHVs, and Corona Warriors across the slum centers. These training sessions were very useful in enhancing and refreshing knowledge and increasing the efficiency of the team. The topics covered during the training included: care of children 0-5 years, the benefits of immunization, the advantages of a balanced and nutritious diet for pregnant women and children, and treatment of diabetes, hypertension, and anemia.

The training was also conducted amongst the school and college students on the Asha values, adolescent health issues, and challenges being faced during the pandemic. Separate training was organized for high school students on exam preparation, and controlling stress and anxiety, especially during the pandemic period.



Women's Groups



Asha's Mahila Mandals (Women's Groups) have been the mainstay of the empowerment programme. Mahila Mandal activities were started during the unlocking phase of the pandemic, in strict compliance with covid protocols and observing covid appropriate behavior. Mahila Mandal members took an active part in solving cases of domestic violence by conducting regular home visits in their respective communities. Mahila Mandal members also visited the local MLAs and government officials to lobby for cleanliness, sanitization, and other developmental activities like repair of toilets, cleaning of drains, and other activities in their area.



Education



The Education sector faced enormous challenges during the pandemic. Overnight, schools and colleges were closed and teaching of primary to senior secondary classes as well as college students shifted to online platforms. The slum children faced severe problems as they lacked access to smartphones and high-speed internet. During the lockdown phase, Asha ensured that the students across the Asha slums continued their education through smartphones. Asha's Ambassadors conducted house-to-house visits to implement this and make sure students' studies were less disrupted. They also helped the students with their assignments and listened to their concerns.

Amidst the pandemic, the final school results were declared and the admission process for university began. This included the payment of fees online and through digital methods. As students from the slums lacked the required infrastructure and resources to complete the admission process on their own, the Asha team along with the student ambassadors provided help, support, and guidance at every step. Every eligible and deserving student was helped to gain admission to Delhi University, guiding them in the selection of college and subject based on their merit, aptitude and the market demand. Every possible care was taken to ensure that the academic year for the students did not go to waste. Wonderfully, 84 students were admitted to university in the year 2020 with Asha's financial support and 40 students were enrolled for vocational and skills development programmes. The Asha Resource Centre in respective locations acted as the hub for college admissions for these students.



IT Labs



Due to the pandemic, the entire school and college education landscape shifted to online platforms which presented a huge challenge for the slum students as they lacked the necessary infrastructure and internet connectivity. Asha's Founder and Director came up with an innovative long term strategy of developing IT Labs across the Asha Centers. This meant that the school and college students, as well as young adults pursuing skill development and job-oriented courses, could utilize these facilities and their academic and professional career was not disrupted. The IT Labs had the best infrastructure: advanced laptops, high-speed internet connectivity, supporting equipment, dedicated staff, and proper sitting arrangements for students to pursue their academics. Students completed their assignments and projects, as well as appeared for online examination using these new facilities. By March 2021, IT labs were operational in Mayapuri and Zakhira, with more centers planned for later in the year.

Online English language Training

Asha provided intensive training to the slum students to improve their spoken and written language skills in English through international volunteers. The training was provided online and improved the English language skills of the students. This had been a major challenge for them in pursuing higher education and seeking better jobs.

International Education Programme



Asha's International Educational programme continued in 2020 with the selection of one student, Amritesh, by the prestigious University of Queensland for a Master's Programme in Finance and Economics with a "UQ-India Equity Postgraduate Coursework Scholarship". He has already commenced his course online due to restrictions in travel to Australia because of the pandemic.

Another student, Tushar, got selected by the University of Sydney for a Master's Programme in International Relations with the "Sydney Scholars India Equity Scholarship". He will commence his programme from August 2021.

The International Education Programme is being expanded and several other meritorious and deserving students across Asha's slum communities are being prepared to receive the best education in prestigious universities across the world to transform their lives. This Programme has provided world-class educational opportunities for selected meritorious slum students and is the first of its kind across Delhi's slums. This is a stunning example of Access and Inclusion of poor, disadvantaged, and vulnerable slum community residents in Internationally recognized institutions. The students who receive the benefit of International Education serve as role models for the other students and inspire them to follow in their footsteps.



Asha's response to the second wave of the pandemic

Although this Annual Report covers the period 1 April 2020 until 31 March 2021, a description of our response to the second wave of the pandemic which began on the first week of April 2021– has also been mentioned briefly, given the scale of the crisis.

When the second wave of the pandemic hit, more than 300,000 cases were reported daily in India. Delhi's positivity rate went up to 32%, accompanied by a significant mortality rate. Hospitals and Covid centers became full within days. Long lines of covid positive patients were seen waiting desperately in front of the hospitals, hoping for a bed. An increased number of cases of lung infection, and low oxygen levels led to an increased demand for oxygen and an acute oxygen crisis in Delhi. The death rate rose significantly and crematoriums were unable to provide space to the departed.

During this desperate time, the Asha team did not lose hope: they scaled up their interventions and started conducting house visits throughout the slums to identify patients with any flu-like symptoms. The Corona Warriors encouraged the community to report cases without fear of ostracization and stigma. People across the Asha slum communities voluntarily reported cases of fever, body pain, and other symptoms, and their treatment was immediately initiated. People who had come into contact with covid cases were also put on a preventative regime.

Asha devised a strategy for home treatment of Covid 19 patients and categorized patients into severe, moderate, and mild, and started treatment as per the agreed treatment protocol. The patients with mild symptoms were regularly monitored, as mild patients had a very high risk of turning into moderate or severe in a short time. Their vitals were carefully monitored by our team in regular teleconsultation with the Asha doctor. Oxygen levels and temperature were regularly checked. Patients with moderate illness were treated with anticoagulants and bronchodilators through nebulization. The team provided the necessary medication and treatment to ensure that moderately ill patients did not go into the severe category.

Any critically ill patients, who were refused hospital admission, were treated as per protocols, after taking consent from the patient or their family members. The treatment included IV and oral medicines, nebulization with steroids, and frequent monitoring of their oxygen level. Oxygen Concentrators were arranged for any severe patients across Asha's slum communities if their SpO2 reached critically low levels.

During this unprecedented crisis, the Asha team's commitment and dedication saved hundreds of lives. Thankfully, of all patients suffering from COVID-19 across the communities, there was only one death. This is a truly remarkable achievement.





Friends of Asha



Great Britain

Dr Richard Hogben, National Co-ordinator
Friends of Asha (GB)

36 Combe Street Lane, Yeovil, Somerset BA213PE, UK
Charity Registration No. 1085071
foasha.richardhogben@gmail.com
facebook.com/Friends-of-Asha-Great Britain



Republic & Northern Ireland

Mrs Victoria Thampi, Chairperson and National Co-ordinator
Friends of Asha (Ireland)

95 Sydenham Avenue, Belfast, BT4 2DL
Charity Registration No. NIC 101268
friendsofashaireland@gmail.com
facebook.com/Friends-of-Asha-Ireland



USA

Mrs Louanne Hempton, National Co-ordinator & Treasurer
American Society for Health for All Inc (ASHA)

15 Notre Dame Ave, Cambridge, MA 02140, USA
ASHA (USA) is a 501 (C) 3 registered charity, EIN #010557632
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asha-usa.org
facebook.com/Friends-of-Asha-USA



Australia

Mr Richard Leder, National Co-ordinator
Australian Friends of Asha for Slums

Australia India Institute, The University of Melbourne,
147-149 Barry Street, Carlton VIC, 3053, Australia.
Charity Registration No. ACN 161 085 650
info@australianfriendsofashaslums.org.au
australianfriendsofashaslums.org.au

Global Friends of Asha

The Asha family is a global one: supporters around the world have been drawn to the Asha values and have been inspired by visiting the Asha communities in Delhi. In the United Kingdom, Ireland, the United States of America, and Australia, supporters have set up 'Friends of Asha' organizations to support Asha's work. Friends of Asha help the Asha donors and hope givers make tax-efficient donations. They also provide resources like information updates, publicity material, statistics and more, for our supporters.

During the pandemic, Friends of Asha have continually supported the work of Asha in India throughout these uncertain times. It would have been impossible for Asha to continue working in the slums if we had not received timely funds that helped saved thousands of lives. Friends of Asha worldwide have gone out of their way to help, by organizing virtual fundraisers, volunteering online to teach our students, holding online events and sponsored walks, amongst other activities. They have constantly displayed their unconditional love and support. Despite living thousands of miles away, Friends of Asha members have walked beside Asha step by step, helping us face every challenge and obstacle as we have provided medical and financial assistance to 700,000 slum dwellers in the Asha slums. Without Friends of Asha, Asha could not have made the urgent interventions in the slums necessary to transform lives and provide aid during the most difficult of times.

Asha wants to deeply acknowledge and express gratitude to all the Friends of Asha members for their support, help, and commitment during this difficult and challenging period.

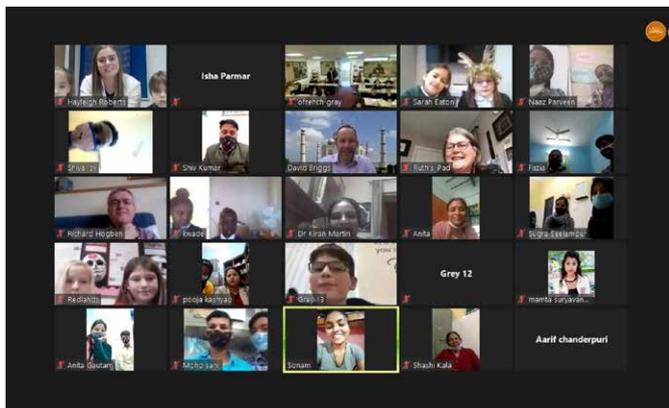
Friends of Asha (GB)



Delhi Ramble: Friends of Asha (GB) organized a 'Delhi Ramble' event which raised funds to support Asha's work during the pandemic. Through this event, hundreds of Asha supporters from Great Britain walked the approximate distance from London to Delhi, collectively covering the distance of 4500 miles on foot during Easter. This initiative was highly successful, with supporters walking short distances and several miles at a time. They were joined by Asha Ambassadors and Asha Warriors in New Delhi as well, to help cover the distance.

'Asha High Energy Laddoo' to fight Malnutrition: Friends of Asha (GB) Trustee Amanda Clegg developed a recipe for a high protein, high calorie, and high energy 'Laddoo'. It is a nutritionally rich supplement used to help promote weight gain in children and women who have fallen into malnutrition due to the lockdown. This laddoo was made at all Asha centers and administered to those that needed it every single day. These laddoos had a significant impact in increasing weight and controlling cases of malnutrition, particularly amongst the children in Asha communities.

The Big British Curry Night: Friends of Asha in (GB) also organized a curry night in the UK after the first covid wave to raise funds for Asha. Due to covid restrictions, few people could attend this event, however, everyone made sure to show their support for Asha by donating to Asha's cause and continuous work during the pandemic.



Virtual Meet at Asha: Amidst the outbreak of COVID-19, Asha organized a Virtual Meet with Discovery Schools Academics Trust, the first of its kind. The meet was attended by various schools in the trust and was facilitated by David Briggs. Other attendees were Dr. Richard Hogben, Coordinator of Friends of Asha GB, and the high school and college students from Seelampur and Chanderpuri in New Delhi. It was not only a great way to network and interact virtually, but the DSAT team also got an opportunity to hear an update on Asha’s emergency COVID-19 response. The meet included a virtual tour of Asha’s Seelampur center. The interaction brought back nostalgic memories for everyone.

Friends of Asha (Ireland)



Dander to Delhi: Friends of Asha (Ireland) planned for a collaborative project to complete a virtual walk to Delhi. A distance of 4354 miles was the distance targeted in the ‘Dander to Delhi’ campaign. It started on 1st December 2020, when an initial 45 volunteers signed up, committing to walk or run part of the journey. More supporters were attracted along the way in both Delhi and Ireland, where volunteers faced every possible weather condition as they made up the total distance to Delhi. By 31st December, this campaign was overwhelmingly successful, with volunteers walking over 9000 miles, doubling the initial goal. Despite 2020 being a difficult year in many ways, Friends of Asha (Ireland) ended on a positive note by supporting Asha’s work in such a fantastic way.



IT lab in Zakhira: It was inaugurated virtually and was attended by supporters from Holywood, Belfast who had raised funds for it.

Food for 100: Friends of Asha (Ireland) organized a Facebook campaign called ‘Food for 100’ to provide grocery bags for the needy and vulnerable families in all Asha slum communities. Friends of Asha supporters in Northern Ireland contributed generously to provide much-needed groceries for slum families. Their campaign of donating a food parcel for one family was highly successful, as they completed their goal by providing 100 grocery bags for the poorest and neediest.

Asha (USA)

The first Virtual Fundraiser: Amidst the outbreak of COVID-19, the Sacramento Chapter of Friends of Asha (USA) organized a Virtual Fundraiser, the first of its kind, on June 27, 2020. Every year Friends of Asha (USA) organizes the ASHA fundraiser event in September, but this year they decided to prepone the event to raise funds for the work of Asha during COVID-19. It was not only a great way to network and fundraise virtually, but the donors also received an opportunity to hear a live update on Asha's emergency COVID-19 response from Asha Founder and Director Dr. Kiran Martin. Congressman Mike Thompson is a long-standing supporter of Asha and has organized the Asha fundraiser event annually for the last 22 years. Hon'ble Mike Thompson could not attend the virtual fundraising event but sent a recorded message, which was much appreciated.

Australian Friends of Asha



Asha's first IT Lab in Mayapuri: Australian Friends of Asha raised funds to open Asha's first IT Lab in the Mayapuri slum community. The IT Lab was inaugurated by His Excellency Barry O'Farrell, High Commissioner of Australia to India. The event was streamed live through zoom and Asha supporters in Australia and around the world were able to watch the event unfold with great delight. The High Commissioner commended the efforts of Asha and the Australian Friends of Asha for supporting this new method of education.

Virtual Meet: Australian Friends of Asha organized a series of zoom webinars to host Dr. Kiran Martin and the Asha warriors. They shared their first-hand accounts from slum residents and detailed the interventions Asha is making to save lives in communities during this pandemic. These events were highly successful as hundreds of Asha supporters worldwide joined in.

In one of the online events, the former Australian foreign minister, Ms. Julie Bishop, His Excellency, High Commissioner of Australia to India Mr. Barry O'Farrell, and the CEO of Macquarie, Ms. Shemara Wikramanayake, shared their thoughts and appreciated the work of Asha in this crisis.

Audit Report

Asha Community Health & Development Society

Abstract of Financials for the year end March 31, 2021*

S.No.	Particulars	Amount (In INR)	
A	Sources of Fund		
A.1	Capital Fund	199398972	
	Less: Application towards Fixed Assets	95502056	103896916
A.2	Restricted Funds		97871701
A.3	Staff Gratuity Fund		12029502
Total (A1+A2+A3)			213798119
B	Application of Funds		
B.1	Change in Working Capital		
B.1.1	Current Assets & Loans and Advances		
→	Current Assets		
	Closing Stock	122150	
	Cash & Cash Equivalents	213239527	
→	Loans And Advances	1639017	215000694
B.1.2	Less:Current Liabilities & Provision		
	Security Deposit(Salary)	1202575	1202575
Total (B1.1-B1.2)			213798119

Financial Activities during the F.Y 2020-21**

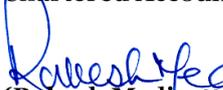
S.No.	Particulars	Amount (In INR)	
C	Revenue(s) earned		
C.1	Income from All Contributions, Donations and Grants		74307670
C.2	Clinic Receipts		869304
C.3	Interest (From Bank & Income tax Refund)		10441233
Total (C1+C2+C3)			85618208
D	Expense(s) incurred		
D.1	Running & Maintenance Of Clinics/Centers		44931201
D.2	Welfare of Children		7413497
D.3	Asset Procurement		1375712
D.4	Administrative Expenses		2338593
D.5	Other Expenses		70546
D.6	Depreciation on Assets		2053875
Total (D1+D2+D3+D4+D5+D6+D7+D8)			58183424
E	Excess of Revenue over Expenses (C-D) transferred to fund(s)		27434783

*Please note that this balance sheet is an abstract only and is solely meant for the purpose of being published in the Annual report of Asha. This statement is not meant to be used before any other forum. For the actual set of Balance Sheet and allied financial statements prepared in accordance with law in force in the territory of India, Asha may be contacted for having a copy.

**F.Y 2020-21 in India extends from April 01, 2020 till March 31, 2021

Signed in terms of our report of even date

For R.Mediratta & Associates
Chartered Accountants


(Rakesh Mediratta)

FCA, Proprietor
Place: New Delhi

Date: 10/7/21



For Asha Community Health and
Development Society


(Treasurer)

Asha Community Health and Development Society is registered under the Societies of Registration Act of 1860. The Registration Number is S/20849 of 1990. Asha is authorised to receive funds under the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act. Contributions to Asha are exempt under Section 80G of the Income Tax Act. Asha is granted Income Tax exemption under Section 10 (23c) (6a).



Asha Community Health and Development Society

Ekta Vihar, R K Puram Sector 6, New Delhi 110022, India.

Email: info@asha-india.org | **Website:** www.asha-india.org



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