

Society for Promoting Participative Ecosystem Management.

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COVID 19 Response by SOPPECOM

Dear Friend,

Today the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi extended the “lock down” till 3rd May. All of us are well aware of the unprecedented hardships that the marginalised social sections of our society went through over the last three weeks because of this lock down and for them survival continues to be at stake. The study report by Jan Sahas brings out this very starkly (https://9f10ca96-9d6f-4573-8373-ed4c52ef9c6a.filesusr.com/ugd/d70f23_f18accd3b4404f789889b53fa27d99c8.pdf). Even after the lock down is lifted most of them – the invisible and nowhere people – would be facing an uncertain future.

Society for Promoting Participative Ecosystem Management (SOPPECOM), Pune has designed a COVID 19 response programme for a period of one year. The plan is to reach out to 2500 families from the most vulnerable communities from nine talukas (sub districts) of Pune, Sangli and Kolhapur districts of South Maharashtra. This is in addition to the MAKAAAM-SOPPECOM initiative.

SOPPECOM’s COVID 19 response programme would move in three phases:

In Phase One the emphasis is on immediate relief and most needy families from vulnerable communities would be provided the essential food items (dry ration), soaps and medicine (paracetamol). It would cost Rs. 1000-Rs.1100 per one family kit.

In Phase Two, the effort would be to provide some minimum support to the most needy families (about one-third families from Phase One): support school going children from these families to buy essentials like text books, note books and other stationary so that the children can go to their schools once the schools reopen in June; support the most needy families to meet costs of buying seeds and other inputs and also to partially meet the costs of land preparation so that they can do Kharif sowing in time; and support supplementary livelihood activities.

Phase Three is going to be a long-term engagement. During this phase the effort would be to work with the social activists in the area for awareness building and also improving their capacities to engage with such incidents/events/disasters in the future. The themes/issues that could be taken up include: 1) building more self-reliant and resilient communities and strengthening Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and local self-government institutions in small towns, 2) disaster preparedness, 3) safety nets for the most vulnerable communities, 4) data base and information sharing system for quick response actions, and 5) rethinking development – alternatives to the present developmental model (especially in areas like agriculture, livelihoods, water, energy, health, etc.) that are informed by equity, social justice, sustainability and democratisation.

The list of families for Phase One is already ready. The families include: local and migrant labourers, construction workers, brick kiln labourers, rickshaw drivers (most of them are daily wage earners), single/widowed/deserted women, baluthedar (artisan) communities, nomadic tribes including Laman Tandas and so on. The condition of these social sections is particularly precarious in small towns like the taluka headquarters where no safety net exists for them.

SOPPECOM’s COVID 19 initiative in South Maharashtra is being rolled out in active collaboration with our activist friends from the region: Bharat Patankar, Dhanaji Gurav, Ashok Jadhav, Anandrao Babu

Patil, Deepak Kothavle, Rajesh Karadkar, Balasaheb Patil, Padmini Pilankar, Amol Waghmare, Babu Metkar, Datta Patil and many others. Some of these activists have already started mobilising local contributions to provide relief kits to most needy in the region.

Azim Premji Philanthropic Initiative (APPI) has given us a grant that is sufficient to provide survival kits as immediate relief for about 1000 families. The distribution of the survival kits has already begun and we expect to complete the distribution for the 1000 families within the next 4-5 days.

APPEAL FOR SUPPORT

Thus, we are looking for support to cover the rest of the families in Phase One as well as to take the programme through Phase Two and Three. This would need your support. We are rather diffident to ask you for your contributions as we know that you would have already contributed to multiple such initiatives. Still, if it does not pinch you too much, please do contribute to this initiative. Your contributions would go a long way in helping these families to survive these difficult times, a situation they find themselves in for no fault of theirs.

The Indian contributions can be sent to SOPPECOM bank account for which details are given below:

Name of the account holder	Society for Promoting Participative Ecosystem Management (SOPPECOM)
Name of the Bank	State Bank of India, Khond Arcade Parihar Chowk, Aundh, Pune: 411 007 Maharashtra, India
Account Number	32924345393
Branch IFSC	SBIN0008784
SWIFT/BIC#:	SBININBB218

SOPPECOM has FCRA to receive foreign contributions. Those who are abroad and would like to contribute please do get in touch with our admin person Pratima Medhekar (pratimamedhekar@gmail.com) and she will send you our FCRA bank account details.

To ensure complete transparency we would put up periodic updates of this initiative, including financial details, on SOPPECOM website.

For more details you could contact any one of us. Please do share this appeal with your relatives, friends, colleagues and networks.

Expecting your contributions, inputs, guidance and participation in this initiative.

Warmly

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