PRAGATI, KORAPUT

COVID-19 Response
4 April 2020 to 25 June 2020

PRAGATI, KORAPUT
At: Pujariput
Po/Dist: Koraput Pin: 764020, Odisha, India
pragatikoraput@gmail.com
http://www.pragatikoraput.org
Introduction:
Pragati, Koraput is a not for profit organization registered in 1994 under the Societies Registration Act 1860, founded by a group of youth with a vision to establish a society free from hunger and exploitation. We are working in Odisha state for improving the living conditions of rural poor through Natural Resource Management, Sustainable Agriculture, Climate Change Adaptation, Disaster Risk Reduction and Women Empowerment. The organisation has strategy to work through People’s Organizations involving different stakeholders. We have collaboration with government, research institutes and other civil society organizations. The initiatives of Pragati have been recognized at different level. Pragati has received the Prakruti Mitra Award for environment conservation in 2003 from the state Government, recognized at National level as NGO of the year in 2008 for its work with the tribal communities and good governance, received the International Keeling Curve Prize-2018 for climate change adaptation.

Pragati has more than 15 years of experience of working in the sector of Disaster relief, preparedness and Risk Reduction which are more focused on robust solutions for the vulnerable population and improving their livelihoods. We have supported communities to develop contingency plans and accordingly intervened for disaster preparedness and disaster risk reduction with support of different aid agencies and collaborated with Government line departments. We have facilitated Village Development Committees, developed their capacities for disaster preparedness and risk reduction measures, implemented rehabilitation measures like house construction, repair of toilets, land reclamation, conservation and management of water bodies and water resources, improved sanitation in disaster affected areas. In the aftermath of cyclone FANI, Pragati has worked for the disaster affected families in Puri District of Odisha for improving sanitation and hygienic practices.

Pragati, Koraput based on its years of work in South Odisha has been working to address the critical situation where the poor communities have become vulnerable to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Pragati Koraput Response to COVID-19
COVID-19 pandemic has affected the lives and livelihoods of people across all sections. The worst hits are the small and marginal farmers, the wage labourers and migrants. All on a sudden it has caused panic among the people in the rural areas who did not have much access to right information.
As soon as the lockdown was declared by the Government of Odisha on 23rd March followed by declaration of Government of India from midnight of 25 March 2020, Pragati has started working out the strategy for responding to the COVID-19 crisis.
Implementation Locations:
Pragati, Koraput is working in the rural areas of Koraput and Nowrangpur Districts in South Odisha for improving the quality of lives of the poor and marginalized communities through natural resource management and sustainable agriculture. Hence it was decided to begin the COVID-19 response work in the existing areas where Pragati is already working with the communities.

Location:
- 315 villages of five blocks i.e. Koraput, Kotpad, Borigumma, Nandapur, Lamtaput of Koraput District and one block namely Kosagumuda of Nowrangpur District

Target group:
Our target groups are the poor and vulnerable families, tribal communities, small and marginal farmers, migrant labourers, landless, women headed families and elderly people from rural areas of Koraput and Nowrangpur Districts.

The following activities were taken up for COVID-19 response:

A. Awareness Generation: The immediate response was to make the communities aware about COVID-19. The awareness actions were started from 4 April 2020 in the action areas with due permission of mobility from the District Administration. The awareness programmes covered 315 villages through use of posters and miking on hand wash, social distancing and precaution measures. The awareness included the following:
   - About COVID-19 virus
   - Hand wash and basic sanitation practices
   - Use of masks
   - Use of helpline number
   - Maintaining social distance at public places like PDS centres, banks, drinking water collection points etc.

Pragati staff and volunteers ensured that the communities get right information about COVID-19, educated them about the guidelines of Government and District administration from time to time. The villagers also adopted self isolation measures like putting barricades to refrain the entry of outsiders to their villages. As the migrants started their home coming, Pragati started counseling them and their families so that they stay in either quarantine centres or home quarantine.

B. Distribution of masks and sanitizers:
In order to ensure precaution measures and influence the communities for adoption of better sanitation practices, Pragati distributed masks and sanitizers to 30000 families of 5 blocks in Koraput District and one block in Nowrangpur district. The women SHGs and the youth leaders were also involved in preparation of masks. It has helped in educating the communities of the rural villages on basic precaution measures in order to protect themselves and their communities.
C. Distribution of Ration Kits to Migrant families:
An immediate need assessment was done through consultation with the Panchayati Raj representatives and community leaders. Pragati tracked the information of the migrant labourers in its action areas i.e. the migrants who have returned and also the migrants who were stuck in their work places due to the lockdown. Pragati has identified the migrants and destitute and distributed ration kits to 1636 migrant families based on the support it has mobilized from different sources. The ration kits included basic food essentials like pulses, edible oil, salt, sugar, puffed rice, biscuits, soaps, candle, match box etc.

Pragati has involved the MLAs, Panchayati Raj representatives, line department officials during the distribution of the ration kits in order to sensitize them on the issues of community, ensure transparency and convergence with Government programmes.

D. Marketing Support for small farm holders: As the Rabi crops were in harvesting stage, most of the farmers faced a lot of problem in marketing of vegetables as transportation facilities were stopped and also the local traders could not reach the farmers. Pragati decided to step in for supporting the farmers for aggregation and marketing of their produces, mainly the vegetables. Pragati supported two Farmer Producer Companies to establish sell centers which has helped farmers of two blocks to market their produces. In order to support farmers for marketing, Pragati has registered 6 Farmer Producer Companies with eNAM.
E. Seed support for Kharif 2020: As the Kharif season has started farmers require inputs like seeds, fertilizers, etc. which may not be available in time. Hence, Pragati has planned for providing seed support to 10,200 farmers in its action areas in Koraput and Nowrangpur Districts. With the onset of monsoon, Pragati has procured paddy seeds of indigenous varieties, aromatic rice, black rice and brown rice which are being distributed among the farmers. So far we have procured 42.50 quintals of paddy seeds and the distributed to 4250 farmers for cultivation of paddy adopting System of Rice Intensification to increase productivity.

F. Working with District administration:
Pragati, Koraput has been associated with District administration in COVID-19 response activities in its action areas. The Pragati team has been supporting line department officials and the Panchayati Raj representatives during distribution of PDS rice, distribution of cash to the ration card holders and registered labourers, counseling of migrants to stay in quarantine centres, observation of social distance in public places and registration of migrants at Panchayats.

Pragati, Koraput is associated with District administration for facilitating MGNREGS in its action areas with the objective to develop infrastructures for agriculture development and reduce distress migration of the poor and vulnerable households to address the crisis caused by COVID-19. This includes facilitation for job demand, enlisting need based work for the beneficiaries, enlisting persons for new job cards. So far, the Pragati team has facilitated for job demand for 2668 job card holders, mostly the migrant families and facilitated new job cards for 650 persons.

Funding Support:
Pragati Koraput has been able to respond to the COVID-19 crisis due to the generous support from EdelGive Foundation Mumbai, HDFC Bank, Great Eastern CSR Foundation and individual donors. EdelGive Foundation has approved Rs 614688/- for the COVID-response programmes to take up awareness programmes and distribution of masks and sanitizers. HDFC foundation has supported Rs 975000/- for distribution of ration kits to 1500 migrant families in Nandapur, Koraput and Kotpad blocks of Koraput District. Great Eastern CSR Foundation has supported Rs 10,00,000 for distribution of ration kits to 136 families and seed support 4250 small and marginal farmers. Pragati has raised Rs 50000 from individual donors for the COVID-19 response activities.
Impact

- Around 30000 families in 6 blocks of Koraput and Nowrangpur district are now aware of the basic precautions for COVID-19. The panic situation and the stigma in the intervention villages have been reduced.
- Dry ration has helped address the immediate need of 1636 migrant and poor families.
- The support in marketing has helped more than 500 farmers to sell their vegetables and other produces through the sell centres established by the Farmer Producer Companies.
- 4250 farmers have received seed support and will start their Kharif paddy cultivation.
- Convergence under MGNREGS has helped in generating wage employment for 2668 migrants and poor households. It has helped in creation of individual farm ponds of 44 beneficiaries, dug wells of 9 farmers and land development of 46 famers.

Challenges

- Initially, it was a major challenge to reach out to the communities because of the restrictions in mobility, but due to the coordination with district administration, block level officials and Panchayat representatives Pragati could reach out to the people in its action areas.
- As the restrictions are relaxed and the number of cases continues to increase, the communities may become more vulnerable.
- There are poor and vulnerable families, old aged, destitute and families without ration cards who may be food and nutrition insecure.
- As the Kharif season has started, the small and marginal farmers find it difficult to get seeds, equipments and also they do not have adequate resources to invest in agriculture activities.
- There are landless and poor families who depend on wage labour and vulnerable to migration. There is need of ensuring their access to Government schemes like MGNREGS. However, the implementation hassles are quite challenging.

Pragati continues to put its sincere efforts to overcome these challenges by focusing on mobilization of resources, approaching different donors and convergence with Government schemes for the benefit of the poor and vulnerable communities to reducing their vulnerabilities caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic.
ତାମାଇ ମନ୍ଦିରକୁ ଗବନମେତାର ଆଦିର ବିରୁପ

ମାତ୍ର ଏକ ମନ୍ଦିର ପଶ୍ଚିମର ବିସ୍ତାର କରାରୁ ବେଳି ଶୁଭ ରହିବାରେ ପ୍ରମୁଖ ବେଦିଯୋଗୀ ପକ୍ଷରୁ ଆସିଲେ। ସେହାଙ୍କ ସହାଯ୍ୟକ କରାରୁ ପ୍ରତିଷ୍ଠାନ ମହାକାଲକୁ ଆଧାର କରିବାରେ ବିଭଳ ବେଦିଯୋଗୀ ପକ୍ଷରୁ ଆସିଲେ। ସେହାଙ୍କ ସହାଯ୍ୟକ କରାରୁ ପ୍ରତିଷ୍ଠାନ ମହାକାଲକୁ ଆଧାର କରିବାରେ ବିଭଳ ବେଦିଯୋଗୀ ପକ୍ଷରୁ ଆସିଲେ। ସେହାଙ୍କ ସହାଯ୍ୟକ କରାରୁ ପ୍ରତିଷ୍ଠାନ ମହାକାଲକୁ ଆଧାର କରିବାରେ ବିଭଳ ବେଦିଯୋଗୀ ପକ୍ଷରୁ ଆସିଲେ। ସେହାଙ୍କ ସହାଯ୍ୟକ କରାରୁ ପ୍ରତିଷ୍ଠାନ ମହାକାଲକୁ ଆଧାର କରିବାରେ ବିଭଳ ବେଦିଯୋଗୀ ପକ୍ଷରୁ ଆସିଲେ।