



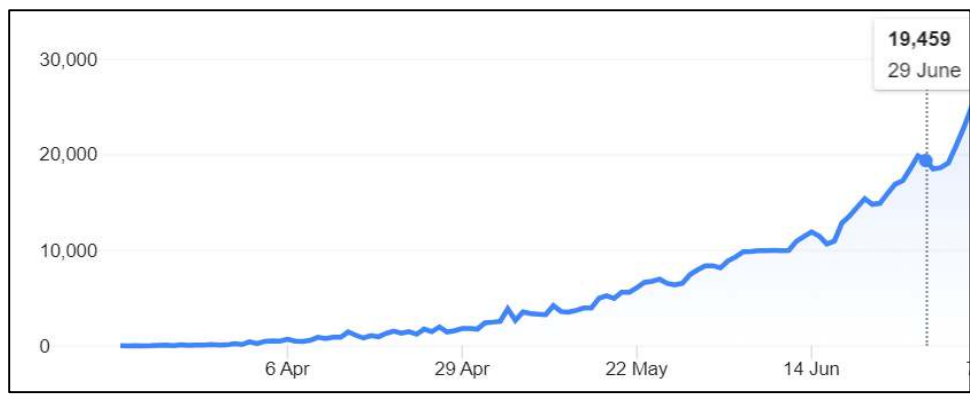
Welcome to the first issue of the CORE Group Polio Project India's News Serial. Its aim is to keep our donors and partners informed and involved and since we want this to be as relevant as possible to our project needs, we look forward to hearing your comments about this first issue.

CORE Group Polio Project India During COVID -19 Pandemic



Total confirmed cases in India have risen to more than 200,000. India's recovery rate stands at 50 percent.

As COVID-19 control is now a global and national priority and because of the lockdown, most of the polio related activities have been put on hold for the time being. The existing CGPP staff as well as the ex-Community Mobilization Coordinators (CMCs) gave their specific time to COVID-19 message dissemination, willingly and voluntarily.



CGPP India goes online

876 DMC, BMC, EX CMCs and influencers were oriented on COVID-19



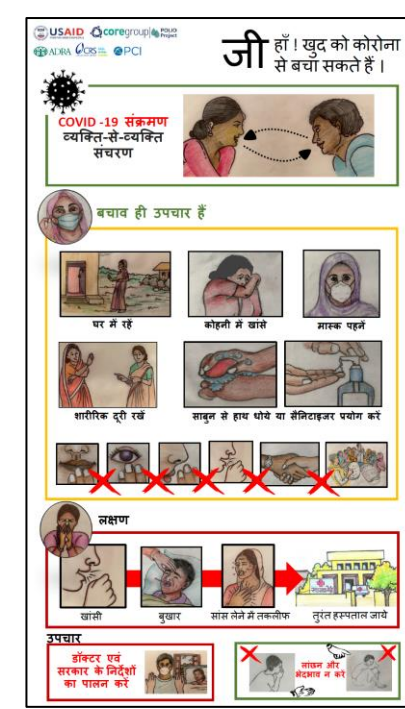
With twenty years of experience in communication and community engagement for public health, CORE Group Polio Project India responded to this pandemic swiftly. About 800 Community Mobilization Coordinators recently disengaged from the project were requested to provide services to their communities. They were given a brief orientation about the disease, and they shared correct information with the community and influencers to support affected families including addressing stigma and discrimination issues.

The CORE Group Polio Project India, through its 12 consortium partners - three international and nine local NGOs continues to support polio immunization in 12 districts of Uttar Pradesh and one in Haryana by ensuring community mobilization for polio and other vaccine-preventable diseases.

Secretariat supported in training, communication materials and reporting on COVID -19.

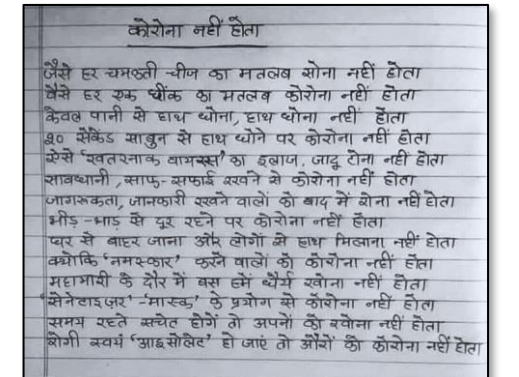


Training package on COVID -19



Flyer on COVID

Trying to explain how to fight and live with the deadly virus which the world is grappling with, Jyoti, an amateur poet - an ex CMC from Baghpat, Uttar Pradesh has put her thoughts beautifully on paper...



It's Not Corona
Just as not every thing that glitters is gold; Not every sneeze is corona!
Just washing hand with water will not keep it away, soaping for twenty seconds will!
The cure for this deadly virus is not black magic, But safety precautions and knowledge will keep regrets away!
Staying away from crowds and doing namaste instead of shaking hands, using masks and sanitizers will keep corona away. We need to be strong and alert to keep corona away.

Our Partners

ADRA India



Dealing with stigma and fear through risk communication

When Naushad with his son and brother, returned from Mumbai to their village, Biral in Baghpat, he was not prepared for the harassment and negative reactions of the locals there. After having travelled more than 800 kilometres on foot, with very little money, they were very exhausted. Naushad called up CGPP's Block Mobilisation Coordinator, Rehman, who listened to his concerns attentively.

There was not much help from the local government and community and if they were quarantined and tested, they would be completely boycotted and asked to leave. Rehman immediately arranged a conference call with the ASHA and village headman and arranged food for the family. While counselling, Rehman tried to make Naushad understand the need for and importance of home quarantine and getting tested for COVID -19. He also connected Naushad with the block medical officer. Finally, COVID-19 tests were done for all three persons and they agreed to put themselves under home quarantine for 14 days.

The test result of COVID-19 was negative!

Project Concern International



CMC Meenu from Mirapur distributing masks

Not just mobilization, CGPP's Ex-CMCs produce masks to ward off COVID-19 from the community



CMC Jolly from Khudada distributing mask

COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the fragility of human lives and calls for rapid response from all quarters. The CGPP team also sprang into action and the CMCs, the ground force of CGPP, were called back to provide voluntary support. Most of them responded positively to the clarion call and began putting in virtual support to the members of the community that they served for years for polio eradication thus maintaining polio-free status.

Some of the former CMCs in Meerut and Muzaffarnagar went a step ahead and started making face masks for needy families in their communities. More than 1000 masks have already been stitched and distributed so far.

"Humne socha ki hume bhee jaruratmando ki madat karni chahiye, humare ghar pe tailoring ki jati hai to bache hue kapde (left-over cloth pieces) ke humne face mask bana ker jarutmando ko diye jo khareed nahi sakte they" said CMC Jyoti of village Mirapur. (We thought that we must help the needy and since we have a tailoring unit at home, we could use left over material to make masks and distribute them.)

Ex CMCs Neha and Kavita did the same.

While COVID-19 is constantly challenging our ease of existence, these CMCs are showing unparalleled energy and indomitable spirit to support their communities in these difficult times, often going beyond their roles and means.

Catholic Relief Services

Fear of COVID-19 leads to refusal of vaccination services

Village Pankhya Nagla in Mirzapur block of Shahjahanpur District is home to a mainly nomadic population and therefore there is a high risk of children contracting vaccine-preventable diseases. But when the routine immunization sessions restarted in early May, the entire village boycotted them for fear of COVID - 19. When no child turned up for the immunization despite repeated reminders, the ASHA and ANM reported this to the Community Health Center in charge, but to no avail. They then turned to the CGPP BMC Balindra Singh and sought his intervention. When Balindra Singh tried to contact the village leader, he was not available.

He then approached the village influencer, who had been very supportive during polio campaigns and shared with him the government COVID-19 safe routine immunization guidelines and explained the importance of vaccination, especially at this time. Both of them then visited each house in the village to tell the parents that their children should not miss their due vaccinations. They also told them about the precautionary measures taken against COVID -19 at the session sites so that there was no chance of getting infected. Balindra Singh, along with the ASHA, also convened a mothers' meeting to share the same messages.

A day prior to the next immunization session, he, along with the village leader and influencer revisited all the houses. The village leader also shared his phone number with the families, so that they could contact him in case of any problem. All these efforts paid off when 26 left-out children and 3 pregnant women received their due vaccinations.

Grassland blowups

Due to COVID-19 a large number of immunisation sessions were missed in CGPP areas in the past six-to eight weeks, with an estimated 22,588 children missing their due vaccinations, leading to lowering of population immunity and increasing the possibility of VDPV emergence



Safe session sites

Community mobilization

