

## **REPORT ON COVID 19 RESPONSE ACTIVITIES BY TASOSS**

**15<sup>th</sup> April 2020**

**TO MOST REV. BISHOP DR. ANTONY PAPPUSAMY, PRESIDENT TNBC**

A new respiratory infectious disease, COVID-19, caused by a new coronavirus called SARS-CoV-2, emerged in early December 2019. Since then, the virus has spread to India and more than 213 other countries in Asia, Europe, North America, Africa, and Oceania. On March 11, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the outbreak a pandemic, which has since rapidly evolved. WHO has released the latest figures **as on 14<sup>th</sup> April as more than 18 lakhs as confirmed positive people and 1,13,675 deaths reported.**

The Government of India has announced the COVID-19 pandemic as a National crisis. Novel Coronavirus or Covid-19 cases **in India have now crossed 10,000 mark.** According to latest figures from Ministry of Health and family welfare **9756 active cases among which 1305 have cured and 377 have died as of April 15<sup>th</sup> 2020.**

Although it is too early to gauge the full spectrum of the outbreak's social and economic impacts, COVID-19 has already caused lockdowns in many countries in Europe, America and in India, suspension of schools and universities, disruption of food systems and other supply chains, as well as a slowdown in trade both internally and externally. In this connection Tamil Nadu is under complete lockdown from the third week of March 2020 until 30<sup>th</sup> of April 2020 which is likely to extend considering the spreading trend which is alarming. The Government of India is trying every possible measure to abstain from the dreadful stage of community spread.

### **1. TASOSS RESPONSES IN COVID 19 MISSION:**

TASOSS along with its key stakeholders at the ground level have started our mission in the process of supporting our people in concern through different ways such as virtual meetings, volunteerism, preparation and distribution of PPEs (Personal Protective Equipments), discussions in social media etc.

**A Whatsapp group for volunteers** was created already that includes all the key stake holders of TASOSS such as the staff of TASOSS and its member societies, Women Federation EC members, Directors of member societies etc.

### **A) VOLUNTEERING ENGAGEMENT:**

- The Volunteers will use the platform for sharing the various efforts taken up at the field level
- Different needs from the ground to be updated.
- Important information from Government sources will be shared and updated both ways.
- Supporting and coordinating with the local district administration and health officials in creating awareness to the public in their locality.
- Ensuring the access of Emergency government schemes announced during this time by our people in concern.
- Encouraging the volunteers to get registered in the government official volunteering portal and make them available for any emergency call. We have more than 20 of our persons already registered.

### **B) IEC DEVELOPMENT AND DISSEMINATION:**

**Printed 10,000** notices having awareness information on COVID-19 (What is COVID-19, Symptoms of COVID-19, Do's and Don'ts, How to wear the mask, whom to be tested for COVID-19, Help-line and emergency contact numbers of the State and Central Governments and the web link of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India for regular updates etc) to



all the church bodies in the state.

This was **disseminated to all our key stakeholders such as Tamil Nadu Women Federation and our core committee members of TN-RSP and member societies.**

The resource material was used as the awareness raising material through Public media such as FM Radio

by Rev Fr. Samson Arokiadass, Director of DMSSS, Dindigul.

### **C) STRATEGIES EXPLORED FOR FUND RAISING AND NETWORKING:**

**TASOSS facilitated in release of one lakh as an emergency fund from Caritas India to 6 DSSS to support in the response activities of COVID 19. TASOSS also sought funds with the**

guidance from TNBC from **all the church bodies and individuals** with the print and visual media support **through Nam Vazhvu magazine and Madha TV**. Similarly there are efforts being taken up to raise funds from the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) wing of HCL.

***D) TASOSS SUPPORT THROUGH COORDINATED EFFORTS:***

TASOSS with the **networking effort with the north india forums** coordinated with a few DSSSSs in identifying and addressing the needs of a few **north Indian migrant workers** held up in Tamil Nadu. More than **400 families of migrant workers from Coimbatore, hosur and kancheepuram** were provided with **essential kit worth Rs.1300 each comprising groceries and vegetables** through the respective DSSSSs team.



**TASOSS** along with the **St. Paul's Seminary** and the **St. Mary's cathedral** provided food packets, masks and hygiene kit to **400 sanitary workers** through the **Trichy Corporation**. This was done in showing the love and solidarity **on the occasion of the Easter festival**.

TASOSS encouraged the ground level volunteers **to associate with Caritas India Helpline number in rendering psycho-social support**. Similarly TASOSS is ready to serve as Volunteers along with a few Sisters to the Trichy Corporation in providing counseling services to the needy.

***E) KNOWLEDGE BUILDING***

On Knowledge building part TASOSS associated with **SPHERE India** and **Red cross organization** in preparing and releasing resource materials related to the humanitarian services, dos and donts during this crisis etc. The resource materials will be really supportive to the people in distress to cope with the situation and bring them out of the panic of COVID 19 and aware about the social stigma and solidarity during the crisis. TASOSS also taking efforts to **translate the resource materials published by the Central Ministry of Health and Family Welfare** in **coordination with the Madras School of Social Work** and the state Health Department.

## 2. DSSSS EFFORTS WITH THE FACILITATION FROM TASOSS

TASOSS facilitated and coordinated with DSSSSs with the guidance from Tamil Nadu Bishops Conference (TNBC) in reaching the most vulnerable sections of the society to respond to COVID 19 crisis across the state.

### A) COMMUNITIES REACHED:

In coordination with our DSSSSs and with the facilitation of TASOSS, the **most vulnerable sections of the society** such as the poor dalits, widows, homeless, migrant workers, narikuravas, daily wage earners, refugees, differently able, trans people, government public servants such as police personnel, fire safety personnel, sanitary and health workers etc were reached.

### B) SUPPORT RENDERED:

**Personal Protective Equipments (PPEs) – Masks/Gloves/sanitizers/Disinfectants/soaps etc.**

The support rendered so far in-terms of **personal protective equipments (PPEs)** such as masks and **Hygiene kits** such as soaps, sanitizers to the tune of **10,000 families in 20 Districts** covering more than **50 villages** and urban locations.

### Dry Ration / Groceries and food

**Dry ration and groceries** such as rice, cooking oil, sugar, dal and vegetables were provided to **5000 families** consolidating to **more than 20,000 individuals.**



Similarly **Nearly 2000 people** were provided with **cooked food** that



includes police personnel, health and sanitary workers etc.

The support extended to more than 20 Districts in Tamil Nadu covering rural and urban locations.

### Psycho-social support:



More than 10 DSSSSs have identified qualified and skilled volunteers



towards supporting in counseling services for the respective district administration have been organized and registered. They have obtained official identity cards from government to work as tele-support counselors.

***Finance support to Government:***

Diocese of Coimbatore and Pondicherry have contributed financial support of Rs. 25 lakhs and 10 lakhs respectively to the Chief Minister's relief fund towards COVID 19 response. The Bishops of the respective Dioceses handed over the money to the respective District collectors.



***C) COORDINATION WITH GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS:***

On the coordination part, TASOSS along with the DSSSs have coordinated with all the District administration, local body representatives, revenue department, police department and Corporation officials in

almost all the Districts in extending the support.

Many DSSSs have directly reached the government departments and

officials in extending the aid. Police personnel, corporation officials, health department officials, sanitary

workers were provided with PPEs, cooked food, refreshments etc in many districts through the respective DSSSs team.



***D) KNOWLEDGE BUILDING:***On knowledge building support TASOSS along with the DSSSs have prepared **more than 20000 awareness notices** related to COVID 19 dos and donts and distributed across the state.

**To Conclude:**

Presently TASOSS representatives along with the Directors have joined as volunteers who will be involved in providing counseling services through the District Corporation helpline services. The training session will start immediately which will be followed by beginning of psycho social counseling services to the needy. Meanwhile TASOSS continues its humanitarian support in coordinating and facilitating the DSSSSs towards responding to the COVID 19 crisis with the guidance from TNBC through networking of Government departments.

**Report as on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2020.**

**Rev Fr. Albert Thambi Durai, DIRECTOR  
TASOSS, TRICHY**