

Minutes of the Meeting on Government NGO Coordination for effective management of COVID-19 scenario in the State held on 30.03.2020

A meeting on coordination and collaborative activities for mitigation of negative effects of the global pandemic COVID 19 with the Civil Society Organisations was held under the Chairmanship of Additional Chief Secretary –cum-Managing Director, OSDMA at 11 AM on 30.03.2020 through Zoom video conferencing facility. The following members of the civil society organizations and senior officials of Government enriched the discussion with their valuable suggestions.

Sl no	Name	Organisation
1	Dr. Kamal Lochan Mishra	OSDMA
2	Satya Ranjan Sahu	OSDMA
3	Akshaya Kumar Biswal, Chairperson – IAG Odisha	Oxfam India
4	Monika Nielsen	Unicef
5	Abha Mishra	UNDP
6	Kirtimayi Mishra	CRS
7	Umi Daniel	Aid-et Action
8	Meghanad Behera	UNDP/OSDMA
9	Inakhi Patra	CASA
10	Dr. Deepa Prasad	UNFPA
11	Bimal Prasad Pandia	Oxfam
12	Bharati Chakra	HelpAge India
13	Purna Mohanty	WaterAid
14	Debabrat Patra	ActionAid
15	Annie Patri	Handicap International
16	Birupakhsya Dixtit	Practical Action
17	Srilekha Chouhan	World Vision
18	M. lyngdow	World Vision
20	Partha Dash	Plan India
21	Dr. Somyakant	Save the children
22	Manoranjan Behera	IAG Odisha

Issues relating to the public at large, destitute population in the remote rural areas, elderly people, migrant workers, milk producers, betel vine farmers and aid agency personnel etc were discussed in the meeting. After detailed discussion the following conjunctures / suggestions emerged.

1. **Institutional quarantine facility:** A number of migrant labourers who have come from outside the state and reached the villages need to be provided with institutional quarantine as their residential accommodation is inadequate to enable them to maintain social distancing. The NGOs are willing to provide all possible assistance to the local administration through their volunteers to support management of the institutional quarantine facility created at Gram Panchayat level. Since cooked food arrangement has been made by government at GP level, local NGOs may consider providing such facilities if required to augment the cooked food facility already extended by the government.
2. **Psycho Social Counseling:** Human beings develop psychological stress and mental health condition in constraint environments. The prevailing COVID-19 scenario in the country as well as in Odisha has started showing disturbed behavioral pattern among the vulnerable communities especially the migrant workers coming from outside the state. Psycho-social counseling is felt necessary for such persons to overcome the stressful condition to enable them to gather sufficient mental courage to come to normalcy as soon as possible. The NGOs having experience and expertise in providing psycho-social counseling can provide such services in their operational areas and the experts available with the civil society organization could also extend their cooperation to the medical and paramedical personnel of the government in providing psycho-social counseling to the distress people. The NGOs may extend facilities of mental health counseling through telephone or through WhatsApp groups or through their volunteers especially to the migrant workers or to anybody who needs such support.
3. **Awareness generation:** Awareness about maintaining social distancing, personal hygiene, all possible measures to prevent spreading of COVID-19 is required at remote areas where people have limited access to electronic/print media. The NGOs may extend their services in generating public awareness on the above-mentioned issues along with awareness about the *entitlement of the people extended by the government* in different sectors of the government service.

4. **Support for home nursing requirement:** Issues of geriatric people having no one to fall back upon is becoming a serious concern. Government may consider issuing passes to the Home Nurses to support such people.
5. **Livelihood support:** (a) Milk producers in rural areas face problems relating to procurement of milk. (b) Betel vine farmers also face difficulty in transporting their produce to outside state markets. (c) Microfinance groups would be urged not to collect current installments from the members in view of the lack of cash/income with the members. (d) Simultaneous exercise may be taken up by all concerned to address livelihood issues of the poor in short medium and long term. ACS-cum-MD, OSDMA may kindly take up the matter with OMFED regarding milk producers' procurement issues and with Principal Secretary, Panchayati Raj for resumption of NREGA work maintaining social distancing parameters. (e) The NGOs suggest for generation of livelihood support activities in rural areas to provide some income to the village folks.
6. In view of the lock down shortage of cash is found among the daily wage earners and migrant workers. Taking advantages of the dearth of cash with poor people local money lenders are seen to be active to provide the money to the people at high rate of interest. The Civil society urged government to kindly consider provide unemployment allowance to such people.
7. **Availability of Critical Medicine:** Some members of the civil society while sharing their field experience observed that critical / lifesaving medicines were in short supply in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack for which people are facing difficulties. Health and Family Welfare Department may be moved to maintain availability of critical medicines at all locations.
8. It is suggested by members of the civil society to include soap in the list of items provided under Public Distribution Systems to ensure better personal hygiene. The Department of Food Supplies and Consumer Welfare may consider these suggestions and take an appropriate decision.
9. Civil Society express their willingness to support Seasonal Hostels meant for children of migrant workers brick kiln workers. Labour and Employment Department may consider preparing a protocol to rope in the assistance of NGOS. Civil Society organizations have the grassroots level presence through their volunteers which can be utilized for assessment of field situations and

- distribution of essential commodities/ ration in remote areas in their work domains.
10. The aid workers and volunteers of the civil society are facing a lot of difficulty in reaching their work places due to restrictions in issue of passes by the authorities. Government may kindly consider allowing the aid workers of the NGOs to operate maintaining the protocols of social distancing.
 11. Community Radio Operators offer their services for generation of public awareness within their broadcast zones.
 12. NGOs willing to provide financial as well as material assistance to the needy people require guidance of government and standard operating procedure/protocol for this purpose.
 13. Next meeting will take place at 11.00 AM on 01.04.2020 through video conferencing.
 14. UNICEF will develop a web / mobile App cell for registration of Volunteers to work with Government, district and subdistrict level authorities.
 15. Issues of PWD regarding Access to Facilities in Quarantine /Isolation/Medical Centres may be considered by the respective authorities.
 16. Government may make vigorous awareness campaign on facilities/benefits/grants extended by it to the people.
 17. This situation may lead to malnutrition among low weight children. Anganwadis may be allowed to look into it.

The meeting ended with thanks to the members of the civil society for their contribution to the discussion


30.03.2020
ACS-cum-MD, OSDMA