



Bhoomika

**ANNUAL REPORT
2020 - 2021**

CONTENTS

ABOUT BHOOMIKA TRUST	3
SHARING OUR THOUGHTS	4
COVID-19	6
HELPLINE FOR SENIOR CITIZENS	7
PROJECT FOOD FIRST	9
Distributing cooked food	9
Distributing ration kits	10
PROJECT HEALTH FIRST	19
Supplying safety gear	19
Distributing critical healthcare equipment	20
COVID-19 IMPACT: MIGRANT CRISIS & OUR RESPONSE	21
Helping send migrant workers home	21
Building an empathetic process	21
The critical role played by our volunteers	22
PROMOTING LIVELIHOODS THROUGH REHABILITATION	26
Cashewnut crackers	26
Weavers	27
Farmers	27
ONGOING EDUCATION PROJECTS	29
CRITICALITY OF COLLABORATIONS DURING A CRISIS	30
Can NGOs partner with government officials during difficult times?	30
IN GRATITUDE	31
To our volunteers	31
To our donors	31
Other NGOs, residents associations & citizen groups	32
TESTIMONIALS FROM OUR VOLUNTEERS	33
FINANCIALS	34

ABOUT BHOOMIKA TRUST

When a group of like-minded individuals gathered to support those affected by the Gujarat Earthquake in 2001, little did they imagine that they would witness the devastation caused by the earthquake and the suffering of the people in its immediate aftermath, followed by the long-term consequences of rebuilding homes, vocations and schools. The devastation caused in communities that were already underprivileged emphasised the need for emphatic organised support. The vision of Bhoomika was born out of this experience.



VISION

Disasters have devastating impacts, traumatising and debilitating lives. We believe that response to disasters is not just about immediate relief but a humanitarian response to the affected that looks beyond immediate suffering. It is about rehabilitation through their vocation, their place of dwelling, the rebuilding of schools, nurturing of the children in the aftermath of the disaster. We aim to rebuild lives and livelihoods.




MISSION

To work with underprivileged communities and individuals

1. *At times of natural disasters by responding through the three phases of Rescue, Relief and Rehabilitation*
2. *In the field of education by supporting children's education through better infrastructure and qualitative interventions with an aim to make it relevant, to equip them with a mind to enquire, to be creative, sensitive to environment and people, and help preserve the planet*

SHARING OUR THOUGHTS

It started in whispers like a brewing storm far away in China, and then it kept growing louder and the storm kept spreading wider and faster. This is not a natural disaster we speak about. It is about a virus that caused a disease. The year 2020-2021 was consumed by this storm called COVID-19.



Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Most people infected with the virus will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment. However, some will become seriously ill and require medical attention. Older people and those with underlying medical conditions like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease or cancer are more likely to develop serious illness. Anyone can get sick with COVID-19 and become seriously ill or die at any age.

Source: World Health Organisation

The first case of COVID-19 infection in India was reported in Kerala. On January 27th 2020, a 20-year-old female presented to the Emergency Department at the Thrissur General Hospital, Kerala, with a one-day history of dry cough and sore throat. She had recently returned from Wuhan, China. Since then, India has gone through a phase of fear followed by lockdowns, the spread of disease across the country, challenges to the medical fraternity and so on.

For us, at Bhoomika, this was a crisis like none before. As it took roots here, it defied understanding. We could not define a time zone or specify a geography that it affected. The challenges were humongous as our team could not step out in the open, and had limited knowledge on protection from or consequence of the disease. Yet we persevered.

Bhoomika started the COVID-19 response with the setting up of a critical helpline for senior citizens. As the distress grew, we started responding to the needs of migrant workers and daily wage earners. We leveraged the process of remote volunteering and reached thousands of people across the State. We learnt new ways to deliver, new collaborations, and new means of volunteer engagements. We were overwhelmed but we stayed the course.

We bring to you, through this report, some of the highlights of our COVID-19 response through the year. It was an emotional roller coaster for many of us who worked through the night in the first few critical months. Our young volunteers emerged as our most valuable resource as they took on long hours of working the phones, reaching distressed people, and offering them solutions, support and immediate care. The distress of the daily wage earner and the migrant workers trying to go back home to their loved ones took centre stage and many of them stayed connected with the migrant workers till they reached their final destination in distant Bihar or Jharkhand.

To us at Bhoomika, this crisis opened our eyes more than ever to the power of collaboration, to the power of community support and to the empathy of the young professionals who burnt the midnight oil helping those in distress

We were a small but important part of the solution in the act of bringing people together on a platform to reach out to those affected. We are eternally grateful to all those who worked with us and supported us in multiple ways. We are thankful to our donors who made much of this possible, to the public offices of the Greater Chennai Corporation, the Greater Chennai Police and the police officials of Tiruvallur district, as well as the innumerable officials who helped us deliver relief.

We closed the year realising that we were still in the middle of this crisis and we are steeling ourselves with resolve to continue.

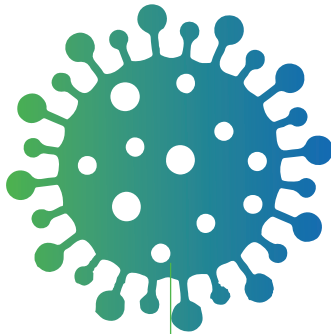
Thank you for all your support

ARUNA SUBRAMANIAM
Managing Trustee

COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic in India is part of the worldwide pandemic of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). The first case of COVID-19 in India, which originated from China, was reported on January 27th 2020. India went into a lockdown from March 24th with life literally coming to a standstill.

A CHALLENGE LIKE NEVER BEFORE



GENERAL CHALLENGES

1. A prolonged crisis with no visible end unlike many disasters we have seen
2. The problems of relief delivery due to safety protocols and movement restrictions
3. The initial fear leading to paralysis of action
4. No geographic boundary

BHOOMIKA'S CHALLENGES

- To identify our focus
- To define process, recognising constraints
- To implement in real time

FOCUS & ACTION: PHASE 1 EMERGENCY RESPONSE



Helpline
for
SENIOR CITIZENS



Food Ration Kits
for
MIGRANT WORKERS
DAILY WAGE WORKERS



Safety Sanitation Kits
for
HOSPITAL STAFF
FRONTLINE WORKERS

HELPLINE FOR SENIOR CITIZENS

The Government of India announced a nationwide lockdown on the evening of March 24th 2020 and our team's initial concern was about how senior citizens living alone would cope. Our first response to COVID-19, therefore, arose from this concern. Bhoomika set up a helpline in Chennai primarily to cater to senior citizens and support their requests for essentials.

FIELD NOTES

In the initial days of the lockdown, our helpline received many calls from senior citizens and their loved ones. The calls sought assistance and support even as all of us were coming to terms with the pandemic and what it entailed. Many requests were for medical assistance as mobility became severely limited in the lockdown.

"I am a senior citizen and needed transportation to take my aged mother for dialysis and was struggling."

"There is no one to deliver medicines from the pharmacy, and I need help with that."

"I live in USA but my aged parents live by themselves and they need medical help."

Bhoomika, through its multiple teams of remote and field volunteers manning the helplines, answered calls and fielded requests for the delivery of cooked food, groceries, vegetables and medicines. This helpline also facilitated ambulance runs for those who needed to visit the hospital for medical needs or emergencies.



291

Ambulance runs



3300

Calls attended

HEARTWARMING FEEDBACK

"Due to the lockdown, we were in a dilemma as to how to take my mother out for dialysis every Tuesday and Friday to Mylapore [Chennai]. A friend sent me a WhatsApp message with Bhoomika's details. I thought it would be a good idea to ask whether Bhoomika could help. Thus our contact started! We just had to inform them about the days and timings of the dialysis. We were then given assurance that we would definitely get a vehicle to [the] hospital and back. It was so reassuring! God bless Bhoomika Trust and all [the] volunteers who are helping us in these difficult times. My mother, aged 87, has a safe trip to [the] hospital thanks only to Team Bhoomika! I can't thank you enough for this."

"I would say your team is our saviour in these crisis days. We find it very hard to travel to the dialysis centre and our home since there is no autos or cabs available due to the pandemic. Thanks to the entire Bhoomika team. Thank the God for the Saviour Team. No words to convey our gratitude. At your feet." (sic)

While the helpline played an important role in delivering daily needs to senior citizens, it also filled the crucial gap of providing emotional and moral support. Our team and volunteers listened to those who called the helpline as they went through difficult times; a service that was particularly critical for senior citizens who often did not have support systems in place.



HELPLINE FOR SENIOR CITIZENS
and immunity compromised in Chennai

Call the
Bhoomika Covid Helpline
☎ **044-46314726**

Our volunteers will reach out on the phone
and if necessary assist at your doorstep

Bhoomika
Trust

விட்டில் இருப்பதே மருந்து.
திருவள்ளூர் மாவட்டத்தில் மருந்தை
உங்கள் வீட்டிற்கே அனுப்புவோம்.

திருவள்ளூர் நகராட்சியில்
டெலிவரி ஊர்காவல் படை செய்வார்கள்

**பூமிகா ஹெல்ப்லைனை
அழையுங்கள்**
☎ **044-46314726**
Call Bhoomika Helpline

For home delivery of
Medicine in Thiruvallur
Delivery by Homeguards

பூமிகா மற்றும் திருவள்ளூர் மாவட்டம்
காவல் துறை இணைந்து செய்யும்
பொதுநல சேவை.

Public Service by Bhoomika in
Collaboration with
Police Department, Thiruvallur District.

Bhoomika
Trust
www.bhoomikatrust.org

PROJECT FOOD FIRST

For many people, the lockdown made access to food difficult. Bhoomika stepped in to respond to the hunger that was brought about by the lockdown. The homeless on the streets of Chennai, the daily wage earners who were deprived of their income, and the migrant labourers working in small workshops, unorganised industry and agricultural fields faced the brunt of this lockdown. In addition to this, several clusters of small industries like weavers, potters, stone cutters, and beach vendors lost their income. Their lives had come to a standstill. Bhoomika adopted a two-pronged approach of providing cooked food for those unable to cook on their own while providing ration kits for families and labourers who had access to cooking facilities.

DISTRIBUTING COOKED FOOD

Our distribution team identified homeless members in the city, sleeping on the side of roads and under flyovers, and provided them with food packets and water. Our volunteers, carrying food packets, reached out to several migrant workers stranded in lodges near the railway station. The Government had imposed strict regulations to not evict them for non-payment of rent. However they had no money to buy food. Food packets were delivered to lodges twice a day - in the morning and evening - for over a week. Migrant workers camping outside the railway station in a bid to find a train were provided food. Bhoomika distributed **98,630 food packets** in total.



FIELD NOTES: A CALLER ON OUR HELPLINE

A migrant worker from Jharkhand reached out seeking help. Three adults and 3-month-old twins in a small room, having exhausted their savings, paid their last rupee to avoid eviction and had not eaten through the day. They were worried about not having baby food for the next day and reached out to us late in the evening. A good Samaritan had asked this skilled migrant worker to reach out to us. We made sure money reached the family within half an hour, so that they could buy something before the stores shut. They would be okay for at least another week. The Bhoomika team supported this family until they left for their hometown. The father called us as the money reached him, filled with gratitude. "Call me if there is something I can do for you. You have cared for my babies."



DISTRIBUTING RATION KITS

Bhoomika realised that providing ration kits to the stranded gave them relief for up to two weeks in the days of evolving crisis. As Governments strategised on migrant workers travelling back to their home states, this support for a sustained period of time became critical. Our tech volunteers helped us develop better data management systems that improved the scheduling and delivery of ration kits.

The story of migrant workers in Chennai

Migrant workers in Chennai are employed in restaurants, as domestic cooks and as security staff. They work as carpenters, they lay tiles, they take up painting contracts, and work in small units. They work in spas and grocery shops, and assist roadside vendors. They are spread across the city of Chennai. They are largely from Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh. Many of these migrants lost their jobs in their home states and many were self-employed and had no income. The migrant workers in this class do not have a safety net as they send back everything they earn to support their families in their home states. The challenge of reaching them was immense as they often lived in small clusters of anywhere between 10 and 40 individuals in small streets of Chennai. Often, 6-7 people shared a room. When the pandemic struck, many of them lost their jobs and income. Their day-to-day survival became a challenge.

Bhoomika set up a process-driven delivery plan with the necessary permissions in place to reach across the city of Chennai and the neighbouring districts. A helpline for migrant workers was set up to aid this effort as well. The helpline answered calls through the day with support from remote volunteers who spoke Hindi and Bengali. Our volunteers followed safety protocols, packed customised provision kits and delivered them to families who had lost their sources of income. We identified cases of food distress, mapped area-wise needs and geo-tagged contact points for the pick-up of kits. Delivery vehicles with ration kits travelled in all directions, remotely monitored by volunteers who alerted the beneficiaries on pick-up locations. This demanding daily process was largely executed by volunteers.





*Focused delivery of ration kits to migrant workers
in Tiruvallur district: 17,000 ration kits*

Bhoomika Trust launched a huge operation to reach the large community of migrant workers in Tiruvallur District. They live across the district in multiple clusters in the sub-divisions of Tiruvallur, Uthukottai, Tiruthani, Ponneri and Gummidipoondi. The labourers are spread across small units, brick kilns, estates, and large and small companies. Many large and medium-sized companies supported their migrant workers with cooked food but many small companies struggled to do the same.

Bhoomika meticulously planned, procured, packed and delivered dry ration kits with rice, wheat flour, oil, turmeric, chilli powder and salt in the Ponneri sub-division, Sholavaram and Minjur Taluks. A packing centre was set up in Tiruvallur district. Our volunteers reached across the district in multiple vehicles, and delivered groceries and sacks of wheat flour to enable them to survive till they were able to restart livelihood or return home.

We wish to thank the police force for their huge support at every stage to make the logistics work, including finding a place to store and pack, finding us local volunteers and sharing detailed data on migrants residing and working there.

*Community-focused support of ration kits:
a need that arose from losing livelihoods*

The loss of livelihoods and resulting distress was very real for many niche groups. Many associations and communities reached out to Bhoomika for sustained support and we were able to provide ration kits to them. We reached many villages and gave away ration kits to landless farm labourers who had no income in this period.

RATION KITS PROVIDED THROUGH COMMUNITIES

Beach Vendors Association, Chennai	479
Musicians (Chennai & Chengalpattu)	960
Tamil Nadu Association for the Rights of All Types of Differently Abled and Caregivers (TARATDAC)	100
Unity Trust for Blind (Thiruninravur)	35
Porters and cleaning staff at Egmore Railway Station	250
Dhuruva (Persons with Disability)	436
Nochikuppam fishermen community	700
Weavers (Kanchipuram)	105
Stone Cutters (Puducherry)	100
SPASTN (Families of children with disability)	60
National Federation of the Blind	195
HIV/AIDS Prevention Control (Tiruvallur Chapter)	100
Leprosy Association (Chengalpattu)	152
Leprosy Association (Vandalur)	71
TOTAL	3743





HEARTWARMING FEEDBACK

It is with much appreciation and gratitude that I write this letter to thank you for providing needed grocery packs to our parents. Your attention to detail in providing what the family needs is really appreciated. It would have been easier for you to just send the ration packs but instead, you chose to plan and execute the task using your resources so very efficiently and tailor-made to the beneficiary.

I wish you and your Trust many years of helping the needy.

Mrs. Jaya Krishnaswamy
Director, Madhuras Narayanan Centre for Exceptional Children

We believe in God and he is helping us through you. Items such as garlic, jaggery, pepper, pulses that are expensive [being included in the kits] were most welcome. Thank you.

Parents from Madhuras Narayanan Centre for Exceptional Children

FIELD NOTES

The reality is that the daily wage earner literally has a hand-to-mouth existence and will not be able to put away anything for a rainy day.

Chengiah, from Kaverirajapuram in Tiruvallur district, is a sole breadwinner supporting his elderly parents, wife and three young children by selling vegetables in Koyambedu. He tested COVID positive. After quarantine, he was worried about going back to the market. Satish, an Irula from Mittapalayam tribal colony is an agricultural daily wage earner. He is a lumberjack and finds himself with no work. Most often such situations drive these families into debt bondage in an effort to survive.

Bhoomika reached over 1600 families across 14 villages in Tiruvallur district. These are largely SC/ST settlements where individuals work as farm labourers and brick kiln workers or in fishing and small workshops in nearby towns. Tiruvallur district itself has been significantly affected by COVID, reporting a high caseload. According to the local volunteers, many families struggled to access their PDS rations and entitlements under MNREGA. We keep finding entire villages where families do not have a social net to handle any break in their daily wages. Our provision kits reached 1603 such families across Tholutavur, Ahipattu, Ambedkar Colony, Ramapuram, Nedumbaram, Mittapalayam, Vengatapuram, Varadapuram, Raghunathapuram, Narayanapuram, Kaverirajapuram, Muthukondapuram, Kanchipadi and Seethapuram. Our team worked with the local volunteers who meticulously planned the distribution by giving away tokens and ensuring social distancing.

Satish and his wife Ellamma say that they never dreamt of having groceries and a hygiene kit with masks and soap being delivered to their doorstep. Chengiah was immensely grateful to see that his family would be taken care of for the next two weeks.

Almost all the people in the villages we reached out to were from the Irula community and worked as daily wage labourers, living in huts with thatched roofs and meagre belongings. The Bhoomika team travelled across **77 villages** and reached out to **3000 families**, providing them with provisions including 10 kilograms of rice, dal, tamarind, oil, turmeric, salt, and chilli powder.



Keerapakkam	Paraniputhur	Sriperumbudur	Mathur	Nedumaram
Nallambakkam	Mambakkam	Irilenceri	Kattugudalur	Nerkunaptu
Unmancheri	Perumborur Kandigai	Pinjivakkam	Kottakayapakkam	Madurapakkam
Karanaipuducheri	Oarathi	Othikadu	Kannikoilmedu	
Kotta Medu	Thondankulam	Sethilpakkam	Vadamanipakkam	
Vallam	Sankarapuram	Odakandigai	Veliyambakkam	
Amnampakkam	Alavur	Sirunai	Vanniyanalur	
Thaiyur	Vaiyavur	Enambakkam	Puthiran Kottai	
Kothimangalam	Ozhayur	Chinnambedu	Elliedu	
Kalathur	Periyakarumbur Kooram	Kosavanpettai	Pazhavur	
Oragadam	Nelvoy	Thaneerpalayam	Mazhuvankarani	
Vallipuram	Pazhathottam	Natham	Sandaimedu	
Nandhivaram	Kavampair	Pethalakandigai	Kilinjalmadu	
Thirukhazikundram	Neiyadipakkam	Samanthipuram	Vadapattinam	
Manimangalam	Aasur	New Keechalam	G D Kuppam	
Madhambakkam	Walajabad	Nochili	Veerapogam	
Orapakkam	Agili	Kollakuppam	Madayambakkam	
Mangadu	Ukkotai	Aravakkam	Kodur	
		Pulikulam	N Palayam	

32,21,660
meals



*Total impact of
Project Food First*

98,630
people



*Number of hospital staff &
migrant workers who
received cooked food in
shelters & trains*

1,04,101
people



*Number of migrant
workers & daily wage
earners who received dry
rations for 15 days*



PROJECT HEALTH FIRST

SUPPLYING SAFETY GEAR

In the initial phase of the provision of healthcare services, our primary focus was on preventing the spread of COVID-19. Healthcare institutions struggled to contain infection spread amidst their staff. As the infection spread rapidly and tracking and monitoring became enhanced, there was a shortfall of the supply of safety gear. In such a situation, Bhoomika established credible supply chains by commissioning small units with capabilities to manufacture PPE kits and protective visors. Quality safety gear in the form of PPE kits, N95 masks, and protective visors was distributed to several hospitals across Tamil Nadu. Sanitation workers were provided with hygiene kits consisting of hand wash, soaps and face masks. The total expenditure for this was **Rs. 64,93,535.**

REUSABLE CLOTH MASKS 1,10,000	SANITATION KITS 45,335
SURGICAL MASKS 22,300	N95 MASKS 21,760
PROTECTIVE VISORS 20,300	SURGICAL GLOVES 18,500
PPE KITS 13,985	Safety gear supplied by Bhoomika

DISTRIBUTING CRITICAL HEALTHCARE EQUIPMENT

COVID-19 being primarily a respiratory infection, it was imperative for hospitals to equip themselves with critical healthcare equipment like ventilators and nasal cannulas. We aided a few hospitals to increase their bed capacity and provided them with critical healthcare equipment. In addition to this, we supported the treatment of several patients. The total expenditure on equipment and treatment was **Rs. 57,07,123.**

HOSPITAL COTS,
MATTRESSES,
IV STANDS

60

O2 FLO HI FLOW
HEATED RESP
HUMIDIFIER

6

MULTI PARA
MONITORS

6

BIPAP

7

Critical healthcare
equipment distributed



COVID-19 IMPACT: MIGRANT CRISIS AND OUR RESPONSE

Tamil Nadu has over 10 lakh migrant workers, a majority of whom are unskilled labourers. A study by the Loyola Institute of Social Science in 2016 estimated that about 27% are employed in manufacturing, 17% in textiles and about 12% in real estate. Majority of the migrant workers in Tamil Nadu come from Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Odisha, Assam and West Bengal. Interestingly, Kanchipuram, Chennai and Tiruvallur districts account for more than 50% of the migrant population through the employment provided by their manufacturing units, real estate and infrastructural projects like Metro construction. A significant chunk of 20% of the migrant worker population are settled in Coimbatore and Tirupur, working in textile and allied industries. With the announcement of the lockdown, the workers wanted to return home.

HELPING SEND MIGRANT WORKERS HOME

"I am a migrant worker speaking from Mappedu, Tiruvallur district. I am with a group of around 60 people here, mostly from Jharkhand and Bihar. We have been without any work since the lockdown. We are employed in units here through contractors. We got our salary for March, but that is exhausted now. We were given few rations, but right now we just have some rice left. We are desperate to go back home and are prepared to walk back. I have been away from home for the past 15 months. I want to see my family."

This was a call we received on our helpline number. It was one of several similar calls during that phase. These calls led to the beginning of a new mission for the organisation - "helping send migrant workers home"

BUILDING AN EMPATHETIC PROCESS

We reached out to Greater Chennai Corporation to offer support in the process of sending the migrant workers back home. We offered to validate their registrations on the official portal, first for Jharkhand and eventually for West Bengal as well. We were able to form a large remote team of Hindi-speaking volunteers overnight. Around 300 volunteers, most of them professionals, were divided into sub-groups and were assigned dockets of registered information. A data management team took charge of dividing and consolidating the information.

We went through thousands of individual and group registrations on the portal, taking the potential tally of those registered on the portal wanting to go back home to just Jharkhand to over 20,000. It was a challenge to weed out duplicate registrations. The volunteers called each registered number, verified their information, their desire to travel and their present location. Often they would ask the migrant workers to click pictures of their current location and send it to make sure the information was accurate. The data of those wanting to go home was continually relayed to the administration who started allocating them to trains. The Police sent out SMSes on the numbers of those who were verified, with details of the trains along with the location of the nearest Police Station for them to assemble on the date of travel. After verification, they were sent in vehicles to the station to board the train.

THE CRITICAL ROLE PLAYED BY OUR VOLUNTEERS

The passionate efforts of our amazing volunteering team made sure that the challenging and complicated process of coordinating migrant workers returning to their homes was a huge success. They did not perceive individual workers as statistics but genuinely empathised with their plight and wanted to help them return to their homes.

Each registration, whether a single person or a group of people, was a living and moving story. It was not about how many people we helped send back home but about how many we could miss out on because they did not answer their phones on time. It was about tracking them actively till they reached the designated pick-up location on time. It was about escalating the cause of a missing person in a group and being persistent with efforts to resolve the issue. It was about making ourselves available 24x7 over the phone which meant we did not have any designated rest. There were many instances of calls well past midnight or as early as 4 AM. It was about taking the additional effort to call the workers and check if they had got the SMS confirming their train journey details. It was about taking that extra effort to transfer money to them to help them find conveyance. It was all about treating them with the empathy and dignity they deserved.

Volunteers from Bhoomika engaged with over **25,000 migrant workers** from Jharkhand and West Bengal in our efforts to help them return home in the middle of the lockdown crisis.



FIELD NOTES: MY 'WANDERING MIGRANT'

"Sab jungle nazar aa raha hai."

On 27th May, I received a call at 6:11 PM from Vishal, a guest worker from Jharkhand. Vishal had missed his 2 PM train to Jharkhand because he reached the station at 3 PM. He sat and waited around the station and then decided to walk back to Gummidipoondi, his workplace, a place that he had come to work at just 2 months before the lockdown began. He is one of the many thousands of migrant workers that our team has spoken to, but sometimes, some stories become personal to you. Vishal had already missed another train earlier on the 20th due to another mix-up. He is all of 18 years old.

Vishal has his roots in a village in Bihar but lives with his mother and younger brother in Dhanbad, Jharkhand. He stopped going to school after 10th standard as he felt the need to support his mother. He worked in shops to bring in a meagre income, until a friend from Bihar guided him to Aurangabad where he worked in a furnace and discovered that he could send more money to his mother. Yet another Thekedhar brought Vishal to Tamil Nadu with the promise of an even higher income. He needed money for his mother's medical needs. "I came here so that I could send an additional amount of Rs. 4000 to my mother and got stuck in this lockdown. "I just want to go home. *Maa ke haath ka khana yaad aaraha hai*," said Vishal, in one of our many chats.

On that 27th day of May, after missing the train, he hitched a ride on a two-wheeler that dropped him somewhere en route to Gummidipoondi. It was then that Vishal decided to call me. "Madamji, I don't know where I am. It looks like a jungle around me," he said. After chiding him for not calling me from the station, my colleague Latha and I began a long vigil, calling the Tiruvallur District police team, and communicating with the strangers around Vishal to pinpoint his exact location for pick up. We were able to finally heave a sigh of relief when he took shelter in a village with another team from Bihar. Vishal said to us with no rancour that we should stop fretting over his hunger as he can easily survive without food for a few days. The team from Bihar was arranging a vehicle and tried to persuade him to travel with them. Vishal confided to my colleague Latha that he was uncomfortable going with them. The police picked him up and brought him to a shelter. He was moved to various police stations and shelters until we finally moved him to a shelter in Chennai with the help of Greater Chennai Corporation and Tiruvallur police.

Latha and I took turns to stay connected with him. Latha obsessed over his safety. Vishal innocently and bluntly told us that he had saved Latha's number as 'Help madam' and my number as 'Madam sirjee.' I sent some money to his mother to hopefully help her with her basic needs. Finally, Vishal boarded the train home to Dhanbad, Jharkhand on the 7th of June. He sent us several selfies posing in front of his train. He had a haunting voice, but looking at his pictures, I realised that my wandering migrant had haunting eyes too.

After some temperature checks from the officials, he finally reached his home. No quarantine was required. At last, my wandering migrant is home, eating his '*maa ke hath ka khana*'. He gave me permission to write about him and post his picture. His number will continue to stay on my phone saved as the 'Wandering Migrant'.

- Aruna Subramaniam



PROMOTING LIVELIHOODS THROUGH REHABILITATION

As an organisation engaged primarily in disaster relief, we understand the phases of rescue, relief and rehabilitation. However, in the COVID-19 pandemic, the phase of relief was prolonged as the economy continued to struggle to restart because of lockdowns, limited operations and a lack of demand for services. As some signs of progress started to appear, we kickstarted our rehabilitation phase. It was about finding an opportunity in the crisis.

At Bhoomika, we believe rehabilitating is creating something better than what existed. The total expenditure on the livelihood projects was **Rs. 16,54,150**.

CASHEWNUT CRACKERS

In Nannikuppam [Cuddalore], **9 Irula families** who have been engaged in de-shelling cashew nuts said that they would be able to earn a livelihood if they had nut cracking machines to carry out this activity. Our grassroots partner, Ennagalin Sangamam, identified the fabricator to get this done. The cashewnut contractor agreed to give them regular jobs and we were able to provide these families with mechanical solutions that enabled them to work smarter and also increase their income.



WEAVERS

Bhoomika launched a Weavers Support Initiative to help some clusters resume their weaving activities and start selling again. Three clusters were identified - Arni, Anakaputhur and Jalakandapuram. Weavers were provided with yarn and some minimal wages to start making sarees. This program extended support to **over 100 weavers**, and they were supported with social media marketing services to offload their existing stocks. Eminent traditional art revivalist Ms. Sabita Radhakrishna was our resource guide for the project.



FARMERS

Bhoomika identified a couple of farmers who were stuck with stocks of cabbage and red pumpkin and purchased the stock from them to support our relief work.



FIELD NOTES: THE RED PUMPKIN

Mullipakkam [Chengulpattu], home to about 100 farmers, had taken to cultivating and selling red pumpkin as a source of income from April to June. They would cultivate paddy twice a year, if rains permitted, and would cultivate red pumpkin in the intervals between the rains. They plant in late January and harvest the pumpkins from April. The red pumpkins weigh anywhere between 2 to 4 kgs and can be stored for a longer duration than most vegetables. The biggest buyers are hostels, messes and restaurants from Chennai and adjoining areas.

"COVID-19 hit us right when we were ready to harvest the pumpkins", said Dayalan, a farmer caught in this quandary like every other farmer there. "We would normally sell through agents who come here on behalf of Koyambedu dealers and get a price of Rs 12 per kg." COVID-19 upset their plans. The hostels, and restaurants shut down. They were now stuck with considerable produce and significant losses.

Bhoomika picked up about 50 tonnes of pumpkins at a base price, which hopefully covered their cost, and transported it to Perumbakkam on the outskirts of Chennai in 5 lorries. We had earlier picked up 10 tonnes and distributed it to several slums in the city. Perumbakkam is one of the largest slum clearance board tenements housing over 17,000 families, who had moved from the canal banks of the city after the 2015 floods. With the support of the Block Development Officer, Tashildar and the Perumbakkam Federation President, we were able to distribute pumpkins to over 10,000 families, with block representatives helping the families cut and share the huge vegetable.



ONGOING EDUCATION PROJECTS

Bhoomika continues to be engaged with constructing school infrastructure for communities in need. There were delays in the timeline of our rehabilitation work for numerous reasons including land allocation for construction of buildings and the time needed for planning, strategising, and getting the required permissions and approvals. In addition, COVID-19 was a significant dampener on our efforts last year, with work almost reaching a standstill at many points.

One of our ongoing projects is a part of the Chennai Floods (2015) Rehabilitation efforts. We are building a Primary School of approximately 17,000 sq ft in a resettlement community in Perumbakkam.



Another one of our projects is the SNDP Higher Secondary School in Kuttamangalam in the Alappuzha District of Kerala. As part of our Kerala Rains Rehabilitation efforts, we are reconstructing an old school building that was abandoned due to structural deficiency caused by the torrid rains.

Our total expenditure on the School Building Project last year was
Rs. 1,95,96,191.



CRITICALITY OF COLLABORATIONS DURING A CRISIS

CAN NGOs PARTNER WITH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS DURING CRITICAL TIMES?

The answer is a resounding 'yes'. Evident as it is that every network on the ground has to be leveraged in moments of crisis, we often tend to operate in silos, duplicating efforts or not capitalising on existing strengths.

COVID-19 was truly an exception in this regard. Many NGOs partnered with the government in responding to the pandemic, and we at Bhoomika were delighted to be at the forefront of it. The situation was extraordinary and a partnership was forged based on our strengths. We do believe that we were able to create more impact because of this. Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC) and the Greater Chennai Police facilitated so many of our efforts with information sharing, permissions and many other unique forms of collaboration. Apart from relief material distribution to migrant workers and daily wage earners, we worked with GCC on data crunching the information on their portals for facilitating migrant workers' journey back home, supported in the front end by the Chennai Police team. A special mention must be given to the Tiruvallur police force whose constant support made sure we could reach and distribute rations to over 17,000 migrants through their network.

NGOs, volunteers and the government came together as critical partners during this pandemic, driven by a common purpose of working towards providing relief to those suffering. Not only that, we realised the potential and efficacy of such partnerships in maximising our existing strengths. We believe this collaboration will be the way forward and we eagerly anticipate collaborating with all stakeholders at all times and not just during a crisis.



IN GRATITUDE

TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

Volunteering on the field during a crisis is something unique and commendable. It needs courage, a large heart, the ability to assess individual strengths and strictly follow safety parameters, to know when to stop, to know how to analyse and respond to situations with a presence of mind. The crisis presented by the COVID-19 pandemic was an extraordinarily overwhelming one where physical volunteering would indeed encounter many challenges. We have been fortunate to have the support of our foot soldiers who have helped us carry out many of our relief projects even during such critical times. Our foot soldiers were actively carrying out the following responsibilities:

- Making deliveries to senior citizens
- Packing dry rations
- Cooking food and delivering it to communities
- Driving people in ambulances to transport dialysis patients and others in need to the hospitals
- Responding to helpline calls
- Coordinating deliveries
- Creation of process flows
- Interacting and engaging with the migrant worker community
- Ensuring constant monitoring from the point of registration until migrant workers board the train

We are immensely grateful for their time, resourcefulness, commitment and most importantly, empathy.

TO OUR DONORS

As always, we owe our donors immense gratitude for supporting us and believing in our ability to deliver. We have received support in donations of cash and kind, in the form of logistics assistance, space, personnel and critical coordination support staff. Without them, a lot of what we have accomplished till date would not have been possible.

OTHER NGOs, RESIDENTS ASSOCIATIONS & CITIZEN GROUPS

At every stage in our endeavour to deliver relief and safety material, we received considerable support from other NGOs, local citizens' groups and Residents Associations who contributed to our efforts by helping in packing of material and delivering it to the final destination.



TESTIMONIALS FROM OUR VOLUNTEERS

The testimonials from our volunteers humble us. We are glad to share some of their voices in this report.

"This was my first time volunteering for Bhoomika and it was a fulfilling experience. It was amazing to see how they changed course as the nature of the problems changed and how they tried to use technology to assist them. While I've volunteered for a few other NGOs before, the key attribute I noticed here is their willingness to listen and adopt to changes suggested if they deemed it fit."

Dhanya Rajagopal, Volunteer, COVID relief

"For me, what started out as an exercise in data and analysis took on a much more personal tone when I started interacting with the affected migrant workers one day during distribution of rations. The feeling of doing something meaningful through something I am very good at but is oftentimes impersonal number crunching is one that I will hold on to for a long time. Thank you for this – and I know I will do this every time when required."

Manoj, Volunteer, COVID relief

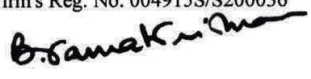



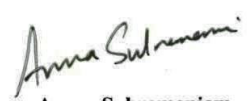

"It has been a very humbling experience – totally indebted to Bhoomika for giving me this opportunity. In depth detailing and ensuring that every person's need is taken care of is not a small feat! Very grateful to be associated with such an organisation – so much learning."

Anshuma Damani, Volunteer, COVID relief

"So grateful to have been able to work with Bhoomika and do what everybody should do - be human. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to contribute in a small way in fulfilling a very basic wish of our fellow brothers and sisters – to be home! To say this experience was overwhelming would be an understatement. Every second was a realisation of how blessed we are and a sense of responsibility dawned to make sure all the recipients of our calls also feel taken care of. "

Ayushi, Volunteer, COVID relief

FINANCIALS

Bhoomika Trust Regd office : 32, 1st street, Karpagam Avenue, Raja Annamalai Puram, Chennai - 600 028 Admin office : Ground Floor, "Pushpak Apartments", 14/10, Jagadambal Colony 1st Street, Royapettah, Chennai 600 014 Balance Sheet As At 31st March, 2021					
Particulars	Sch.	As at 31st March 2021 (Amount in INR)		As at 31st March 2020 (Amount in INR)	
I. Sources of funds					
(a) Capital Fund	1		7,08,18,254		4,84,33,826
(b) Corpus Fund	2		50,00,000		50,00,000
(b) Loans & Advances	-		-		-
Total			7,58,18,254		5,34,33,826
II. Applications of funds					
(A) Fixed Assets:	3				
(a) Gross Block		74,554		1,03,484	
(b) Less: Depreciation		18,670		28,932	
(c) Net Block			55,883		74,552
(B) Current Assets, Loans and Advances:					
(a) Cash and Bank Balances	4	7,49,76,655		5,23,64,105	
(b) Other Current Assets	5	9,54,601		11,47,665	
(c) Loans and Advances	-	-		-	
		7,59,31,256		5,35,11,771	
(C) Current Liabilities and Provisions:					
(a) Liabilities	6	1,68,886		1,52,497	
Net Current Assets (B) - (C)		7,57,62,370	7,57,62,370	5,33,59,274	5,33,59,274
Total			7,58,18,254		5,34,33,826
As per Our Report of even date for CNGSN & Associates LLP Chartered Accountants Firm's Reg. No. 004915S/S200036  B Ramakrishnan Partner Membership No.201023 					
for and on behalf of Bhoomika Trust  P Jayendra Trustee 					
 Aruna Subramaniam Trustee 					
Place: Chennai Date: 30th December 2021					

Bhoomika Trust

Regd office : 32, 1st street, Karpagam Avenue, Raja Annamalai Puram, Chennai - 600 028
Admin office : Ground Floor, "Pushpak Apartments", 14/10, Jagadambal Colony 1st Street, Royapettah, Chennai 600 014

Income And Expenditure for the year ended 31st March, 2021

Particulars	Schedule No.	For the year ended 31-03-2021 ₹	For the year ended 31-03-2020 ₹
Income			
Donations received	-	8,81,53,319	1,90,83,895
Processing Fee received	-	3,849	5,650
Interest received from bank	-	30,52,074	31,00,336
Income Tax refund received	-	34,590	-
Interest on Income tax Refund	-	-	32,484
Other Income	-	7,680	540
Total Income		9,12,51,512	2,22,22,905
Expenditure			
Application for Charitable Purposes	7	6,88,48,412	2,33,68,739
Depreciation	3	18,670	28,932
Total Expenditure		6,88,67,082	2,33,97,671
Excess of Income over Expenditure		2,23,84,430	(11,74,767)
Carried to Balance Sheet		2,23,84,430	(11,74,767)

As per Our Report of even date
for **CNGSN & Associates LLP**
Chartered Accountants
Firm's Reg. No. 004915S/S200036

for and on behalf of
Bhoomika Trust

B. Ramakrishnan

B Ramakrishnan
Partner
Membership No.201023



P Jayendra
P Jayendra
Trustee



Aruna Subramaniam
Aruna Subramaniam
Trustee



Place: Chennai
Date: 30th December 2021



Bhoomika

BHOOMIKA TRUST

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