

ANNUAL REPORT (APRIL 2020-MARCH 2021)



SUBMITTED BY:

**NAB INDIA CENTRE FOR BLIND WOMEN & DISABILITY
STUDIES**

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A. BACKGROUND & INTRODUCTION-NAB INDIA CENTRE:

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND IN INDIA, over 55 years old largest organization for the blind in India, started, **CENTRE FOR BLIND WOMEN & DISABILITY STUDIES** in 2002 in Delhi as a result of an extensive study on Status Of Blind Women In India, which was undertaken by Asian Blind Union and executed by a team headed by Ms. Shalini Khanna, who then became the Founder Director of the Centre. Now, a management team chaired by former ambassador Sh. Ajai Malhotra takes care of the centre with former IT chief commissioner Ms. Pamela Bhandari as Treasurer and international Rotary Governor Mr. Manjit S Sawhney as the Vice Chairman.

- The findings of the study revealed a very dismal state of Blind women in India, and most were confined to homes like captives after attaining adulthood due to social stigmas.

- The Centre was set up with a vision to change lives of Blind Women by training on contemporary vocations and by now has reached to 14000 disabled women and children blind women through its different programs.

In Delhi, In a residential facility, The centre trains 120 blind women in a year while providing them free food and shelter, coming from different urban and rural corners of India in various skills and reaches out to another 100 disabled people in villages and semi urban areas. Till now 3000 blind women have been trained on different vocations.

- At present, the Centre is one of its kind in India, well known for its work in social economic research with disability studies, diversity & inclusion, creating new employment opportunities in varied sectors for the blind and providing expertise to various forums including Skill Council for PwDs, Government of India.

- *The Centre, in the past, has been an implementation agency for Ministry of Information Technology (IT), Govt of India to train trainers and disabled students in 100 schools in the country for different disabilities.*
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B. RELIEF WORK FOR PWD BY NAB INDIA CENTRE DURING COVID 19

- The global crisis triggered by the spread of COVID-19 pandemic has hit everyone alike in the world. But worst are the disabled, who cannot even access the support system available.
- A lot of migrant, poor and less educated people with visual impairment and other mobility disabilities, who were employed in factories and small set ups have lost jobs suddenly and their source of income in these difficult times.

There are thousands of blind persons living in clusters in some parts of Delhi-NCR & outskirts with their blind spouses and small children. Many approached NAB India Centre for different kinds of support like Ration, Medicines and medical treatment, , Baby milk, Sanitary napkins to name a few.

The current COVID-19 pandemic, followed by the national lockdown to mitigate the transmission of the virus poses many challenges, including healthcare access, to the life of people living with visual disabilities. A sudden disruption of support system and assistance to these groups of individuals have a serious impact on their health and well-being, daily living activities, socio-economic, livelihood, and finally compromise on the quality of life and may even endanger their lives.

In this time of desperation when everyone is trying to keep one's own home and supplies safe, NAB India Centre (on request of thousands of persons with disabilities) provided following relief services to the persons with disabilities around Delhi-NCR



1. FOOD DISTRIBUTION:

NAB India Centre collected the data of around 2, 000 disabled beneficiaries seeking ration support through its mobilization team. The needs of the applicants were assessed and short listing of deserving disabled beneficiaries was done by the monitoring team through checks and verification by calling and physical visits.



Number of beneficiaries Covered:

NAB India Centre, in response to the above requests, till date **provided ration to around 1, 820 persons with disabilities (primarily visually impaired/blind) including their family members** at their door step around Delhi-NCR.

Geographies Covered:

- **Delhi-NCR:** Faridabad, Gurugram, NOIDA, Nazafgarh, Madanpur dawas, Rani Khera, Sultanpuri, Mehrauli, Burari, Patpadganj, Karala, Govind Puri, Raghubir nagar, Nandnagri, Subhash nagar, Kalkaji, Palla village, Sangam vihar, Tuglakabad, Uttam nagar, Wazirpur, Zafrabad, Palam, Madangiri, Mayur vihar, Mori gate, Mundka, Nangloi, Nathupura, Neb sarai, Karkardooma, Karol bagh, Kiradi, Andrews ganj, Ashram, Ballabgarh
- Bihar (buxar) and Madhya Pradesh.

Methodology adopted:

- Ration was procured from a reliable and reasonable vendor; packaged at the Centre itself by the in-house packaging into ration kits with the designated commodities in allotted quantities.

- All safety guidelines for COVID 19 were followed during procurement, packaging and distribution process.
- With the help of identified blind coordinators in the colonies, a day was fixed for the distribution of kits by the operations team in the said clusters keeping all guidelines in mind about social distancing and hygiene for safety and security. The resident blind coordinator of the colony would fix up common meeting points where he would call the approved applicants (of the ration) to come and receive the ration.
- In COVID phase 2, the Centre tied up with a delivery partner, Shiprocket. An automated shipping software which provides a single platform where e-merchants can handle multi-channel orders and ship multi-channel order easily.
- With the help of their existing network, it was possible to send ration to the doorstep of the one-off odd families or individuals residing far from the Centre, besides those who



Every Ration Kit includes:

Rice	Red Chilli powder
Atta	Cumin seeds
Cooking oil	Tea leaves
Lentils (dal)	Biscuits
Sugar	Maggi
Salt	Sanitary Napkins
Turmeric powder	Face Masks
Coriander powder	Medicines (if required)
Milk powder for infants, Medical Equipment like thermometer or oxygen concentrator (if required)	

2. Provision of shelter & Skill building trainings:

- Throughout the COVID crisis till date, the NAB India Centre did not shut its operations. The blind girls and boys at the Centres stayed back since travel was a bleak possibility and traveling alone was impossible especially for blind women.
- While a lot of the staff was held back in their homes, the caretakers at the Centre worked round the clock to look after the girls.

During the pandemic since April 2020, NAB India Centre has not only reached the persons with disabilities in communities with the essential support, but kept running its two hostels in Hauz Khas Enclave and Chitra Vihar in Delhi for around 100 inmates. . The following facilities were provided to them:



- Safe stay with 24X7 security service
- Counselor for trauma handling and adjustment issues
- Warden and care takers during day and night
- Electricity and safe drinking water
- Well ventilated rooms with clean beds and bedding and storage
- Clean washrooms and toilets
- First aid box and medical facilities, quarantine facilities, COVID Care
- Cloths and toiletries
- Four healthy meals per day
- Kitchen with all the essential equipments like fridge, water cooler, aqua guard etc



Administrative measures adopted in the hostels of blind youth pertaining to COVID Appropriate Protocol:

- It was ensured that sanitizers and soaps are available in all the units viz office, training and hostel area. Mopping of handles, surfaces and floors to be done by the disinfectants. The material that has been bought or received as donation to be kept outside for 2-3 days before storing these. Perishable items to be cleaned with water, salt and soap etc (depending on the availability) before putting them for cold storage.
- Time tables were made flexible in terms of including entertainment sessions such as, movie watching, one hour party (with physical distancing), changing of food menus with special focus on high tea on daily basis, allotment of class teaching to on the job trainees in absence of the teachers for overall engagement of every trainee in the centre.
- Also, sessions were conducted to introduce new skill of knitting by a blind girl trainee to others who were interested in the skill.

- Online Presentations were done by the blind girl trainees on various topics of their interest after searching on internet. The objective of the presentations was to promote the use of technology amongst blind trainees and confidence building through public speaking.

3. Awareness generation on COVID pandemic:

- Awareness Sessions:** Various sessions on Corona Virus, its adverse effects on health, hand hygiene, wearing of masks and use of sanitizer and good physical health through Yoga and Pranayams were conducted from time to time.
- A webinar on COVID 19: Struggles & challenges for Persons With Disabilities:**

It was held where an ex blind trainee of the centre, Priyanka Kaushik, who was a survivor of COVID 19 shared her experience as a COVID patient with blindness during her treatment and quarantine journey. It addressed a lot of questions of restless blind youth about this issue. A few government officials also joined in and assured that needs of PWDs shall be taken care of while framing any policies in future.



4. Provision for online and home based skill building:

a. For Sheltered blind youth in our hostels:

As lockdown was in operation, trainers were not able to travel to the residential training centres, so following online capacity building workshops were held for their uninterrupted learning for around 80 blind beneficiaries:



- a. Customer care executive training: use of MS Word, excel, PowerPoint, internet, social media, usage of smart phones etc
- b. Packaging & Handicraft training: sessions on paper products making, jewellery making and packaging of garments and knitting
- c. Therapeutic massage training: Sessions on anatomy, client handling, different strokes of massages and relaxation therapies
- d. Breast Cancer detection training: Sessions on breast health, identifying lumps with a special tool DOCOS, taking client history on excel and maintaining client's reports about diagnosis for referral of doctors for final say etc.
- e. Life skills: Sessions on Braille, mobility and orientation and home management for independent living.
- f. Grooming: **Table manners & cutlery usage, Introduction to Dress Sense, Clothing as per occasions, Make up, Public Speaking, Under Garments, Banking, Self Awareness, Hair Care & Foot care**, session on Visit to parlour, what is parlour, Various treatments session on Share market, audio tours(to qutub minar, chandni chowk, Taj Mahal, India Gate, Garden of five senses) colour and nature, home remedies for healthy face, Traditional marriages held in different states of India, Future dreams and aspirations, Winter care.

g. Other Exposures:

- **Online Singing Competition:**



Online Singing Contest was held by Golden Shine and NAB Delhi in joint-collaboration. Our student Sangita Adhikari (pursuing breast cancer detection course) was declared joint winner and stood at the first position in the singing contest. Kudos to her.

- Online sessions On “**Hotel Industry and various departments in a hotel**” was conducted by a resource person from Taj Hotel for the blind trainees.
- Workshops on menstrual hygiene were organized which was attended by the blind youth. Since girls need to know how to keep themselves hygienic during their menstruation days, workshop like these will help them to understand the importance of menstrual hygiene in a better way.
- The centre provided 7-8 visually impaired trainees trained in Customer Care Executive programme earlier (in Delhi & Bangalore) to Skill Set Council for Persons with Disability-SSCPWD for a pilot testing of an app designed by the former to conduct online assessments for blind people. The trainees were to give their feedback on the accessibility of the app by a visually impaired person. Around 10 blind girl trainees (smart phone users) provided their feed back to the developers of “Vani App” for improving its accessibility features on October 7, 2020 at the centre.

b. Skill building in the community:

The data collected during the large-scale ration distribution drive was converted into a database with details like name, number of members in the family, type of disabilities, their needs, education, work experience, skill based trainings and willingness to work from home.

Being able to reach them telephonically and then physically, led to the creation of a first of its kind database of the blind people staying alone, with their families or in hostels

across NCR of Delhi during COVID 19. These were primarily people who had lost their jobs/source of earning due to the present crisis.

The Centre now has a data of approx. 300 people with information on their education, work experience and training capacity for market aligned skill building of them in future.

The following areas were identified and shortlisted for further work:

- **Tailoring**
- **Paper products making**
- **Vending carts and kiosks**
- **Knitting and crochet work**

In the next few months, a training coordinator started assessing the existing skills of the people who were willing to work by asking them to create samples so that neatness, speed and quality of work could be identified to plan the skill building for marketable products for them.

Raw material was delivered and ready samples collected during subsequent ration distributions in the areas, along with guidance to them over the phone and physical visits.

Travel cost would be reimbursed both ways if a PWD came for training, sample collection or delivery to the Centre. Ration was provided to these workers on a priority basis to keep them motivated to continue work.

The people who were trained and were given home based handicraft work in 2020 have continued working with the Centre and have been able to upgrade their skills.

With the span of one year, these beneficiaries have refined their work and have become the core member in the community. The team continuously identifies more people who are in need and willing to get trained and start working.

TAILORING:

Many blind and orthopedically impaired people in the resettlement areas in Delhi were found to be trained in tailoring. In order to judge their actual capacities, they were given samples to work on, based on which they were given sewing machines. They were later given work on making bags and pouches that could be sold easily.

More products and tie-ups are being explored to design market friendly products.



KNITTING:



Some blind women in the community have been found to be trained in knitting and need skill up-gradation in context of colour and design ideas to cater to a premium market.



HANDCRAFTED PAPER PRODUCTS:

One of our product ranges is of made out of newspapers, on which we were able to train blind people in a short duration during the COVID crisis and some of them were able to earn money out of those products during Diwali.



VENDING CARTS OR KIOSKS

One amongst the few vocations in entrepreneurship that a blind person can take up is managing a vending cart or a kiosk. The trade is not only feasible for both rural and urban areas but also provides an avenue for a blind person to operate from the confines of his own space, to which he is oriented well. There are live examples of people running vending food carts or petty shops successfully.

5. Guidance for accessing exclusive vaccination facility to PwDs:

- NAB India Centre counselled blind people in the community to get themselves vaccinated by discussing and breaking the myths and misconceptions that were in their minds. Many were not ready for the vaccination as were haunted by the fake news of deaths after having it.
- Secondly, it has disseminated information about free vaccination facility for all as per government order from time to time.



6. Provision of Aids and appliances:

NAB India Centre provided basic assistive devices to blind beneficiaries as under:

- White Canes
- Braille Slates & Stylus
- Smart phones
- USB Enabled
- Recording devices

7. Arrangement of Transport facilities:

Transport facilities were provided for hostels of blind beneficiaries and for those living in communities around Delhi-NCR as under:

- For Fetching supplies of fruits, vegetables, groceries, Dairy products, medicines, snacks, toiletries etc from the market
- For going to hospitals in case of emergency
- For going to nearby hospitals for COVID testing
- For ration, medicines, thermometer and oxygen concentrators distribution in the community
- For wedding of blind couple
- For commuting to the office after the lockdown

8. Brief Counselling and emotional support and Psychotherapy:



- a. **The trainers remained on call with the trainee girls, to motivate them and help them tide away the feelings of loneliness.**

b. **Counseling Sessions:**

Professional psychologist conducted telephonic sessions with individual blind trainees in order to address their apprehensions, issues related to anxiety, fears, and discussed coping strategies during the ongoing Covid-19 Lockdown Phase.

Following coping strategies' were recommended:

- Mind Physical distancing but not social distancing, so to be in touch with friends and family
- Adapting new method of learning slowly i.e. virtual learning in response to apprehension's related to absence of teachers in the classrooms
- To handle Layoffs with positivity, strength and patience
- Following physical fitness and good sleep regime



c. Webinars on Handling Emotional Needs of persons with disability during COVID Crisis:

These were held for the staff & care givers of the centre and was conducted by a Mumbai based senior psychologist. The staff involved (in house and outside) to run the centre during COVID 19 was put to ease to discuss their own mental state and stresses first and they were addressed accordingly. It gave further strength and positivity to them for future handling of their work and to handle emotional health of their residential trainees.

9. Any Other:

- Two of our students (Rakhi & Priyanka Das) from Handicraft Course have got placed in Gurgaon. They have been moved to a PG Accommodation in Gurgaon. Proper care has been taken while shifting them taking care of their basic requirements along with ensuring their daily travel to the work place through an auto. They are being contacted on daily basis to enable them to get adjusted to the new atmosphere with ease without getting a feeling of having left alone.
- another 1 blind couple above (Vijay & Phoolan), residents of NOIDA got an order of cloth bags from another NGOs through centre's intervention and was supported with money for basic survival during the lockdown. Similarly, 2 trained blind youth from communities were provided orders for paper panels by the centre on payment basis.
- Advocacy for re employment of blind beneficiaries:

NAB India Centre was continuously in touch with employers of its blind beneficiaries to take them back on employments after the lockdown. Due to this advocacy and efforts, many blind beneficiaries got their jobs back in factories.

NAB India Centre witnessed yet another wedding of Ms. Sunita with Mr. Balwinder on the 3rd November, 2020. Sunita had been the café in charge at the centre.



Ever since Sunita (came from an Orphanage in Haryana) joined NAB India CBW, she got trained on various fronts and gradually evolved as a person. Her trainers took utmost interest in educating her on aspects such as computer, housekeeping, personality development and other life skill trainings understanding her needs. Her trainers soon realized she has a knack for cooking hence got her trained in the café unit where she excelled. With the Centre's support she has been able to acquire the skills to manage, communicate and run a café with minimal supervision. Today she stands confident due to her trainings and all set to take a step ahead in life further adhering the responsibilities of a married life. All in all we wish Sunita and Balbinder a very Happy Married Life.



Placements:

Vinod Yadav & Prakash at Radhnik Exports, NOIDA

- Ankul at Pee Empro Exports, Faridabad
- Shankar & Susheela (couple) at Paperus Eco Friendly Hand-Waved Marbles Eco F
- Neha and Usha Kumari at Aju Hotel, Gurugram

