

# Lessons for Social Protection from the COVID-19 Lockdowns

REPORT 1 OF 2: STATE ACTORS





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# i Introduction

This report seeks to use COVID-19 and its attendant lockdowns in India as a crucial moment to assess social protection. Policy and scholarship both recognize that social protection plays an important role in alleviating poverty, improving standards of living, mitigating risks and shocks, and reducing episodes of financial adversities (Conway & Norton, 2002). We understand social protection as “all public and private initiatives that provide income or consumption transfers to the poor, protect the vulnerable against livelihood risks and enhance the social status and rights of the marginalized; with the overall objective of reducing the economic and social vulnerability of poor, vulnerable and marginalized groups” (Devereux & Sabates-Wheeler, 2004). Social protection thus includes measures that are protective against destitution— both amidst crisis as well as in the everyday— as well as promotive in how they enable individuals, households and communities to thrive and flourish rather than just survive (Devereux & Sabates-Wheeler, 2004).

Given our focus on relief measures, we are particularly interested in the protective aspect of social protection. We ask three inter-related questions:

- First: what do the immediate relief measures put into place to cope with the impact of COVID-19 and the lockdowns tell us about the current state of social protection systems?
- Second: how did these measures effectively target and deliver relief in complex and constrained situations such as the lockdowns?
- Third: going forward, what lessons does this set of immediate relief measures offer not just for medium-term recovery but for designing, building and improving social protection systems?

We believe such analysis to be crucial to more precisely link poverty with vulnerability in thinking about and implementing social protection. While poverty measures a sense

of capabilities, income and resources, it is vulnerability that explains how resilient each is to shocks. How well, and for how long, can a family cope with known lifecycle welfare shocks – illness, injury, marriage, death, job loss – as well as systemic or environmental shocks like recession, flood, or drought? How quickly and effectively can they recover? It is vulnerability that reminds us that poverty is relational and dynamic (Krishna, 2010), and that it is equally important to guard against individuals and households falling back into poverty as it is to help them escape it in the first place. COVID-19 and the lockdowns offer a critical site to diagnose the current state of our social protection systems from the lens of vulnerability.

Such analysis is particularly needed since the gaps in India's social protection systems are well known. Yet often assessment of those gaps focuses on missing entitlements and not equally on the challenges in delivering existing entitlements effectively. Both, we argue, are crucial. To take one example:

eight of ten workers in India work within the informal economy (Bonnet, Florence, 2019). This implies a challenge to the entitlement framework since by definition, many informal work arrangements are characterised precisely by the lack of access to social security benefits (NCEUS, 2009). Yet it also presents a particular set of delivery challenges. The conditions of informal employment do not just create and shape the nature of need, but they also confound processes of delivery. Entitlements struggle to reach informal workers precisely because the nature of their work make them hard to reach if: (a) they are mobile across regions, (b) beyond regulatory frameworks, (c) outside accessible or appropriately scaled databases; (d) in workplaces and residences that are hard to reach such as landfills, streets, construction sites and private homes; and (e) beyond the reach of usual delivery channels such as employers, fair price shops, anganwadis or through direct bank transfers. It is the effectiveness of design and delivery that this report focuses on. We do so not because we believe the existing entitlement frameworks



*BSM distributing ration to members of a waste-picking community at Bhalswagan.*

*Credits: Basti Suraksha Manch*



are complete – they are clearly far from being so – but because relief measures must work within existing entitlement frameworks as a constraint to overcome, and are thus ideally suited as an archive to offer insight into these limitations as well as possible ways to overcome them.

*We chose to focus on three kinds of relief that are closely related to social protection: food, cash transfer and labour protections.*

We chose to focus on three kinds of relief that are closely related to social protection: food, cash transfer and labour protections. The first is thus about ensuring provisioning of commodity directly, the second is a direct financial transfer and third regulatory and protective measures. Across them, we employ three key analytical frames that structure the report. The first part focuses on identification – how did relief measures identify, define and find whom to give relief to? Here we look closely at eligibility criteria to be part of a relief scheme, verification processes, as well as the use of databases to direct relief.

The second part looks at defining entitlements themselves: on what basis was the quantum, constitution and form of particular entitlement decided for different categories of recipients? Here, we assess what was given as relief, and consider the factors that led to this determination. The third part then looks at delivery mechanisms: how was a decided entitlement delivered to the right person at

the right time? Here, we focus on the modes, processes, and actors responsible for ensuring the promised entitlement actually reached the right person within an appropriate time frame. These three elements – identification, definition of the entitlement, and design of the delivery – are key components of the actually existing practice of any social protection system. Relief measures implemented during the lockdown are a rich archive against which to assess each. These measures both continued, used and expanded existing systems of design and delivery but also innovated with “temporary” measures that created new categories of recipients, new forms of entitlements, and new mechanisms of delivery. It is crucial that we learn from both the continuities and innovations of the social protection measures implemented in this time in order to improve and expand these systems in a post-COVID world.

Our findings are divided across two reports, of which this is the first. In this report, we focus on relief measures undertaken by state actors. By this, we mean any central or state undertakings, including governments, departments, agencies, and para states, acting in their public capacity. While we believe that social protection, as we defined it above, includes both public and private actions, it is imperative to assess the implications for design and delivery separately for state and non-state actors given the different nature of institutional arrangements within each. We present our findings for non-state actors in a separate report. Additionally, our findings and archives are available for public access and further analysis on [explorecovidrelief.in](https://explorecovidrelief.in).

# The archive

To assess relief provided by state actors, we analysed 181 announcements between March 20 and May 31, 2020, covering the four phased lockdowns announced by the Government of India, described in Table 1.

Table 1 Phases of the Lockdown

Phase	Start	End
Lockdown 1	March 25	April 14
Lockdown 2	April 15	May 3
Lockdown 3	May 4	May 17
Lockdown 4	May 18	May 31

We focused on announcements, circulars, notifications, and orders about food, financial relief, and labour protections. Of the total 181 announcements, 89 related to food, 68 to cash transfers, and 24 to labour protections. Figure 1 lays out the order by type and date, showing the distribution across states and lockdown phases. We used a variety of sources, including repositories of major notifications from legislative research firm PRS Legislative,<sup>1</sup> legal database Manupatra,<sup>2</sup> and the citizen-run Covid-19 Government Order

Tracker.<sup>3</sup> We also referred to news articles in national and regional newspapers, and, occasionally, department websites of government institutions directly.

The complete list will appear on an online database at [explorecovidrelief.in](https://explorecovidrelief.in). The orders referred to in this report appear in Annexure 1: List of Referenced Orders. When we cite orders in the report, we refer to the Annexure table, with footnotes indicating the code of the order so it may easily be found.

<sup>1</sup> See <https://prsindia.org/covid-19/notifications>

<sup>2</sup> See <https://www.manupatrafast.com/>

<sup>3</sup> See <https://covid-india.in/>

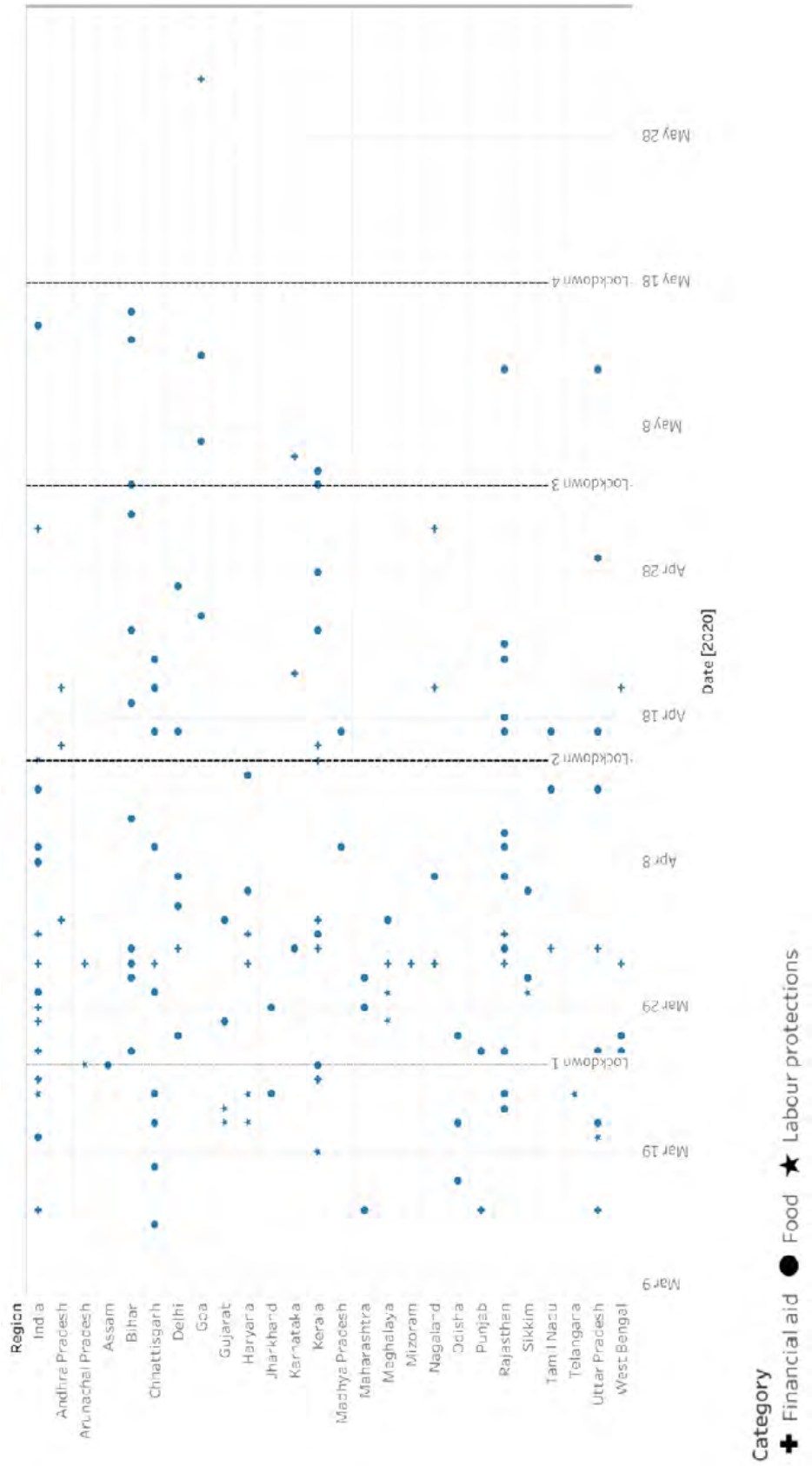


Figure 1 Timeline of state announcements

# Identifying beneficiaries

## 1.1 Ways of identification

All targeted relief relies on pre-defined criteria for determining eligibility of individuals for any particular entitlement. It is important to distinguish and understand the possible relation between criteria of identifying beneficiaries, databases used and the way in which the database(s) were employed. In this section on how people were identified for relief, we focus on the 'database' - a listing of people as per a pre-defined criterion. 'Criteria' are the basis on which one is included or excluded from particular forms of relief. At the onset of the pandemic and the ensuing lockdown, pre-existing databases of various social protection programmes were accessible and reliable sources to reach people via official methods. These made it possible to reach the underserved and the most affected through an official channel in a relatively short period of time. Their ready availability and amenability to the process of delivering entitlements centred them in how relief was conceived and executed.

Yet, as we argue in this section, it soon became clear that existing databases simply weren't enough. The scale of vulnerability that the lockdowns revealed meant that state actors

had to innovate. To take one example: the use of databases for purposes other than their original intention was evident as Delhi's transport department extended one-time cash transfer benefits of Rs. 5000 to all holders of Public Service Vehicle (PSV) Badge<sup>4</sup> using their status as public transport workers as a proxy for vulnerability. On March 21, the Government of Uttar Pradesh announced, among other entitlements, one month's free ration to construction workers and registered MNREGS workers,<sup>5</sup> directing a food entitlement on the basis of occupational status. In other cases, databases acted as negative criteria, with entitlements directed at those not included to further expand the reach of relief as far as possible. At other times, databases allowed clarity within harder to define categories like 'migrants' or 'informal workers.'

In this section, we discuss these different processes and criteria of identification of beneficiaries employed by central and state governments across relief programmes. We identify six methods of beneficiary identification based on criteria of inclusion or exclusion of beneficiaries; choices in which database is used,

<sup>4</sup> SFA20. To see this order's details, refer to this row code in the full list of orders in Annexure 1.

<sup>5</sup> See SFD5.

and the way the database is employed. Table 2 summarises.

To further analyse the role played by a database in one's ability to access relief, we deploy the idea of 'robustness'. We measure 'robustness' as the certainty of inclusion in relief entitlements resulting from one's position in the databases. Being enlisted in a database can take many forms: e-listings/registrations that are in consideration, pending, expired or due for renewal; or in categories as graded by the database itself such as PHH (Priority household) and AAY (Antyodaya Anna Yojana) under National Food Security Act (NFSA); or Senior citizens, Widows and persons with disabilities classified into different categories by age. Even if not part of a database's own criteria, we also argue that the social identity of a beneficiary and the statutory or governmental category they fall into also affect robustness.

We thus imagine robustness as a spectrum across social identity and position across various databases and registers. Simply put, 'robustness' measures not just presence in a database, but more significantly, the order in which one is present. 'Order' here refers to the specifics of how one is enlisted or registered. Later, we argue that the robustness of one's presence in a database also shapes the kind of entitlement one receives.

Table 2 Employing databases to identify beneficiaries.

Section	Database for identifying beneficiaries	Criteria employed	Notes
1.1.1	Existing database used.	Criteria align with those of database	
1.1.2	Categories adjacent to database used	Remain unchanged	Categories already exist in database and can be promptly enlisted
1.1.3	Database expanded by new survey	Remain unchanged	
1.1.4	Existing Database	New criteria	Database used for purposes other than it was intended - proxy equivalence.
1.1.5	New database created by new survey	Criteria Expanded	
1.1.6	Universal delivery without a database	Demand-driven	Universal delivered by Place-based supply points, distribution centres, delivery nodes leveraged for delivery.
1.1.7	Absent databases	Missing criteria	Directives given to other operators to identify, procure and deliver relief.

### 1.1.1 An existing database is used; the criteria of the database align with the nature of the entitlement

The first form of identification is when state actors use an existing database to deliver relief to those already included within it. In other words, those enrolled in a pre-crisis social protection system. The entitlement offered is similar in form to that given out prior to the crisis. Here presence in the database itself becomes the criteria of identifying beneficiaries. An example is the provision of dry food rations as relief to ration card holders who were already enrolled in the scheme in the Public Distribution System (PDS). Under Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana (PMGKY) and several additional state government circulars, additional ration was allotted to existing beneficiaries on the basis of this prior inclusion. A ration card was the criteria for identification while the PDS database was the means of verification.

Other examples of such relief include cash transfers for registered construction workers. In late March, the Ministry of Labour & Employment announced cash transfers for all registered construction workers. It was closely followed by Sikkim State Building & Other Construction Workers Welfare Board with Rs 2000; and Government of Meghalaya, Department of Labour in partnership with Department of Revenue & Disaster Management with Rs 2000.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, the Department of Labour, Government of Rajasthan announced compensation in pay amounting Rs 1000 for registered construction workers who had suffered loss in wages due to the lockdown. While the announcements by

Ministry of Labour and Sikkim and Meghalaya welfare board identified every registered labourer as beneficiary, the relief measure by Rajasthan welfare board stated a specific aim to reach registered workers who had suffered loss in wages due to being kept in isolation.<sup>7</sup> However, the GO did not specify how the additional criterion of having lost wages would be verified.

Existing databases of schemes and programmes like PM-KISAN, PMUY, ESIC also became criteria of identifying beneficiaries. Many relief measures announced by the Ministry of Finance adopted this approach. Consider the schemes announced by the Ministry of Finance in the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana in early April 2020. Financial relief was announced, among others, to farmers registered under PM-KISAN; women account holders registered under Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana; and beneficiaries under the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana.<sup>8</sup> The Ministry of Labour and Employment also announced financial relief for insured persons under ESIC, which served as both criteria and database.<sup>9</sup> Our first method of identification, therefore, is the existing enrolment within social protection programmes pre-COVID of beneficiaries fully enrolled and registered as per the terms of the scheme.

### 1.1.2 Enrolling those 'adjacent' to a database; criteria remain unchanged

It was soon evident that reaching those already within the system was not enough – the first evidence of the inadequacy of pre-COVID social

<sup>6</sup> See CFA1, SL5, SL3, SL11 in Annexure 1.

<sup>7</sup> See SL10 in Annexure 1.

<sup>8</sup> See CFA2, CFA4, and CFA7 in Annexure 1.

<sup>9</sup> See CL6 in Annexure 1.

protection systems. The first mechanism state actors used to get past this was to consider those we describe as ‘adjacent’ to the database. For example: one may not be currently enrolled but have a pending application, or a recently expired registration. What is useful here is that it can be reasonably assumed (though not known for certain) that applicants to a scheme fit most, if not all, criteria for the scheme since it is unlikely that they would have applied for a scheme for which they were completely not eligible.

The Ministry of Labour and Employment, for example, announced relief for insured persons whose registration had recently expired but were unable to renew it due to lockdown. A cap of June 30th was however introduced for those with recently expired registrations as opposed to the entire lockdown period for those with registrations.<sup>10</sup> Similarly, the Food, Public Distribution and Consumer Affairs Department, Jharkhand issued relief measures providing ration to those with pending ration card applications.<sup>11</sup>

The Food, Civil Supplies, and consumer affairs Department, Govt of Chhattisgarh extended ration entitlements to those who fall under some eligibility criterion under NFSA but are not eligible for ration currently because of not having eligibility slip. The total number of slips were capped in 2014-15 by Gol. Those who fall under such 25 eligible categories in NFSA but were not eligible at present were included under the reach of relief.<sup>12</sup> By mid-May, the Food Supplies and Consumer Welfare Department, Govt. of Bihar had issued orders to include old persons (“vridhh paatra”) whose biometric authentication could not be done but were already ration card holders.

<sup>10</sup> See CL5 in Annexure 1.

<sup>11</sup> See SFD10 in Annexure 1.

<sup>12</sup> See SFD 45 in Annexure 1.

It is noteworthy that relaxation in biometric authentication was given only to old persons. We will discuss this further in later sections on new categories and proxies.

*It was soon evident that reaching those already within the system was not enough – the first evidence of the inadequacy of pre-COVID social protection systems.*

Often, those included from an adjacent status were not as robustly present as those originally enrolled. For example, under the PMGKY additional 5kgs of grain was allocated for each family member registered with NFSA in addition to the normal entitlement of grain. Those newly made eligible for the entitlement through including pending registrations, however, were only entitled to 5kg grain overall. Thus, adjacent incorporation can come at the cost of what we will later detail as a differentiated entitlement.

Expanding the database like this required a process of verification. In this case, since applications had come to the system and were pending/expired, the information of the beneficiary was available, and the Aadhaar database was hence used for verification.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> See SFD80 and SFD81 in Annexure 1.

### 1.1.3 Expansion of a database, via a new survey to correct for wrongful exclusion

State actors also expanded existing databases as per the criteria of inclusion. Fresh surveys were initiated to this effect. Some state governments expedited the process to register unregistered but eligible individuals. For instance, the Government of Uttar Pradesh initiated making ration cards for families that, despite being eligible, didn't have a ration card.<sup>14</sup> Similarly, when the Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Protection Department of Chhattisgarh announced distribution of ration to those in need without ration cards irrespective of eligibility, it further called to issue ration cards to eligible individuals.

The process involved urban bodies enlisting such individuals. Aadhaar or mobile numbers were used to check with the ration card database, along with assistance from Non-Governmental Organisations and other individuals.<sup>15</sup> TDPS first reached those in direct fold of existing food security program NFSA, with additional entitlements announced as relief. Thereafter it was extended to those who were either registered with other food security programs (such as State food security programs, possessing State ration cards) or waiting to be registered with NFSA itself.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>14</sup> See SFD51 in Annexure 1.

<sup>15</sup> See SFD 53 in Annexure 1.

<sup>16</sup> See CFD5 and SFD10 in Annexure 1.

### 1.1.4 Use of a database with proxy equivalence

In March, the Government of Uttar Pradesh announced<sup>17</sup> free ration for a month to construction workers and casual labourers without ration cards who held a MGNREGA job card or were registered with the Labour department. Here they considered all construction workers and casual labour as vulnerable and needy, using the database with MGNREGA and the Labour department to identify those left out of the PDS database in their state. A database originally intended to be a listing of construction workers is used to stand in for what should be considered 'vulnerable' and 'needy' at the time of crisis.

**कोविड-19 संकट के दौरान किंग के चिन्हीकरण हेतु प्रपत्र**

(परिवार के मुखिया का नाम एवं हस्ताक्षर)

- जन आधार/आधार नम्बर .....
- परिवार के मुखिया का नाम ..... परिवार में कुल सदस्य .....
- मोबाईल नम्बर ..... ई-मेल एड्रेस .....
- आवासीय पता

- गृह राज्य .....
- व्यवसाय/आजीविका .....
- व्यवसाय के स्थान का पता .....
- यदि किसी संस्थान में कार्यरत है तो उसके मालिक का नाम मय मोबाईल नं० .....

(व्यावसायिक संस्थान यथा- होटल/रेस्टोरेंट/सिनेमा/हेयर सेलून/रिक्शा/ऑटो चालक/बन्द उद्योगों के श्रमिक/मैरिज पैलेस/केटरिंग के कार्य करने वाले कार्मिक/कोचिंग संस्थान/प्रिंटिंग प्रेस/ईट-मट्टे)

- संस्थान का पता .....
- क्या परिवार का कोई भी सदस्य बाहर रोजगार/व्यवसाय/नौकरी करता था? अर्थात् क्या परिवार में कोई भी सदस्य प्रवासी है ?
- यदि हाँ, तो उसका नाम ..... एवं आधार नम्बर .....
- बैंक खाता संख्या ..... बैंक का नाम .....
- डाटा एन्ट्री कर्ता का नाम ..... मो.नं. ....

मैं घोषणा करता हूँ कि उपर्युक्त समस्त सूचनाएँ सही हैं। कोविड-19 के कारण मेरे परिवार का रोजगार प्रभावित हुआ है।

(परिवार के मुखिया का नाम एवं हस्ताक्षर)

*A form released by the Department of Food and Civil Supplies, Rajasthan to identify and enlist 'needy'.*

*Credits: Rajasthan Mahila Kaamgaar Union*

<sup>17</sup> See SFD 5 in Annexure 1.



In late April, the Transport Department, Govt. of Bihar issued an order to conduct surveys to identify those who didn't have a ration card and worked in transport viz. rickshaw pullers, thela drivers, e-rickshaw and auto drivers. This was done to extend relief to those who may not possess ration cards at all or are not in possession of it presently.<sup>18</sup> In this case, occupational categories are used as a proxy for vulnerability and to address possible exclusions from other social protection schemes, in this case, the PDS system. Such an approach results in the creation of a new database that matches identified beneficiaries from one scheme with the entitlements of another, or with one-time special entitlements. The Government of Tamil Nadu's Revenue and Disaster Management Department drew on a range of pre-existing trade-specific Welfare Boards in an order dated April 11. The order listed 14 welfare boards and their member databases as beneficiaries of cash assistance of Rs. 1000.<sup>19</sup> The groups included "scavengers, fishermen, transgenders, cracker labourers," and several others.<sup>20</sup>

### 1.1.5 New database created by conducting a new survey with expanded criteria

The Food Supplies and Consumer Welfare Department, Govt. of Bihar issued an order targeting migrant workers who fall outside the coverage of NFSA and state PDS. The process of identification involved district officers to fill an excel sheet format made available to them. This sheet required listing details of such 'migrants', such as name, name of father/husband, family

members, Aadhaar, mobile in a spreadsheet. The Government Order emphasised that Aadhaar of each member and phone number of at least one was mandatory. These lists were then to be de-duplicated against the ration card database. Thereafter information on food collection could be sent through SMS on listed mobile numbers of these new beneficiaries.<sup>21</sup> A new process was hence created with the Aadhaar database used to verify beneficiaries. Further, absence in the ration card database was one of the criteria of inclusion.

*The creation of these new categories of beneficiaries and new databases offer possibilities of expansion beyond the immediate crisis.*

There are also instances of schemes where those outside any of these registration databases were reached through newly expedited temporary enrolment into entirely new databases. States used mobile applications, physical and online registration kiosks, and physical surveys to execute such enrolment.<sup>22</sup>

On occasion, the State invited self-identification from those seeking to avail relief, like this initiative by the Department of Labour and Department of Revenue & Disaster Management, Govt of Meghalaya that asked adult wage earners from marginal sections of the society who have been deprived of wages during the lockdown period to identify

<sup>18</sup> See SFD65 in Annexure 1.

<sup>19</sup> See SFA53 in Annexure 1.

<sup>20</sup> In a follow-up order dated May 12, the same groups were listed as beneficiaries of a second round of cash transfers of the same amount. See SFA54 in Annexure 1.

<sup>21</sup> See SFD80 and SFD81 in Annexure 1.

<sup>22</sup> See SFD39, SFD52, SFD65, SFD81 in Annexure 1.

themselves. Negative exclusion criteria were used, again making it clear that the attempt was to reach beyond existing databases of social protection schemes. In this case, self-identification was not allowed for those already registered under Building and Other Construction Workers (BOCW) through Welfare Board, MGNREGA workers through BDOs of C&RD blocks, Muster Roll Workers through respective departments and casual wage workers in government, semi-government departments through respective organisations. Claimants had to supply their details including bank account and EPIC numbers to a toll-free number to be considered for relief.<sup>23</sup>

State actors at times also relied on elected representatives to include unregistered beneficiaries in need. Consider, for instance, the Delhi government's attempt to provide vulnerable populations with an emergency kit. Elected representatives like MLAs and MPs had a fixed number of coupons that they could distribute as per their discretion to those without ration cards, Aadhar cards, or any other form of registration or identification.<sup>24</sup>

The creation of these new categories of beneficiaries and new databases is one of the most important findings of our report. They not only indicate the limits of existing social protection schemes but also offer possibilities of expansion that can be sustained and continued even beyond the immediate crisis. For example, consider the insurance scheme designed under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana for those fighting against Covid which covered “public healthcare providers including community health workers, who may have to be in direct contact and care of COVID-19 patients and who may be at risk of

being impacted by this”. The scheme further covered “Private hospital staff and retired/volunteer/local urban bodies/contracted/daily wage/ad-hoc/outsourced staff requisitioned by States/Central hospitals/autonomous hospitals of Central/States/UTs, AIIMS and INIs/hospital of Central Ministries can also be drafted for COVID 19 related responsibilities.” Private individuals were identified as those “deployed/drafted” by “both public & private health care institutions/organizations through an agency” while volunteers were identified as “those who are drafted by the Government Official authorized by Central/State/UT Government for care”. New databases were created for such “private individuals” and “volunteers”, which was relied on as proof of service.<sup>25</sup> In this case, social protection reaches not just the most vulnerable, but informal and contract workers within formal enterprises – a category of work that is rapidly growing in India.

### 1.1.6 Universal, demand-driven entitlement delivered via place-based supply point/distribution centre/delivery node

In many cases, databases were simply suspended as is often the case with relief. In this approach, universal approaches dominate with few, if any, restrictions on who can avail relief. Community kitchens and State canteens,<sup>26</sup> for example, were widely used to ensure food security across states in a timely manner when the identification and verification process for ration distribution was leaving many out of its fold of protection. While many others may or may not have done so, guidelines specified for community/

<sup>23</sup> See SL17 in Annexure 1.

<sup>24</sup> See SFD68 in Annexure 1.

<sup>25</sup> See CFA6 in Annexure 1.

<sup>26</sup> See SFD7/17/19/20/11/32/13/21/24/25/27/35 in Annexure 1.

state kitchens to be located strategically in low-income neighbourhoods in Delhi to serve low-income neighbourhoods, whereas elsewhere pre-existing canteens were used as the supply point. The Government of Jharkhand repurposed Dal Bhaat Kendras, the Government of Odisha repurposed Aahar Kendras, and the Government of Delhi repurposed school buildings to run kitchens across the state to provide free or subsidised meals to all those who need it.

*Universal access no doubt eases identification – the question is whether it can be a delivery mode with a more substantial entitlement.*

The Government of Kerala repurposed community kitchens under Kudumbashree; women under Mission Shakti<sup>27</sup> in Odisha ran community kitchens to provide food for those in need. There were other attempts by states of Nagaland and Uttar Pradesh to provide subsidised meals via community kitchens and food banks, but these were narrower in their presence and beneficiary focus, limited to night shelters in UP and students and others in particular districts of Nagaland.

In this mode, identification is minimised as a barrier, and often no documentation, proof of identity or address, are required at all.

Yet, as we discuss later, this is also often tied

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.timesnownews.com/mirror-now/in-focus/article/covid-19-lockdown-women-self-help-groups-under-mission-shakti-make-a-difference-in-odisha/571441>

with a substantially diminished entitlement (cooked food for a single meal as opposed to dry ration stocks) and requires effort from the beneficiary (to go to the kitchen, stand in line). Universal access no doubt eases identification – the question is whether it can be a delivery mode with a more substantial entitlement. This is pertinent in asking why all relief was not simply made as universal as possible instead of incremental expansions of databases that we have been outlining so far.

### **1.1.7 Government orders employers, landlords and other actors to take or suspend action in alignment with the crisis.**

Finally, there are instances where state actors do not play an active role but issue directions to non-state actors. We see this in orders issued in late March across central and state governments. Several notices were issued with the intention to extend protection to ‘informal labour’ by way of ensuring payment of wages, paid leave or saving rent money. These notifications specifically asked for rents to be waived, workers not to be retrenched, and wages not to be withheld. Such notifications, for example, were issued by the Department of Finance and Department of Labour & Employment of the centre, from states like Sikkim, Kerala, Arunachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Haryana, Odisha, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh, and Telangana.<sup>28</sup>

Yet the complete financial and moral responsibility often fell on employers and landlords, given there was no mechanism in place for regulation of the same, and, critically for our arguments in this section, no databases

<sup>28</sup> See CL1, SL1, SL2, SL3, SL4, SL6, SL7, SL8, SL9, SL12, SL13, SL14, SL15, SL16, SL18 in Annexure 1.



meals.<sup>31</sup> Similarly, Sikkim names “daily wagers, migrant, casual or construction site workers, hawkers and other stranded labourers” as beneficiaries of a home-delivered cooked food scheme.<sup>32</sup>

Many of these categories are not statutory, and there are no pre-existing databases for them. In some cases, new processes are created to list those fulfilling the criteria of such categories, which clearly define the criteria or processes of inclusion. We also see however, that often such terminology is used more loosely, without definitions of the criteria. There is little clarity, then, on the inclusion and exclusion of beneficiaries as there is no set criteria to prove or disprove one’s inclusion into the category.

One also finds, in circulars across Central and State governments and agencies, the use of terms like ‘casual’, ‘migrant’ etc. as categories or descriptors of beneficiaries. The terms ‘casual’, ‘contractual’, ‘outsourced’ ‘workers’/‘labour’/‘staff’ are used to describe beneficiaries by central government agencies like the Ministry of Labour and Employment<sup>33</sup>, the Ministry of Finance: Department of Expenditure<sup>34</sup>, and the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution<sup>35</sup>. The Ministry of Home Affairs issued orders to landlords to not force ‘students’, ‘workers’ and ‘migrants’ to vacate rented accommodation<sup>36</sup>.

State agencies also use terms such as ‘migrant/casual labourers’ by Office of the District Collector, South Sikkim District Namchi<sup>37</sup>; ‘contractual/casual/daily wage/outsourced staff’ by the Finance Department, Government of

Kerala<sup>38</sup>; ‘casual/contractual’ workers by Office of the Labour Commissioner, Government of Odisha<sup>39</sup> and Labour Department, Government of Haryana<sup>40</sup>. The Government of Meghalaya, Labour Department used the terms “marginal sections of the society who have been deprived of their daily wages during the lockdown period” in efforts to provide relief. A database was to be created by relying on such individuals to self-report for inclusion as beneficiaries, supplying details and their EPIC numbers used for verification.<sup>41</sup> Government of NCT of Delhi, Delhi Disaster Management Authority created relief measures to address ‘poor and needy persons including migrant workers’<sup>42</sup>.

These terms - ‘casual’, ‘contractual’, ‘outsourced’, ‘daily wage’, ‘marginal sections’ - not only work as proxies of vulnerability but may now also contribute to the creation of new governmental categories given that have appeared in government orders.

There is thus an important opportunity here to leverage the use of such terminology towards a greater universalisation of claims to social protection. Such categories, linked to new surveys and the creation of new (if temporary) databases, offer scope to bring such beneficiaries who were erstwhile either unregistered into state registers. Further, it allows those beneficiary groups who were collapsed with other governmental or statutory categories to be re-coded as special categories, opening avenues for social protection schemes more suited to each group.

<sup>31</sup> See SFD20, SFA44 in Annexure 1.

<sup>32</sup> See SFD30 in Annexure 1.

<sup>33</sup> See CL1 in Annexure 1.

<sup>34</sup> See CL2 in Annexure 1.

<sup>35</sup> See CL4 in Annexure 1.

<sup>36</sup> See CFA9 in Annexure 1.

<sup>37</sup> See SL1 in Annexure 1.

<sup>38</sup> See SL2 in Annexure 1.

<sup>39</sup> See SL7 in Annexure 1.

<sup>40</sup> See SL12 in Annexure 1.

<sup>41</sup> See SL17 in Annexure 1.

<sup>42</sup> See SFA21 in Annexure 1.

Apart from the creation of new categories, we also see creation of new processes to list beneficiaries under new as well as existing categories. We have detailed many of these above, from using self-declaration to e-listing, helplines, partnerships with non-state actors, using elected representatives and public officials. Consider the process created by the Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Protection Department of Chhattisgarh calling to issue ration cards to eligible individuals<sup>43</sup>. Urban bodies were to enlist such individuals along with assistance from Non-Governmental Organisations, social service and other individuals. We will return later in this report to further discuss the possible lessons from these new processes to expand the reach and coverage of social protection in a post-COVID world.

### 1.3 Identification vs verification

A final note in this section re-iterates that presence in a database or the creation of new categories or databases always requires a process of verification, especially when state actors are involved that must be open to audit and explanation of the basis of their actions. Often, a larger expansion of databases, and indeed, a more radical universalisation, is hindered by the concern of verification both of who beneficiaries say they are as well as if they meet both new and old eligibility criteria. Here, both wrongful inclusion and false exclusion are fears.

State actors used existing databases most often in this regard, treating them as negative criteria. For instance, construction workers receiving ration, as in the relief measure by Bihar's Food

<sup>43</sup> See SFD 53 in Annexure 1.

Supplies and Consumer Welfare Department, were checked against databases for duplication and prevention of erroneous inclusions.<sup>44</sup> In an order dated April 3 announcing cash relief of Rs. 1500 for BPL category families, a detailed process is described to "avoid double payments."<sup>45</sup>

Similarly, we see the example of the Department of Labour, Meghalaya, where relief was targeted towards 'adult wage earners from marginal sections of the society who have been deprived of wages during the lockdown'. To be a beneficiary also required exclusion from 'Building and Other Construction Workers (BOCW) through Welfare Board, MGNREGA Workers through BDOs of C&RD blocks, Muster Roll Workers through respective departments and casual wage workers in government, semi-government departments through respective organisations'. Registration in one database, then, is used as an exclusionary criterion to prevent erroneous inclusion.<sup>46</sup>

Consider also the Government of Karnataka's list of criteria and safeguards to prevent erroneous inclusion into its announced financial aid for writers and artists. To be eligible, one must: be a full-time artist in the art form for 10 years; be in economic hardship; not be already benefiting from assistance from the Department of Kannada and Culture; and not be an employee of state/central/corporation board/government-funded/semi-government-funded institutions. Providing false information to access the benefits, the order states, is punishable under the National Disaster Management Act.<sup>47</sup> Was the scrutiny associated with identification of beneficiaries dependent on the nature of entitlement? The government

<sup>44</sup> See SFD81 in Annexure 1.

<sup>45</sup> See SFA18 in Annexure 1.

<sup>46</sup> See SL17 in Annexure 1.

<sup>47</sup> See SFA37 in Annexure 1.

orders we studied suggest that the leeway given in identification of beneficiaries depended on the nature of the entitlement. Dry rations and cash transfers were more strictly regulated through registration. Cooked food and emergency kits were more likely to see a more relaxed means of beneficiary identification. This was done with the assumption that the chances of appropriation of relief by those it was not meant for could be regulated with the size of entitlement as well as the means of accessing the entitlement. This represents a deep challenge to expansive and adequate social protection systems. If universalisation is associated with reduced entitlements, then without better verification procedures, we risk constantly self-limiting entitlements as the system scales.

Lockdown relief measures have shown multiple ways in which state actors innovated beyond their earlier narrow construction of categories and databases of social protection. It has also shown that, despite attempts, more radical moves towards significant universalisation remained absent, even amidst a widespread crisis. The limitations of existing databases are a key part of this, as are limitations on procedural innovations that can enrol larger numbers of beneficiaries quickly, efficiently, and with verification systems in place that will pass the scrutiny and logic of state audit. Attempts to learn from and apply these lessons to post-COVID social protection systems will have to engage with these obstacles directly.

**दिल्ली सरकार** GOVT OF NCT OF DELHI  
 सारा भी रहता है eCoupon for Temporary Ration

Head of Family [Redacted] Total Family Members **4**

Address [Redacted], Badarpur

Distribution Centre  
 Nigam Pratibha Vidyalaya (Girls), Molarband, New Delhi

Collection Date: 20-04-2020

Time: 11 AM - 2 PM

eCoupon: [Redacted]

Issued On: 20-04-20

On behalf of  
 FSO, Badarpur  
 Issuing Authority



An e-coupon issued by the Government of Delhi to avail ration as relief; A queue for obtaining state offered ration.

Credits: Basti Suraksha Manch

# Defining entitlements

## 2.1 Entitlements Rooted in Existing Protections and Databases

Which specificities determine the entitlement one is able to avail as relief? Is being in a database enough? Closely tied to presence is the specific ways in which one is present in the database that has a role to play in the quantum and nature of relief one is entitled to. In this section, we examine 'robustness' through the differences of form and quantum of entitlement among beneficiaries.

Entitlements differ by form, quantum, and frequency. Further, we see delivery of one-time entitlements in parts. For example, the Ministry of Finance announced in March a one-time, ex-gratia payment of 1000 rupees for senior citizens, widows and persons with disabilities, to be given in two instalments over the three months. The form of entitlement here is cash transfers/ the quantum is Rs1000; the frequency is once, but to be delivered in two parts.

It is important to make a distinction between frequency and the number of instalments

or parts that an entitlement is delivered in. Frequency is simply the number of times an entitlement is to be given. For instance, we consider the announcement of a monthly cash support for a fixed period of months as having frequency as one which is the sum of all monthly payments. Its delivery is considered to be in multiple parts. This distinction is important because such design of relief allows a beneficiary to plan how they spend the relief they receive. Ration, cooked food, emergency kits, medical assistance, reimbursements and insurance are some other examples of form. By triangulating form, quantum, and frequency, we categorise the various entitlements and relief measures of the central and State governments into the following three groups.

### 2.1.1 Form of entitlement and the nature of the database

The first decision on what form of entitlement is to be given derives from the nature of the database in which the beneficiary is, i.e. the form of social protection they are already entitled to receive. In many cases, beneficiaries received an entitlement as per the stated purpose of the database used to identify them. We examined this from the lens of identification



above in section 1.1.1. Ration card holders received ration; those registered under the PMUY<sup>48</sup> received financial assistance for gas cylinders; those registered for pensions under certain databases such as NSAP<sup>49</sup> and PM-KISAN<sup>50</sup> got cash transfers in the same quantum as they were normally entitled to receiving. Within this mode, relief is constrained by pre-existing forms of social protection entitlements. Yet again the robustness of previously existing social protection determines the possibilities and nature of relief.

## 2.1.2 Advancing/reordering of existing entitlements

A separate shift was to take an existing form of an entitlement but alter its frequency or the timeline of delivery. Three months' pension for those registered under NSAP, for example, was advanced. The Rs 2000 announced for farmers registered under PM-KISAN was also advanced, paying earlier an instalment that would have been received regardless in the later months.<sup>51</sup> Bihar also advanced three months' pension to those under the Mukhyamantri Vriddhajan Pension Yojana. The beneficiaries therefore received in quantum exactly what they would have even without these announcements. The announcement only advanced these entitlements. While advancing helps give a beneficiary immediate relief, it also displaces risk to later months, when no instalment will come, as happened in the case of pensions. A second model didn't advance but re-ordered the delivery timeline. Where ICDS and MDM schemes could continue with their routine delivery, with necessary modifications in

delivery and conditionality, households continued to receive nutritional food and supplements for children. This reduced the burden on the savings and entitlements of dry ration and cash that the household could receive from other sources. The Rajasthan government<sup>52</sup> continued to provide baby mix and nutritional supplements to its beneficiaries, moving from a daily feeding to a take-home model for a week's share, thus reducing waiting time and improving accessibility. The Kerala<sup>53</sup> and Chhattisgarh<sup>54</sup> governments also continued to provide ICDS nutritional benefits to its beneficiaries, increasing accessibility via home-delivery and take-home models respectively.

Maharashtra government deposited the cost equivalent of the month's Mid-Day Meal into the bank accounts of primary and upper primary students, thus changing modality and advancing the entitlement for the month at the same time to ensure continuation of the social protection. In this case both the form of the entitlement was altered and its realisation advanced.

## 2.1.3 Existing entitlement augmented

Under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana, ration allocation was increased by 5 kilograms per person per month for three months and an additional 1 kilogram of pulses to each beneficiary family. MGNREGA wages were increased from Rs202/day by Rs20 from April onwards<sup>55</sup>. This was a permanent increase, limited not merely to the time of the crisis.

<sup>48</sup> See CFA4 in Annexure 1.

<sup>49</sup> See CFA5 in Annexure 1.

<sup>50</sup> See CFA2 in Annexure 1.

<sup>51</sup> See CFA2 in Annexure 1.

<sup>52</sup> See SFD34 in Annexure 1.

<sup>53</sup> See SFD11 in Annexure 1.

<sup>54</sup> See SFD4 in Annexure 1.

<sup>55</sup> See CFA13 in Annexure 1.

It is worth noting that a hike in the daily MGNREGA wages was due in March 2019 itself.<sup>56</sup> However, this hike was announced not as due process under the programme but instead as relief under PM Garib Kalyan Yojana by the Ministry of Finance.

Beneficiaries under the PMUY were given three gas cylinders for the months of April, May and June free of cost. The price of one cylinder was to be paid as advance into bank accounts of beneficiaries. Once the beneficiary used this amount to buy a cylinder from the market, the advance amount for the next refill would be credited to bank accounts.<sup>57</sup> In July, an extension was made to claim unavailed benefits till September. However, only unutilised credits could be used and there would be no new transfers made.

*A long pending increase in NREGA wage rates was announced as relief under PM Garib Kalyan Yojana*

## 2.1.4 New entitlements given that were linked to existing databases

In many cases, new entitlements were given to those within existing databases, with the form of the entitlement remaining the same. A one time, ex gratia of Rs 1000 was awarded by the Ministry of Finance for senior citizens, widows and persons with disabilities. The GO stated: “give them Rs 1,000 to tide over difficulties during next three months.” This, however, was to mean that a total amount of Rs. 1000 was to be given in two instalments over the next three months.

Women account holders under PMJDY were given Rs 500/month ex-gratia for the months of April, May and June. Existing bank accounts that were registered as per a list provided by the Department of Financial Services were used to transfer this amount. Construction Workers’ Welfare Boards of various states also announced cash transfers to registered construction workers<sup>58</sup>. Different states had different frequencies and number of instalments. Table 3 below illustrates such relief measures to construction workers across states<sup>59</sup>. Again, the form of the entitlement remained the same, it was the quantum that represented relief. There were, however, some instances where the entitlement differed from the typical entitlements associated to the databases used for identification. For instance, Tamil Nadu routed cash transfers of Rs 1000 through identification of ‘rice only’ ration cards<sup>60</sup>, while Uttar Pradesh delivered ration

<sup>58</sup> See: <https://www.financialexpress.com/economy/relief-to-construction-workers-18-states-transfer-rs-1000-5000-each-in-1-8-crore-beneficiary-acs/1921743/>

<sup>59</sup> See SL11, SL15, SFA13, SFA24, SFA26, SFA27, SFA31, SFA32, SFA35 in Annexure 1.

<sup>60</sup> See SFA19 in Annexure 1.

<sup>56</sup> See: <https://www.telegraphindia.com/india/minimum-wage-test-for-nrega/cid/1684824>.

<sup>57</sup> See CFA4 in Annexure 1.

for a month to those without ration cards using cash transfer registers<sup>61</sup> to identify informal workers such as the list of construction workers with the welfare board and the NREGA enrolment list. Here, recognised forms from other databases were delivered through a database not originally designed for a particular entitlement.

There were also instances where state governments provided additional support in view of the particularity of the Covid context. The Kerala government activated a mental

health support program, and institutionalised home delivery of food and dry ration to high risk individuals early in the lockdown. The Delhi government included additional cooking materials and hygiene products in its universal relief kit along with the central government's stipulated dry ration entitlements. Such acts of responsive relief entitlements and support makes the relief more comprehensive.



*Cooked food being distributed to migrant workers by BSM at Meethapur, Delhi.*

*Credits: Basti Suraksha Manch*

<sup>61</sup> See SFD5 in Annexure 1.

Table 3 Relief Measures to Construction Workers

State	Quantum of cash transfer	Frequency	Number of instalments
Uttar Pradesh <sup>62</sup>	Rs 1000		One
Rajasthan <sup>63</sup>	Rs 1000	Once	One
Arunachal Pradesh <sup>64</sup>	Rs 4000	Once	Two; each awarded monthly. (April, May)
Sikkim <sup>65</sup>	Rs 2000	Once	One
Meghalaya <sup>66</sup>	Rs 2000	Once	Two; each awarded weekly.
Nagaland <sup>67</sup>	Rs 2000	Once	
Punjab <sup>68</sup>	Rs 3000	Once	One
Kerala <sup>69</sup>	Rs 3000		
Delhi <sup>70</sup>	Rs 5000	Twice in lockdown (April, May)	One
Goa <sup>71</sup>	Rs 6000	Once	

This happened across several states. The Rajasthan government<sup>72</sup>, in addition to giving entitlements early, also used the same beneficiary list to provide additional dry ration to these households. Tamil Nadu delivered cash transfers through identification of ration cards<sup>73</sup>, thus ensuring a kind of layering of entitlements through delivery itself. Whereas Jharkhand signed a contract with Border Roads Organisation to hire 11,800 workers in June which ensures that 'BRO will pay wages that are higher by 15-20 per cent directly into the bank accounts of the workers, unlike the practice

so far where the middle men took their cut from the wages. The BRO will also have to provide benefits such as health care facilities, accident insurance, transport to and from home, and proper housing [under the new memorandum].<sup>74</sup>

The Uttar Pradesh government announced delivery of ration through identification in cash transfer registers such as the Construction Worker's database and NREGA database<sup>75</sup>, using these as proxies for informal workers and vulnerable citizens. In effect, this also ensured that the same beneficiary that received a cash transfer also received food relief. We speak of such layering and integration in more detail in Section 2.3 below.

<sup>62</sup> See SFA35 in Annexure 1.

<sup>63</sup> See SFA32 in Annexure 1.

<sup>64</sup> See SFA24 in Annexure 1.

<sup>65</sup> See SL5 in Annexure 1.

<sup>66</sup> See SL3 in Annexure 1.

<sup>67</sup> See SFA33 in Annexure 1.

<sup>68</sup> See SFA31 in Annexure 1.

<sup>69</sup> See <https://www.financialexpress.com/economy/relief-to-construction-workers-18-states-transfer-rs-1000-5000-each-in-1-8-crore-beneficiary-a-cs/1921743/>

<sup>70</sup> See <https://www.livemint.com/news/india/delhi-govt-to-again-pay-rs-5-000-to-construction-workers-11589197278805.html>.

<sup>71</sup> See SFA26 in Annexure 1.

<sup>72</sup> See SFD34 in Annexure 1.

<sup>73</sup> See SFA19 in Annexure 1.

<sup>74</sup> See Tripathi, P.S. (2020, July 3). Bihar & Jharkhand: Contrasting tales. Frontline: <https://frontline.thehindu.com/cover-story/article31842480.ece>

<sup>75</sup> See SFD5 in Annexure 1.

Table 4 Forms of Entitlement: Cash Transfers by the Central Government

Quantum of entitlement	Beneficiary	Database
Rs1000	Senior citizens, widows, persons with disabilities	
Rs500/month	Women Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) account holders	Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY)
Rs200; Rs500; Rs300; Rs500; Rs300; Rs500;	Senior citizens (60-79 yrs); Senior citizens (>80 yrs); Widows (40-79 yrs); Widows (>80 yrs); Persons with disabilities (upto 79 yrs); Persons with disabilities (>80 yrs)	National Social Assistance Program (NSAP)
Rs2000	Farmers under PM-KISAN scheme	PM-KISAN

## 2.1.5 Differentiated entitlements

Across many relief announcements the entitlement was found to vary among the beneficiary group. Table 4 shows a comparison of the quantum of cash transfers issued by the Centre in late March and early April. We see the variations in quantum across different categories and categories of databases.

Among new entitlements announced as relief were insurance or ex-gratia compensation on death. Amongst the various such measures announced, the quantum of entitlement is found to vary by the identity of the beneficiary as well as by the agencies announcing the relief.

The Ministry of Finance announced 50 lakh as insurance coverage under Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package for Safai karmacharis, ward-boys, nurses, ASHA workers, paramedics, technicians, doctors and specialists and other health workers of all government health centres, wellness centres and hospitals of Centre as well as states; private hospital

staff, local urban bodies, contract, daily wage workers, outsourced staff requisitioned by states, central hospitals, autonomous hospitals, AIIMS, among others. We see above how there wasn't a differential entitlement in this scheme. On the other hand, the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution made distinctions between different categories of employees under FCI.

**GOVERNMENT OF NAGALAND  
HOME DEPARTMENT  
RELIEF & REHABILITATION BRANCH**

No. RR-COVID19/01/2020-21

Dated Kohima, the 21<sup>st</sup> May, 2020

**NOTIFICATION**

**Subject: Ex Gratia grant for fatalities to frontline workers due to COVID-19**

In continuation of Notification of even number dated 20<sup>th</sup> April'2020 on the above subject; the provision of payment of ex-gratia amount of Rs. 10.00 lacs by the State Government to any employee of the Nagaland State Government suffering fatality due to COVID-19 while performing frontline duties is extended to cover drivers, cleaners, sanitary workers, caterers, and all such personnel/workers involved in the management of the Quarantine Centres in the State, as well as to any other non Government functionary involved in any other activities for combating COVID-19 under the District Task Force.

**Sd/-TEMJEN TOY, IAS  
Chief Secretary, Nagaland**

*Notification from Government of Nagaland announcing cash transfers in case of fatality due to COVID-19*

Table 5 Quantum and form of entitlement

Quantum of entitlement	Form of entitlement	Beneficiary	Announced by
Rs 50 lakh	Insurance coverage	Health workers fighting COVID-19 in Government Hospitals and Health Care Centres	Ministry of Finance <sup>76</sup>
Rs 15 lakh; Rs 10 lakh; Rs 35 lakh; Rs 30 lakh; Rs 25 lakh.	Compensation on death	FCI Labour; Contractual Labour; Category-1 Officers; Category-2; Category -3 & -4 workers	Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution <sup>77</sup>
Rs 25 lakh	Compensation on death	Next of kin of frontline staff, including police personnel, health and sanitation workers, staff of revenue and food supply department and fair price shopkeepers, state government employees, who are engaged in work related to coronavirus.	General Administration Department, Government of Gujarat <sup>78</sup>
Rs 10 lakh	Compensation on death	Police Officers, Employees of Nagaland Govt, All personnel supporting quarantine centres, unorganised workforce in District Task force	Govt of Nagaland, Home Department, Relief and Rehabilitation Branch <sup>79</sup>
Rs 1 lakh	Insurance coverage	Employees of WB Govt, ICDS, employees supporting public transport, police and defence personnel deployed for covid19 duties, employees of private hospitals, nursing homes deployed for covid19 duties, pharmacists, biomedical waste collectors, courier servicers carrying covid19 test samples, any other who in the assessment of H&FWD, Gov of WB was deployed in covid19 duties and suffers illness/death.	Health and Family Welfare Department, Government of West Bengal <sup>80</sup>
Rs 10 lakh	Death benefit		

## 2.1.6 Adequacy of entitlements

While it is beyond the scope of this report to assess the various forms of entitlement against the need, we offer a brief comparison on the quantum of cash transfers to indicate that initial analyses do suggest that the relief, while

not ever intended to match the entitlement, certainly seems to be far out of proportion for the need. We compare, in Table 6, cash transfers as a daily amount against NREGA wages to indicate how little existing cash based relief would go towards alleviating need, especially if workers had lost employment and new income.

There are other comparisons that suggest a systematic inadequacy in the quantum of cash transfer. Work by some of the authors

<sup>76</sup> See CFA6 in Annexure 1.

<sup>77</sup> See CL4 in Annexure 1.

<sup>78</sup> See SFA51 in Annexure 1.

<sup>79</sup> See SFA52 in Annexure 1.

<sup>80</sup> See SFA2 in Annexure 1.

of this study with domestic workers in Jaipur (Rai Chowdhury, Bhan, & Sampat, 2020) for example, shows that, in May 2020, six weeks post the first lockdown, workers needed Rs 7500 a month in bare expenses to cover rent, food, and utility payments. They had to do so with a 93% fall in income from February to April. Yet, in the same period, they received only Rs 1000 in their Jan Dhan accounts, and a one-time payment of Rs 2500 from the state government.

*A genuine basic income transfer that would have sought not just to prevent destitution but protect savings for working households hit by the pandemic would have had to move as close to Rs 7000 as possible.*

Cash transfers issued by the Centre in late March and early April varied in quantum across different categories of databases, ranging from Rs 200 to 2,500. Construction Workers' Welfare Boards of different states also gave out one time or regular cash transfers to registered construction workers, ranging from Rs 1,000 to Rs 6,000.

Another way to think about what an adequate cash transfer could be is to look at rent, without which households face the risk of eviction that would exacerbate the vulnerability during a pandemic. According to NSS data from 2018-19, average rents in urban Indian cities is Rs 2193, with the bottom 70% of households paying upto Rs 2176. In large cities, this rises to Rs 3,633 on average, with the bottom 50% of households paying Rs 2840. Even in smaller urban centres, average rents are Rs 1823, with the bottom 50% paying Rs 1,461. Across the categories, rent is 10-20% of household income, even for the bottom 10% of households by income.

Looking at rent alone, therefore, shows the inadequacy of the quantum of cash transfers. A genuine basic income transfer that would have sought not just to prevent destitution but protect savings for working households hit by the pandemic would have had to move as close to Rs 7000 as possible.

The fact that the survey of domestic workers we referred to above indicated that workers left the first lockdown not just without savings but Rs 10,000 on average in debt indicates the consequences of a lack of adequate income compensation through transfers.

Table 6 Effective daily COVID-related Cash Transfers, vis-a-vis NREGA wage rates

Description	Amount per day
Cash transfers: NSAP advanced pensions to senior citizens (60-79)	7
Cash transfers: NSAP advanced pensions to persons with disabilities (<79)	10
Cash transfers: NSAP advanced pensions to widows (age 40-79)	10
Cash transfers: advanced to farmers under PM-KISAN scheme	17
Cash transfers: NSAP advanced pensions to persons with disabilities (>80)	17
Cash transfers: NSAP advanced pensions to senior citizens (>80)	17
Cash transfers: NSAP advanced pensions to widows (age >80)	17
Cash transfers: to Women Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) account holders	17
NREGA, per day, Chhattisgarh	176
NREGA, per day, Madhya Pradesh	190
NREGA, per day, Himachal Pradesh	198
NREGA, per day, central govt	202
NREGA, per day, Andhra Pradesh	211
NREGA, per day, Haryana	309

## 2.2 Missing Entitlements

It is imperative in assessing the form of entitlements to also consider those that are marked by their complete absence. We note several that state actors themselves recognised as critical vulnerabilities but had no existing means or programmes to handle, namely housing insecurity, adequate<sup>81</sup> unemployment compensation to all informal sector trades, transport services, and regular health services.

The central government identified the risk of housing insecurity among the vulnerable population in the first week of lockdown. It

issued a circular on March 29 ordering that '[one] shall not demand payment of rent for a period of a month and if any landlord is forcing [them] to vacate their premises, they will be liable for action under the [Disaster Management] Act', disallowing landlords to demand rent for a month from workers and evicting migrant workers or students for a month.

This was followed by state government orders by Sikkim, Delhi, Telangana, and Maharashtra; wherein Sikkim and Delhi issued protection for one month [April 2020] and the other two for three months [April to June 2020]. We note that only two state governments had issued an order for protection from eviction for a period of three months, i.e. until the end of

<sup>81</sup> By "adequate" here we mean replacement-level payments for loss of income and job and such payments to workers in various informal sector trades.



क्र. सं.	स्वयं के नाम के साथ पति का नाम	पूरा पता जहाँ रहते हैं	खाता संख्या	IFSC कोड	आधार नम्बर	मोबाइल नम्बर	मजदूरी की श्रेणी
1.							
2.							
3.							
4.							

Example of a listing done by RMKU to facilitate delivery of state-announced cash transfers for workers in the unorganised sector. These were collected from several areas, digitised, and shared with local government offices.

Credits: Rajasthan Mahila Kaamgaar Union

June 2020. In the other orders, including the central government circular mentioned above, the stringent lockdown phase I and II exceeded the rent moratorium period. The lockdown was expected, and reported within the first few weeks, to have severe impact on livelihoods. However, the period of rent moratorium in previously announced orders didn't extend in response to this. This lapse in design, that the period of direct impact on livelihood from lockdown was longer than the rent moratorium, made it inadequate to cover the risk. Further, there was little in the way of broad based implementation in either case because of the lack of enforceable mechanisms.<sup>82</sup> Despite such challenges there have been no new modalities from the central government or any state government to ensure or enforce rental waiver, moratorium, or compensation in way of cash transfers in lieu of average low-income rentals on eviction.

The government acknowledged the risk of infection and extraordinary nature of continuing several services including 'waste and cleaning workers, delivery workers, and other

transport related workers' in the first address to the nation after Covid-19 cases were identified in India.

In the second address the government acknowledged the loss of earnings and employment for the informal worker, announcing the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana. The central government and state governments followed it with government orders for ensuring payment of wages and disallowing termination of services for casual and contractual workers under public and private enterprises, explicitly mentioning informal workers and particular informal trades. Yet there were no directions or new modalities to ensure these for informal workers and informal employment in absence of enforcing mechanisms. How and how well this could be implemented to protect jobs and incomes is challenging to ascertain without any official data. Several impact studies have been conducted since lockdown and all report a drastic fall in income and loss of employment, between 64-65 percent and 52-75 percent respectively.<sup>83</sup>

<sup>82</sup> See Harish and Lala (2020) Rent Control Amidst Pandemic. The Hindu, May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Available at: <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/rent-control-amidst-pandemic/article31521840.ece#!>

<sup>83</sup> See a compilation of multiple impact studies here: [cse.azimpremjiuniversity.edu.in/covid19-analysis-of-impact-and-relief-measures/#other\\_surveys](https://cse.azimpremjiuniversity.edu.in/covid19-analysis-of-impact-and-relief-measures/#other_surveys)

# delivering entitlements

## 3.1 Infrastructures of Delivery

In this section, we look at the modes and organisational capacity to deliver defined entitlements to identified beneficiaries. We consider existing organisational capacity to be cumulative of the existing social protection programmes, outlay, governance, physical infrastructure, human resources, and other administration systems. These capacities deeply shaped the effectiveness of governments to respond and deliver the announced entitlements.

### 3.1.1 Leveraging systems designed for social protection

Modes of delivery were the aspect of relief most strongly determined by the forms of pre-COVID systems. By far, the most effective delivery occurred in food relief, rooted in a system designed for universal public provision and followed by continuous people's effort to protect it.

The PDS system is the most broad-based social security program in India with physical infrastructure, supply side linkages, and familiarity of people. The targeted public distribution system, even if not universal, continued to function during the pandemic and the lockdown, and even expanded its scope in entitlement and beneficiary base to cope with the indirect impact of COVID through its surge capacity, i.e. ability to handle increase in load in a timely manner.

The Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana<sup>84</sup> announced additional entitlements in ration for existing beneficiaries and extending it to a new beneficiary base, and various state governments announced further expansion<sup>85</sup> in addition to implementing PMGKY. State quotas were extended<sup>86</sup>, the entitlement was increased<sup>87</sup> and for a period of three months.

The beneficiary base was extended to non NFSA beneficiaries via State ration card, processing pending applications, new registration, and proxy verification using other government issued identity cards. This expansion was possible as there was capacity and system for

<sup>84</sup> See CFD5 and CFD7 in Annexure 1.

<sup>85</sup> See SFD47, SFD77, SFD68, SFD39 and SFD52.

<sup>86</sup> See CFD2 in Annexure 1.

<sup>87</sup> See CFD2 and SFD18 in Annexure 1.

storage of excess grains, strong information systems to respond to the change in need with change in allotment for higher entitlement and beneficiary base in a timely manner (this was one of the earliest pan-nation relief responses), and decentralised delivery infrastructure of warehouse and PDS shops across the nation enabled distribution.

The timeliness and comprehensiveness that was achieved in design, as discussed above, could be improved further if the following challenges could be addressed: lack of outreach and awareness about extending entitlement and beneficiary base, addressing refusals linked to absence or mismatch of mobile numbers linked to verification document, geographic limitations of ration card, delay in registrations of new/temporary beneficiaries, addressing lack of clear guidelines of implementation to the last tier of delivery, and inadequate nutrition in the entitlement package. The lack of these parameters resulted in out-of-pocket expenses and need for gap-filling by non-State actors.

### 3.1.2 Infrastructures of cash transfer

Any existing database of vulnerable groups linked to their bank accounts could be used for timely cash transfers in relief response, but it wasn't leveraged as well as the PDS in design. Table 7 lists the databases generally used for social protection schemes in India with their criteria, entitlement, delivery modes during usual times and reach and entitlement during Covid-19 relief. Existing databases of informal workers and other vulnerable population groups linked to their bank accounts were used to extend one-off cash transfers, such as

to construction workers via BOCW<sup>88</sup>, farmers via PM-KISAN<sup>89</sup>, old, disabled and widowed via NSAP<sup>90</sup>, and vulnerable households via women's Jan Dhan bank accounts<sup>91</sup>. Those left out of these databases altogether but in need were somewhat reached by freshly created lists in some states, as discussed in earlier sections. The existing delivery channels of cash transfers were adapted for relief through augmented or/and advanced payments in case of NSAP and PM-KISAN. The existing channels of NREGA and Ujjwala could be adapted through suspension of conditionalities, but weren't. Of the databases that were used, Jan Dhan bank accounts, Construction Workers' registers, PM-KISAN, and NSAP had the maximum reach in decreasing order, with likelihood of overlap based on identification criterion. Nevertheless, an analysis of the reach of women's Jan-Dhan bank accounts, the mode of identification and delivery for the primary cash transfer scheme, 'shows that a little less than half of all households are likely to be excluded from cash relief,<sup>92</sup> while other similar research<sup>93</sup> estimates that, at the individual level, roughly half of poor women are unlikely to have a PMJDY account. The delivery infrastructure here largely proved deeply inadequate. Those without bank accounts or without access to banking facilities had limited access to cash transfer benefits. Two state governments had a delivery mode to

<sup>88</sup> See CFA1, SL5 and SL11 in Annexure 1, and Table 3 in this document.

<sup>89</sup> See CFA2 in Annexure 1.

<sup>90</sup> See CFA3 in Annexure 1.

<sup>91</sup> See CFA7 in Annexure 1.

<sup>92</sup> Somanchi, A (2020) Are women Jan Dhan accounts the right choice for cash transfers? Ideas for India, May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020. See: <https://www.ideasforindia.in/topics/poverty-inequality/covid-19-relief-are-women-jan-dhan-accounts-the-right-choice-for-cash-transfers.html>

<sup>93</sup> Pande, R et al (2020) A Majority of India's Poor Women May Miss COVID-19 PMJDY Cash Transfers. Yale Economic Growth Centre. Accessed October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020. See: <https://egc.yale.edu/sites/default/files/COVID%20Brief.pdf>

address this gap. Tamil Nadu<sup>94</sup> used 'rice only' ration cards as verification documents at their PDS shops to transfer Rs. 1000 cash assistance in hand, instead of bank accounts - which is the only mode of delivery in the other cases. On the other hand, the Odisha government has maintained a delivery model of delivering pension payments in villages through cash-in-hand for several years now. Such delivery mechanisms are significant for building a widely applicable system of cash transfer programs, especially to the most vulnerable in routine delivery as well.

### 3.1.3 Employment programmes

Though not a direct focus of this report, it is imperative that we note that, similar to food, the expansive infrastructure of NREGA was able to also hold an expansive and critical burden of new beneficiaries, raised wages, and a manifold increase in the number of beneficiaries. NREGA has been widely cited as a key programme to absorb (rural and migrant) unemployment, though it took has struggled to absorb the scale and spatiality of Covid-19 impact on jobs.<sup>95</sup>

The principle, however, of the extent of an existing infrastructure being critical before social protection is effective, remains further illustrated. In absence of enforceable mechanisms to ensure either wages or employment to informal workers in urban areas, some state governments ensured broad-based labour protection for informal workers through other pathways. The Odisha and Jharkhand government created new jobs

to absorb unemployment. Odisha created an Urban Minimum Wage Guarantee on the foundations of its existing social welfare programmes across small and medium towns.<sup>96</sup> Whereas Jharkhand signed a contract with Border Roads Organisation to hire 11,800 workers in June which ensures that 'BRO will pay wages that are higher by 15-20 per cent directly into the bank accounts of the workers, unlike the practice so far where the middle men took their cut from the wages. The BRO will also have to provide benefits such as health care facilities, accident insurance, transport to and from home, and proper housing [under the new memorandum].'<sup>97</sup>

In response to large numbers of incoming migrants in Bihar<sup>98</sup> the state government responded with two steps within a month and a half to manage the employment/ livelihoods concern. It was directed that incoming migrants would be issued NREGA job cards along with creation of new works under several of its wings in the rural areas so as to absorb them into the workforce. The government also issued a directive to conduct a skills survey<sup>99</sup> to identify the skills and plan responses to it by, for example, matching or creating jobs. Such skill surveys have been initiated in several other states as well.

<sup>94</sup> See SFA19 in Annexure 1.

<sup>95</sup> Jebarak, P (2020) Only 30lakh found MNREGA work in April. The Hindu, April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020. See: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/coronavirus-lockdown-only-30-lakh-found-mgnrega-work-in-april/article31467548.ece>

<sup>96</sup> See: <https://www.iied.org/covid-19-jaga-mission-value-already-existing-solutions>

<sup>97</sup> See: <https://frontline.thehindu.com/cover-story/article31842480.ece>

<sup>98</sup> See: [https://prsindia.org/files/covid19/notifications/3902.BR\\_Directions\\_Job\\_Cards\\_Apr\\_24.pdf](https://prsindia.org/files/covid19/notifications/3902.BR_Directions_Job_Cards_Apr_24.pdf)

<sup>99</sup> See: [https://prsindia.org/files/covid19/notifications/4475.BR\\_CM\\_Directions\\_May\\_1.pdf](https://prsindia.org/files/covid19/notifications/4475.BR_CM_Directions_May_1.pdf)

### 3.1.4 Existing physical and public infrastructure could be repurposed

The physical infrastructure of existing social welfare programmes and public infrastructure could be repurposed for relief response. Government run canteens, community kitchens, and cooked meals from government canteens were widely used<sup>100</sup> to ensure food security across states in a timely manner in absence of a mechanism to ensure all those who need food can access it via PDS mechanism. It was scaled up using existing systems and infrastructure. Kerala (Kudumbashree), Odisha (Aahar Kendra), Jharkhand (Dal Bhaat Kendra), and Maharashtra (Shiv Thali) used their subsidised government canteen infrastructure to run relief kitchens<sup>101</sup>. Delhi and Bihar used public schools and school administration to set up and manage temporary<sup>102</sup> relief kitchens. Punjab and Rajasthan engaged their police force to deliver cooked meal or meal packets, while some others reportedly used the existing model of mass cooking vendors from the Mid-Day-Meal scheme.

The State often relies on existing social infrastructure and institutions across a spatial spread for reaching beneficiaries it cannot reach<sup>103</sup> by leveraging the presence of schools, Anganwadis, PDS shops etc. Leaning onto the spatial spread and access that such places allow, it relies on those in need to self-claim benefits and self-identify themselves. For example, the Delhi Disaster Management Authority authorized and mandated all District Magistrates to make necessary arrangements at appropriate locations in their respective

districts to provide cooked food to those in need. Every municipal ward was to have two such hunger relief centres, where those in need would self-select themselves. Similarly, we see state canteens and community kitchens locate themselves in low-income neighbourhoods expanding their reach to beneficiaries.

## 3.2 Layered and Integrated Entitlements

Layering of entitlements is identified as a mechanism to create more comprehensive social protection in normal times, which can prove to be an effective base to create comprehensive relief in an event of shock (Barca, V. 2020). Like dynamic and differentiated entitlements, if done well, layering entitlements can address multidimensional vulnerabilities and risks in the event of shocks such as Covid-19.

We assess layering by analysing: (a) how households could receive a range of different kinds of entitlement either from relief measures or from routine social protection measures or both; and (b) how existing identification criteria and robustness of databases create opportunity and infrastructure for layering. Table 7 lists major databases used for social protection schemes in India along with their criteria, links to bank accounts, and local delivery nodes.

There were two ways in which this could be activated on ground during Covid-19 relief: through a package of entitlements to existing beneficiary groups to create a comprehensive relief or through crafting delivery modes to give complementary relief entitlements. A point of caution that this is not particular to relief times,

<sup>100</sup> See SFD7/17/19/20/11/32/13/21/24/25/27/35.

<sup>101</sup> See SFD11/35/20/25/24.

<sup>102</sup> See SFD13/21.

<sup>103</sup> See SFD41, SFD42



Individuals trying to register phone numbers with Aadhaar at an e-mitra kiosk to become eligible to receive ration.  
Credits: Rajasthan Mahila Kaamgaar Union

when the state uses something like the BPL for delivering both pension and Antyodaya, it is essentially layering. And while certain decisions created layering in relief, it was not necessarily by design.

*By using the delivery channel of food entitlement for cash transfer and the database of cash transfer entitlement for food relief, the respective state governments crafted a sure way for the same household to receive both.*

For illustration, we would take the case of delivery of two of the earliest forms of relief announced and implemented, food and cash. The beneficiary identification and database for the largest food and social security program in India, TPDS, is not linked to bank accounts or to any other scheme for cash transfer. Thus, at a time when food and cash relief were both equally important to protect vulnerable populations from multidimensional vulnerabilities, there was no basis to create a layering of food and cash entitlements to the same database.

The absence of any basis for layering here exposed the vulnerable populations to other risks despite registering themselves and being the beneficiary to one of the many databases for social protection. As of September, 22 crore households received ration entitlements while only 20.6 crore households (via as many women's Jan-Dhan accounts, assuming each one is unique to a household given the scheme guidelines) received cash transfers. Even if

we assume that the beneficiaries overlap, there is a gap. This gap persists despite the identification criteria being common for the PDS, pension, and Ujjwala schemes; the latter two of which are connected to bank accounts. The women's Jan Dhan bank account, arguably the largest database of eligible beneficiaries for such a relief measure, was not connected to either ration card registration or a similar identification criterion.

If there is a common register, or a common basis for identification and registration for TPDS and cash transfer schemes followed with the condition that all those in need are identified, and all those who are identified are registered, then this would conceptually be a credible design for layering. However, currently total beneficiaries under PDS and Jan Dhan are 75/22 (individuals/hh) crore and 20.6 crore respectively. Despite the discrepancy, there is scope for a considerable overlap. Thus, making adequate entitlement for cash transfer another key parameter for creating an adequate layering.

In absence of any robust database, it was at the discretion of the state governments to implement food and cash delivery for reaching maximum beneficiaries in the most adequate manner via existing databases and social security infrastructure. The example we used earlier illustrates this when we showed how Tamil Nadu delivered cash transfers of Rs1000 through identification of 'rice only' ration cards<sup>104</sup>, while Uttar Pradesh designed to deliver ration for a month to those without ration cards through identification in cash transfer registers<sup>105</sup> of informal workers such as the list of construction workers with the welfare board and NREGA enrolment list. By using the delivery channel of food entitlement

for cash transfer and the database of cash transfer entitlement for food relief, the respective state governments crafted a sure way for the same household to receive both, irrespective of the position of a beneficiary in all the appropriate databases. It also signifies a successful case of aligning the strength of different delivery modes in different databases in time of emergency, where local delivery nodes of PDS could be used to hand cash to beneficiaries directly when many couldn't access bank accounts (and to those who do not have any active bank accounts).

<sup>104</sup> See SFA19 in Annexure 1.

<sup>105</sup> See SFD5 in Annexure 1.

Database	Beneficiaries reached as per PMGKY implementation update in Sep 2020 (one time or per-month) (in crores)	Criteria	Entitlement in usual times	Entitlement during COVID-19	Is a bank account linked to the registration ?	Is there localised delivery?
NREGA	~195 cr person days since April 2020 or ~ 39 cr person days a month	Rural households having adult members desirous of seeking unskilled wage employment		Conditional cash transfer	Yes	No
NFSA/ TPDS	~75 cr individual ~22 cr hh as per annavitaran	BPL <sup>107</sup>	Ration	Ration	No	Yes
Women PMJDY account holders	~ 20.6 cr (individual of most likely distinct households as per the criterion of PMJDY)	The household should not have any bank account in the name of any of its members prior to it	Financial inclusion	Cash transfer	Yes	No
PM-KISAN	~ 8.94 cr	All landholding farmer families having cultivable land holding upto 2 hectare (given they do not match exclusion criteria)	Cash transfer	Augmented cash transfer	Yes	No
PMUY/ Ujjwala	~4.25 cr (cylinders)	BPL	Conditional cash transfer	Conditional cash transfer	Yes	No
NSAP/ Social assistance	~ 2.81 cr (individual)	BPL	Pension payments	Augmented and advanced pension payments	Yes	No
BOCW	~ 1.82 cr (individuals)	Construction workers	Several	Cash transfers, Ration	Yes	No
ICDS	-	Place based identification of pregnant and lactating mothers and children under 5 years seeking support for delivery and nutritional supplements, a proxy for vulnerability.	Food and nutritional supplements	Food and nutritional supplements	No	Yes

<sup>107</sup>Below Poverty Line is a benchmark used by the government of India to indicate economic disadvantage and to identify individuals and households in need of government assistance and aid. It is determined using various parameters which may vary from state to state.

Table 7 Social Protection Databases in India: General use vs COVID Relief



# i mplications and Lessons

What are the lessons that we can draw from lockdown relief efforts for social protection more broadly?

## 4.1 Limited Databases

Relief was not structured to cover all those in need. Instead, it was premised on those that could be reached directly through being visible to the state. This visibility required not just registration, but what we have described as a robust presence in state databases. The limits of these databases are immediately evident not just from multiple studies that showed all they excluded but also from the state's own immediate efforts to expand them in any way they could. States created new databases, allowed pending applications, tried to apply eligibility criteria of one database to include any who fit these criteria even outside the database, conducted new surveys, and even allowed lapsed registrations to be counted again. Yet the extent of vulnerability that COVID made evident indicates glaring absences in our social safety net even with these attempts at expansion. This makes clear a point that is central to our argument: a social protection system can only deliver relief if it was in place to a reasonable degree before the shock. What

assessing relief in COVID is showing us is how far we are from this reasonable degree.

We can take two examples that make the inadequacy of state databases clear. In New Delhi, 72 lac residents hold ration cards for the PDS system. Over 6 lac applications were pending when COVID hit. When the Government of Delhi announced a temporary E-Coupon system for dry ration, 38 lac people applied. In other words, when measured by vulnerability rather than poverty, enrolment in the PDS system should be nearly one and a half times higher than it is. Yet food is the strongest of our social protection databases. In construction work, of the estimated 5-6 crore construction workers in the country, no more than 3.5 crores are known to be registered, according to government reports, and of these, not all will be current. Construction, we must note further, is one of the few informal work sectors that have registration possibilities at state level.

It is worth noting that relief measures have brought to light many ways in which expansion was tried that offer lessons on how to proceed with incremental improvements even as more integrated and expansive databases (a point which we address below) are created.

In particular, the use of self-declaration, such as in schemes by the Government of Meghalaya, or of using spatial proxies that allowed all that lived in an area and could access, for example, a community kitchen, usefully turn the responsibility of classifying and categorizing need onto the state. The work of the citizen is to reach out rather than have to do so in a manner that proves, assesses and quantifies their vulnerability before they can enter a database. The multiple mechanisms from online apps to new surveys, phone helplines to physical registration desks, are a reminder of the ways in which the expansion of databases has to be sought and enabled as a responsibility of the state. The burden on the citizen of applying, undergoing transaction costs, and then going through certification, must be reduced if databases are to be expanded.

Where entitlements were universal – such as community kitchens where anyone who went to the kitchen was fed without any conditions – we find that that entitlement itself becomes less robust, i.e. in this case a cooked, one-time meal rather than a ration kit. This implies severe costs of being outside a state database, or of not possessing the means of verification, such as state issued identification or appropriate papers. Indeed, much state relief relegated many citizens to the barest entitlement or to non-state actors precisely because of such exclusions. Relief measures, unlike normal times, at least saw state actors attempt to reach those that did not have an Aadhar card, ration card, or registered worker card. The impetus behind this attempt must not be lost post-COVID. Yet it must come with a caution that as databases and identification expands, the form and quantum of the relief must not diminish. They need not but in order for this to happen, overall public investment in social protection

systems, as well as in their delivery mechanisms and capacities, must rise.

## 4.2 Structural Absences

The nature of the gaps is particular. Maximum coverage is within food, followed by pensions and access to bank accounts that can enable cash transfers. Housing, rent protections, labour protections against wage cuts or retrenchment, and health insurance are near absent. These are not “gaps” in our social protection framework – they are structural absences. Indeed, India’s social protection framework has rarely considered them to be part of the necessary components of a safety net at all.

This is not an easy task. Social protection systems in India have to contend with three often overlapping structural constraints: (a) a dominance of informal employment which means employers cannot be key vectors of delivering entitlements as they are in the global North; (b) large scale informal housing and rental which makes enforcement difficult if not impossible using conventional legal and policy tools; and (c) a deeply ‘multi-local’ (to use urban researcher Renu Desai’s term) population whose are unable to claim entitlements where they are in systems that have a deep “sedentary bias” (Aajeevika Bureau, 2020). COVID relief efforts make clear that our social protection systems have not adequately grappled with these constraints, limiting programmes, entitlements and databases to subsets of populations that can be more easily reached, counted and delivered to.

What we can take from relief measures is the legacy of the new kinds of vulnerabilities, and indeed, subjectivities that the state has been forced to recognize. We spoke, in Section 1.2,

of the multiple orders that created categories that did not fit existing beneficiary formats of state programmes. These new categories are a vital diagnostic of the gaps in our social protection that the state has already recognized because of COVID-19. State orders on rent moratoria and wage protection, even if unenforceable, open a conversation both about including housing costs and wages into poverty estimations and social protection entitlements, as well as a debate on how implementation mechanisms can grapple with informality. We must, as we will argue in our final section on recommendations, not lose this opportunity to do so.

### 4.3 Lost Opportunities for Integrated, Layered Entitlements

Not only is the current coverage inadequate, the form of existing databases – and thereby existing social protection – is siloed. No database architecture exists that approaches social protection from the individual or the household, integrating their needs across food, wage, rent and health care. Instead, each type of entitlement has its own database, delivery system, and institutional architecture. This means that, in the normal course of social protection, there is no layering (Barca 2020) of entitlements other than unintentionally. Layering is essential to address multi-dimensional poverty and vulnerability at the

Recommendations	
1. Assess vulnerability as well as poverty	6. Anticipate multi-locality
2. Expand the components of social protection	7. Design new delivery mechanisms
3. Expand databases	8. Anticipate exclusions and keep universal minimums
4. Integrate databases	9. Build partnerships
5. Invest in public institutions	

household level. In our arguments above, the disconnect between two largest social protection databases – PDS and Jan Dhan – is emblematic of this structural faultline. The absence of such integration – even across some elements of social protection if not all – sharply undermined the effectiveness of the relief that did reach, ensuring that even households that got something, didn't get enough of the kinds of support they needed.

Yet relief work showed the possibilities of incrementally improving layering even with existing restrictions of our databases, such as when the Government of Tamil Nadu used “rice only” ration cards as a proxy database for a Rs 1000 cash transfer to the most vulnerable. Even as more integrated databases are made, layering can be incrementally introduced by using existing databases as proxies for each other and trying to get multiple entitlements to the same household.

## 4.4 Existing and Expansive Systems are the best Relief Measures

One of our key findings on the delivery of entitlements is that the amount of relief needed, and its effectiveness, are inversely proportional to the strength of the public institutions in any state. Existing public institutions – regardless of whether they were designed to deliver a specific social protection entitlement or not – were the single most important factor determining the effectiveness of state relief. Public institutions could (a) hold expanded benefits within the same form that they were designed for (for e.g. PDS shops that stored and distributed extra

allocations of grain and expanded essential kits); (b) offer databases that could be used for other benefits to be delivered as discussed above; (c) be repurposed to deliver benefits they weren't designed for (for e.g. Schools in Delhi that became ration and cooked food distribution centres); and (d) ensure spatial outreach to vulnerable communities since their establishment was driven by equitable and widespread distribution (for e.g. Kerala's community kitchens, or Anganwadi centres in low income neighbourhoods).

States that have invested in the architecture of social protection of any kind were able to act faster, more effectively and with a wider spatial reach. Here again, the integration of delivery of public good through public institutions, however, is not often intentional. The imagination of integrated public service centres that are spatially distributed at different scales across communities would have enabled comprehensive, effective and multi-dimensional relief at an even greater scale. What relief measures showed was the importance of public architecture of social protection of any kind, and indicated that patchworks could be built, incrementally, even without a complete structural overhaul of the system as it stands today.

## 4.5 Recommendations

We conclude with a reminder not only of the importance of learning from relief work to improve design and delivery of social protection, but with a set of recommendations in how to do so both incrementally as well as structurally.

### 1. Assess vulnerability as well as poverty:

COVID-19 has reminded us that the measure of effective social protection must be the resilience individuals and households have to shocks, rather than just a static measure of poverty. Measuring vulnerability through a new set of metrics helps bridge the gap between protective and promotive aspects of social protection. It also insists on a far broader understanding of who is in “need” and therefore must be able to access state social protection. Approaching the “universal” of social protection when based on vulnerability will allow a more expansive and accurate estimation of how many should be within databases of programmes, schemes and missions of state social protection. This vulnerability must be multi-dimensional and measured at both individual and household scales, recognizing the inter-connectedness of different elements of social protection.

### 2. Expand the components of social protection:

India’s social protection systems have crucial structural absences. Expanding beyond food, fuel and minimum cash support such as pensions into housing, rent, labour protections and health insurance is key towards moving towards a multi-dimensional system based on vulnerability. This involves creating new databases such as the Government of Tamil Nadu’s attempt to record (not register) all rental agreements in the state.

**3. Expand databases:** Even before large scale structural change, existing databases must be expanded to cover even the single-theme sectors or populations they are meant to cover. New innovations discovered during relief work – measures of proximate registration, self-declaration, and the expansion of modes of registering and declaring need to the state – must transition into ordinary functioning

of these systems. Similarly, new categories created by the Government Orders during relief work must be sharpened and employed even after the pandemic to expand social protection. The databases created during COVID-19 across states must not be reversed or now unseen. They can be the starting point of incremental improvement in coverage within the existing system and its constraints.

**4. Integrate databases:** As databases expand, they must also explore incremental as well as radical forms of integration. First steps may include allowing registration in one to automatically register in another with harmonized eligibility criteria. However, the architecture of new integrated databases that start from multiple dimensions of vulnerability at household level must begin to be built and integrated into systems of public statistics.

**5. Invest in public institutions:** The existence of decentralized and spatially distributed public institutions cannot be over emphasized. Investing in older (public schools, anganwadis) and newer (multi-purpose community centres, local health infrastructure) forms of such local public infrastructure is key. Where these institutions exist, they remain too centralized or scaled at district rather than community, village or ward level. State relief’s reliance on these systems shows their multiple impacts at times of crisis and debates on efficiency through private delivery must account for what such privatization does to a systemic response to vulnerability within and beyond shocks.

**6. Anticipate multi-locality:** Relief is clearly marked by sedentary bias (Aajeevika Bureau, 2020). The design of social protection must de-emphasize the binary question of where one claims entitlements and instead anticipate what scholars have called not migrant but multi-local

lives. Leveraging integrated databases and technology can allow for delivery to be spatially aggregated at different scales such as districts or states as appropriate. These will, equally, have to anticipate and address questions of inter-state jurisdictional contests and build the requisite legal and inter-governmental infrastructure in addition to technological solutions.

### **7. Design new delivery mechanisms:**

Improvements to existing systems, databases and processes will not be enough if structural absences in social protection are to be addressed. The three challenges of informal employment, multi-local lives, and informal housing alone require re-thinking approaches to identification, the design of entitlements as well as the mechanisms of their delivery. In each, residents, workers, activists and researchers have outlined ways of recognition that both respect the agencies of workers as well as the needs of a bureaucratic state. Recent advances in legislations protecting specifically informal workers offer multiple possible approaches. These must be taken further and institutional experiments at scale initiated to ensure not just the expansion of entitlements but new ways to ensure their delivery. Relief proclamations on wages and rent moratoria show us how significant the challenge still is.

**8. Anticipate exclusions and keep universal minimums:** In many cases, the inadequacy of existing databases as well as the expected constraints of a bureaucratic state system implies that certain verification processes such as the possession of the right kind of state identification, for example, became sites of exclusion for many. Relief sought to get past these, often deliberately seeking out those without ration or Aadhaar cards, for example.

This approach that anticipates and recognizes exclusions from current systems must become a mainstay of social protection. The design of our systems, particularly for the non-negotiable protective parts of social protection, must not use the absence of certain verification requirements as an excuse to exclude. Instead, it must re-emphasize that errors of false inclusion can well be tolerated within social protection as long as they offset errors of false exclusion which can have devastating consequences on already marginalized lives.

**9. Build partnerships:** Discussed more deeply in the second connected report on non-state actors and relief, the current limits to social protection, as well as the need to transition to multi-dimensional and vulnerability-based systems for multi-local lives, necessitate thinking in terms of networks and not siloed institutions. These partnerships are both within the state across sector, space and scale, as well as with non-state actors.

Relief measures have offered us a glimpse of what social protection must look like pre-crisis. As one of the authors of this report has also argued elsewhere, no amount of relief, however effective, can compensate for vulnerable households and a patchwork social protection system.<sup>106</sup> What we must take from COVID-19 is a warning and wake-up call to start investing in and building a social protection system that does not unsee what the lockdown's devastating impact on a majority of our fellow citizens has shown us.

<sup>106</sup> See Kinjal Sampat, writing in Scroll.in here: <https://scroll.in/article/958631/covid-19-package-its-like-trying-to-cure-patient-on-verge-of-cardiac-arrest-with-physical-exercise>

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**सूचना पट्ट**

**उचित मूल्य दुकान नं. 587 वि. सैक्टर नं.**  
**डिवीजन नं. 15 क्षेत्र नं. 5**

1 अधिकृत राशन विक्रेता का नाम व पूर्ण पता श्रीमती हेमलता  
 2 दुकान खुलने व बन्द होने का समय रजत पथ, मानसरोवर  
 प्रातः 9 से 1 बजे तक  
 सायं 2 से 5 बजे तक  
 3 अवकाश का दिन प्रत्येक मंगलवार  
 4 दुकान पर कुल योजित राशन कार्डों एवं युनिट संख्या अ कुल राशन कार्डों की संख्या

5 दुकान पर विपणन करने वाली सामग्री की मात्रा एवं दर तथा नाम माह जिसकी राशन सामग्री वितरण की जा रही है एवं स्टॉक की स्थिति

नाम वस्तु	मात्रा	दर
चीनी		
केरोसिन		
चावल		
गेहूं		

6 सम्बन्धित प्रवर्तन अधिकारी एवं प्रवर्तक निरीक्षक का एवं पता

584 का वितरण याजूई 13 से 15  
 584 A 20 से 23 } 30 से 20  
 586 24 से 26 }  
 588 B 27 से 29 } शेख बचा

आज्ञा से हस्ता. अधिकृत राशन विक्रेता  
 जिला रसद अधिकारी 9461001115

# Annexure -1: List of Referenced Orders

Notice at a ration shop in June listing days it would be open.

Credits: Rajasthan Mahila Kamgaar Union





USN	Agency	Date announced	Entitlement	Beneficiary
CFA1	Ministry of Labour & Employment	Mar 24, 2020	Cash transfer (details not provided)	Registered Construction Workers
CFA2	Ministry of Finance	April	Cash transfer of Rs 2000	Farmers under PM-KISAN scheme
CFA3	Ministry of Finance	April-June	One-time cash transfer of Rs 1000	Senior citizens, widows, disabled persons
CFA4	Ministry of Finance	March	Free gas cylinders for 3 months. The price of one cylinder is paid as advance into bank accounts of beneficiaries. Once the beneficiary uses this amount to buy a cylinder from the market, the advance amount for the next refill will be credited to bank accounts.	Beneficiaries of Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana
CFA7	Ministry of Finance	April, May, June	Cash transfer of Rs. 500 from Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana	Women Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) account holders

USN	Agency	Date announced	Entitlement	Beneficiary
CFA5	NSAP	First week of April	Advancing pension of 3 months	<p>Senior citizens (60-79 yrs): Rs. 200</p> <p>Senior citizens (&gt;80 yrs): Rs. 500</p> <p>Widows (40-79 yrs): Rs. 300</p> <p>Widows (&gt;80 yrs): Rs. 500</p> <p>People with disabilities (upto 79 yrs): Rs. 300</p> <p>Persons with disabilities (&gt;80 yrs): Rs. 500</p>
CFA6	Ministry of Finance	Three months from 26Mar2020	<p>Personal accident cover of Rs. 50 lakh.</p> <p>Under Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package (Insurance scheme for health workers fighting COVID-19 in Government Hospitals and Health Care Centres)</p>	<p>Safai karamcharis, ward-boys, nurses, ASHA workers, paramedics, technicians, doctors and specialists and other health workers of all government health centres, wellness centres and hospitals of Centre as well as states; private hospital staff, local urban bodies, contract, daily wage workers, outsourced staff requisitioned by states, central hospitals, autonomous hospitals, AIIMS, among others. Any of the above who while treating covid-19 patients, meets with some accident.</p>

USN	Agency	Date announced	Entitlement	Beneficiary
CFA9	Ministry of Home Affairs	Mar 29, 2020	No deduction in pay by employers No demand of rent by landlords for a period of one month.	Migrants
CFA13	Ministry of Finance	Apr 1, 2020	Increase in minimum wage of Rs20	13.62 crore families under MNREGA
CFD1	Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution	Mar 20, 2020	States can lift food grain supplies for upto six months and pass on to retailers.	All States/UTs
CFD2	Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution	Mar 30, 2020	Allocation of additional food grains to states and union territories for April-June for Distribution for TPDS under the PM Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (AAY and PHH)	AAY, PHH

USN	Agency	Date announced	Entitlement	Beneficiary
CFD3	Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution	Mar 30, 2020	Allocation of additional food grains to union territories for April-June for Distribution for TPDS under the PM Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (AAY and PHH)	
CFD4	Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution	Apr 8, 2020	NGOs involved in relief operations permitted to buy wheat and rice directly from FCI without going through the e-auction process, at the pre-determined reserve prices (OMSS)	AAY, PHH, NGO beneficiary group
CFD5	Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution	Apr 9, 2020	FCI to provide food grains to non-NFSA beneficiaries having state ration cards, 5 kg per person per month for 3 months; NGOs can buy without any limit	AAY, PHH, non-NFSA State ration card holders, NGO beneficiary group

USN	Agency	Date announced	Entitlement	Beneficiary
CFD6	Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution	Apr 13, 2020	States and union territories can draw rations of up to three months, from the central pool, on credit; all PDS beneficiaries per card/ family will be provided with free 1 kg pulses for the next three months	PHH, AAY, PDS, NGO beneficiary group
CFD7	Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution	May 15, 2020	Allocation of additional food grains to states and union territories for May-June for Distribution to migrant workers with no ration card	"Stranded migrants not covered under NFSA or State Scheme PDS"
CL1	Ministry of Labour and Employment	Mar 20, 2020	If any worker goes on leave, should be deemed to be on duty without any consequential deduction of wages. If place of employment is made non-operational due to COVID-19, employees of such units to be deemed to be on duty.	All employees of all public/ private establishments, especially casual or contractual employees.

USN	Agency	Date announced	Entitlement	Beneficiary
CL2	Ministry of Finance: Department of Expenditure	Mar 23, 2020	Payment of wages accordingly in period of absence	Contractual, casual, outsourced staff of all attached/subordinate offices, autonomous/statutory bodies, ministries, departments, other organisations of Govt. of India
CL3	Ministry of Railways	Mar 23, 2020	Payment of wages and ensuring the employees are not retrenched. Maximum pay limited to 70% of contract value for contracts awarded on lump sum basis and not manpower basis.	Employees of private establishments providing services to trains. stations, offices, directly affected with suspension of services and lockdown situations.
CL4	Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution	Mar 24, 2020	Ex gratia in case of death due to COVID-19 on duty with FCI. FCI Labour- Rs15 lakh; Contractual Labour- Rs.10 lakh; Category-1 Officers - Rs.35 lakh; Category-2 - Rs.30 lakh; Category -3 & -4 workers - Rs.25 lakh.	All employees and labour (including regular and contractual labour) of Food Corporation of India (FCI)

USN	Agency	Date announced	Entitlement	Beneficiary
CL5	Ministry of Labour and Employment	May 15, 2020	Avail medical benefit despite expiry of validity of cards because of inability of beneficiaries to deposit advance lumpsum due to lockdown.	Insured persons under ESIC
CL6	Ministry of Labour and Employment	During the lockdown period from Apr15, 2020	Purchase of medicines from private chemists and subsequent reimbursement from ESI	Insured persons under ESIC



USN	Agency	Date announced	Entitlement	Beneficiary
SFA2	Health and Family Welfare Department, Government of West Bengal	Apr 1, 2020	Insurance Policy for police, healthcare workers and other personnel working to contain COVID-19. Free treatment for Covid patients. Additional financial assistance of 1 lakh; death benefit: 10 lakhs if death is attributable to Covid 19.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All employees under Health &amp;FW department and the WB govt</li> <li>2. Conservancy staff of Urban Development and Municipal Affairs Department and Conservancy staff deployed in the rural areas</li> <li>3. State police personnel (permanent/contract/part-time) deployed for Covid-19 duties</li> <li>4. Central Police and Defence forces, Airport staff and employees, Ports employees, Employees of Railways deployed for Covid 19 duties.</li> <li>5. Drivers, conductors, other employees deployed for road and river public transport in the state.</li> <li>6. Doctors, nurses, paramedics, conservancy staff, and all other employees deployed by private hospitals and nursing homes for Covid 19 containment/ management</li> <li>7. All ICDS workers and helpers</li> <li>8. Cooks/food distributors, washermen, ayas working in govt or pvt hospitals.</li> <li>9. Druggists, chemists, staff working in pharmacy/medical store/ dispensaries</li> <li>10. Bio-medical waste handlers at hospitals.</li> <li>11. Anyone associated with Covid19 transport (ambulance, hearse van, etc)</li> <li>12. Private transport workers for Covid19 duties.</li> <li>13. Couriers carrying Covid19 samples to labs or testing.</li> <li>14. Any other person deployed for Covid19 duty and suffers from illness or death</li> </ol>

USN	Agency	Date announced	Entitlement	Beneficiary
SFA4	Andhra Pradesh Health Medical and Family Welfare Department, Chief Secretary to Government, Chief Commissioner, Commercial Taxes; District Collectors	Apr 4, 2020	Arrangements for shelter and food requirements of migrant labour from other States. Special Shelter Centres are established by the Government for providing shelter and food to the migrant workers, homeless people, etc.	Migrant workers, homeless people
SFA12	Rajasthan Chief Minister's Office	Apr 2, 2020	Deferment of electricity bill payments for March and April. Bills for these months can be paid in May. Those who pay before 31 May will get a 5% discount.	5% discount on future electricity bill for residential & agricultural consumers who pay bills by May 31
SFA13	Rajasthan (linked to SFA12)	Apr 2, 2020	Rs. 650 crores grant from State government to DISCOMS to support all announced relief measures	

USN	Agency	Date announced	Entitlement	Beneficiary
SFA18	Rajasthan Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment , Department of Labour and Employment	Apr 3, 2020	Additional financial assistance of Rs.1500 for eligible beneficiaries	Categories 1, 2, 3, and 4 families. Direct Benefit Transfer through bank accounts. Amount transferred to bank accounts of District Collectors. Region-wise lists of eligible families to whom assistance amount has been directly transferred. These lists must be downloaded by subdivision officers, development officers, tehsildars and municipal executive officers will download the list using their SSO login ID and ensure payment to the eligible families at the district level, preventing double payments. Guidelines have been given to provide immediate assistance to the more important needy person or family during this process.
SFA19	Tamil Nadu	Apr 2, 2020	Rs.1000 Corona lock-down- related relief to public through TNPDS shops	
SFA20	Delhi	Apr 2, 2020	One-time Financial Assistance of Rs. 5000/-	Holders of PSV Badge with valid Driving License of Para Transit Public Service Vehicles.

USN	Agency	Date announced	Entitlement	Beneficiary
SFA21	Government of NCT of Delhi, Delhi Disaster Management Authority, Directorate of Education, New Delhi Municipal Council and Municipal Corporations	Apr 2, 2020	Supply of cooked food two times a day.	Migrant labourers, poor and needy persons
SFA22	Kerala State Disaster Management Authority, District Disaster Management Authorities, State Emergency Operations Centre	Apr 2, 2020	Disbursal of funds to DCs: 50 lakh each to carry out various relief and preventative activities	

USN	Agency	Date announced	Entitlement	Beneficiary
	Haryana	Apr 3, 2020	Waiving of fixed charges on power consumption	Industrialist, Businessmen, and others using big power connections. If the consumption of 50 kW unit is 50 percent or less, then the fixed charges of last and the present month will be waived off. For High Tension (HT) connections larger than 50kW, fixed charges up to a maximum of Rs. 10,000 will be waived.
SFA25	Rajasthan Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Department of Labour and Employment	Apr 3, 2020	Additional financial assistance of Rs.1500 for eligible beneficiaries	Categories 1, 2, 3, and 4 families
	Rajasthan Rural Development Department	Apr 17, 2020	50000 to each gram panchayat	
SFA27	Karnataka	May 6, 2020	Compensation of Rs.25,000/- per hectare	Flower growers who have suffered crop loss. limited to the maximum extent of one hectare for the flower growers who have suffered crop loss.

USN	Agency	Date announced	Entitlement	Beneficiary
SFA28	Kerala	Apr 16, 2020	Financial assistance sanctioned to artists INR 1000	The beneficiary (artist) must have at least 10 years of work experience in the sector and be a permanent resident of Kerala state. Those receiving salary/ stipend/pension on a monthly basis from the govt/public institution/ welfare board/ cooperatives are not eligible for this scheme.
SFA29	Department of the Local Self Government - Kerala State Government	Apr 4, 2020	CM's Helping Hand Loan Scheme - A total of INR 2000 Crore	"Ayalkukam" or Kudumbashree Units across Kerala that are struggling for financial assistance due to COVID 19 should not be exempted from this scheme. Units that are registered before 31st December 2019 will be eligible for the loans. If a unit has already taken at least one loan from a scheduled/cooperative bank or hasn't taken any loans yet, can take the loans from the same bank or take a loan via a savings account in the scheduled/cooperative banks respectively. Each member of the Unit is eligible for INR 5,000/ 10,000/ 15,000/ 20,000 loans (maximum INR 20,000). However, members of the unit or family members of the same, receiving a pension from Govt or partial govt institutions and/ or those earning INR 10,000 or more per month is not eligible for this subsidy loans. However, social security pension receiving members are eligible for this scheme.

USN	Agency	Date announced	Entitlement	Beneficiary
SFA24	Arunachal Pradesh Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board	April	Cash relief Rs2000/ month	All non-government/ unorganized registered workers with the Board
SFA31	Punjab	March	Cash relief of Rs. 3000	Registered construction workers
SFA32	Labour Department, Government of Rajasthan	April	Cash transfer of Rs. 1000	15.78 lakh registered construction workers
SFA26	Office of the Commissioner, Labour and Employment, Goa	June	Cash relief Rs6000	Registered workers under State's B&OCWWB
SFA33	Nagaland B&OCWWB		Cash relief Rs2000/ month	Registered workers under State's B&OCWWB

USN	Agency	Date announced	Entitlement	Beneficiary
SFA34	Govt of Nagaland, Home Department, Relief and Rehabilitation Branch	April	Ex-gratia Rs 10 lakh	Employees of Nagaland Government, Urban Local Bodies, Police.
SFA35	Uttar Pradesh		Cash relief of Rs 1000	Registered construction workers
SFA37	Karnataka Department of Kannada and Culture	Apr 21, 2020	Cash transfers	All types of artists or litterateurs in economic hardship. Must have been in the art form for 10 years. Must be both professional and in economic hardship. Those getting assistance already from the department of Kannada and Culture are not eligible for this. Must not be govt employee (state/central/Corporation board/government funded/ semi-government funded institutions) Need name, address, phone number, bank details. Taking advantage of this by giving wrong information will be punished under the disaster management act.
SFA44	Nagaland	Apr 20, 2020	Cash relief	Special package for distressed citizens outside Nagaland



USN	Agency	Date announced	Entitlement	Beneficiary
SFA51	Gujarat	Apr 1, 2020	Compensation of 25 lakh for family of police officer who dies on duty	Next of kin of front-line staff, including police personnel, health and sanitation workers, staff of revenue and food supply department and fair price shopkeepers. state government employees, who are engaged in work related to coronavirus,
SFA52	Govt of Nagaland, Home Department, Relief and Rehabilitation Branch	May	Ex-gratia grant to fatalities to frontline workers due to Covid 19 Rs 10 lakh	Drivers, cleaners, sanitary workers, caterers, all such personnel workers in managing Quarantine Centres in the State, as well as any other non-government functionary involved in any other activities combating covid 19 under the District Task Force
SFD4	Women & Child Development, Chhattisgarh	Mar 21, 2020	Take-home rations of 750 gram ready to eat per child for 6 days	Undernourished children between the age of 3 and 6 (via Anganwadi)
SFD11	Kerala	Mar 25, 2020	Community kitchen, home-delivery if needed, free and over-the-regular provisions to all ration cardholders, home quarantine kits to all irrespective of income status.	

USN	Agency	Date announced	Entitlement	Beneficiary
SFD13	Disaster management, Bihar	Mar 26, 2020	Community Kitchen/ Relief camps to be run in government schools to provide food and shelter to those people/workers who are struggling to find either food or shelter	
SFD17	Uttar Pradesh	Mar 26, 2020	Food and water will be provided to persons staying in night shelters and border areas; community kitchens set up for helpless persons unable to cook; 14000 vehicle volunteers to deliver vegetable, milk, medicines at doorstep	'Nirashrit', night shelters, resting places, border areas, labourers, old people, slum dwellers, those in hostels and 'aashray sthal'
SFD18	Food and Supplies department, West Bengal	Mar 26, 2020		AAY, SPHH, PHH and RKS-1 category of ration cardholders to get free rations from 1st April to 30th September. RKS-2 to get rice at Rs.13/kg and wheat at Rs.9/kg.
SFD19	Chief Secretary, Municipal Commissioner, DM, West Bengal	Mar 27, 2020	Food and lodging arrangements for stranded workers at home/place of work and regular payments to be ensured by MC via employers	Stranded migrant workers

USN	Agency	Date announced	Entitlement	Beneficiary
SFD20	Housing and Urban Development, Odisha	Mar 27, 2020	Free cooked meal/food packet	Destitute, homeless, beggars, people without food during day or night
SFD21	Delhi	Mar 27, 2020	Food centres/community kitchens	Needy
SFD24	Revenue and Disaster Management, Maharashtra	Mar 29, 2020	Reduction of price of Shiv Bhojan Thali from Rs.10/- to Rs.5/-, w.e.f. 1st April. To be implemented by the DMs	Those who do not have money and cannot make provision for food - homeless, migrant labour, outside students
SFD25	Jharkhand	Mar 29, 2020	Community kitchens (Dal bhaat kendra) to be opened in all districts	Those in need of food and cannot procure (migrant, homeless, disabled)
SFD27	Chhattisgarh	Mar 30, 2020	Food to be provided to all homeless people and migrant labourers stranded by lockdown in all districts of the state. Rice can be procured at an economical cost from Consumer Affairs	Not mentioned. Submit requirements to the Zila Prabandhak.

USN	Agency	Date announced	Entitlement	Beneficiary
SFD30	Sikkim, District Collector (South Sikkim Namchi), Municipal Executive Officer, BDO	Mar 31, 2020	Home delivery of food packets to ensure Proper and Systematic Distribution of Food and Essentials to the Poor and Needy families, Daily Wage Earners, migrant, casual or construction site workers, hawkers, and other stranded labourers affected due to lockdown	Poor and Needy families, Daily Wage Earners, migrant, casual or construction site workers, hawkers, and other stranded labourers affected due to lockdown
SFD32	Bihar	Apr 2, 2020	State government to operate ten centres in Delhi for providing food to daily wage workers from the state. This will operate between 12pm to 2pm, and 7pm to 9pm.	3200 benefited from it on 2nd April afternoon; daily wage workers from Bihar stranded in Delhi

USN	Agency	Date announced	Entitlement	Beneficiary
SFD34	Rajasthan	Apr 2, 2020	Distribution of whole grains in the form of pulses, wheat, and other food to about 35 lakh beneficiaries through Anganwadi centres;	Families that are covered under ICDS. 1 kg pulses, 1-3 kg wheat in excess of regular PDS entitlement. 16.30 lakh kids between 6m and 3 years are given 750 gram baby bi take home ration per week. 9.90 lakh kids between 3-6 years are given 750 gram baby mi per week. 4.22 pregnant women, 4.02 dhaatri women, and girl child between 11 and 14 (not going to school) are given 930 gram take home nutrition mix per week. (more)
SFD35	Kerala	Apr 3, 2020	Guidelines for setting up of Community Kitchens under Kudumbasree	
SFD39	Delhi	Apr 5, 2020	Temporary ration cards - e coupons	4 kg wheat and 1 kg of rice free of cost to each individual

USN	Agency	Date announced	Entitlement	Beneficiary
SFD41	Haryana, Revenue and Disaster Management Department	Apr 6, 2020	<p>The Haryana government notified to all the Nodal Officers, Divisional Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners of Chandigarh with a list of renewed prices for dry ration or cooked food packets. It has been done to cater to the requirements of persons in need.</p> <p>Aka - 1kg per person/ per week, limit of 5 kg per family/per week.</p> <p>Dal - 250 gms per person/ per week, limit of 1.250 kg per family/ week.</p> <p>Mustard Oil - 100 ml per person/week, limit of 500 ml per family/week</p> <p>Sugar - 100 ml per person/ week, 500 gms per family/ week</p> <p>Onion - 500 gm per person/ week, 2.5kgs per family/ week</p> <p>Potato - 500 gms per person/per week, limit of 2.5kg per family/ per week</p>	Persons in need, stranded migrant labourers

USN	Agency	Date announced	Entitlement	Beneficiary
SFD42	Delhi, Delhi Disaster Management Authority	Apr 7, 2020	District Magistrates and District DCPs resolve all issues pertaining to food Distribution. All DM have been authorized and mandated to make necessary arrangements at appropriate locations in their respective districts to provide cooked food as lunch and dinner	Have made 2 suitable locations in every municipal ward falling under their jurisdiction as food centre/hunger relief centre for 500 meals twice
SFD45	Chhattisgarh; Food, Civil Supplies, and consumer affairs	Apr 9, 2020	Extending ration entitlement to those (32 lakh) who are under 25 eligible categories in NFSA but were not eligible at present	4 kg wheat, 1 kg rice, free for a month
SFD47	Rajasthan	Apr 9, 2020	Ration to be provided to families displaced from Pakistan & living in Rajasthan	Food related requirements/ ration items

USN	Agency	Date announced	Entitlement	Beneficiary
SFD5	Uttar Pradesh	Mar 21, 2020	1.65 crore construction workers and daily wage labourers registered under antyodaya yojana, MNREGA and labour department will be provided one-month ration free of cost in April	1.65 crore construction workers and daily wage labourers registered under antyodaya yojana, MNREGA and labour department
SFD51	Uttar Pradesh	Apr 13, 2020	Ration card to be made for families who are eligible beneficiaries but don't have a ration card	
SFD52	Haryana; Food, Civil supplies and consumer affairs	Apr 14, 2020	Distress ration coupon to those without ration card	Same as other priority household



USN	Agency	Date announced	Entitlement	Beneficiary
SFD53	Chhattisgarh; Food civil supplies and consumer affairs	Apr 17, 2020	Guidelines regarding distribution of ration to people without ration cards. 2 quintals of rice are allocated to every gram panchayat, which can be utilised for Distribution to individuals without ration cards, as per their eligibility (subject to 5 kg limit for an individual). Issue ration cards to those who are eligible but don't have ration card now.	Those who need food support but are without ration card. Those who are eligible for but do not have a ration card. A detailed list of those who receive it must be shared. Request for more procurement can be placed. In urban areas urban bodies have been used to identify and enlist those who are needy and without ration card. In urban areas the Aadhaar/mobile number may be used to check with ration card database. One can use assistance from NGOs, social service and other individuals
SFD68	Delhi, Food Supplies and Consumer affairs, Designated Distribution centres, Schools of Directorate of Education	Apr 27, 2020	Emergency kit ("for a decent meal with hygiene"), 4 kg rice, 1 kg wheat, 1 kg oil, 1 kg chole, 1 kg sugar, 1 kg salt, haldi, dhanian, chili, soap	Poor with no documents, in addition to PDS card holders and non PDS card holders with Aadhar

USN	Agency	Date announced	Entitlement	Beneficiary
SFD7	District collector office, Municipal corporation, Rajasthan	Mar 22, 2020	Cooked food Distribution to needy people by Municipal corporation	Those in need
SFD77	Rajasthan	May 12, 2020	Dry ration material for 15 days to be given to needy and poor families; 15 kg wheat, 1 ltr oil, 1 kg salt, 2 kg pulses, 2 kg rice at once to a family of four	Those in need but without ration card
SFD80	Bihar, Food Supplies and Consumer Welfare Department	May 14, 2020	Providing benefits under PDS to those old persons whose biometric authentication could not be done	Old persons whose biometric authentication doesn't match Aadhaar
SFD81	Bihar, Food Supplies and Consumer Welfare Department	May 16, 2020	Food Distribution under PDS to incoming migrant labourers without any ration card under centre or state schemes; 5 kg rice to each person for two months	Incoming migrants who aren't registered for any ration card with state or centre

USN	Agency	Date announced	Entitlement	Beneficiary
SL1	Office of the District Collector, South Sikkim District Namchi	Mar 30, 2020	No deduction in pay; No rent to be charged for the period of a month	Migrant/Casual labourers
SL10	Department of Labour, Government of Rajasthan	Mar 23, 2020	Compensation for pay	Construction workers who have suffered loss in wages due to being kept in isolation for Covid 19
SL11	Government of Meghalaya, Department of Labour; Department of Revenue & Disaster Management	Mar 30, 2020	Rs 1000 per week	Beneficiary workers registered with the Meghalaya Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board who are unable to attend work due to lockdown
SL12	Labour Department, Government of Haryana	Mar 23, 2020	Consider all on duty and pay wages in full	Employees (particularly contractual and casual employees) of all industries, factories, shops, commercial establishments etc.

USN	Agency	Date announced	Entitlement	Beneficiary
SL13	Mineral Resources Department, Government of Chhattisgarh	Mar 1, 2020	No pay cut, no termination of services, appropriate help for health of those affected with COVID-19	Skilled/Unskilled workers (who have been employed as of 15Feb2020?)
SL14	Uttar Pradesh Shasan Shram Anubhag	Mar 20, 2020	Paid leave for 28 days on provision of medical certificate on joining duty after fitness	All employees (public/private) affected by Covid-19 and kept under isolation
SL15	Finance Department, Government of Kerala	Mar 19, 2020	No deduction of wages	Outsourced staff (teachers)
SL16	Labour, Employment, Training And Factories (Lab-II) Department, Telangana	Mar 23, 2020	Paid holiday	All categories of employees of all shops and establishments other than those exempt in the G.O.Ms.No.45

USN	Agency	Date announced	Entitlement	Beneficiary
SL3	Government of Meghalaya, Department of Labour; Department of Revenue & Disaster Management	Mar 28, 2020	Financial assistance	Adult wage earners from marginal sections of the society who have been deprived of wages during the lockdown period, except those under Building and Other Construction Workers (BOCW) through Welfare Board, MGNREGA Workers through BDOs of C&RD blocks, Muster Roll Workers through respective departments and casual wage workers in government, semi-government departments through respective organisations.
SL18	Uttar Pradesh Shasan Shram Anubhag	Mar 20, 2020	Holiday with wages for the period of temporary closure.	Employee/Workmen of the shops/ commercial establishment/factories which closed temporarily by the orders of the State Government or District Magistrate
SL2	Finance Department, Government of Kerala	Mar 24, 2020	No deduction of wages	All contractual/casual/daily wage/out-sourced staff
	Department of Labour and Employment, Government of Arunachal Pradesh	Mar 25, 2020 (for the duration of lockdown period)	No deduction of wages	All employees of public and private establishments, factories, shops, offices

USN	Agency	Date announced	Entitlement	Beneficiary
SL4	Labour and Employment Department, Gujarat (?) (Shram Ayuktani Kacheri, Gujarat Rajya)	Mar 21, 2020	No pay cut	All the employees or workers of registered establishments
SL5	Sikkim State Building & Other Construction Workers Welfare Board	Mar 30, 2020	One-time compensation of Rs2000	Registered building & other construction workers (live and active)
SL6	Uttar Pradesh Shasan Shram Anubhag	Mar 20, 2020	Paid leave for 28 days on provision of medical certificate on joining duty after fitness	All employees (public/private) affected by Covid-19 and kept under isolation
SL7	Office of the Labour Commissioner, Government of Odisha	Mar 21, 2020	No termination of services. No reduction in wages	All employees (public/private) including contractual and casual labour.

<b>USN</b>	<b>Agency</b>	<b>Date announced</b>	<b>Entitlement</b>	<b>Beneficiary</b>
SL8	Gujarat Labour and Employment Department	Mar 22, 2020	No pay cut, Allow paid voluntary leave	Workers in unorganised sectors (including domestic work)
SL9	Department of Labour, Government of Rajasthan	Mar 23, 2020	No pay cut, no termination of services.	All workers of commercial establishments, workshops and factories







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