



One By One

Year 20 Issue 2 (Double Issue)

June 8th, 2020

“If ever there was a time to acknowledge and recognize how connected the world is, it is now.”

Karina Gould

Living in Lockdown

**** A Heavy Read—Read with Caution ****

Every day seems to change immensely but yet stand still.

The best way to convey what is happening on the ground is through stories and personal reflections of the staff and the One! Family themselves. All authors/artists of the submissions found here have given their approval for use. I think you will find their candidness both refreshing and alarming.

The situation in Mumbai seems to worsen by the day and is nowhere close to flattening the curve. The task of helping our families repair their lives after the damage caused directly and indirectly by COVID-19 is daunting.

We hope you, like us, have a renewed perspective, determination and will to make this world a better place!

Keeping Staff Engaged, Informed and Giving Hope

Unable to physically be with each other, we created a google classroom for the staff to have discussions, express their feelings, and stay engaged. We have mandatory exercises and optional activities: English lessons, art activities and puzzles! It has been a fantastic way to help pass the time and support each other through this uncertain time.

Sapna, 18 years old, client staff: “This butterfly is saying thank you to everyone for still connecting with each other and supporting as much as possible. Thank you everyone.”

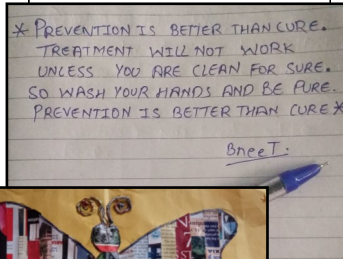


Through the One! Family’s Eyes...

Shashi, client staff, 33 years old, 3 children (told orally, translated by Vijay):

"It has made me crazy at times as my son and husband doesn't listen and step out of the house quite regularly. All the people of my neighbourhood gather together and as soon as they see the police, they run away and get into their houses. Being quite hot, we are not able to sleep properly. Although there has been groceries announced by the Government, it hasn't been reached to us yet. People are not listening and don't have patience to stay at home. They all want the lock down to be lifted but they themselves are not helping each other to get through the situation and get well soon. I have learned the importance of saving money and coping with stress effectively and positively. I will try to rectify my mistakes of not saving money and will make a budget every month."

Bineet, 20 years old, client staff (in his own poetry!):



* PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN CURE.
TREATMENT WILL NOT WORK
UNLESS YOU ARE CLEAN FOR SURE.
SO WASH YOUR HANDS AND BE PURE.
PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN CURE *

Bineet.

Sanjay, 21 years old, client staff (in his own words):

"I was enjoying the first lockdown. In second lockdown we came to know that in Khar danda we have 35 COVID-19 cases. The ration that was given for poor people, that was not distributed. That food they kept for themselves. I came to know that we cannot trust peoples in this difficult time. My dad didn't got alcohol for 2 months then he went mad and started hitting us and throwing home stuff. we have to get him alcohol for Rs400 [\$8]. While buying alcohol a policeman hit me on legs. I was not able to walk for 2 days. Then in third lockdown my father ran from home. So I had to find him all the night. I was scared that he shouldn't get effected by COVID-19. He gets epilepsy attack in every two days. I was thinking what would be worst than this then I came to know that a cyclone is coming. we were shifted to other place because of cyclone. Thanks to all the one international family."

Jeetu, staff, 22 years old (in his own words):

"Whole world's people are facing problem of corona virus but we guys facing problem of essential goods. People are going very selfish this time no one wants to help each other. Who were distributing food, now they disappeared. All works are closed. Every time I am thinking about what will happen next with us. Everyone getting irritability day by day at home, even I! Big brother's health is not well, the doctor has doubt about pneumonia. Now I am in more pressure. Now corona people have come in Santosh Bhavan. People are increasing the cost of the essential goods. If this situation will run longer than we people not will die from virus we will die from our irritability and hunger because of this lockdown no work, no money. Same thing, anger will become danger. Every day thoughts which coming in mind from that. How can we survive? Always I'm asking to my self!

Virus and because of lockdown many people went to their village from our chawl, still people are going to their village from our areas in trucks and in autorikshaw, Mumbai to Uttar Pradesh! No one wants to support anyone to live. All people want money. House owner they asking for house rent and water rent in every month. Even we people don't have money to eat in the lockdown, how we can pay rent?!? Some are still living here in the hope of every thing will become normal. We are hoping every thing will become same and normal again."

Aarti, Grade 10 student, 15 years old (story by Tania):

On May 12, 2020, Aarti's father decided that they couldn't go hungry in Mumbai any longer. The government set up a meal center for a few weeks, but the food stopped and with no work, money was running out. He borrowed Rs. 8000 from a friend (\$160), packed up his family in a rikshaw and set out on the 1800 km trek from Mumbai to their home state of Bihar.

The first day was fantastic, Aarti called Vijay Sir and told him about the fun journey and the incredible scenery.

The second day was horrific. The rikshaw hit a rock and, being only a three-wheeler with a canvas roof, it turned over and was destroyed. Aarti was following in a rikshaw behind (driven by her uncle) and watched the accident unfold—the rikshaw tumbled with her mother, father, brother and sister-in-law inside. Her brother and sister-in-law escaped with only bumps and bruises. Aarti's mom had a badly broken leg and Aarti's father had internal injuries. Her father was immediately taken into surgery. After being told that both parents would be ok, Aarti continued onwards to her village with her extended family, leaving her brother to take care of their parents. Aarti's mother came out of ICU the next day and her father was sitting and in good spirits 2 days later. Suddenly, something went wrong. He was taken back into emergency surgery but they could not save him. The next day, Aarti's mother, still in severe pain, was driven by ambulance to their village (24 hours away) with the body of her husband beside her. Her leg is in plaster, but we fear she has more serious injuries. We will only know more with time and when COVID-19 is no longer swamping the hospitals, that do not have the capacity and will not treat her now.

Khushboo, staff, 20 years old (in her own words):

"There is a story from my neighborhood. In my chawl [row of houses] lived an old man, He was 55 year old. His name was Mr. Ramesh Gupta. Mr. Ramesh lived here alone and his family lived in the village. During the lockdown Mr. Ramesh faced lots of problem like lack of money and ration. After a month, Mr. Ramesh decided that now he should go to the village because they had no money. Mr. Ramesh borrowed ₹3000 from his friend and made a plan to go to the village by way of truck. The next morning Mr. Ramesh also took his bag and left for the village. There were too many people in the truck. After three days they reached the border of Madhya Pradesh by truck. All passengers on the border of Madhya Pradesh got tested of covid -19. Mr. Ramesh and two other people turned out to be corona positive. There Mr. Ramesh was in the hospital for four days and died on the fifth day. The policemen took the number from their phone and called their house.

This was very painful news for his family and for us...."



Struggling to social distance in population dense Nallasopara. They were also struggling to stay indoors with the heat of

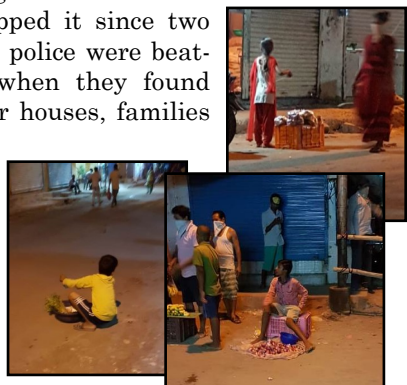
the summer and, at time, no electricity.

Afsar, 13 years old, student (told orally, translated by Jeetu):

"I am left alone as my elder brother is in Pune and can't come to Mumbai due to lock down. My sisters are staying with my aunt. I don't have parents. I have to do all my household work and as the school is also being closed, I have left with no friends to spend time with. I getting really bored during this period. I have learnt to live independently and hygiene. I have planned to go to village after lock down and will stay together with my family members. I want to become a singer and will try to focus on it. I will help my elder brother in his painting work as he is a painter and will look after my younger sister. People are not allowed to step out of their house and no one is getting to roam have some fun outside."

Vijay, staff (in his own words):

"It has been almost three months since we are physically away from One! family. The pandemic has brought each and everyone's life to a standstill. At the start, the lockdown was not so troublesome but as the lock down got extended time and again, people started to feel the heat both physically and mentally. Many families ran out of food, money and other basic commodities. Local authorities were distributing cooked food daily, but they stopped it since two weeks. Since the police were beating the adults when they found them out of their houses, families sent their children to get things. Even some parents started sending their children to sell vegetables and other groceries.



Most of the people were without a source of earning and hence decided to go to village by whatever means they could go.

In Santosh Bhavan [Nallasopara School area] although there has been only few cases of Covid, still many people lost their lives in accidents and other diseases. ATMs in NS don't have money and many people are not able to get money from bank. Many of the Government hospitals are turned into COVID hospitals and hence poor people with other diseases are not able to get treatment. Private clinics are closed as the doctors are scared of getting infected by covid. All the doors to help seem to be closed for poor people living in Mumbai and its surrounding area. The cases are increasing so fast that the Hospitals ran out of bed and patients are asked to go to Private hospitals. Private hospital is very expensive and only rich people could afford it. Besides all these, corruption and political fights has made the situation worse. Although Government has announced free ration for each and every family for next two months, people in Santosh Bhavan hasn't got any since the lock down. Anxiety and stress has also started to effect our older students and their families and we are trying our best to keep each other positive. It is such a period that every day comes with new challenges and before it is handled, other one is around.

Although there has been so many stressful things going around, one positive feeling regularly comes in my mind that our children will be getting a beautiful and safe environment to live in future. They will be learning more about personal hygiene, values and ethics and true means of education. Such hope has come from all of our One! family members and that has helped me to stay positive."

Mother—3 students (told orally, translated by Saurabh):

"I have become jobless and don't have money to feed my children. I have been going to local authorities to seek help but they ask to go other authorities. At last, I decided to sell vegetables with some leftover money and has become risk against the disease to step out of the house. I can't go to village as I don't have money. I have become completely helpless. I will try to find work as soon as the lock down is lifted. Very difficult situation. People are getting beaten by policemen. Not able to step out of the house regularly."

Due to lockdown and lack of rations in stores, we were not able to provide full rations to our families. Our plans were blocked repeatedly: restrictions on travel; police roadblocks; lack of available food; bureaucratic catch-22s; and so on. We have provided food and other support as possible but are saddened and frustrated that we have not been able to provide as much to our families as we had wanted. Staff in India have done an extraordinary job in the face of the obstacles and danger. We are proud of their efforts and sacrifices.



Anil Sir, 70 years old, staff (in his own words):

"My family is suffering from many problems during lockdown. We are above age and we can not move out easily to buy anything from the market. We have to depend on shopkeepers for rations and medicine which we are not getting in proper time. My and my family's medical expenses are very high and we don't always know how to get the medicines we need. Sometimes, no rations are available and people are scared. We have to go to the shop and get a number, when our name comes then they will distribute what they have. The queues are very long. Like me, people can not stand long. There are no medical practitioners at the dispensaries now. The open dispensaries are a long way away, they give numbers and then distribute, but with no transportation systems running, how can I go? The hasty coronavirus lockdown of Mumbai leaves many fearful of what may come next. Many people are facing hunger and even starvation with the absence of daily wages. This crisis shines for me a torch on the fragilities of our Indian economy.

Countless numbers in Golibar colony [a slum close] are suffering lots and most of the labourers are jobless. How long can they live without money? One of our ex-students (Nisha) was staying on the road but for a few days, we have not seen her. Golibar is a hotspot and it is sealed because many people have died.

The government is supposed to give free rations, we are not getting them. Free ambulances are not arriving on time and by the time they come, the patient dies. I am very scared because of suffering from high blood pressure and diabetes. If there will be any problems with my health, I can not go for follow up. In the lockdown, every one is depressed and the vaccine is not coming. There is no meaning of a person's life, people die on the street and nobody is doing anything. The socio-economic condition is very poor for people living below the poverty line in Mumbai.

In Mumbai, day by day the COVID-19 disease is spreading more among the people with per day 2500-3000 people infected. How will people survive? A vegetable seller in Vakola [his area] died because of corona virus, now the market is sealed. But, where to go? My maternal aunt passed away of corona virus in Mumbai. I don't know what to do. In Mumbai, the situation is very fearful and stressful. What to do now? What next? We don't know.

Written by Tania unless otherwise mentioned.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Canada:

112 Garland Crescent, Sherwood
Park, Alberta, Canada, T8A 2R2

Phone: (780) 467-6254

India:

Phone: (91) 98205-17805

EMAIL: info@one-international.com

Twitter:

@One_Intrnl

Facebook:

/OneTaniaDidi

www.one-international.com

KEM Hospital peons (told orally, translated by Vikas):

"They worked in KEM hospital, world renowned for its disaster relief programs and the best public hospital in Mumbai, up until two weeks ago when they quit abruptly and stowed away in a truck to their village. They were not willing to risk their lives in the conditions at the hospital. COVID-19 patients were mixed in with diabetes, cancer and other patients because there weren't any beds. Doctors were telling nurses and workers to discharge quarantine patients at 5-7 days because they needed the beds. The morgues were full, bodies were piled up in the hallways (no AC) and even piled up on beds next to living patients (photos were spread in the news)."

Mahendra, staff (in his own words):

"It is very difficult time for us many people they are going back to there native place. In Mumbai it's very difficult to survive without money. Things are becoming so costly; example oil before we get in 100 rupees now it comes in 145. Vegetable, milk everything is so costly. In near to me 4 to 5 COVID-19 positive patient found. Everyone says make your immune power strong by eating healthy food but for healthy food you need money...If you have money so still you can live nicely. But middle class and poor people are dying because they are depend on monthly and daily wages. Still everyone needs to pay electricity, water bill, Society maintenance, rent (Modi says don't take now take after some time, but no one is listening). That's why many people they are trying to reach native place but on the way many people dying because of Hunger and accident. I am also many time feel so much tensed about loan... Because we wanted to give good life and education to Shiv [his 6 year old son]...Now we are losing everything..I don't know what will happen next. In lockdown no one can go anywhere so all economical burden came on Smita [his wife]. I can't help her. Today in my area vegetables price was so high. This is mango season but we didn't tried. Before money was not so important for me but now in this condition money becomes very important because you feel secure if you have money. You can buy the things even you can help others...If you get chance go and buy necessary things before 12pm, and don't think about money, so much line. If ask why it is so costly they say 'Maal Nahi mil Raha hai' [we are not getting stock]. Thanks to you because mentally we are getting so much help from you."

Sunil, staff (a story through art!):



Vivek, 17 years old, student/part-time teacher (in his own words):

"There is no threat of COVID-19 because we strictly follow the preventative measures to prevent it. The only difficulty found is money and study of my 12th because college and classes are not open so I not understand online concept of any subject. But all in this situation one thing is good there is no confirm case found in my area. Most people walk freely on roads and street. The vegetables market is open and many people came out for buying it. But I see many children of our school are forced to sell vegetables and other things if they refused it they will punish by their parents and parents not give them food if they refused to sell.

It has effected my education very much. I was going to join classes before the lock down and being in 12th Grade and in Science stream, it is quite difficult to understand lessons through online and the college lectures have told that they are not going to teach again. I would not be able to join classes after the lock down due to financial problems. Once the lock down is lifted, I will be focusing on my studies and saving money by working. Last year, I spent a lot and didn't saved money and hence I have learnt the importance of saving money."

Ekta, staff, 23 years old (in her own words):

"In Mumbai there are many people they don't have money for food and also suffering from food . Everyone are going to their village , many people in India are going to their villages by walking, by truck and bus, Autorikshaw . Because of they are not getting anything for survive. Lot's of people lost their life during going to their villages . Government has started free online form of trains for people but some people don't know how to fill the form so people were taking advantages of that. They charge 1000 Rs , 1500 Rs to each people just for filling form... Ration has been sent from the government but we are not getting Because of some politicians. Some peoples are tries to help poor people but they are not able to do it because of lockdown.

My family is also facing a lot of trouble due to lockdown. Ration Vegetables Everything is Expensive in this situation. We get some help from school but now the situation is getting very bad due to the coronavirus . Now I'm praying for peace , good health and happiness for everyone's life. Hope this pandemic is end soon ."