

**Brief Online Study Report on  
Situation and Problem faced  
by Communities in Different  
Parts of Bihar Due to COVID -  
19 Pandemic**

**Study Conducted: April 2020  
by  
Bihar Voluntary Health Association**

# Brief Online Study Report on Situation and Problem faced by Communities in Different Parts of Bihar Due to COVID -19 Pandemic Study Conducted: April 2020 by Bihar Voluntary Health Association

## Introduction of Situation:

The Covid-19 Pandemic has engulfed the entire world. Rapid spread and lack of vaccines has made it difficult to curtail the disease. As a safety measure, the government of India has further extended a 21-day national lockdown which was from 26<sup>th</sup> of March till 3<sup>rd</sup> May which is further extended to 17<sup>th</sup> of May a total 40 Days with an aim to flatten the curve. However, amidst lockdown people who are affected the most are the daily wage now jobless and they do not have enough saving to continue long (not even one month) and in majority of the cases the family size is quite big or those living in vulnerable conditions who have no safety net to fall back on. Many of them are starving. Even though the government is taking commendable measures to reach out to the vulnerable families, the need is immense. According to World Bank – <sup>1</sup>*The coronavirus (COVID-19) is a crisis like no other the world has faced in recent decades in terms of its potential economic and social impacts and estimate that the pandemic could push about 49 million people into extreme poverty in 2020. In<sup>2</sup> states like Bihar, UP, West Bengal, Maharashtra, and Madhya Pradesh may account to 50% of the 354 million newly added poor.*

## Govt of Bihar's Initiatives:

The honourable Chief Minister Nitish Kumar- has announced three months of advance pension for the elderly, disabled persons and widows, Rs 1,000 financial assistance to families in lockdown areas (before the whole country went under lockdown), and a performance bonus equivalent to one month's pay to the health workers battling Covid-19. Bihar has decided to give free ration for a month to all ration card<sup>3</sup> holders.

## Study Objective:

The purpose of this study is to understand the impact of lockdown due to COVID-19 in the lives of the vulnerable communities and their emergency needs.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://blogs.worldbank.org/voices/covid-19-will-hit-poor-hardest-heres-what-we-can-do-about-it>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.financialexpress.com/opinion/covid-19-may-double-poverty-in-india/1943736/>

<sup>3</sup> **Ration cards** are an official document issued by [state governments in India](#) to households that are eligible to purchase subsidized food grain from the [Public Distribution System](#) (under the [National Food Security Act](#)). They also serve as a common form of identification for many Indians.

**Priority ration card** - priority ration cards are issued to households that meet the eligibility criteria set by their state government. Each priority household is entitled to 5 kilograms of food grain per member per month.

**Antyodaya (AAY)** ration cards are issued to "poorest of poor" households. Each AAY household is entitled to 35 kilograms of food grain per month.

**Study Area:**

Bihar Voluntary Health Association has conducted an online study in the 25 Districts of Bihar covering 300 respondents across the state.

**Study Methodology:**

To understand the situation, a Short questionnaire was developed in Hindi (local language) after discussion with community people and few field level project personnel of Network member organizations to understand the present situation of the marginalized communities at this very crucial time. Questions consist of single choice or multiple choice questions and were developed in Google Form. The Google form link was shared through social media platform (mainly WhatsApp) to the Network member organizations and their development team members those have access to smartphone. The duration of the data collection was for 10 days as we had limitation on the number of respondents. The responses received were analysed.

**Sample Size:**

297 respondents have given responses from 25 Districts of Bihar through online Google form. As it was online survey, so the responses are not even throughout the districts in some districts, responses received are negligible in numbers. Such Districts were Aurangabad, Begusarai, Bhagalpur, Darbhanga, Kaimur, Katihar, Lakhisarai, Munger, Samastipur, Siwan, and West Champaran where responses are below 3 respondents per district whereas in East Champaran, Gopalganj, Kishanganj, Nawada and Sitamarhi responses received more than 25 responses. From Sitamarhi District, highest responses received which was 67 followed by 64 from Gopalganj.

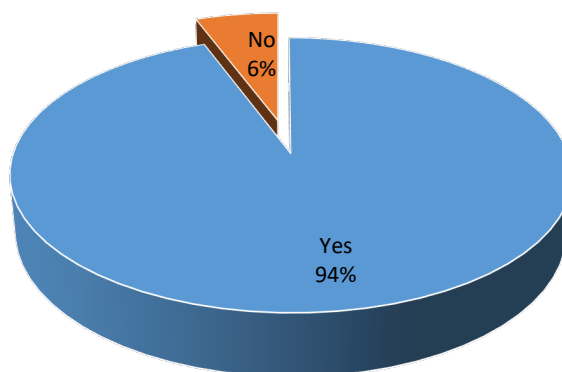
## Major Findings:

### Knowledge on COVID-19 (Corona Virus):

When asking them if they ever heard of the Corona Virus pandemic, 280 respondents out of 297 responded mentioned that they have heard about COVID-19 and rest 17 said they don't know about this. This indicates that 94% of the respondents heard about Corona Virus pandemic.

District	Know about COVID-19, N= 298			District	Know about COVID-19, N= 298		
	Total Response	Yes	No		Total Response	Yes	No
Araria	8	7	1	Kishanganj	36	23	13
Aurangabad	2	2		Lakhisarai	2	2	
Banka	4	4		Madhubani	8	8	
Begusarai	1	1		Munger	3	3	
Bhagalpur	3	3		Nawada	28	28	
Bhojpur	4	4		Patna	6	6	
Darbhanga	2	2		Rohtas	5	5	
East Champaran	33	32	1	Samastipur	2	2	
Gaya	8	6	2	Sitamarhi	67	67	
Gopalganj	64	64		Siwan	2	2	
Kaimur	1	1		Supaul	2	2	
Katihar	1	1		West champaran	2	2	
Khagaria	3	3		TOTAL	297	280	17

Percentage of People know about COVID -19

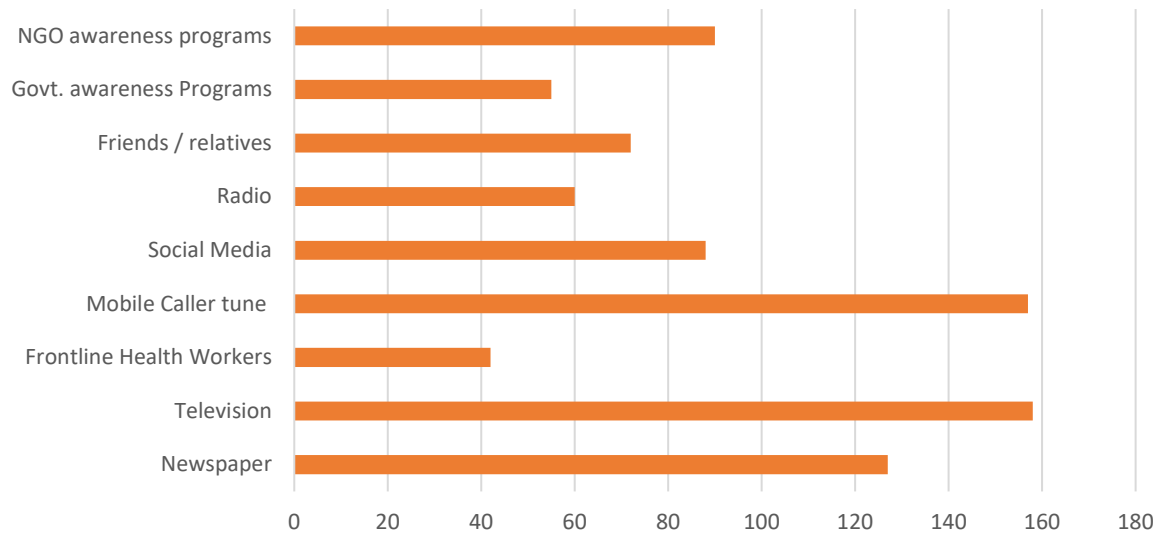


## Sources of Information Regarding COVID-19:

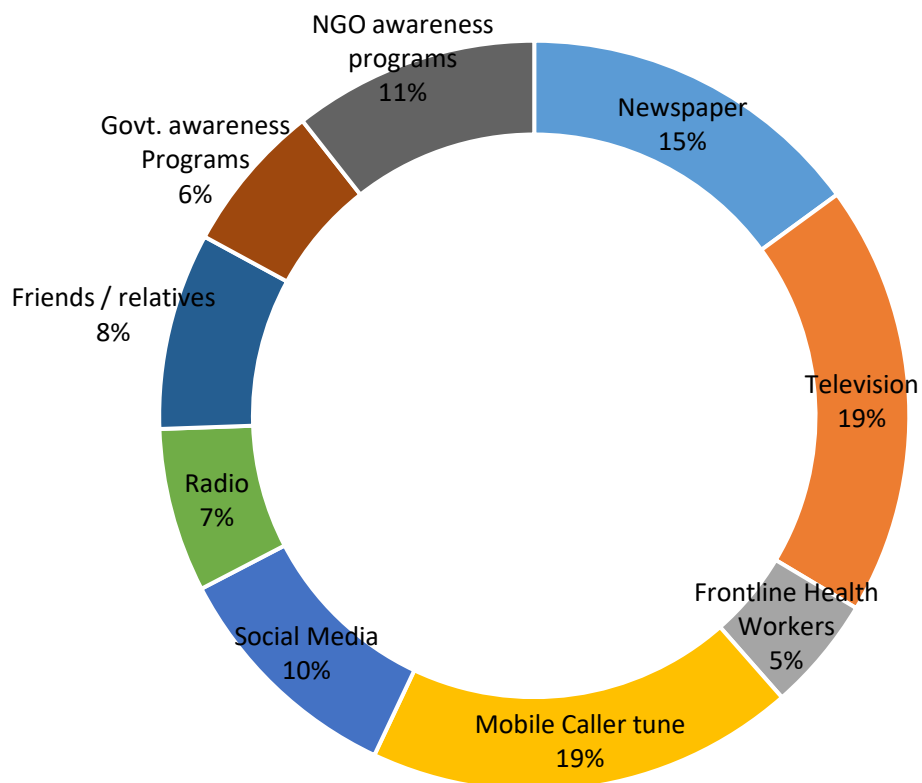
Out of 297 respondents, 180 have heard about Corona Virus and when asked from where they received information about Corona Virus, the major responses were TV, mobile caller tune, social media, newspaper etc. Block wise distribution of respondents is as follows:

District	Sources of Information Regarding COVID-19									
	Total Respondents	Newspaper	Television	Frontline Health Workers	Mobile Caller tune	Social Media	Radio	Friends / relatives	Govt. awareness Programs	NGO awareness programs
Araria	8	3	6		2	2	1		2	2
Aurangabad	2	1	2							
Banka	4	4	4		4	4	3	3	3	3
Begusarai	1	1								
Bhagalpur	3	3	3	1		1		1	3	3
Bhojpur	4	3	4		3	4	3	3	1	4
Darbhanga	2	2	2		2	2				2
East Champaran	33	5	26	4	14	7	2	8	3	7
Gaya	8	2	3	1	3			5		
Gopalganj	64	51	45	4	40	31	25	23	21	9
Kaimur	1		1							
Katihar	1									1
Khagaria	3				1					2
Kishanganj	36	1	2		13	7		4	1	
Lakhisarai	2	1	1	1	1	1				1
Madhubani	8	5	6		4	4	1	3	1	3
Munger	3	3	3	1	2	2			1	
Nawada	28	16	7	3	18	2		1	2	19
Patna	6	5	6		4	5	4	2	3	1
Rohtas	5	3	5	1	2	3	1	1	3	2
Samastipur	2		1		1					
Sitamarhi	67	14	27	24	40	11	19	16	9	29
Siwan	2	2	1		1			1	1	1
Supaul	2	1	1	1	1	1	1			1
West champaran	2	1	2	1	1	1		1	1	
TOTAL	297	127	158	42	157	88	60	72	55	90
Percentage		45%	56%	15%	56%	31%	21%	26%	20%	32%

## Sources of Information received



## Different Sources of Information on COVID-19

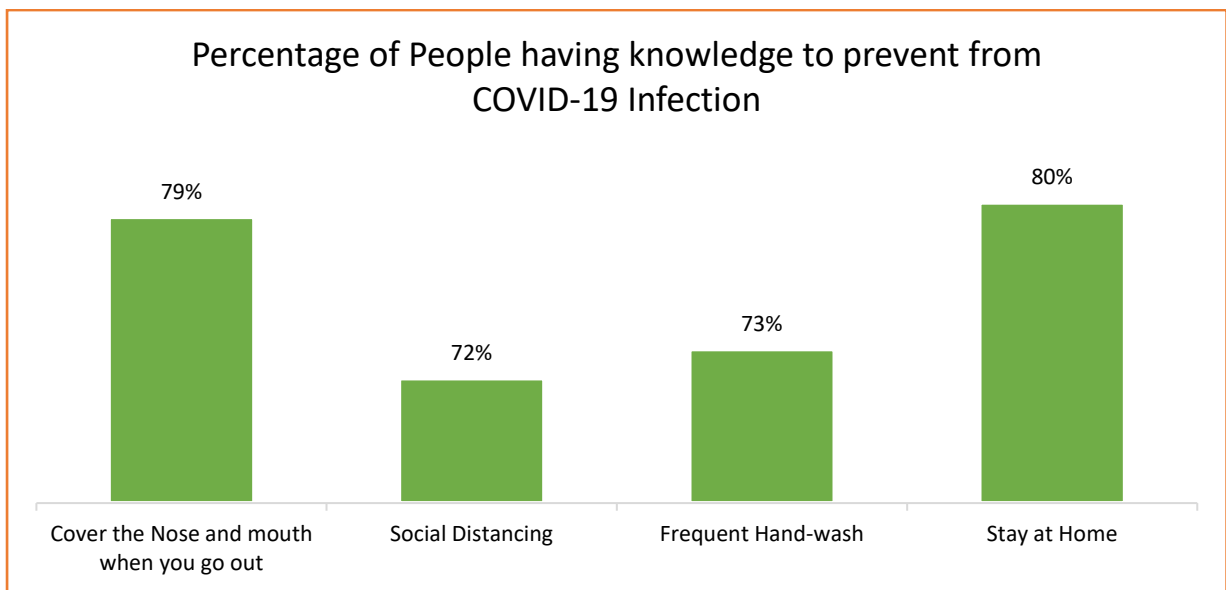
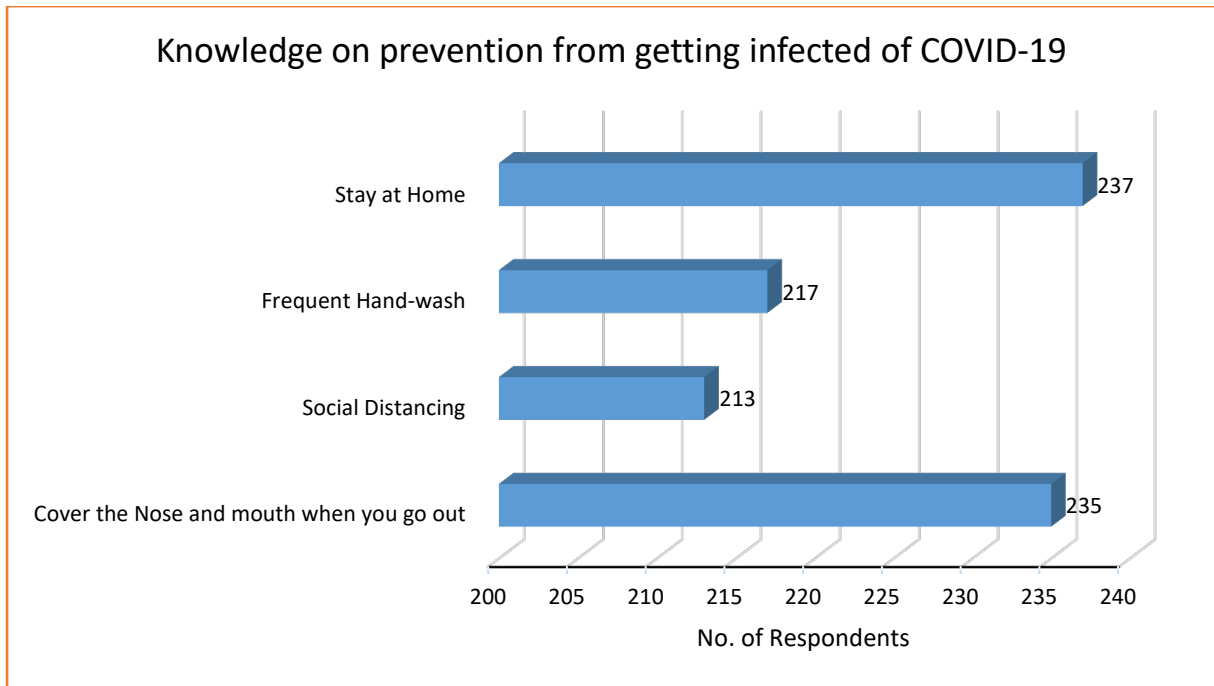


The government has ordered all telecom firms to make a 30-second audio clip on coronavirus as a caller tune of mobile phone users to create awareness among masses about the epidemic. The data reveals that Television, Newspaper and social media (especially WhatsApp) as well as mobile caller tune (Mandatory by Govt. of India to spread the information).

### Knowledge on prevention from getting infected of COVID-19

When asking the respondents how they can prevent themselves from getting infected of COVID-19 (Corona Virus), 79% of them responded that cover their nose and mouth with Mask or cloths when moving outside, 72% knows that it can be prevented by maintaining social distancing, 74% told frequent hand-washing and 80% replied staying at home and not go outside unnecessarily.

District N = 297	Knowledge on prevention from getting infected of COVID-19				
	Total Responses	Cover Nose and mouth when you go out	Social Distancing	Frequent Hand-wash	Stay at Home
Araria	8	5	6	5	5
Aurangabad	2	2	2	2	2
Banka	4	4	4	4	4
Begusarai	1	1	1	1	1
Bhagalpur	3	3	3	3	3
Bhojpur	4	4	4	4	4
Darbhanga	2	2	2	2	1
East Champaran	33	27	29	29	29
Gaya	8	8	7	5	6
Gopalganj	64	58	34	47	52
Kaimur	1	1	1	1	1
Katihar	1	1	1	1	1
Khagaria	3	2			1
Kishanganj	36	21	23	18	32
Lakhisarai	2	2	2	2	2
Madhubani	8	7	7	7	7
Munger	3	2	2	2	2
Nawada	28	22	22	22	22
Patna	6	4	4	4	4
Rohtas	5	5	5	5	5
Samastipur	2	2	2	2	2
Sitamarhi	67	48	48	48	48
Siwan	2	1	1	1	1
Supaul	2	1	1		
West champaran	2	2	2	2	2
TOTAL	297	235	213	217	237



## Corona Virus Infection among the Respondents and their Families

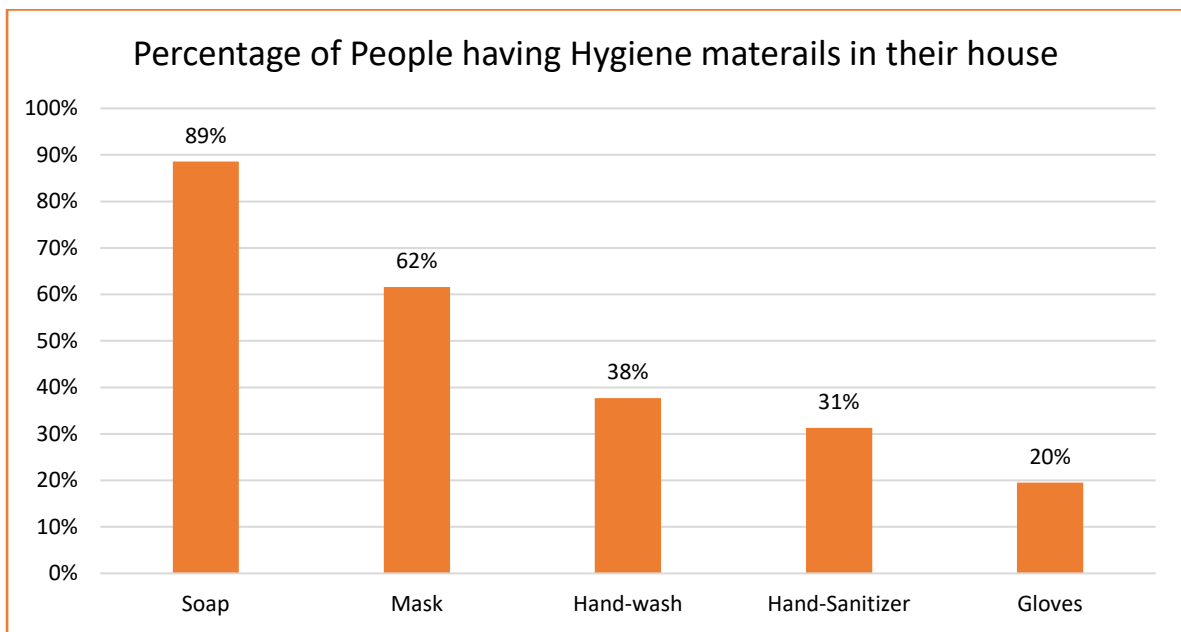
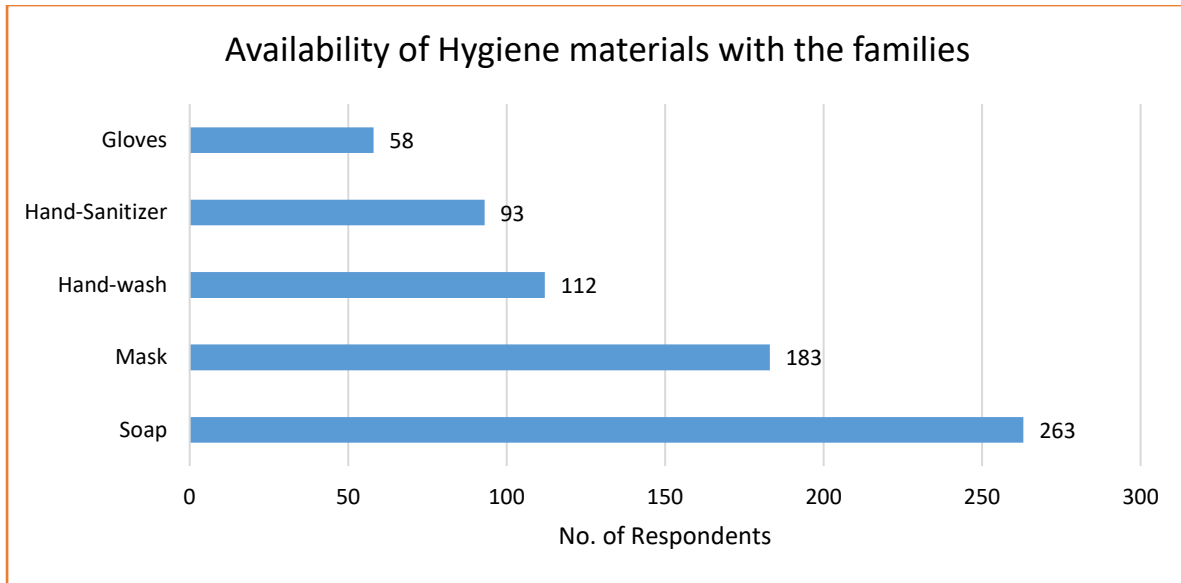
In response to the question whether there are any family members with any symptoms of COVID-19, **No one** has given a positive answer which means nobody from the respondents had any symptoms of COVID-19 Or they may afraid to report.



## Availability of Hygiene Materials with the families to Fight against COVID-19

Available Hygiene Materials with the Respondents' families to prevent themselves from getting Infection from COVID-19, the data reveals that out of 297 respondents, 263 respondents have at least soap for hand-wash which is around 89% of the total respondents. The data also describes that 62% of the families have readymade mask or they made it with their cloths available in their home (non-stitched). Other articles like hand-wash, gloves, hand-sanitizers have access less than one fifth of the total respondents.

District	Availability of Hygiene Materials:					
	Total Responses	Soap	Mask	Hand-wash	Hand-Sanitizer	Gloves
Araria	8	6	8	7	6	2
Aurangabad	2	2		1		
Banka	4	4	4			
Begusarai	1	1	1	1	1	
Bhagalpur	3	3	3	3	3	
Bhojpur	4	4	4	4	4	
Darbhanga	2	2	2	2	2	2
East Champaran	33	31	28	19	10	18
Gaya	8	7	2	1	1	1
Gopalganj	64	58	54	27	26	1
Kaimur	1	1	1	1	1	
Katihar	1	1	1	1	1	1
Khagaria	3	2	3		1	1
Kishanganj	36	30	4	2	6	1
Lakhisarai	2	2	2	1	2	1
Madhubani	8	7	6	5	2	1
Munger	3	3	1	3	1	1
Nawada	28	21	20	15	11	11
Patna	6	4	4	4	4	4
Rohtas	5	3	3	3	2	2
Samastipur	2	2	1	1		
Sitamarhi	67	63	26	7	5	9
Siwan	2	2	2	2	2	1
Supaul	2	2	1	1	1	1
West champaran	2	2	2	1	1	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>58</b>
Percentage		89%	62%	38%	31%	20%



## During lockdown Problems faced by the Respondent & their Families

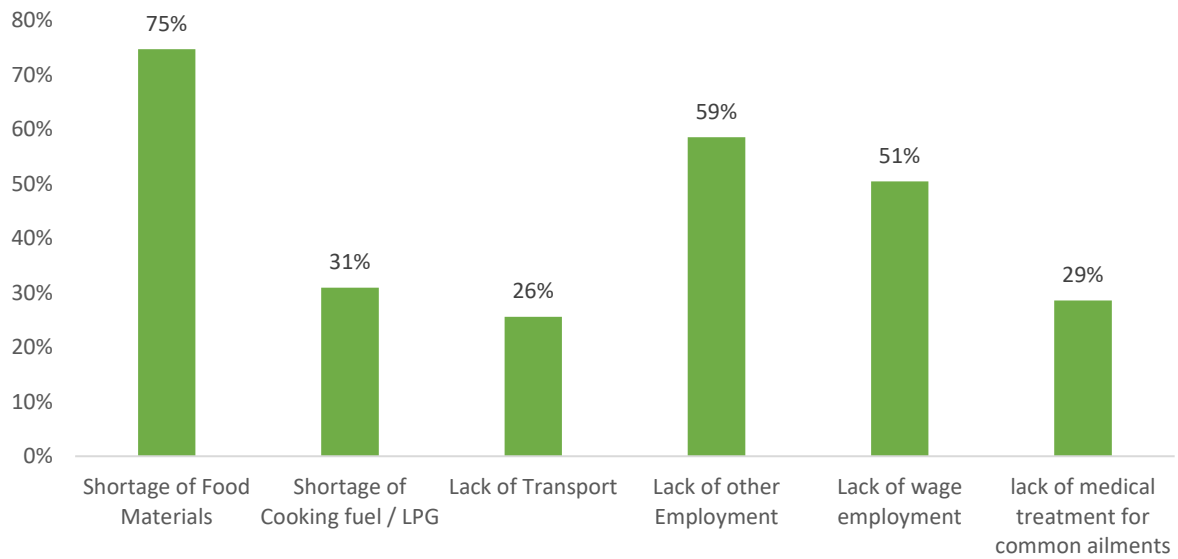
Amidst lockdown people who are affected the most are the daily wage earners or those living in vulnerable conditions who have no safety net to fall back on. Many of them are starving. Even though the government is taking commendable measures to reach out to the vulnerable families, the need is immense.

The data shows that shortage of food materials and lack of employment are major problems faced by them. 75% of the respondents said that shortage of food materials is a big issue for them as they lost their employment. Most of them were working as daily wage labourers or working in unorganized sectors where lockdown brings the closure of their regular income.

which affects their food security. 59% of the respondents said that lack of employment in other than daily wage labourer is next big challenges faced by them. At the time of data collection there was no other opportunities were available and hence 51% of them responded that lack of wage employment opportunities in their area is another problem. Because of restriction in movement, 31% respondents responded that shortage of cooking fuel/ firewood/ LPG is another challenges they are facing. 29% said that they are facing problems getting medical treatment of other common ailments along with accessibility of maternal health care services.

District	During lockdown Problems faced by the Respondent & Their Families						
	Total Responses	Shortage of Food Materials	Shortage of Cooking fuel / LPG	Lack of Transport	Lack of other Employment	Lack of wage employment	lack of medical treatment
Araria	8	5	1	4	6	2	
Aurangabad	2						2
Banka	4			1	1		4
Begusarai	1				1		
Bhagalpur	3			3	1	1	
Bhojpur	4			1	3	1	1
Darbhanga	2			2	2	1	1
East Champaran	33	23	15	14	25	20	
Gaya	8	8			8	8	6
Gopalganj	64	58	11	2	31	44	
Kaimur	1						1
Katihar	1	1				1	
Khagaria	3	2		1	2		
Kishanganj	36	32	24	17	33	25	28
Lakhisarai	2	1		2			2
Madhubani	8	5	4	2	6	5	
Munger	3	2			2	1	2
Nawada	28	24	1	3	13	4	12
Patna	6	3		3	6	3	
Rohtas	5	2		3	3	2	3
Samastipur	2	2	2	1	1		1
Sitamarhi	67	49	32	15	25	30	21
Siwan	2	1			2	1	
Supaul	2	2	1	1	1	1	
West Champaran	2	2	1	1	2		1
TOTAL	297	222	92	76	174	150	85

## Percentage of Families facing problems Due to COVID-19 Lockdown

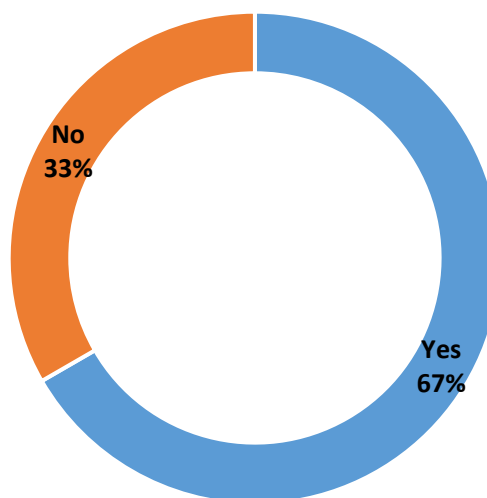


### Accessibility and Availability of Food Grains in PDS Shop:

Due to the hardship faced by the marginalized communities, Govt. of Bihar announced to give free ration for the month of April to all ration card holders. While for non- card holders government of Bihar has decided to give Rs. 1000 in their accounts. When asking the respondent that whether they have received ration at free of cost from PDS (Public Distribution System) as per Govt. new announcement or at low price at PDS shop, the shows that 67% of them have received food grain from PDS and rest 37% did not yet received which is also a big in numbers.

Accessibility of Food Grains in PDS Shop at low prices:							
District	Total Response	Yes	No	District	Total Response	Yes	No
Araria	8		8	Kishanganj	36	30	6
Aurangabad	2		2	Lakhisarai	2		2
Banka	4	4		Madhubani	8	4	4
Begusarai	1		1	Munger	3		3
Bhagalpur	3	3		Nawada	28	15	13
Bhojpur	4		4	Patna	6	3	3
Darbhanga	2	1	1	Rohtas	5	3	2
East Champaran	33	12	21	Samastipur	2		2
Gaya	8		8	Sitamarhi	67	56	11
Gopalganj	64	62	2	Siwan	2	1	1
Kaimur	1		1	Supaul	2	1	1
Katihar	1	1		West champaran	2		2
Khagaria	3	2	1	TOTAL	297	198	99

### Availed Free / Low Cost Food Materials from PDS



### Access to Various Govt. Schemes for COVID -19

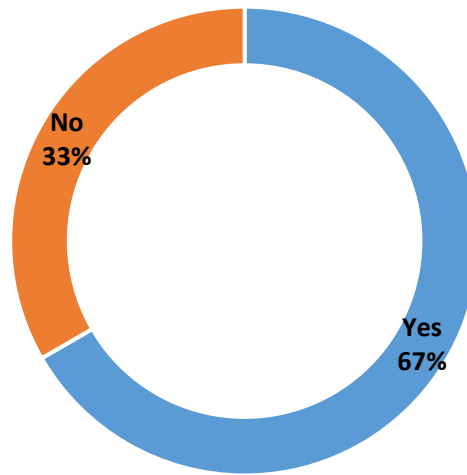
When asking the respondent about the accessibility and availability of various Govt. Schemes, it was observed that the percentage of the families availed the schemes are very less and it differ from scheme to scheme.

#### Accessibility of Food Grains in PDS Shop at low prices:

Due to the hardship faced by the marginalized communities, Govt. of Bihar announced to give free ration for the month of April to all ration card holders. While for non- card holders government of Bihar has decided to give Rs. 1000 in their accounts. When asking the respondent that whether they have received ration at free of cost from PDS (Public Distribution System) as per Govt. new announcement or at low price at PDS shop, the shows that 67% of them have received food grain from PDS and rest 37% did not yet received which is also a big in numbers.

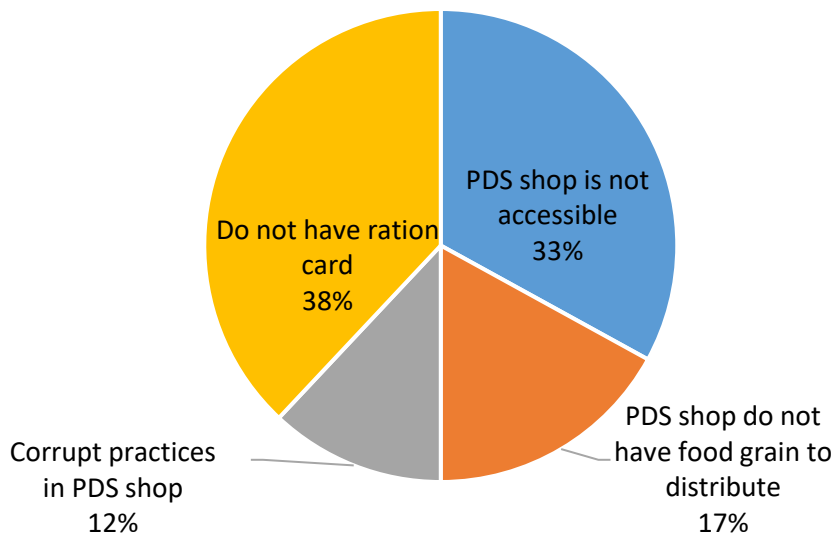
Accessibility of Food Grains in PDS Shop at low prices:							
District	Total Response	Yes	No	District	Total Response	Yes	No
Araria	8		8	Kishanganj	36	30	6
Aurangabad	2		2	Lakhisarai	2		2
Banka	4	4		Madhubani	8	4	4
Begusarai	1		1	Munger	3		3
Bhagalpur	3	3		Nawada	28	15	13
Bhojpur	4		4	Patna	6	3	3
Darbhanga	2	1	1	Rohtas	5	3	2
East Champaran	33	12	21	Samastipur	2		2
Gaya	8		8	Sitamarhi	67	56	11
Gopalganj	64	62	2	Siwan	2	1	1
Kaimur	1		1	Supaul	2	1	1
Katihar	1	1		West champaran	2		2
Khagaria	3	2	1	TOTAL	297	198	99

### Availed Free / Low Cost Food Materials from PDS



The reasons behind the inaccessibility of ration from PDS, 33% did not reach the PDS shop due to lockdown, 17% said that PDS shops don't have food grains to distribute, 12% said due to some kind of corrupt practices by PDS they could not availed food from PDS and rest 38% said that they do not have ration card or their names are not included in the ration card.

### Reasons for not receiving Food Grains



### Cash Incentives Received in Bank Account from Govt.

The direct cash transfer given by Govt. to the Jan Dhan Account of Daily wage earner but the data shows that 48% of them did not yet received it.

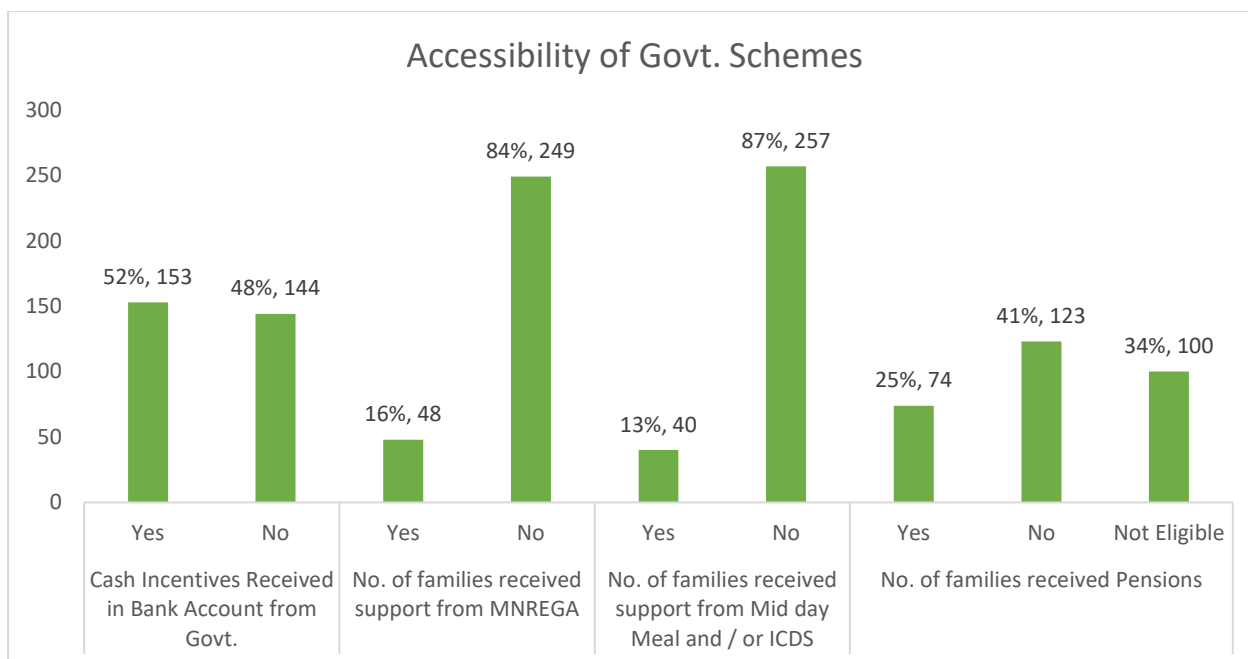
**No. of families received support from MNREGA:**

To provide support to the migrant labourers and other daily wage labourers, Govt. have put effort to start generating employment through MNREGA but the evidence speaks that only 16% of them received jobs through MNREGA.

When asking them about the availability and accessibility of support from Mid day Meal and / or ICDS during lockdown period, 87% responses in negative.

Availing amount from Pension: The data shows that only 25% of them received pension in their bank account and 41% said that they have not received it yet and rest 34% replied that there are not eligible for pension.

District	Total Respondent	Cash Incentives Received in Bank Account from Govt.		No. of families received support from MNREGA		No. of families received support from Mid day Meal and / or ICDS		No. of families received Pensions	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Araria	8	1	7		8	1	7		5
Aurangabad	2		2		2		2		2
Banka	4	1	3		4		4	4	
Begusarai	1		1		1		1	1	
Bhagalpur	3		3		3		3		3
Bhojpur	4		4		4		4		4
Darbhanga	2		2		2		2		
East Champaran	33	7	26	1	32	1	32	8	14
Gaya	8		8		8	4	4	1	6
Gopalganj	64	61	3	30	34	21	43	15	27
Kaimur	1		1		1		1		1
Katihar	1		1		1		1		1
Khagaria	3	1	2		3		3	3	
Kishanganj	36	13	23	9	27	4	32	17	16
Lakhisarai	2	1	1		2		2		1
Madhubani	8	1	7		8		8		5
Munger	3	1	2		3	1	2		3
Nawada	28	8	20		28	1	27	6	12
Patna	6	4	2		6		6		4
Rohtas	5	1	4		5		5	1	1
Samastipur	2		2		2		2		1
Sitamarhi	67	52	15	8	59	6	61	16	15
Siwan	2	1	1		2	1	1		
Supaul	2		2		2		2	1	1
West Champaran	2		2		2		2	1	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>123</b>
<b>Percentage</b>		<b>52%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>87%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>41%</b>



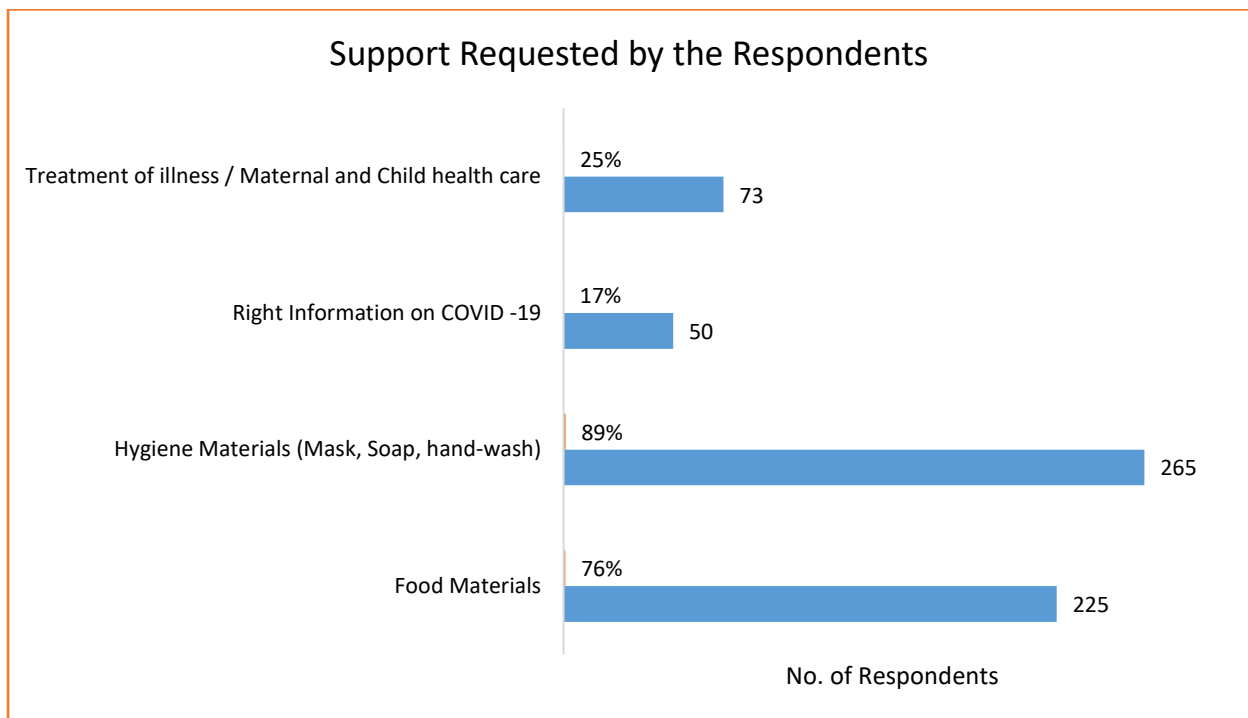
### Support Requested by the Respondents:

The data reveals that most of the respondent are facing food security problem as most of them have lost their employment (daily wage labourers). Out of 297 respondents, 225 of them are facing food security problem which is about 75% of the total respondent. 265 respondent i.e. 89% of them said that they need personal hygiene materials and mask to prevent themselves from getting infected. Only 17% of them need proper information related to Do's and Don'ts of COVID-19. About 25% of them realized that they need medical treatment of common ailment from the public health facilities including maternal health care which are being restricted due to lockdown.

Support Requested by the Respondents:					
District	Total Response	Food Materials	Hygiene Materials (Mask, Soap, hand-wash)	Right Information on COVID -19	Treatment of illness / Maternal and Child health care
Araria	8	5	8	2	
Aurangabad	2		2	1	1
Banka	4			3	1
Begusarai	1				1
Bhagalpur	3	2	1	3	
Bhojpur	4				1
Darbhanga	2	1	2	1	1
East Champaran	33	24	26	7	7
Gaya	8	8	8		
Gopalganj	64	53	64	1	1



Kaimur	1	1	1	1	1
Katihar	1	1	1		
Khagaria	3	2	3		
Kishanganj	36	32	36	14	25
Lakhisarai	2	1	1	1	1
Madhubani	8	4	5		
Munger	3	1	3	2	1
Nawada	28	26	28	5	9
Patna	6	4	4	1	
Rohtas	5	1	2	2	2
Samastipur	2	2	1	1	1
Sitamarhi	67	53	67	5	19
Siwan	2	1			1
Supaul	2	2	1		
West champan	2	1	1		
TOTAL	297	225	265	50	73
Percentage		76%	89%	17%	25%



### Support Required by Neighbours

Out of 297 respondents, 244 respondents said that their neighbours are also in need at this crucial time which is 82% of the total responses.

Out of 244 responses, 222 replied that their neighbour have shortage of food materials which is about 91% of the respondents. 163 respondents means 67% of them requested that their neighbours also require hygiene materials to prevent themselves for getting infected from

COVID-19. 34% respondents said that their neighbour needed public health care services for common ailments and 18% replied for proper information of COVID-19 (Do's and Don'ts).

District	Shortage of Food Materials	Lack of Hygiene Materials	Treatment of illness & maternal / child health care	Right Information regarding COVID-19
Araria	5	5	1	
Aurangabad		1		
Banka	4	4	3	3
Begusarai		1		1
Bhagalpur				
Bhojpur	3			3
Darbhanga	1	1	1	1
East Champaran	21	21	9	4
Gaya	8	8	3	3
Gopalganj	37	28	5	
Kaimur	1	1	1	1
Katihar	1	1		
Khagaria	1	2		1
Kishanganj	36	23	24	12
Lakhisarai	2		1	
Madhubani	7	8	3	
Munger	2	3	1	1
Nawada	28	10	4	5
Patna	4	3		
Rohtas	1	2	1	1
Samastipur	2	1	1	1
Sitamarhi	54	38	24	7
Siwan	1		1	
Supaul	2	1	1	1
West champaran	1	1		
TOTAL	222	163	84	45
Percentage	91%	67%	34%	18%

## RECOMMENDATION

BVHA conducted an online survey in 25 Districts of Bihar through the online survey through BVHA's Network member organizations across the State. The objective of the study was to understand the effect of current pandemic situation in those areas especially on the marginalized communities in Bihar. Government declared a 60 days lockdown which forced everyone to stay at home and allowed only the essential services. During the lockdown, the labour class people were mostly effected as all the means of livelihood was shutdown leaving them with no wage. Through the main findings, it came up that food crisis is the major issue of the target population along with availability of hygiene materials. Due to lack of monetary resources, people are unable to buy ration and vegetables. Though government has issued that free ration to the people who have ration card but many of them don't have those facilities. It is recommended that the Block Development Officer with the help of other service providers make a list of such people who have no access to ration cards and help them getting the new ration card as soon as possible. Secondly with the help of Civil Society Organizations reach those areas and provide dry ration till the lockdown period. Also very less people are getting access of wage employment through MNREGA and cash benefits from direct cash transfer could be an alternative option..

The finding also indicates the lack of hygiene kit to fight against COVID-19, due to lack of resources, villagers are not able to buy soaps in a frequent basis as the utilisation of soap has increased after the instruction of WHO. To ensure that families maintain proper hygiene the Govt. can provide sanitary kits among the people who are most vulnerable. The mask can be easily prepared at home or through SHG members (JEEVIKA) can prepare and distribute it among the community people.

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## Annexure: Questionnaire

To open the questionnaire, please double click the below object.

कोरोना वायरस कोविड -19 से सम्बंधित जानकारी  
\* Required

1. शिबि का नाम •  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. इलाका का नाम •  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. अपने गाँव का नाम •  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. उपरदस्ता का नाम •  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. उपरदस्ता का जिला •  
Mark only one oval.  
 टुंग  
 मीरत  
 पुरवांडर

6. उपरदस्ता का ठेका •  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. क्या आप कोरोना वायरस COVID -19 के बारे में जानते हैं? •  
Mark only one oval.  
 हाँ Skip to question 8  
 नहीं Skip to question 9

Untitled Section