



NON-TRADITIONAL LIVELIHOODS NETWORK

NTL NETWORK – SHARING AND REFLECTION DURING COVID19 LOCKDOWN

22nd April 2020, 11:30 am – 1:00 pm @Google Hangouts

Minutes of Meeting

As the Covid19 lockdown continued into its second month, the NTL network secretariat initiated some activities for collective sharing and connecting. First, a whats app group was created to enable members to share news from their respective field areas as well as discuss collective agendas. On 22nd April 2020, the network secretariat convened an online meeting of network members with the objective of sharing and reflection of experiences on the ground by all member organisations, and have the space for camaraderie and partnering with each other in these troubled times. The online meeting was set up by the network secretariat with the support of Ashutosh Tosaria from Quest Alliance. The meeting link and agenda was sent in advance to all members so that they could join effortlessly. The meeting was attended by 22 participants including, 18 people from fifteen member organisations; 2 individual members, 1 process documentation consultant and the network secretariat coordinator. All members of the network steering group attended this meeting. (see list at the end of minutes)

Agenda for Discussion

- **Sharing Experiences of Covid19**
- **What do you see as the way forward for livelihoods post Covid19? What can we do together?**
- **Mapping the Covid19 realities and narratives that you are encountering every day, stories from the ground**
- **Format for an Advocacy document that all of us can use**

Amrita Gupta, NTL Secretariat Coordinator welcomed all members. She invited the members to share how each organisation is responding to the situation on the ground and what it is doing to support the affected communities in terms of livelihood loss due to the lockdown and the near disaster situation being faced. She also explained the methodology for the discussion wherein members could post questions on the chat box and those would be taken up once there are five or more questions, before moving on.

Session I

Jan Vikas, Ahmedabad (Kirti Joshi):

- Recently started 10 self-managed community kitchen in collaboration with the DCP in Zone 5 of Ahmedabad. Approximately 4500 migrants and homeless people are being given meals twice a day.
- From 25th March, when the lockdown was announced, Jan Vikas has supported people with dry ration kits, hygiene kit, food packets, as well as cash transfers for medicines, vegetables etc.
- Through the Centre for Social Justice, district legal service authorities have been activated and implemented in four states of India. Some 800 paralegals have been developed with facilitation guide books through which they are helping people understand the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana and other packages announced by the state government. This is being done to educate the community and letting them know who is eligible for what.
- Jan Vikas's community radio called Nazariya is broadcasting educational messages; and the Ahmedabad police is also using this radio, which is a good collaboration.

- Through an institutional collaboration with the Indian institute of Public Health in Gandhinagar, wherein 1600 community leaders will be trained for COVID-19 and beyond for all the communicable diseases.

Quest Alliance (Angela Jean D'souza): Angela began by introducing herself to the network members (working with the Youth and Employability programme at Quest) as it was the first NTL network meeting she was attending. As the lockdown began, the organisation quickly moved in with efforts reaching the youth so that they use their time productively.

- Through the 'My Quest' programme, it works with youth in communities and also with ITIs and polytechnics. Over the past lockdown month, the organisation has conducted around 220 or so virtual sessions and managed to reach 60 80 students per session, 14000 in all, on issues of employability, gender, even Covid19 etc. Quest got experts to speak to the youth through zoom, Facebook, Google hangout etc. for those who had personal access to these platforms through smart phones or computers.
- A distress helpline has been started for the youth who would like to speak to someone. <https://bit.ly/QuestHelpline> The team that was usually in the field is now doubling up as volunteers to just talk to the students of the ITI and also the alumna, getting questions about stress; what is COVID, what it means to get the infection, questions about the viability of their jobs and if a family has lost their income how to deal with it? The volunteers respond to these queries sensitively and serious problems are referred for mental health support. The helpline is being publicised widely.
- The organisation is building capacities of its trainers so that they get adapted to run online sessions, and hold run webinars for the youth virtually.
- Use of IVRS, SMS to send out positive messages to the students.
- Reached out to the industry on how they are responding to this, through a survey with 110 employers to see immediate actions they have taken. The findings are that not so much has changed apart from the fact businesses have shut and are working from home. They continue to pay the salaries to the students for the month for March. Quest will be revisiting the survey to see if there will be any changes in May as it is anticipated there may be some changes in how the industry responds then.
- Quest has been reaching out to its working alumni to understand their status, have they lost incomes or are they on leave without pay and what has been the impact on them.
- At a larger level, Quest has been writing appeals and letters to employees to hold back major decisions as their jobs means a lot to the young people coming from weaker sections of the society and they would like the salaries to tide over these times.
- Quest has been engaging with partner NGOs across the country in the past one month—who are involved in distributing rations, trying to get funds for the communities, providing psycho-social support though in an unstructured way. Some of them are making masks, some of them are making sanitizers.

Humsafar, Lucknow (Richa):

- The organisation has, since the lockdown began been working among 40 local communities where it works on issues of gender and violence. It is supporting struggling women, youth, women who are survivors of violence and the e-rickshaw drivers whose livelihoods have completely stopped, through dry rations, sanitary pads, contraceptives, cooked food, etc.
- Humsafar is on the national level helpline through which it is accessible to women who are facing domestic violence and sharing their mental health issues.

iPartner India (*Sumedha Sharma*):

- Reaching out to 6000 families across different states through its partners. These are mainly migrants and those people who are not getting rations from the state, so providing dry rations in the immediate.
- On a long term basis, trying to look into how activities will change post-COVID-19 for the partners.
- Focussing on the children with which the organisation is working, especially since they are right now in confined spaces either at homes or shelter homes, what are the safety measures that can be put in place. iPartner is planning a series of Webinars on this topic with its partners and other organisations.

Akshara, Mumbai (*Nandita Shah*): Given that the situation is really bad, the organisation was looking at multiple ways to respond.

- The first kind of reaction was reaching out with food rations, sanitary napkins, etc. through different partners. A platform of 19 organisations in Mumbai has come together to co-ordinate the relief work so that inter-area networking is possible. Relief is being done through a network of ration shops so that they are paid through Paytm and people can go there and pick up the rations, especially as it is very difficult to reach people's houses in Bombay city.
- Akshara has tied up with some mental health professionals who are giving their time on certain days to help its community requiring mental health services. The young people have also been given information about other helplines such as Icall etc.
- Akshara is encouraging the communities to do some kind of creative work like drawings etc. and then putting them on social media like Facebook etc., sharing and talking of being positive in this kind of an atmosphere.
- The bigger action taken recently was a campaign on lockdown on domestic violence—an issue on which nationally all-women groups have come together through the Aman network. They have contacted Smriti Irani and expressed concern about increasing violence that women are facing these days and that there are no systems in place. Akshara realised that they needed to make a larger noise on this issue. They connected with celebrities and were surprised to get their support from Virat to Anushka and many others. It was not that difficult to get them on board. The biggest challenge was how do we give one helpline number along with backend support. There was no point in giving a number as 181 and 1091 does not work in Maharashtra. Akshara tied up with the Maharashtra government to work on the backend system. Mobile numbers have been collected from across the state of all service providers in every district which has about 20 people who can be contacted including shelter homes and hospitals where there are Dilasa centres. The 100 number can also be contacted now as well as the district level numbers. The campaign's launch from the Chief Minister's office has given it that seriousness; it has been created in three languages and has been sent by several Bollywood and cricket celebrities. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y0fgSE9nS2k>

Nirantar (*Purnima Gupta*): Like other organisations, Nirantar has also been working with partner organisations since the lockdown began. Nirantar runs various programmes of literacy and girl child education, with partner organisations in the three states of Delhi, UP and Bihar.

- Nirantar started with sharing information with partners on the different types of methods that can be used for relief operations during the lockdown.
- The first action was in making lists of families who needed dry rations and who required cooked meals.
- Being located in Delhi, implied that the organisation had easy access to information that could be used to provide relief, for example filling forms for those who do not have ration cards.

- The field workers, volunteers and teachers of Nirantar's programmes worked very quickly using the mobile phones to track the learners and alumni, women and girls helped with a coordinated effort to reach out to communities during this lockdown.
- The organisations that participated in this were Action India; Bal Umang Drishya Sansthan; Shiksha Kendra Women's Collective in Bihar and Nirantar
- Across the three states, work is being done in Delhi in the East, North and South Delhi; in UP, Lalitpur and Bareilly; in Bihar, Gaya, Muzaffarpur, Kaimur, Sitamarhi, Sasaram and West Champaran work is being done. In Bihar, the relief is being done through the Women's Federation and until now, 2000 families have been delivered cooked meals; more than 500 families have been helped to apply for ration cards online. Financial help and medical aid has also been provided. Since all these partner organisations are rooted in their field, they have been able to raise and do a lot of relief efforts at their individual level from leveraging funds to relief materials.
- Since the organisations are working in areas like Bihar, UP and Bundelkhand region, they thought about developing some information in the local language. A podcast was thus developed knowing that most of the people who are in the rural or tribal areas don't have a Smartphone. The podcast is in Bundeli and Hindi language. Out of the two podcasts they have made, the first one is on the precautionary measures that volunteers can take while helping in the COVID situation. The other podcast concerns facts and myths regarding the epidemic. This is also available in three different languages.
- The Covid19 situation has motivated the teachers, volunteers and field workers to work even harder and faster at various levels, and therefore Nirantar started a few sharing forums. This includes two zoom chambers where a multitude of members have attended to share their experience and feelings. This sharing is not about the work done, but about their feelings, their own experiences. For example, a lot of the women are used to doing a lot of work outside of the home but now there are restrictions on their mobility, they are trapped inside their homes. Suddenly they are facing mental health issues, different kinds of experiences are emerging—some women are getting support at home, some are being questioned as to why they are getting calls late at night. These forums for the workers and staff have been significant in these times, and also to enable them to brainstorm ideas on better ways to tackle the endemic. Out of the volunteers, almost 99% of them are women and girls and the amount of energy and work they are putting in is amazing.
- There is also concern at the learning centres and at the organisational level about the gap in education due to the lockdown and how this will affect the performance of their female students.

Amrita: I agree that women are at the forefront of the fight and without the hard work and dedication of our members they would not have been able to reach the level of community participation that they have. This point that you have raised is extremely important about the leadership of the women at the forefront.

Purnima: Another thing I would like to raise is the lack of accessibility of women to even essentials like mobile phones. Only some days ago I got a call from a woman telling me about how she is unable to even access telecommunication facilities and so even though the government has worked to create a lot of helplines these are null and void because women are not able to access mobiles.

Etasha Society (Anindita): The day we understood that the lockdown was imminent, Etasha began working remotely.

- Within three weeks into the lockdown, Etasha began online classes with the trainees, especially those in the vocational training programme.
- All our banking staff started working from home and we tried to figure out what kind of help people needed; for some, we transferred some money also. When we were talking to them we could understand that they might be we want money for gas cylinders or medicines, sanitary napkins so we started giving money to our trainees, but not to the community.

- Etasha distributed ration to about 1200 families.
- Funding was received to stitch masks through our women entrepreneurs group but we also figured out that this work can be done with the community as a whole depending on whoever wants to do so to earn some money. Etasha identified people who knew tailoring and had machines and have started getting masks made by them. Around 120000 masks have been made in Mangolpuri and around.
- As a lot of calls started coming in from students for counselling, a collaboration is being set up with Quest Alliance to start an online counselling process.
- Since a lot of Etasha's facilitators, traders, and team members are living alone and everyone is uncertain about the future with the change of work scenario—online meditation and other in house training facilitation programmes have been initiated.
- Reaching out to every trainee at a personal level. Since internet speed, data, etc. are an issue, Etasha is offering trainees support in different ways as possible.

Though it is not clear as to what will happen in the next few months, Etasha is pivoting itself according to the need of the hour.

Nari-O-Shishu Kalyan Kendra (*Rahima Khatun*): The organisation is working in Howrah district which is in the red zone because of the number of positive cases and also a death case.

- Working with the staff and SHG groups through phone and also looking at migrant labour that is from Jharkhand and Bihar.
- Trying to link up with the government facilities and monitoring if support is reaching communities, using the existing network.
- Working with 1000 street children by providing nutritious diet. 700 people were provided with dry rations, sanitary napkins through the municipality. The organisation is part of the monitoring committee which ensures that rations are reaching the needy.
- The organisation is also looking at Zari workers who have gone to Bombay and Gujarat who are facing ration and problems of returning home so trying to see how to plan and use networks to get them back.

Abhivyakti (*Nitin Paranjpe*): When the lockdown began, the organisation was wondering what is to be done and team members were given some homework to think about possible actions. Soon after, distress phone calls started coming in from the field for help. Abhivyakti works in 80 villages of North Maharashtra across Nashik, Nandurbar, Jalgaon, Dhule. These are tribal villages and inaccessible.

- Through field contacts, the organisation started exploring what is happening in the villages. Two things emerged: one that there was a huge food shortage, ration shops were not equipped and the stock had run out and private shops were selling at a higher cost. The poor people who were landless and daily wagers were finding it difficult to cope with their storage and had also run out of rations which was also disturbing. The second was that the villagers had the belief that the virus as a devil and they would not sleep at night, instead started doing rituals to get rid of the virus. Even though the field staff was trying to tell them that this was not correct, they themselves were not clear about COVID so the field workers put their act together.

First, they started providing communication material to the villagers through the local village level contacts –from YouTube and WhatsApp, WHO posters on different themes like hygiene, social distancing, stigma. They made short video films on social distancing, what kind of care to be taken and that the virus will go away eventually so not to worry, etc. The villagers were also informed about their rights vis-a-vis entitlements from the government during this crisis. With material provided by the Government of Maharashtra and UNICEF, the field team started working with the local Panchayat telling them to get active and find out who are the most affected. So this was all about creating awareness and providing information.

Second, families who were affected and in need of food were identified and coordination was done through the government to reach the villagers located in remote areas. With the right to food campaign, they got in touch with the Food Collector's, shared the list with the district collectors with copies to the legal cells, established by the Government of Maharashtra. They were informed by the villagers that the government is cross-checking if the food shortage was real and they were asking the ration shops to provide food. The right to food campaign asked them to connect with some of the workers from Assam who were stranded near a village in Nashik. They got them connected to the collector's office that could provide them with whatever was required. The main need was of food which was taken care of by the government. Abhivyakti thus ventured into actions which were not a part of the work earlier like linkages and coordination with the government. The government is also responding very well to the situation which has helped removed the organisations' bias against the government particularly the Shiv Sena government responding was a surprise to Abhivyakti. This has been happening and it is very good.

- Nitin hosted two calls with young people on the parent-child relationship. The call was called Mein, Mummy aur Papa (Me and mummy-papa), held on a Monday and Tuesday for two hours and brought the parents and children together to resolve any differences. Through some tools and engagement, we could reach out to them and dialogue with them and come out with some kind of message for them.
- Another intervention being done in collaboration with Shikshantar, Udaipur and a friend in United Kingdom is around the 10 by 10 program which means that any issue could be solved by having multiple solutions to that. If multiple things are working on the same solutions it could be solved. We have put together an online course on complexities. To our surprise more than a hundred people from all over the world participated and this was played over five sessions with some preparatory calls.
- Abhivyakti is working with girls in villages and asking them about their mental health and providing them with some counselling. The organisation is putting them in touch with local doctors who could give them some counselling sessions.
- The girls have been asked to meet another 10-15 other girls in their villages (either through phone calls or visits) to find out the impact of COVID in their life, their family and community. This survey is being done by the girls in 10 villages. The processes are on and they will be compiling the findings and sharing with others.
- The girls have been asked to shoot video interviews about their families, people's suffering and share it with them. Similarly, they have been asked to write articles which are called Voices from the Grassroots and these will soon be published in the local newspapers who have agreed to give them space.
- Most of Abhivyakti's staff who were not so savvy with computers have all started interacting regularly on zoom and are getting used to this kind of processes and to our surprise, their meetings wrap up in one hour which in office environments takes three to four hours so this also increases the efficiency.

Azad Foundation (*Meenu Vadera*): Azad Foundation is working in Delhi, Jaipur, Kolkata and Indore (with Samaan) and it has been in touch with all the community level people, about 2000 of them. Many of them are trainees and drivers and others. For drivers, the business has completely stopped as Sakha cabs cannot run during the lockdown. This has made everyone very anxious as they are at home and without work. In a very decentralized manner, each team is in touch twice a week with every single person.

- Azad has done two rounds of direct support in terms of food delivery and rations along with sanitary stuff, etc. It has helped communities link up with other organisations that are working in the local areas and with the government.

- In Delhi, the government came out with an offer of helping drivers with Rs.5000/- a month. Azad staff has helped the women file the applications and connect them with whatever relief is available.
- The organisation has also responded to various distress calls from the community. For example, in one case, some vegetable vendors have gone out to sell despite the lockdown and police took them in. The Azad team got in touch with the SHO and been able to prevail on the police to release them. Though there has not been any extreme case of deliberate cruelty but the police is strict to maintain a lockdown in which case the vulnerable people as they are not able to defend themselves.
- Developed an App with the help of an organisation called Dhawani, which will help Azad stay in touch with its 2000 women and continue to get information from them. These 2000 women drivers will further cover their Gali-Mohalla (local streets and colony) to connect with 20 to 30 households and enable Azad to channelize its help whether it is food security, gender-based violence, busting Covid19 myths and sharing reality and if required, how to access treatment.
- Azad is hoping to do more to help the community once the lockdown is lifted or relaxed in terms of legal counselling and psychological counselling and any other help they may require.

Magic Bus (*Anuj Alphonso*): Like any other organisation, Magic Bus got hit very badly as a result of COVID and the lockdown and it were not prepared as the organisation is community-driven and all the work happens in an 'in-person' sort of format; even the livelihood training is highly collaborative and experiential in nature. There is very little e-learning component in its work and the same is with the largest adolescent programme which is the mother's programme. The organisation had to suddenly devolve towards a virtual mode of training and operating. As a large organisation, regrouping was difficult due to the multiple levels of work while ensuring that communication is all-inclusive. The organisation spent the first few days in looking at the impact of the lockdown on different levels of its work. We operate in different states and levels and it was important that we take stock on each of these levels. Most of our operations are driven through volunteers, numbering about 10000 people. Most of them do not own phones. We asked ourselves various questions about our plan of action for the future. One indication we got from the government was that this situation from a lockdown standpoint was going to be like that for the next six months in a very harsh manner. Social distancing was going to be given a lot of weight even after the lockdown was lifted, and it was clear that our work was going to be affected and we were never going to return to the pre-COVID situation before six to eight months.

- Magic Bus has initiated a relief to recovery programme, wherein the first step was to help and deliver aid to the community and ensure their survival. Most of the community members were BPL who relied on one family member for the entire family income and had, on an average five to six dependents. The government of India is also taking this initiative. It was important that whatever programme we take up for the next 6 to 10 months will primarily address the survival of families and help them connect with whatever is available through the government and various NGOs.
 - One, we are trying to spread a lot of social awareness on social distancing and corona virus. Despite intense Government and NGO activity, there was a massive lack of awareness. A lot of people are influenced by whatever community members were saying rather than what instructions are being given by the government so our effort is to spread the right kind of awareness about the corona virus.
 - Second, we are trying to create supply lines for food, and have partnered with multiple NGOs for food delivery.
 - Lastly, we started thinking about relief efforts because probably the only earning member in the family had lost his job and so we came up with the approach that was based on the household. So we try to create an approach where everyone in the family was able to contribute economically to the well being of the family. This is a family-based approach to livelihood where instead of just getting one member of the family, every member would become economically productive and we are trying to link them to government schemes which would make them financially productive. The aim is not

only to survive but to recover from the financial crisis caused due to the coronavirus impacts.

- Magic Bus organised a roundtable conference with the fraternity, and one of the challenges that came up was the low Smartphone penetration in the country so we have to look at a lot of other options like common community radio options to increase our outreach. Internet bandwidth was also a big issue because a lot of people have moved to the internet for their daily work however, due to the small size of internet packages establishing learning continuity in this areas is very difficult due to the internet consumption of conference calls.
- Magic Bus has taken stock of how many alumni have lost their jobs.
- Magic Bus has also looked at what advice the community was following, was it actually utilising advise provided by trusted medical sources and government or were there just following common say practices. We had to find a way to reach out directly to the people and ensure that the message that we were delivering was correct. Virtual learning was something that we immediately moved on to. Most of the youth who are educated do not own a desktop so we have to move on to a Smartphone-based approach early on. We have decided that we will not stop and roll in more batches however, we will reduce the number of students being taken. At this time, we would also not take on youth who do not own at least one Smartphone in the family. Magic Bus organised a crowdfunding campaign through its alumina network.
- Magic Bus organised a local helpline to let community members reach out to us. Unfortunately, a lot of calls were on domestic violence and also people not having enough resources and people being unable to look for them. There was also a very widespread image that the police are extremely insensitive in terms of handling the situation, and there was a lot of anger among the people.
- Magic Bus initiated a nationwide socio-economic survey to capture about the community was thinking and the impact of the COVID-19 on these communities. We did this to fine-tune a programming approach in the next months.
- The team being led by Anuj is working twice as hard, almost 12 to 14 hours a day to keep reassessing the situation and stay ahead of the curve. In a lot of cases, local and state governments are having a lot of say in the decisions being taken on the ground as well as the method of operations as compared to the central government and therefore we are trying to ensure that our organisation is highly decentralized in our responses.

Jabala Action Research Centre (*Baithali Ganguly*): The organisation is mainly working with adolescents and young adults. In Kolkata, in the red light area, prostitutes have completely lost their livelihood another place is tea gardens, even in Murshidabad, and in some areas in Jharkhand where it is difficult to reach even in normal times.

- It was very difficult initially to respond but the organisation began to do so even though 80% of the adolescents did not have smartphones. Even for ration, the local volunteers were given the money to provide them. The safety equipment mask help us in rural areas where people not able to afford normal protective gear.
- One huge challenge related to the migrant workers stranded in other states like Tamil Nadu, Delhi, Orissa, Maharashtra, who are not being taken care of properly by the state governments and starved for many days. We were unable to even provide them food and they were starving.
- The main problem we faced in Jharsuguda and Cuttack where the inspection team asked the community on what sort of work they did that they can support themselves for 1 month. Family depend on the migrant workers in the initial stages of the lockdown they did send some of the money after that this started taking loans from the neighbour and also put their gold ornaments as a mortgage so now they're at a starving situation.

- Jabala is looking into this along with domestic violence and they are also working with the government in West Bengal there is another problem that the COVID cases data are not correct. First, there are lots of community problems and it is a real challenge to work with the government. Many places NGOs are not allowed to get in touch with the community that is a situation they are struggling.

Sujata Gothoskar (Mumbai): One of the main issues in Bombay and many other places is that migrant workers want to go home but are stranded and are not allowed to go and everything is over- ration is over and they cannot pay rent.

The women's collective that Sujata is part of started working with two helplines in these lockdown times, one was a family-based helpline and one was a proper call Centre setup. The calls are attended by a team of local volunteers and coordinators. Most of the calls are coming from Bombay mainly migrants but also other family members. Some of the calls are from outside Bombay too and some from Delhi (especially the riot-affected people in the camps that have been shut down). These callers are Muslim women and some of them quite young girls who homes have been destroyed and vegetable carts have been destroyed. Initially the helpline calls were for basic needs, but since the lockdown extension, there are much more distress calls coming in.

Kriti team (Aanchal Kapur):

- The Kriti team has responded to the Covid19 crisis by supporting domestic workers in two low-income areas of Dehradun with dry rations as they faced the crisis of lesser pay from their employers. A partner organisation called Astitva has worked in this area since 2008 and we are trying to revive the work there, and this response was made after we got some distress calls of women facing domestic violence.
- The Kriti Film Club has also been recommending documentary films since 21st March 2020 so that young people, adults and elders across intersectionalities get to connect with the issues deeply affected the marginalised in the country. These films can also be good resources for all the network partners to use in their virtual classrooms and we could facilitate discussions around them for your communities. We have also been sharing the resources, fund raisers and appeals by network members and other peer organisations through our social media and mailing lists.

All members pointed out that their staff, volunteers, field workers are working even more than pre-Covid and many of the organisations are constantly ensuring experience sharing and dialogue within the organisation to provide support and succour to them and keep the motivation levels high. Many of them have very quickly picked up digital skills and become savvy in using digital media through the smart phone and computers while in the stayhome lockdown mode.

Session II

Amrita Gupta: We have heard about issues of food security, migrants beings stuck, young people's anxieties, gender-based violence,, on how we are creating virtual networks and how people on the ground are building networks, alliances, podcast videos, etc.

One of the agenda's that the network could consider working on together is to create a repository of these narratives that we are getting from the field. Each organisation could share atleast two narratives of on the condition at the ground and what is the kind of work being done.

Network members could get people to talk about their issues from different areas, since we are talking to youth, women, rural people, urban issues, migrants, so we could just look at this and talk about the issues and its state-wise and then do advocacy around it. Members were requested to share their views on this proposition.

Nandita: The objective of why and what advocacy needs to be very clear if we are to develop any creative resources. For example, as a group of this kind, it would be really good to have resources like what Quest is talking about or maybe combining all the Helpline centres there we have access to. For example, collate all the mental health and domestic violence helplines and all the online resources that Quest or Magic Bus has put together. This kind of **resource compilation** is a better idea than to get

stories. Resource compilation can be shared and people/ organisations will find their ways to use that. If one wants to advocacy, the network would have to create a focus of why and what. For example, for the lockdown on domestic violence campaign, the organisations came together as part of the Aman platform, we went to Smriti Irani and then rolled it out from the Chief Minister's office. ***Advocacy agenda has to be very specific, and NTL is not really the subject to focus on in the present context.***

Amrita: I was not looking at NTL but the **future of livelihood** as its unfolding as a result of the current context. Inviting other members to share their thoughts and interest in working on this agenda together.

Nandita Shah: On the issue of helplines, a question remains on especially women on how their phones are going to be recharged and how they are going to access which is the big challenge. This is from Akshara's experience that it is easier to give a number that women will remember like 100 or 181. The whole idea of the number 100 is that the police are not going to arrive or do anything about it but we are connecting them to the service providers through the number 100 and that will help. So the police will do the connect instead of asking every woman or helpline to connect. So that was the concern we had and since 100 is there in every district we have created this district wise list that they can be connected to. The challenge remains on how women will really access this helpline and also in all fairness how much help is going to come. Even protection officers in Maharashtra are an essential service provider but how much are they going to arrive or enter dead zones. So these questions need to be taken little by little, case-by-case but at least a commitment from the state has to be there that they are willing to look at this issue as an important one as any other issue in the Covid scenario. ***If Quest does a training for a large group of people Akshara's members can also join and this kind of resource sharing among network members would be valuable.***

Sujata: Amrita pointed out on the future of livelihood and given the Indian level of unemployment it is a very crucial issue and one needs to both get a commitment from the state as well as think in terms of how one can or what are the proposals we can give. A couple of days ago the government said that they will increase the working hours from 8 to 12 which I think is one of the most retrograde things that can happen. What the state should be doing is more people in jobs and reducing the working hours, so things like this if one can very concretely work on ***what is the future of livelihoods, what is the future of employment and at what levels can we protect workers*** or give concrete suggestions on various issues. Whether it is in terms of Azad, Sakha etc. on how do we look at other livelihoods, unemployment of the community that we work in. What can be the level of networking that we can do and the level of advocacy we can talk in terms of giving concrete proposals to the government. The reality is that the government is also stuck and not that they are politically willing but that has to be created by us. So, it is a very good idea to have a meeting where we each look at and share what is happening in my constituency and hence this is what is required, this is what needs to be done and this is the way to look at it in terms of sharing experiences resources and advocacy.

Purnima: To take from what Sujata is saying and I feel that this lockdown situation needs a structural focus like gender, equality, religion, caste, etc. are looked into. In this situation, livelihood is a very big issue and along with that, all other aspects will have an impact on it. We all work on different issues but under this lockdown situation, an important issues that we are dealing now is ***food security, livelihoods*** and the COVID-19 situation is going to persist for the next one and half years. Especially if we look at marginalised communities like transgenders, Dalits, and women, the question about their livelihoods is big and as a network we need to think of ***how we will work together on these issues concerning livelihood.*** We all have different expertise and it will good to see them pooled in. We need to put into respective resources. If one organisation is working on education and the usage of the digital medium and since our community workers are now also getting more accustomed to digital education, digital literacy which has also increased, we take it further in a more concrete way since there are still many materials still in English. So converting them into local languages which can be accessed by communities, as a network how can we connect to do this together.

Meenu: Many great ideas are coming up and the suggestions are very valuable and we can move ahead with them. I want to add that even the fact that this network is around, and the whole issue of

livelihoods and the diverse trends we bring in, is critical. The network presents clarity and experience of many different states and different kinds of vulnerable groups. So there is a lot being discussed about migrants that is one large group which is visible right now, but there are also people in the rural areas, daily wagers maybe 2nd-3rd generation migrants, and ofcourse women from across class and caste. From both these perspectives we could develop a kaleidoscope of ***how these different marginalised groups are suffering, what is the kind of reality and experience and also some options***. For example, it is true that we have just started going digital and we had wished to earlier but the fact is that it would have taken many years to get into. There can be a whole lot of ***livelihoods coming from this whole digitisation scenario***. So from both in terms of experiences of the group we bring in, some and add to the voices from the ground and at the same time in terms of helplines and call centres, the various online initiatives on what is working would be my suggestion on what is going forward.

Amrita: There is a ***change in livelihoods*** like the daily wagers are selling vegetables so we have to think about these issues. For example, someone who is working on traditional skills will also move to different jobs. We have to think in terms of how we are going to look at that, especially for the migrant families.

Nandita: Let's look at the future of work at two levels. One is while the lockdown is on, what are the options because they will open up in some areas and may not open in some. Is there any way we can think, to find some immediate ways to find work like stitching, etc. for women. Second, we want to work on government policy and its impact.

Amrita: I am hearing a lot of talk of livelihoods that are emerging right now and in the future. What kind of options will be available? We can use our experience to determine options for rural areas, migrants and other vulnerable groups. We should structure the first part of our collective agenda on the different kinds of narratives and perspectives we are seeing. For example, the kind of livelihood opportunities are coming up, and the future of work in this context, like work and education from home, and the setting up of small businesses. I will work on a format and share it with you, which you can fill in with your experiences. It would be great to have a collaborative group to work on it to fill in their experiences and recommendations.

Anuj Alphonso: We have initiated discussions with various employers at various levels across multiple sectors, and expect a greater level of participation and collaboration of organizations. But now, the equation has changed in demand and supply, with new demands and new nature of employment, which calls for greater cooperation and collaboration. We need to cooperate with industries on what kind of labour demand is rising. The rural-based livelihood situation will get a burst, as migrants who sent money back from cities will now be looking for ways to earn within the village. We will have to revisit what we are compiling over the next thirty days because even employers are unsure of their needs, and are not immediately making long-term binding plans.

Amrita: The last thing I would like to say is that we would like to create a collaborative platform, and it would be great to facilitate and share information in the network.

Participant list

1. Purnima Gupta, Nirantar, New Delhi
2. Archana Dwivedi, Nirantar, New Delhi (NTLN SG)
3. Meenu Vadera, Azad Foundation, New Delhi (NTLN SG)
4. Nandita Shah, Akshara, Mumbai (NTLN SG)
5. Sumedha Sharma, iPartner, New Delhi
6. Ashutosh Tosaria, Quest Alliance
7. Angela Jean D'Souza, Quest Alliance
8. Vriti Sawhney, Quest Alliance
9. Baitali Ganguly, Jabala, Kolkata (NTLN SG)
10. Raheema Khatum, Nari-O-Shishu Kalyan Kendra, Kolkata
11. Thressiamma Mathew, Archana Women's Centre, Kerala (could not share due to weak internet connection) (NTLN SG)

12. Anuj Alphonso, Magic Bus, New Delhi
13. Kirti Joshi, Jan Vikas, Ahmedaba
14. Richa, Humsafar, Lucknow
15. Rajendra Bandhu, Samaan, Indore (had to leave early due to some field urgency) (NTLN SG)
16. Anindita Kar Gupta, Etasha Society, Noida
17. Nitin Paranjpe, Abhivyakti, Nagpur
18. Anna Tores, Open Eyes
19. Adil Ali, New Delhi (NTLN SG)
20. Sujata Gothoskar, Mumbai
21. Amrita Gupta, NTL Network secretariat, New Delhi
22. Aanchal Kapur, Process Documentation consultant