

RISE

Remedial Innovation in School Education

RISE Update | July 2020 | Mental Peace in Children

As COVID-19 pandemic continues to expand in India and in the world, only one thing is certain: the current outbreak will have profound impact not only in the health and economic situation, but also on the psychosocial well-being of children. In the current context of lock down and restriction of movements, children have constrained access to socialization, play, and even physical contact, critical for their psychosocial wellbeing and development. School closures are preventing children from access to learning and limiting their interactions with peers. Children may feel confused and at loss with the current situation, leading to frustration and anxiety, which will only increase with the overexposure to mass and social media, especially among adolescents. Some adults may struggle to find ways to explain and communicate with children about the current situation in a way that is understandable by this age group, which will add frustration and disquietude. Being very keen observers of people and environments, children will notice, absorb and react to the stress in their caregivers and community members, which unavoidably will affect their well-being. And the above is only the beginning. Levels of stress will be exponentially higher among vulnerable families. RISE is taking all possible steps to uphold the morale, positivity and optimism of children.



Coping with Education in Covid



Online education is not as easy as speaking into the microphone at one end, and connecting a laptop and listening in on the other; there are challenges faced at both ends of the spectrum – students as well as the faculty. As soon as the COVID-19 crisis broke out in India, the schools & colleges announced the suspension of classes until March 31. While schools & colleges were closed, everyone waited to see what would happen next, so they started exploring online classes. COVID-19 has forced universities across India, and the world indeed, to suspend physical classrooms and shift to online classes. In India, while this transition has been smooth for most private schools, the public ones are still adapting. Faculty members started giving lectures online (on Google Meet, Zoom, etc.). So, the academic activities are much less affected in private schools but on the other hand children of public schools were worst hit by this decision. However, while technology is enabling, it can also be limiting, especially in India, where basic access is a challenge. Not every student has a computer or fast-streaming internet at home. This

leads to issues with attendance and participation in online sessions. The main issue with online teaching is that some of our students come from remote villages with slow and patchy internet access. Educators quoted, *"Many of our students' parents survive on 1GB or 2GB daily data plans on their phones — not everyone has Wi-Fi at home — and they have to manage their entire course work on that."* Thus, to combat this situation RISE-AROH educators conveyed the same to AROH team and decided to provide them internet recharge packs to create Whatsapp groups for their children class wise so that online classes can be conducted easily. Every month this responsibility is taken very strictly by RISE educators that they daily do video call to their students and get their problems solved. AROH-RISE educators record short

videos based on the topics of the syllabus, regulate them into Whatsapp groups and help students to cope up with their syllabus.

To alleviate these circumstances, we need to start realising that the education of students has to be equally targeted alongside measures for health and food security. As the old adage goes *"Today's children are tomorrow's citizens,"* yet if the lessons from the pandemic are anything to by, much more can be done in this interim to better prepare these citizens for an uncertain future. Education is not just about classes. It is about





interactions, broadening of ideas, free-flowing open discussions, debates, and mentoring of each student, this is what AROH Foundation is trying to help with the current situation of children. While we try to do all of this, we covered almost all the children through online platform. In this time of crisis, a well-rounded and effective educational practice is what is needed for the capacity-building of young minds. It will develop skills that will drive their employability, productivity, health, and well-being in the decades to come, and ensure the overall progress of India.



Contributing towards mother nature



“Just living is not enough, one must have sunshine, freedom, and a little flower.” – Hans Christian Andersen.

RISE-AROH has had a long standing tradition of preservation of culture, heritage and flora and fauna of the environment. In order to sensitize RISE students & educators towards the need to preserve our environment and ecology, tree plantation drives are organised in the areas of Mundka, Delhi from time to time. These drives were held during which trees were planted around the area of Mundka. Mr Yogesh Lakra, RISE Project Coordinator, RISE educators and few students were present on the occasion and they planted numerous trees like tamarind, *Ashoka*, *Neem*, *Belpatra*, *Saptarni*, *Kadamb* and *Kachnaar*, *peepal*, *safeda*, etc. The students participated in the drive enthusiastically and helped each other in planting the saplings to make it a big success. The students and staff participated in the tree plantation drive with great Zeal and





enthusiasm and thus made it successful. The students planted around 51 saplings, fenced them and watered the plants in order to restore the eco-balance of the afforestation drive was taken with all seriousness. The students along with the teachers also took an oath to look after the planted saplings, plant more and more trees and encourage others to do the same. Some of the students also shared their experiences and shared their joy with others.

Every step of the programme was appreciated by the representatives of the administration. The programme created a great stir among the general public too. Such little steps taken together by the school and students will surely help in fostering strong mental and social health amongst today's children so that they connect with their peers, their elders, their community and their environment.



Covid Relief Work



Several hundreds of guest workers, most of whom have either lost their jobs or have not been paid salaries for months, never got their hands on the ration kits, provided free by AROH Foundation during the bad times COVID-19 Pandemic. While the civic body claims that over hundreds of ration kits were distributed, many labourers, whose names are not in the government database, were left to fend for themselves through the lockdown. Informal settlements are experiencing a great surge in COVID-19 cases than other urban neighbourhoods in Delhi, India. Their high density, narrow streets, tight internal spaces, poor access to water and sanitation leave residents highly vulnerable to the spread of corona virus. One of Delhi's poorest & most under-developed neighbourhoods, Sangam Vihar & Ghevra-Mundka, are two of three informal settlements we have been studying. More than a month before the Indian government imposed a national lockdown, Sangam Vihar & Mundka residents, supported by AROH Foundation, and adopted their own measures to counter the pandemic as the area suffers from severe lack of health facilities. Unsurprisingly, residents' health suffers. Respiratory illness makes Covid-19 even more threatening for residents.

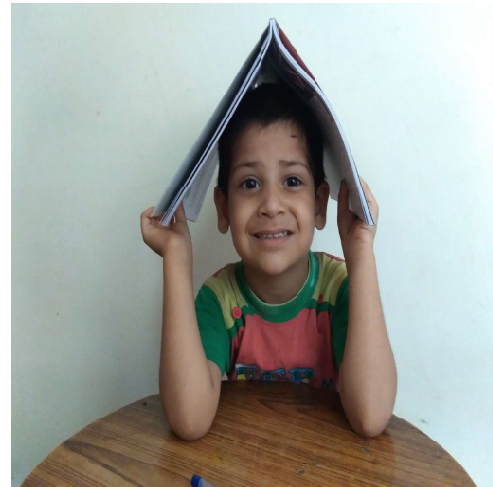
The sudden lockdown and market closures left most residents without food, water and medicines. Some of the residents didn't have the ration cards & money needed to get free food & safety items like masks, sanitizers & hand washes. After witnessing the plight of the underprivileged people around AROH arranged help for the area. Elderly and pregnant women were encouraged to stay home and contact the volunteers for help with their daily needs. AROH team was providing ration & safety kits and essentials to residents. Each ration kit & safety kit comprised of about many items including 5-kg rice, 2-kg dal, and half a kg sugar, 1-litre cooking oil, small packets of Masale, 2 hand sanitizers, 5 masks & 6 soaps. So far, 3 rounds are done and other are being planning for. Distribution began within the containment zones, but later extended to the entire settlement.

AROH team then assured the people saying, we agree that not all migrant labourers were given ration kits from Government. This could be because of the lack of communication or

poor management. We have put in a system to ensure ration kits & safety kits to each of you. Priority were given to the families who had pregnant women and families of a lot of members while distributing the kits. Ration kits & Safety kits in their hands people shared that *"at least five times over the last many days we shared our Aadhaar & mobile numbers with people who promised to provide us ration kits. They have not come back. We are told by our friends from our state, who live in other areas in the City, that they got ration kits & safety kits"*. AROH Foundation's permanent staff members is still helping them and others by managing everything from outside. Staff is regularly calling the residents to give advice on hygiene and how to get essentials and contact doctors for other ailments.



Ensuring Mental Peace for Children



AROH-RISE Educators acted to gather and mobilize public and private resources to support the mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of the world's most vulnerable children and young people at this extraordinary time. RISE educators are continuously keeping themselves in contact with their students and their parents, solving their educational & life problems. They made routine students' routine learning at home and helping them engaged into indoor activities. Educators are even performing YOGASANAS with their students' through Whatsapp video calls to help them get rid from anxiety, stress and anger. AROH-RISE educators are also visiting communities keeping social distancing in mind to provide assurance when needed. This somehow helps the students & parents to assure that someone is there to help them, make feel safe & care.



Breaking Barriers ... Mona

When Mona was 18 her mother decided to marry her off to a 26 years old boy to pay her father's gambling debts. After the marriage, the husband and both the in laws would constantly abuse her, beat her and treat her indecently. They seldom demanded for dowry too. Situation grew more gruesome after she gave birth to a female child. The beatings were so bad that she lost her hearing on one side. After taking the torture for a long time, Mona thought the same shall continue with her daughter. She gathered all the courage and informed one of our RISE Educators, Ms Babita, while Babita was on her routine door to door survey. Babita took the matter with extreme urgency and reported the case to AROH Foundation's expert team. A team of counsellor visited her house, counselled her in laws and also



awaked them and Mona with all laws and repercussions of domestic Violence. They kept the counselling going on for few weeks through physical visits and on call. She is also being trained in cutting in tailoring so that she can become self-reliant and take care of her children independently.

After a few months of counselling Mona was able to go back to her parents' home and her husband Mr Mahesh had been sent to rehabilitation centre to get rid of his drinking & gambling habits. Mona is 25 now, has 2 children and she's working in manufacturing company.

Mona says, "Since I was unaware of such strict laws, I had to take the torture for so long. Thanks to Babita didi and AROH Foundation for reaching & helping me out when I had nowhere and no one to help. I'll be always grateful to you all."



Agriculture Insurance Company of India Limited (AIC) was incorporated under the Indian Companies Act 1956 on 20th December, 2002 with an authorized share capital of INR 15 billion and paid up capital of INR 2 billion. AIC commenced business from 1st April, 2003. AIC has taken over the implementation of National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS) which, until FY 2002-03 was implemented by General Insurance Corporation of India. In addition, AIC also transacts other insurance businesses directly or indirectly concerning agriculture and its allied activities. AIC also works towards upliftment of marginalized sections of the society. Project RISE is CSR initiative of AIC which aims to provide better educational opportunities to underprivileged children.



AROH Foundation is a leading national-level NGO, strengthening government programmes and CSR initiatives of several corporates and PSEs by providing total integrated solutions - consulting, planning and implementing - for sustainable, inclusive development and growth of the needy and marginalised communities in several states of India for the past 12 years. AROH is an ISO 9001:2008 Certified organization, registered under Societies Registration Act, 1860.

RISE is a pioneering initiative designed by AROH Foundation, which recognizes the nation's concern of improvement of learning outcomes and universalisation of elementary education as of paramount importance, and strives to bring the deprived and marginalized or educationally backward children in backward villages and slums under the safety net of education through an innovative approach and Project-Based Learning Methodology.