

INDUSTRY COVID-19 RESPONSE CHECKLIST

DEVELOPING AN INCLUSIVE RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 SECOND WAVE

The second COVID-19 wave and resulting lockdowns have rendered informal workers vulnerable yet gain, in the absence of state support for healthcare and other critical provisioning. Learning from our Social Compact journey over the last year, we urge companies to focus on their ecosystem, on the partners and workers that add value to the business, and facilitate critical assistance

PLANNED ACTION AND COMMUNICATION

- It would be really useful for industries to offer a 3-month support plan for workers, highlighting the services it covers at employer cost, at worker cost or on a shared basis
- Learning from the case of many companies last year, proactive and consistent communication of the plan will be key, by company officials across levels.
- This may call for sensitization and preparation across levels on consistently communicating the intention behind the support plan and allaying of fears among workers on unexpected consequences etc.

PULSE CHECK DISTRESS LEVELS IN SUPPLY CHAIN

- This may be one of the most crucial times to initiate no-agenda conversations with partners in the supply chain, just to understand their distress levels and anything that could be done to reduce the impact on them and their workers
- If these conversations can be had simultaneous to your building the 3-month support plan, principal employers could consider extending their services to workers in the supply chain, as feasible
- These empathic conversation channels for responding to the current crisis as a business chain, may pave the way for more forward-looking conversations with supply chain partners on progressive worker policies and actions.

To help with this support plan, our NGO partners have put forth a checklist of actions that could really help companies plan their response for workers in their ecosystem.

ENSURING ACCESS TO SHELTER

- Continue to provide shelter for those who ordinarily live within company premises
- Convert company premises to shelters camps for workers directly/indirectly employed or a part of supply chain of the company
- Convert company premises to a quarantine centre for workers who have contracted Covid.
- Provide allowances for rent, electricity and water bills of workers who are living off site and might not be receiving wages during the lockdown.
- Provide phone recharges to workers to keep them connected to their families
- Facilitate travel and expenses for migrant workers who wish to return to their homes.

MAXIMISING SAFETY AND GOOD HEALTH

- Provide masks and sanitisers to workers and ensure onsite hygiene.
- Arrange for doctor's visit, male and female, twice a week to ensure that no worker has any health issues.

- Communicate information about the vaccine—both its efficacy and side effects—to workers in the company ecosystem and its supply chain, and facilitate registration of workers who wish to be vaccinated.
- Organise a vaccination drive by reaching out to local municipal corporation and requesting for a tie-up with a suitable hospital or connect with the nearest hospital in the nearest vicinity requesting for the Covid vaccination service.
- Provide one day of paid leave to workers post vaccination as loss of wages for that day of sickness deters workers from opting for vaccines.
- In case workers cannot acquire state sponsored treatment for medical emergencies (e.g migrant workers ineligible for state-specific schemes), cover all medical expenses.
- Provide separate washing and bathing facilities and free sanitary products to female workers.

ENSURING LIVING WAGES TO WORKERS

- Ensure regular payment of wages to workers, and where possible, an additional allowance where workers require financial help for distress situations
- Ensure contractors, suppliers, vendors (and other supply chain partners) are not arbitrarily deducting workers' wages.

ENSURING ACCESS TO FOOD

- Cover food costs through direct provisioning of staples (rice, wheat, pulses, vegetables and cooking materials) or free meals at company canteens
- Provide nutrition support to workers with children.
- Link to subsidised programs run by the government or NGOs for ration and meals (see table below)

SETTING UP GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL MECHANISMS

- Set up a company-wide helpline or alternative grievance redressal mechanism for workers to voice pandemic and lockdown-related concerns, fears and seek information on the dynamically changing situation.
- Broadcast information about this mechanism to workers in supply chains, who are most likely among those in the company ecosystem to face wage, food, shelter issues.
- Advocate with local government stakeholders in case of repeated concerns raised through this mechanism: e.g. speaking to local police stations in case of instances of use of force against workers in their residential areas, or if they are forcibly shutting down small vendor/supplier units against government guidelines.

SUPPORTING ORG PARTNERS ON WORK IN COMMUNITIES & ADVOCACY EFFORTS

Engage with our NGO partners are providing a range of preventative and relief efforts for communities on ground (for e.g. Distributing COVID detection and preventive kits in rural areas that are highly affected by Covid) as well as undertaking advocacy efforts for easing registration of workers with Inter State Migrant Workers' Scheme and BOCW cards for construction workers.

ENSURING SOCIAL SECURITY PROTECTIONS AND ENTITLEMENTS

Companies can also help workers access social security in terms of health, food and wages by linking them to following schemes:

Schemes	Provision	Eligibility	Requirements	Geography
Building and other Construction Workers' Welfare Board (BOCW)	Various cash transfers for beneficiaries related to housing, livelihood support, home expenses, etc.	Construction workers who have worked for 90 of the last 365 days and certified by a contractor or union.	Need to be registered under the BOCW Board of the state where work is taking place.	Pan-India.
Ayushman Bharat (PMJAY Scheme)	Medical coverage up to INR 500000 per family per year at all public and empanelled private hospitals.	"Deprived rural families and occupational categories of urban workers' families" determined by SECC data. No registration required, check the link mentioned here for eligibility.	Produce Ayushman Bharat card.	Pan-India. Call 14555 (toll free) for further information. Check https://mera.pmjay.gov.in/search/login to see if a worker is eligible.
One Nation, One Ration Card	Subsidised food grains under the PDS system	Ration card holder in eligible states	Ration card (note: if single migrant to city, family will forfeit ration at the rural end)	Eligible states (see list here: https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1646954)
Free grains through Public Distribution System	3kg wheat, 2kg rice for Mah ration card holders	Maharashtra ration card holders	Access at local PDS shop, workers might need facilitation	Maharashtra

Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Jan Arogya Yojna	Free hospital care for 996 surgeries/therapies/procedures under 1000 empanelled hospitals	Residents of Maharashtra who hold Yellow, Orange, Antyodaya, Annapurna ration cards (recently, White ration card holders also eligible)	Produce ration card, Aadhar (or other photo ID). For minors, photograph of child with parent and parent's ration card. If resident without ration card, obtain letter from Tehsildar. Call 18002332200 for assistance	Maharashtra
Shiv Bhojan Scheme	a meal to the poor for just Rs. 10 at designated centres in a district			Maharashtra