

Our Response to the COVID-19 Crisis

December 2020, Vol. 6

On April 1, 2020, Azim Premji Foundation¹ and Wipro committed a sum of Rs 1,125 crore to contribute towards a nation-wide response to the challenges posed by COVID-19.

Our comprehensive response to the pandemic has an immediate and short-to-mid-term timeframe, in each of which we are responding to the two inextricably tied dimensions of the crisis – **healthcare** and **humanitarian**.

We have significantly ramped up our **integrated healthcare response**, focusing on strengthening the frontline work, enhancing testing capacity and augmenting treatment facilities across select-regions. Our **humanitarian assistance** is focussed on livelihood regeneration and access to entitlements under various welfare schemes in some of the most vulnerable regions in the country.

Table 1: Illustration of our comprehensive response, to-date²

Healthcare

Our integrated healthcare response in Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Puducherry, Telangana, and Uttarakhand touches a population of about 10 crores.

- **Strengthening the 'frontline'** by training and equipping frontline healthcare workers for improved awareness, screening, quarantining; we are also augmenting frontline resources through our partners and working to build better community ownership.
- **More effective testing** by enabling better utilisation of existing facilities and setting up new testing systems; our support has helped increase RT-PCR test capacity as well as make testing more accessible by creating distributed capacity in remote locations
- **Augmenting treatment facility** by increasing oxygen bed capacity in primary and secondary health centres to treat mild and moderate cases and adding ICU beds at tertiary care centres in underserved locations.
- **Other allied aspects** including making health facilities more accessible through services such as helplines, field booths and ambulance services; better data management and analytics support to the departments for better decision making

We continue collaborations with partners who run **public-spirited hospitals and community health programs in other geographies** to strengthen their response.

Our **learning partnerships** with institutions such as National Centre for Biological Sciences, Bengaluru, Christian Medical College, Vellore, St. John's Medical College, Bengaluru and Bangalore Baptist Hospital help us understand and promote better clinical processes.

Humanitarian

Our work with partners for livelihood regeneration, including access to entitlements, in vulnerable rural areas is reaching over **79 lakh people in 12 states**.

We continue immediate assistance in the form of food, dry rations and personal hygiene kits on a need basis; this has reached around **84 lakh people** to date across **26 states** and **3 union territories**; our food support translates to around **31 crore meals** so far.

¹ Azim Premji Foundation comprises the Field, the University, and the Philanthropic Initiatives.

² This report is an update of October and November 2020, previous volumes can be accessed [here](#).

Reach So Far

1. Overall

Over the last two months, we continued our efforts towards strengthening our integrated healthcare response in select regions of **Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Puducherry, Telangana and Uttarakhand.**

As part of our humanitarian assistance, we are reaching over **79 lakh people** in rural areas of **12 states** for livelihood regeneration, including access to entitlements; we continued immediate assistance and have reached around **84 lakh people** in **26 states** and **3 union territories**, so far - our food support translates to around **31 crore meals**.³

This coordinated response is enabled by 1600 members of our own organization, over 55,000 team members of around 500 partners, thousands of public-school teachers that we work with and a large alumni network of our University along with Wipro’s technical expertise and distribution reach.

In the last eight months, this response has been refined and re-designed with careful assessment of the on-ground situation through direct experiences of our own members, our partners and our network of alumni and teachers working at the frontline, as well as through systematically conducted studies. The figure below (Fig. 2) illustrates the journey of our response, till date.

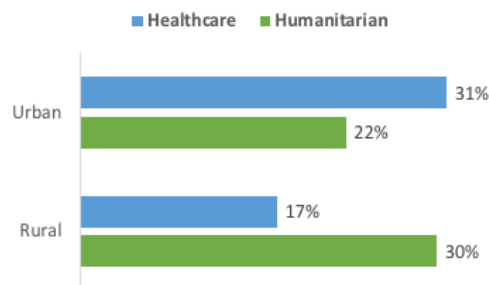


Fig. 1: % of total value of support, to-date*

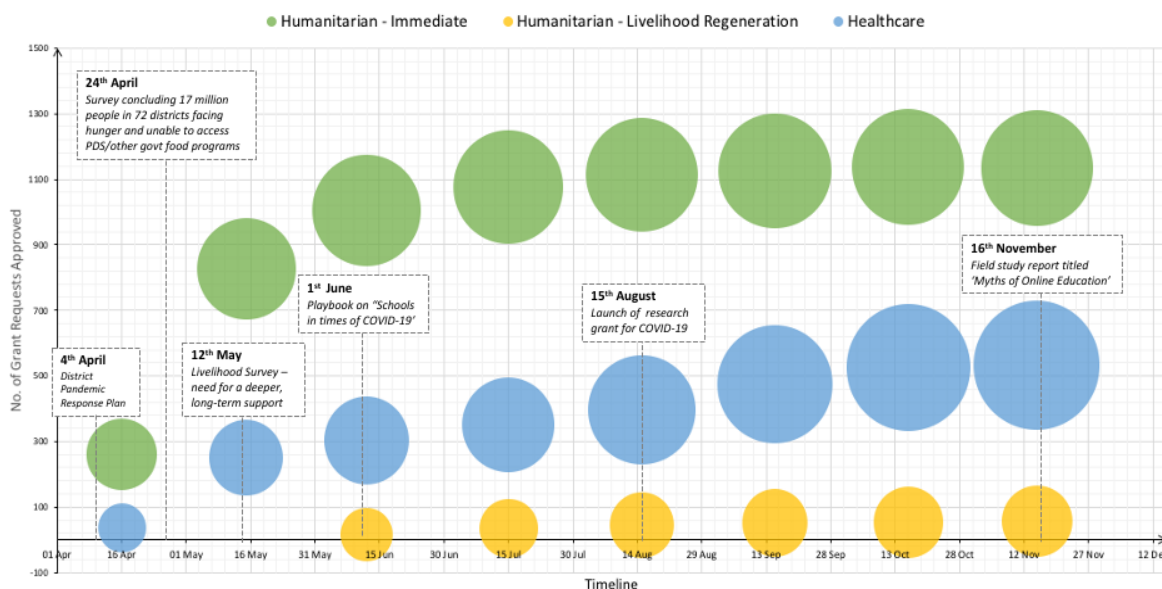


Fig. 2: Progression in our response, till date⁴

³ Data as on 15th November 2020.

*The rural-urban split is approximate - some efforts cater to both urban and rural beneficiaries; in which case it has been assumed to be equally split between the two

⁴ Size of bubble represents total value of support till date under each domain

2. Healthcare Support

We are supporting a strong integrated response (see Fig. 3) in select regions of **Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Puducherry, Rajasthan, Telangana, Uttarakhand** (where we have our own field operations) and in **Jharkhand** (where our partners have a strong ground presence), touching a population of more than 10 crores. Below is a description of work done in past two months in some of these regions.

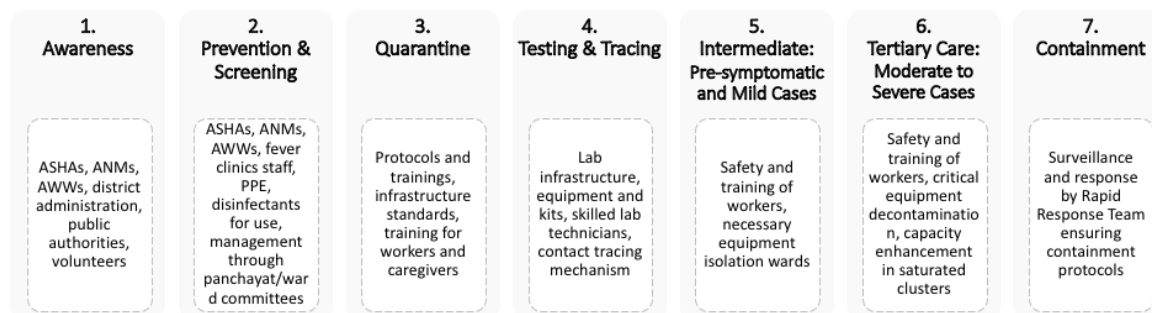


Fig. 3: Key elements of an integrated healthcare approach

A summary of support provided till date, region-wise, is available in [Annexure 1](#)

Strengthening the frontline

Over the last two months, we have intensified our frontline work within the locations where we started. In Chhattisgarh, we expanded the work to 3 more blocks in Raigarh district including enabling an integrated COVID-19 call/helpline centre; we also equipped all panchayats we are working in with screening equipment including pulse oximeters and infrared thermometers. We provided information material for building awareness and screening equipment for the ASHA workers in Uttarakhand. In Bengaluru, we have continued and expanded frontline work, across wards and zones; this included mental health training and counselling support for frontline workers.

More effective testing

Over this period, we have focussed largely on adding testing capacity to remote areas. Illustratively, we are adding CB-NAAT machines in difficult-to-access hill regions of Uttarakhand such as Ranikhet, Dhauladevi and Chaukhutiya of Almora district and Agustyamuni, Jakholi and Ukhimat of Rudraprayag district. We are establishing a turnkey RT-PCR lab at the district government hospital in Ballari, Karnataka. This includes supply, installation, testing and commissioning of RT-PCR based testing laboratory comprising infrastructure, all medical equipment (such RT-PCR machine, automatic RNA extractor, deep freezer, centrifuge, micro-pipettes) and consumables.

Augmenting treatment facilities

We have balanced our efforts between primary, secondary and tertiary care, ensuring that existing facilities are strengthened, and effectively utilised and new facilities added, wherever necessary. For instance, over the last two months, we have committed support for the following:

- In Chhattisgarh,
 - Equipment at the new ICU ward at Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar Hospital, Raipur

- Enhancing HDU and ICU capacity at Late Shri Lakhiram Agrawal Memorial Government Medical College, Raigarh. Support for equipment like ventilators, Auto BiPAP machines, multipara monitors, oxygen concentrators etc.
- Additional support for expanding COVID-19 treatment facilities including ICU – beds, equipment and protective equipment at Dhamtari Christian Hospital, Dhamtari
- Equipment (portable X-ray machines) and ambulances for multiple medical colleges/COVID-19 hospitals in the state
- Augmented oxygen facilities in the district hospital at Janjgir and community health centres in Bemetara, for better intermediary care
- In Almora, Uttarakhand, we are aiding augmentation of oxygen facilities across COVID Care Centres
- In Bengaluru, we are supporting HDU/Oxygen beds, doctors and staff and other equipment at Government General Hospital Yelahanka. We also extended support to one more public-spirited private hospital - St. Philomena's - to augment critical care capacity

Other areas of support

In Bengaluru, we are supporting meals for frontline health workers at three hospitals; child quarantine facilities to accommodate children before they get into the government homes and childcare institutions as per Supreme Court norms.

Other collaborations

We are leveraging our **learning partnerships** with premier institutions very directly on the ground. We continue to support the National Centre for Biological Sciences (NCBS), Bengaluru to improve testing protocols.

Additionally, we continue to respond to healthcare requirements in other geographies – through a small set of credible **partners engaged in running public-spirited hospitals and strong community health programs**; during this period, we extended our support to Jan Swasthya Sahyog, Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh to do intense frontline work across 72 villages.

More details on our support to such initiatives in the accompanying Field Note 6.

Next steps

Over the next months we will critically assess the effectiveness work we have rolled out across locations. The pandemic is taking different trajectories in these different regions. We will tailor our support in each region depending on the course of the pandemic, the further support that the healthcare system there may need to tackle it and our own assessment of what elements of such integrated support has been effective in the region.

*We recently released our field study report titled **Myths of Online Education**. The study was undertaken in 5 states across 26 districts covering 1,522 schools. These public schools have more than 80,000 students. The objective of the study was to understand the experience of children and teachers with online education during the pandemic. The study finds an overwhelming majority of teachers and parents stating that the online mode is inadequate and ineffective for education. The study also reveals that most parents are eager to send their children to schools with necessary health safeguards and do not think that health of their children would be affected in such an event.*

Full Report is available [here](#).

3. Humanitarian Support

Our support for livelihood regeneration intends to address, very specifically, the immediate issues of food insecurity and livelihood vulnerability - by organising an emergency response (Fig. 4) with our existing partners in rain-fed areas, prioritising the most vulnerable households in the region.

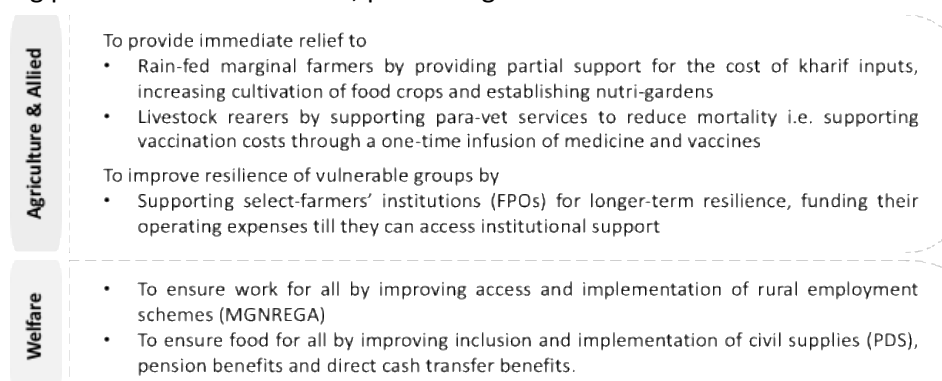


Fig. 4: Objectives of Covid Rural Livelihood Response

Till date, we have reached over **79 lakh people⁵ across 12 states** – Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal in more than 300 blocks. In the last two months, we have **expanded work further in Assam, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, and Odisha.**

Table 2: State-wise, illustrative reach of our livelihood regeneration support, to-date

#	State	Districts	People Reached
1.	Andhra Pradesh	Anantapur, Chittoor, East Godavari, Kadapa, Kurnool, Srikakulam, Visakhapatnam, Vizianagaram	13,67,705
2.	Assam	Bongaingaon, Chirang, Goalpara, Kamrup, Karbi Anglong, Majuli	3,61,950
3.	Chhattisgarh	Koriya	97,500
4.	Gujarat	Ahmedabad, Aravalli, Bhavnagar, Dahod, Dang, Mahisagar, Narmada, Navsari, Panchmahal, Patan, Surendranagar, Tapi	8,58,785
5.	Jharkhand	Bokaro, Dumka, East Singhbhum, Godda, Gumla, Hazaribagh, Khunti, Koderma, Lohardaga, Ramgarh, Ranchi, West Singhbhum	11,62,700
6.	Karnataka	Chikkaballapur, Gulbarga, Yadgir	1,37,785
7.	Madhya Pradesh	Alirajpur, Anuppur, Barwani, Betul, Burhanpur, Chhatarpur, Dewas, Dhar, Dindori, Hoshangabad, Jhabua, Katni, Khandwa, Khargone, Niwari, Raisen, agar, Shahdol, Sihi, Singrauli, Tikamgarh, Vidisha	6,06,305
8.	Maharashtra	Yavatmal	1,26,595
9.	Odisha	Angul, Boudh, Dhenkanal, Ganjam, Kalahandi, Kandhamal, Kendujhar, Koraput, Mayurbhanj, Nabarangpur	13,82,115
10.	Rajasthan	Ajmer, Banswara, Bhilwara, Karauli, Pali, Pratapgarh, Rajsamand, Sirohi, Tonk, Udaipur	10,78,777
11.	Uttar Pradesh	Mau	1,95,000
12.	West Bengal	Alipurduar, Bankura, Nadia, North 24 Parganas, Paschim Medinipur, Purulia, South 24 Parganas	5,29,590

In addition to the above, we continued our support for immediate assistance to those who are still unable to access institutional help, till date we have reached over **84 lakh people⁶ across 26 states and 3 union territories**; our food support translates to around **31 crore meals** so far – state-wise details of our reach available in [Annexure 2](#).

Next steps

We will continue our support for immediate assistance as well as livelihood regeneration through inputs for agriculture, access to welfare entitlements and community preparedness for COVID-19.

⁵ Estimated number; does not represent unique beneficiaries. i.e. each beneficiary could have received more than one type of intervention across agriculture and welfare and also within welfare, hence counted more than once.

⁶ These numbers are an approximation, derived from the number of ration kits and hygiene kits disbursed at household level, assuming 5 members per household/family

Annexure 1: Region-wise summary of integrated healthcare assistance, to-date⁷

State/UT	Region	Population	Frontline ⁸	Testing and tracing	Treatment
Chhattisgarh	Raipur (Dhamtari, Baloda Bazar, Bemetara, Raipur)	48,63,653	52,320 PPE kit and 32,500 N95 mask; Awareness building in collaboration with frontline staff, panchayat and other local institutions, in collaboration with local NGOs; screening equipment at panchayats; Personal hygiene kits and sanitisation for quarantine centres	1 Automated RNA extractor machine; 5 CB-NAAT machines with starter kits	Equipment and other support for isolation and treatment including ICU for Dhamtari Christian Hospital, the designated COVID hospital Oxygen plant and oxygen concentrators for dedicated COVID facility being set up in Ayurveda college, Raipur. Equipment – including ventilators, multipara monitors etc. – for new ICU ward at Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar Hospital, Raipur Oxygen facilities for CHCs and screening equipment for district hospital at Bemetara
	Raigarh (Janjgir, Raigarh)	31,13,691	3100 PPE kits and 3600 N95 masks; Awareness building in collaboration with frontline staff, panchayat and other local institutions; in collaboration with local NGOs; screening equipment at panchayats; Personal hygiene kits and sanitisation for quarantine centres; cooked meals for patients and staff in the centres	2 Automated RNA extractor, 2 RT-PCR test machine and other essential equipment for setting up a testing lab at Govt. Medical College, Raigarh	Enhancing HDU and ICU capacity at Late Shri Lakhiram Agrawal Memorial Government Medical College, Raigarh; support for equipment like ventilators, Auto BiPAP machines, multipara monitors, oxygen concentrators, high flow nasal cannulas etc. Oxygen concentrators and cylinders for district hospital at Janjgir
Karnataka	Kalaburagi (Kalaburagi, Bidar, Yadgir, Vijayapura)	76,21,228	20,352 PPE kits, 22,012 N95 masks; IR thermometers and pulse oximeters for frontline workers; glucometers and digital BP apparatus for sub-centres; Communication materials; training for frontline staff and panchayat task forces; protection kits for frontline staff; Setting up Gram Arogya Kendras at the panchayat-level in Yadgir to improve awareness and screening; Focused frontline effort in urban slums in Vijayapura	2 Automated RNA extractor machine, starter RNA extraction kits; 2 CB-NAAT machines with starter kits	High flow nasal cannulas, ventilators, multipara monitors, ICU beds, and other equipment for district hospital at Kalaburagi; ambulance services Yadgir: Improving facilities in COVID care centres, augmenting ICU capacity in the district hospital; ambulance services
	Ballari (Ballari, Koppal, Bagalkot, Raichur)	76,61,079	8500 PPE kits and 7500 N95 masks; IR thermometers and pulse oximeters for frontline workers;	2 Automated RNA extractors, 1 RT-PCR test machine	High flow nasal cannulas for district hospitals at Ballari and Koppal

⁷ This includes materials that have been delivered or committed over the next few weeks.

⁸ Awareness, quarantine, and screening; protective equipment is for frontline as well as institutional workers

			Communication materials; training for frontline staff and panchayat task forces; protection kits for frontline staff; Comfort kits comprising clothing, and items for personal hygiene and safety for persons in quarantine	In addition, establishing a turnkey RT-PCR lab at district govt. hospital, Ballari	
	Bengaluru (Urban, Rural)	1,06,12,474	10000 PPE kits and N95 masks; Intensive frontline work over 50 wards covering 8 large slum clusters to reach over 1 lakh households, equipment and other support, including counselling, for frontline staff; support helpdesks at 9 hospitals; outreach through cable TV, bus advertising, wall paintings	Setting up RT-PCR labs at 3 public hospitals; 5 high capacity Liquid Handling Systems (for RNA extraction) at premier public institutions; CB-NAAT machines for distributed capacity	Augmentation of treatment facilities, including ICU capacity, in 5 public-spirited, private, city hospitals; Augmenting capacity for oxygenated beds and ICU in public hospitals; additional doctors and nursing staff in two facilities through a partner Local COVID care centres, and dedicated COVID health centres with oxygen
	Mysore (Mysore, Mandya)	48,06,896	5250 PPE kits and 2250 N95 masks	-	-
Madhya Pradesh	Indore (Indore, Khargone)	51,49,743	7830 PPE kits and 5500 N95 masks; Awareness building in Khargone, in collaboration with frontline staff, panchayat and other local institutions, and others; targeted intervention in crowded areas like markets and business centres; Equipping frontline workers with equipment, materials and capacity building to improve screening and tracing	1 Automated RNA extractors and 1 RT-PCR test machine	-
	Sagar	23,78,458	1000 PPE kits and N95 masks	1 Automated RNA extractors and 1 RT-PCR test machine; RNA extraction kits	-
	Bhopal	23,71,061	11,680 PPE kits and 11,350 N95 masks	1 RT-PCR test machine	-
Rajasthan	Jaipur (Jaipur, Tonk)	80,47,504	13,710 PPE kits and 33,200 N95 masks; Personal hygiene kits, food, and water to quarantine centres; protection kits for frontline staff; Awareness building in Tonk in collaboration with frontline staff, panchayat and other local institutions; targeted intervention in crowded areas like markets and business centres; Equipping frontline workers with equipment, materials and capacity building to improve screening and tracing; Support for quarantine centres with equipment, protective kits	1 RT-PCR test machine	Ambulance services at Jaipur

	Jodhpur (Jodhpur, Barmer, Jalore, Pali)	1,01,57,219	700 N95 masks	-	-
	Udaipur (Udaipur, Rajsamand, Chittorgarh, Banswara, Pratapgarh; Sirohi)	1,08,59,586	2500 N95 masks; Awareness building in Sirohi in collaboration with frontline staff, panchayat and other local institutions; targeted intervention in crowded areas like markets and business centres; Equipping frontline workers with equipment, materials and capacity building to improve screening and tracing; Support for quarantine centres with equipment, protective kits	1 RT-PCR test machine	-
Uttarakhand	Kumaon (Almora, Bageshwar, Champawat, Nainital, Pithoragarh, Udham Singh Nagar)	42,28,998	12180 PPE kits and 34601 N95 masks Hygiene kits for quarantine centres; protection kits for frontline staff; Awareness building in Almora and Nainital in collaboration with frontline staff and local institutions; Equipping frontline workers with equipment, materials and capacity building to improve screening and tracing	4 Automated RNA extractor machines, 4 RT-PCR test machines, 5 CB-NAAT machines; 8 bio-safety cabinets	Supporting CHC at Nainital to improve treatment – especially oxygen – facilities Improving oxygen facilities in COVID care centres at Almora
	Garhwal (Haridwar, Dehradun, Pauri, Rudraprayag, Chamoli, Tehri, Uttarkashi)	58,57,294	5220 PPE kits and 14,829 N95 masks Awareness building in Chamoli, Dehradun, Pauri, and Tehri in collaboration with frontline staff, panchayat and other local institutions; Equipping frontline workers with equipment, materials and capacity building to improve screening and tracing	2 Automated RNA extractor machines, 2 RT-PCR test machines; 16 CB-NAAT machines with starter kits; 10 bio-safety cabinets	Increasing bed capacity at intermediate treatment centres (CHCs) in Dehradun Ambulance services at Pauri
Puducherry	Puducherry	9,50,289	2000 PPE kits and N95 masks	-	-
Telangana	Sangareddy	15,27,628	2505 PPE kits and N95 masks Communication materials; training for frontline staff; protection kits for frontline staff IR thermometers and pulse oximeters at CHCs and PHCs	2 CB-NAAT machines with starter kits	Ventilator, multi-para monitors and other equipment for district hospital
Jharkhand	Gumla, Khunti, Lohargada, Ranchi, Simdega	55,32,719	35,933 PPE kits and 34,000 N95 masks IR thermometers and pulse oximeters for frontline workers; additional facilitator at each panchayat to augment frontline Communication materials; training for frontline staff and task forces; protection kits for frontline staff	2 Automated RNA extractor machines and 5 CB-NAAT machines at central test facility CB-NAAT machines at 15 CHCs to augment and decentralise testing	Oxygen concentrators at 15 CHCs; Expanding critical services in Dedicated Covid Hospitals at Ranchi and Simdega; establishing Dedicated Covid Health Centres at CHC/district level; telemedicine facilities

Annexure 2: State-wise immediate humanitarian assistance, to-date

#	State	People Reached		
		Urban	Rural	Total
1	Andhra Pradesh	74,405	2,37,213	3,11,618
2	Arunachal Pradesh	0	1,750	1,750
3	Assam	45,901	1,16,816	1,62,716
4	Bihar	1,24,639	1,81,266	3,05,905
5	Chhattisgarh	62,803	1,60,373	2,23,175
6	Gujarat	82,581	1,81,403	2,63,984
7	Haryana	3,188	30,788	33,975
8	Jharkhand	1,11,405	2,62,088	3,73,492
9	Karnataka	14,94,294	4,95,732	19,90,026
10	Kerala	25,937	19,185	45,122
11	Madhya Pradesh	1,07,160	4,25,105	5,32,265
12	Maharashtra	8,31,860	1,73,517	10,05,376
13	Manipur	1,500	22,200	23,700
14	Meghalaya	31,751	34,251	66,001
15	Mizoram	1,315	1,315	2,630
16	Nagaland	5,750	1,250	7,000
17	Odisha	1,31,040	3,44,991	4,76,031
18	Punjab	1,250	1,250	2,500
19	Rajasthan	1,62,858	3,44,390	5,07,248
20	Tamil Nadu	1,96,246	1,82,887	3,79,132
21	Telangana	3,56,084	52,656	4,08,740
22	Tripura	0	1,000	1,000
23	Uttar Pradesh	43,374	69,402	1,12,776
24	Uttarakhand	33,450	64,121	97,571
25	West Bengal	2,96,073	5,27,970	8,24,042
26	Delhi	2,04,801	35,825	2,40,626
27	Jammu Kashmir	5,655	9,894	15,549
28	Puducherry	1,500	2,500	4,000
29	Others	1,897	547	2,444
30	Grand Total	44,38,713	39,81,681	84,20,394