UMC
URBAN MANAGEMENT CENTRE

Local Government Practices

Covid Times Update

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Compilation from States and Local Government responses on COVID-19 outbreak

In the wake of current COVID 19 outbreak that has taken over many parts of the world only in a mere span of over 3 months, the government is facing an unprecedented challenge of protecting its citizens from the virus and from the economic slowdown caused by the nationwide lockdown imposed since the March 25,2020. While in the past, the country has successfully emerged out of a crisis caused by virus outbreaks, the challenges envisaged in the present context are multi-fold and of a larger scale.

Therefore, we bring to you interventions by local governments, community and states at large to keep you posted with the measures that have proven to be effective in various situations. The update specially looks into technology and international best practices for every day advancements and important learnings.

Disclaimer:This is a compilation based on secondary data sources and does not represent primary research conducted by UMC.

Film on Safety of Sanitation Workers

The film in continuation with the previous stresses further on the safety of our sanitation warriors. This short film will equip the sanitation workers in less than 4 minutes on all necessary precautions that are to be taken at this time of COVID-19 spread.

Watch Film

Telangana government offers shelter to homeless, provides healthcare facilities amid lockdown

The Telangana Government has made makeshift shelters for the daily wagers and the homeless in the state and has also provided health care and sanitisation facilities to them, amid the nationwide lockdown to curb the spread of novel coronavirus. A makeshift shelter at the Nampally Exhibition Grounds is providing food to at least 1,000 homeless people. Doctors are also present at the shelter to avoid any health crisis.

Harish Kumar Daga, an IT entrepreneur along with others is working alongside the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation and the Hyderabad City Police to ensure that there is no dearth of food.The social workers and volunteers have also established a mobile health desk keeping a close track on the health of people in the shelter. They are strictly maintaining social distancing protocol while making the poor aware of the importance of hygiene.

News Source: India Today

Support for slum and slum like communities

Chennai civic body conducts door-to-door surveillance to track the spread of coronavirus

The Greater Chennai Corporation has started door-to-door surveillance in the city to check for potential covid-19 cases. The civic body has decided to send around 16,000 staff to every home over the next 90 days. Chennai is spread over 426 sq km and has an estimated population in excess of seven million. According to information provided on the GCC website, there are 110 cases in the city. "The city would be divided into units of 75-100 houses and around 16000 GCC staff would be deployed for this survey of public health profile. Every house in GCC limits will be surveyed," the corporation said in a statement. The GCC said it will survey all residents and identify those with symptoms like cough, fever and breathlessness. "The households will also be surveyed to identify people with hypertension, diabetes, age above 60 years old, pregnant women and patients with chronic illness," the GCC said in a statement.

Contact tracing reduced spread of Covid-19 in Dharavi by 42%

Mumbai has become one of India's biggest coronavirus hotspots with over 1,500 cases being reported from the financial capital. The BMC has recently released the ward-wise data of Covid-19 cases in Mumbai which shows that G-South and G-North wards have reported the highest rise in cases. G-North ward which consists of Dharavi said that 42 percent of the new cases were already in quarantine hence it helped contain the spread of the virus.

The corporation had initiated extensive tracing of contacts in the slum ever since the first case of virus was reported. "Numbers suggest that contact tracing has been effective for us. It was through tracing that these patients were quarantined and didn't spread the virus to their contacts. Identifying high-risk contacts is vital for a place like Dharavi. Initially, cases were reported from different parts of the slum with no common links. Hence we had to make an action plan and screen 13,224 people in all these areas to stop the community spread," said Kiran Dighavkar, Assistant Commissioner G-north ward.

Fever clinics have been set up by the BMC to trace people with symptoms and take their swab tests also helped contain cases in the slums of Govandi. Out of 82 positives cases in the ward, 67 cases were traced through fever clinics in densely populated slum areas. Those who were found to have symptoms were quarantined at a facility until their results came out.

News Source: <u>India Today</u> Image Source: Times Now, PTI

Taking care of city staff and their sanitation workers

Telangana to provide incentives to health and sanitation personnel

Applauding the services being rendered by doctors, nurses and all other supporting health workers during the crisis, the Telangana CM announced that a 10 percent of their gross salary will be paid as a mark of appreciation of their commitment.

Sanitary workers in municipal corporations will also be paid the incentive of Rs7,500 and in municipalities and gram panchayats Rs5,000. This is in addition to their regular incomes. All municipal workers will be paid their complete salaries amidst the lockdown in addition to the incentives for those working at the frontline.

SHGs support to local governments and their fellow citizens

Odisha SHGs multitask in coronavirus fight

For SHG members of Balishankara block in Sundargarh district, the lockdown has been the busiest period since formation of their groups. From distributing vegetables and masks to people, creating awareness on the importance of hand washing and social distancing to preparing 'chatua' for children, new mothers and pregnant women, they have been doing it all. A group of 20 members of Kalyani, Jagriti and Subhashree SHGs have formed Desh Premi Producers Group which has come forward to help the administration in its fight against the coronavirus pandemic.

President of the group, Jayanti Ekka said they have been getting orders from the district administration to manufacture masks against payment. Apart from meeting the demand, they have so far distributed 1000 masks for free to those who cannot afford to buy one.

While some members of the group prepare masks, few others sensitize patients visiting the local CHC on practices of hand washing, social distancing, and personal hygiene. They also distribute awareness leaflets among villagers of their locality daily. Members Indumati Naik and Limila Naik said they also procure vegetables from different sources and sell them to villagers at reasonable rates, helping them stay at home during the ongoing lockdown. And while doing all this, the SHG members maintain social distancing and sanitize their hands every time they meet the villagers.The group has also donated INR 20,000 to CM's Relief Fund.
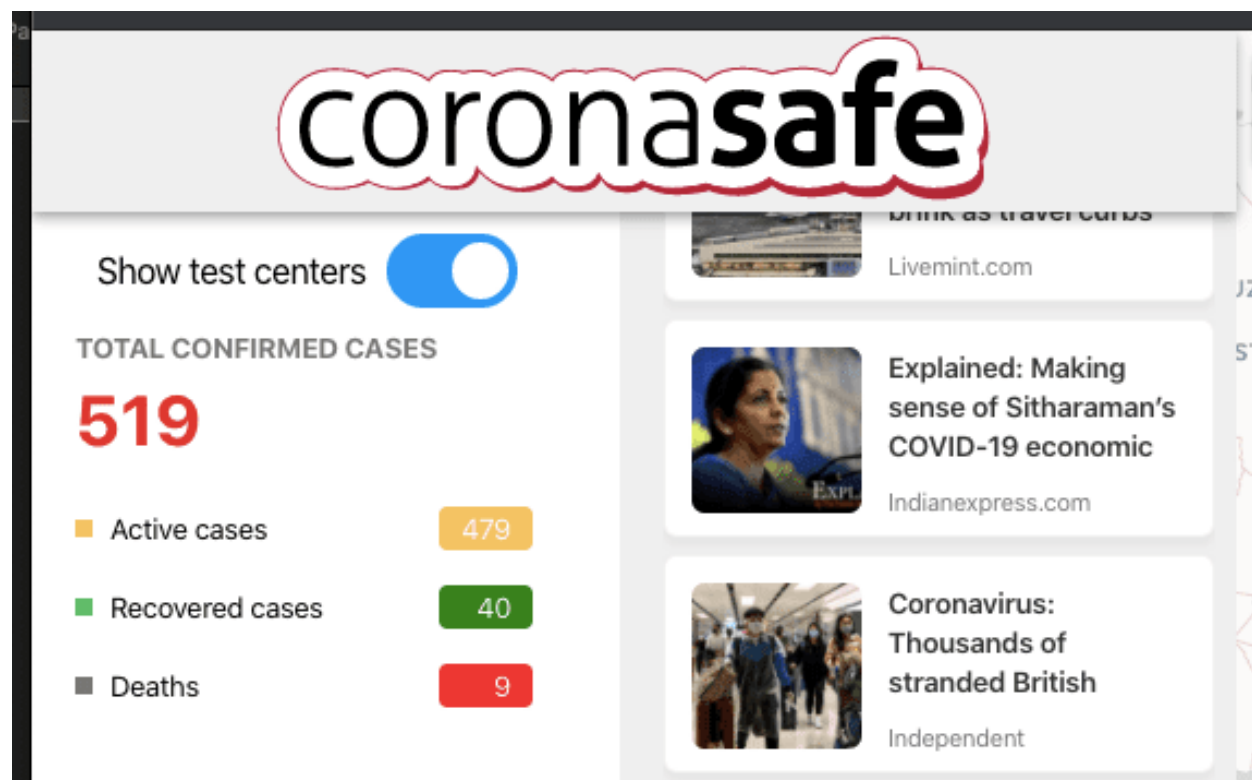
Use of technology in managing the covid outbreak

Kerala uses open source public utility 'CoronaSafe Network' to fight COVID-19

To combat the spread of the virus and to prepare itself to face the untoward situation where its healthcare system that consists of 37,021 hospital beds collapses, CoronaSafe Network has been launched, which is an open source public utility designed by a multi-disciplinary team of innovators and volunteers who are working on a model to support Government efforts. The strategy against corona includes: Corona Literacy Mission (CLM) and Corona Care Centres (CCC). CLM is to spread authenticated and correct information and the first step of CoronaSafe Network is to develop and spread awareness on the way the virus

spreads, precautions to be taken. And CCC is developed as a public-private partnership system to soften the impact on hospitals and to deliver quality health services to everyone who is affected, without the system collapsing completely leading to maximum lives being saved.

States taking pro-active measures

In times of a lockdown, the khaki provides relief for the marginalized in Majlis Park – one of the many resource-scarce slum clusters in Delhi

Vijayanta Arya, Delhi's deputy commissioner of police (northwest), the mother of two young children, leaves home at the crack of dawn every day for north Delhi's Majlis Park area. Here, as many as 1,000 slum dwellers are fighting a battle like no other—there's no work, and nothing to eat. Majlis Park holds a special meaning for Arya and her officers, who have 'adopted' all 250 families there for the entire duration of the lockdown, to nurse and care for them, with their own means."We are supplying them with dry rations and, based on their needs, we will keep augmenting the resources," Arya said. "We are acting as a link between areas where food or other essentials are required and people with the resources and willingness to cater to their needs," said the police officer.

Majlis Park was chosen "because there were women, children, the elderly and daily wage earners, some of whom sold vegetables, some were labourers, and they needed all the help they could get.There is a large section of the population, especially daily wagers, who have been hit hard by the 21-day lockdown, and their sources of livelihood have been taken away," Arya said. She added that even though it goes against the very idea behind the lockdown, police teams across the capital city have been counselling people from various slum clusters to remain indoors to prevent a community outbreak of the deadly coronavirus.

News Source: Livemint Image Source: Livemint

Learnings from international responses to COVID

South Korea Offers a Lesson in Best Practices

When it comes to the novel coronavirus, South Korea has taken tracing to a new level. When passengers deplane at Incheon International Airport near Seoul, they pass through mandatory temperature checks and are required to download the health ministry's self-diagnosis app. Once at their destinations, they must use the app every day to self-report any symptoms of COVID-19, the disease caused by the new coronavirus. The movements of those who test positive are tracked, and other people in their vicinity receive social-distancing alerts on their phones.

The timeline of South Korea's response is one of efficient containment. The country wasted little time. Less than a week after South Korea detected its first case of COVID-19 on January 20, health officials met with 20 medical and pharmaceutical companies to jump-start the production and approval of test kits. At the end of January—just nine days after that first positive case—the Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (KCDC) and the National Health Insurance Service established a '1339' call center to update the public and collect case data. At the same time, the Korea Occupational Safety and Health Agency started supplying more than 700,000 face masks to vulnerable workplaces. About two weeks after the first case was confirmed, the government approved and distributed test kits capable of producing

results in six hours. South Korea then proceeded to test more than 20,000 people daily.

About one month after South Korea's first positive case, health officials came up with the idea of a drive-through testing facility. The first one was set up in the parking lot of a university on February 23. There are now more than 70 drive-through facilities and more than 600 testing facilities nationwide. These facilities allowed for thousands to be tested daily while maintaining social distancing, as patients waited safely in the confines of their vehicles.

News Source: Foreign Affairs Image Source: Nature