



BROOKE INDIA'S RESPONSE TO THE COVID 19 PANDEMIC: April-December 2020

ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

The publication is a culmination of the hard work and dedication of all the organisations, individuals and Brooke India (BI) field staff members who provided immense support and made a big difference in the lives of the working equine and equine owning communities during COVID 19 crisis. We are truly grateful and would like to express our sincere gratitude to all the stakeholders who assisted BI during the pandemic.

Effective from November 1st 2020, BI is no longer implementing its programme through partner NGOs and is implementing all its operation directly through Equine Welfare Projects ■

LIST OF ACRONYMS

1. Animal Welfare Board of India	AWBI
2. Animal Husbandry Department	AHD
3. Animal Health Mentoring Framework	AHMF
4. Brooke India	BI
5. Body Condition Score	BCS
6. Brick Kiln	BK
7. Community Based Organisation	CBO
8. Community Resource Person	CRP
9. Community Mobiliser	CM
10. Civil Society Organisation	CSO
11. Chief Veterinary Officer	CVO
12. Emergency Support Fund	ESF
13. Equine Welfare Association	EWA
14. Equine Welfare Federation	EWf
15. Equine Welfare Group	EWG
16. Equine Welfare Project	EWP
17. Extension and Training Team	ETT
18. Field Assistant Animal Health	FAAH
19. Field Assistant Community Engagement	FACE
20. First Aid Kit	FAK
21. Government Veterinary Officer	GVO
22. Government of India	GOI
23. Income Generation Activity	IGA
24. Kilograms	Kgs
25. Local Health Provider	LHP
26. Local Service Provider	LSP
27. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme	MGNREGA
28. Men's Equine Welfare Group	MEWG
29. Manager cum Veterinary Officer	MCVO
30. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare	MOHFW
31. Non-Government Organization	NGO
32. National Rural Livelihood Mission	NRLM
33. National Disaster Management Authority	NDMA
34. Partner Equine Welfare Unit	PEWU
35. Personal Protection Kit	PPE
36. Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi	PMKSN
37. Participatory Welfare Needs Assessment	PWNA
38. Rural Self Employment Training Institute	RSETI
39. Self Help Group	SHG
40. Short Message Service	SMS
41. State Disaster Management Authority	SDMA
42. State Rural Livelihoods Mission	SRLM
43. Veterinary Officer	VO
44. Veterinary Council of India	VCI
45. Women's Equine Welfare Group	WEWG

INTRODUCTION

The COVID 19 pandemic unleashed an unprecedented global health and socio-economic crises. India followed many nations in placing their citizens in months of lockdown as an important step towards the containment of the virus. In India, the lockdown had incalculable repercussions on the weaker sections of society, especially daily wage labourers. These individuals were suddenly left bereft of any employment/work and without any tangible source of livelihood. These daily wage labourers belonged to both the non-migrant, and migrant working unorganised labour force of the country. The non-migrant rural population faced a complete reduction in demand for the services provided by them locally. Simultaneously, thousands of migrant labourers stuck at BKs and other workplaces had to make the tough choice between staying back under uncertain lockdown conditions and the possible health risks of travelling back home and facing starvation. Amongst the various categories of suffering labourers in India, one major category were the poor equine owners who are earned their daily livelihood at BKs, or by transportation of people, goods, and services.

Already struggling to make ends meet, COVID 19 was a harsh blow that befell them. These individuals often worked in difficult worksite and living conditions. The facilities provided to equine owners for their equines owned by them were equally challenging. The unavailability of proper feed during the early days into the lockdown saw multiple cases of equine emergency flare up in BI's operational areas. Due to lockdown mobility restrictions, LHPs and GVOs who were linked to the equine owning community were unavailable to attend to equine emergency cases. The equine owners therefore reached out to the BI's team whom they trusted and relied upon for support.

BI has a widespread presence in many districts of 10 Indian States & Union Territories through its local NGO partners. Guided by the BI team, they were quick to respond to the situation. BI ensured that manifold steps were taken in terms of providing veterinary services, awareness generation to equine emergency relief to its beneficiaries, the working equines and the community. BI's PEWUs veterinary and field staff provided veterinary services onsite and make arrangements of essentials for the equine owning families and their animals. The BI teams own efforts were augmented by the assistance provided by the network established between the community and BK owners, LHPs, LSPs, and Govt. authorities. BI also ensured that the equine owning community also benefited from the various humanitarian aid projects managed by their partners during this period of crisis.

The team facilitated the development of alternative IGAs by the community, so that they did not have to depend solely upon external aid for long, in the face of their primary livelihood using equine coming to a standstill, thereby developing resilience.

This document has been prepared to provide a brief insight into the innovative and strategic ways by which BI teams responded to the challenging early stages of the COVID 19 pandemic. It also highlights the efforts of various Government agencies and NGOs who collaborated with BI to ensure that the right kind of aid reached our beneficiaries at the right time ■

VETERINARY SERVICE

DELIVERY DURING COVID 19

The COVID 19 pandemic unleashed an unprecedented global health and socio-economic crises. India followed many nations in placing their citizens in months of lockdown as an important step towards the containment of the virus. In India, the lockdown had incalculable repercussions on the weaker sections of society, especially daily wage labourers. These individuals were suddenly left bereft of any employment/work and without any tangible source of livelihood. These daily wage labourers belonged to both the non-migrant, and migrant working unorganised labour force of the country.

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STORIES FROM THE GROUND

Horse with a Fractured Limb Receives Treatment

In Vadodara, due to a spike in the number of positive COVID 19 cases, the city was on a standstill. In these circumstances, Niranjanbhai Vanzara's horse met with an unfortunate accident. The horse got his leg stuck in the branches of a fallen tree and in its attempts to pull it out, suffered severe injuries. He was in acute pain and was not able to stand. The nearest GVO was available but only at the hospital, and there was no way Niranjanbhai could take the horse to him, amidst strict movement restrictions. As his only resort, Niranjanbhai reached out to Dr Kaushal, BI's MCVO. Upon receiving the call and understanding the urgency of the situation, Dr Kaushal visited the community. He got police permission for the movement, using his VCI identity card, which permitted to move out for attending emergency cases during the lockdown. Dr Kaushal examined the horse and diagnosed that the horse had sustained fracture of lower limb. He immediately relieved the horse's pain and provided requisite treatment by correcting the fracture and plastering the injured limb. The horse was soon able to stand up again and recovered soon after.

"I would have lost my dearest horse in these dire times if Dr Kaushal had not immediately helped. I am extremely grateful to him and BI" – Niranjanbhai Vanzara

Horse Received Treatment by BI Trained LHP

Surra, one of the fatal diseases that occur in equines, took its toll on two horses at Lareb BK in Etah district, Uttar Pradesh. Fortunately, the equine owners of the two horses, Ram Singh and Sooraj, could identify some of its symptoms as the BI team had previously sensitized them about the disease. Some of the visible symptoms seen were weakness, swelling of legs and lethargy. They immediately reached out to Manish, BI's FAAH, and sought help. Manish knew that it was difficult for him to visit the BK due to restrictions imposed over the movement during the lockdown. He therefore contacted the nearest available LHP, Dalchand.

Dalchand had been trained by BI's team of VOs, for three consecutive years, and his name is listed as an 'A' Grade LHP's under BI's AHMF. His response to the highlighted issue was quick. The very day Manish spoke to him, Dalchand visited the BK and conducted an examination of the case in consultation with Manish. It was confirmed that it was indeed a case of Surra. Dalchand then contacted the designated GVO and carried out the advised line of treatment under the GVO's supervision. Within four days of receiving the treatment, both the horses were free from Surra.

Furthermore, to prevent its outbreak in other horses working at the BK, Manish and Dalchand, shared their knowledge of precautionary measures against Surra with the equine owners. These included the importance of keeping the stables clean and dry, applying neem oil on equine's body, and allowing the equines to graze near water bodies only between 10 am to 3 pm to avoid coming in contact with horseflies transmitting Surra.

"We are thankful to BI's team for their immense support in these adverse times. Our horses are our only option of livelihood, and without them, our survival would have become impossible." - Ram and Sooraj ■

FAKs at BKs Saves Horse's Life during Lockdown

BI's prior networking with BK owners and Munshis and sensitisation campaigns regarding animal welfare proved beneficial during the lockdown. Notably, the FAKs installed at the remote BKs, as a special initiative taken by the BK owners, as promoted by BI, turned out to be a lifesaver.

One such incident occurred when the entire country was six days into the lockdown. BI's FAAH, Sonu working in Dholpur district of Rajasthan received a call, late at night, from the equine owner, Gyan Singh. He informed him that his horse was having severe abdominal pain and was refusing to eat.

To provide immediate respite to the suffering horse, Sonu advised him to give medicines for colic, from the FAK, to his unwell horse. The advice proved beneficial, and next morning, Gyan Singh thanked Sonu and informed him that his animal was in a better condition.

"I thank the BK Munshi for installing the FAK at RM BK, Garhichatola, and BI for providing basic first aid training to us." - Gyan, Equine Owner ■

TECHNOLOGY & OUTREACH DURING LOCKDOWN BY BI

Harnessing Technology during COVID 19

The COVID 19 pandemic challenged us to rethink how we can stay committed and continue to deliver an acceptable level of care to the equines as well as support our beneficiaries. The sudden closure of BKs, loss of work, myths regarding COVID 19, overstretched administration, strict police deployment and stoppage of public transportation created panic, stress and anxiety among the equine owning community. BI realised it was important to devise a strategy to provide psychological support to our communities during the lockdown. As physical contact was not possible in the initial phase, the BI team exploited technology to reach out to the equine owners and provided online virtual counselling and advice to deal with this unprecedented crisis.

Through interactions at ground level, BI realised that loss of livelihood and uncertainty of future, were the main reasons behind the stress and anxiety faced by the community members. The BI team therefore reached out to over 500 beneficiaries daily through video and telephone calls. The team also leveraged WhatsApp for making group calls to CBO Leaders and CRPs to augment their efforts.

The virtual support proffered by BI included:

- Calls inquiring about their family's well-being & need for maintaining personal hygiene.
- Assurance calls that BI would offer veterinary care to their animals during the lockdown.
- Dispelling myths regarding COVID 19, simplifying government advisories in their local languages.
- Ensuring access to dry food ration, green fodder & advance waiver through networking calls with BK owners/Munshis.
- Social media platforms and SMSs were used for dissemination of information.

BI also realised that identifying alternate IGAs was key to deal with the livelihood crisis overcoming the community. Keeping in view, market demands amidst lockdown restrictions, BI arranged for online training to be given to members of WEWGs. They were trained to produce cotton facemasks and PPE kits which were in demand throughout the country. This not only provided a valuable service, it also created an alternate source of livelihood for these women ■

Use of SMS

Despite the physical efforts to aid as many equine owners in need as possible, certain areas continued to be out of the BI field staff's reach, as the steady rise in COVID 19 cases in some areas made the rules for movement even stricter.

The fear caused by the rapid spread of the virus and loss of livelihoods amongst the community was seen reflected in the decreased focus on equine welfare. This was discerned to be one of the prominent reasons for equine health emergencies and even casualties in some cases. The need for finding new ways of connecting with the community, led the team to make use of digital communication technology, such as WhatsApp video calls and other video calling applications. It was used to provide contactless medical consultation for ailing equines, organising discussions on equine welfare and training equine owners, BK owners and Munshi (Operation Managers) on good equine husbandry practices easier.

However, many equine owners only possessed basic mobile phones with only features of making calls and SMSs. Considering, the population of such equine owners; it was also not possible for the team to make individual calls. So, BI teams decided to utilise the medium of SMSs to focus their attention on equine care and health, while simultaneously, diminishing their fear of COVID 19.

SMSs have been part of BI's communication platter for raising awareness on equine-related issues and BI possessed an active database of information such as type of beneficiary (equine owner, equine breeder, LHPs, LSPs), mobile numbers and locations. SMSs were used to reach out to more than 4000 beneficiaries in their native language during this period. ■



Translating WhatsApp Messages to Wall Paintings for Community awareness on COVID 19

BI's PEWU "Panchsheel Development Trust", in Bahraich, Uttar Pradesh utilised wall paintings as a medium to raise awareness against COVID 19. The team made sure that the equine owners were well aware of the safety measures against COVID 19. BI team took the help of BI trained Ashwamitras (Friend of Equine) and reached them through WhatsApp to share the MoHFW information collaterals on COVID 19 prevention, in Hindi.

Simultaneously, Ashwamitras conducted meetings with EWGs members and disseminating the information. Two WEWGs in Asmapur village felt the need that this vital information should be widely circulated in the community. They brainstormed catchy slogans on the need for wearing masks, social distancing & frequent hand washing.

These slogans were further fine-tuned by BI team members & were converted into wall paintings at prominent locations, where these messages were visible to other community members, visitors, and passers-by in the villages ■

Leveraging Social Media

Over the past year, BI has established its social media presence on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. The followers on these platforms range between, BI's NGO partners, field staff, equine owners, farriers, representatives from different organisations, GVOs, foreign supporters, and so on. Observing the spread of unauthentic news around the pandemic, causing overwhelming fear and anxiety amongst the masses, BI's team felt the need and responsibility to bring to light the right and important information. As an action step towards the same, the team shared collaterals developed by the MOHFW, GOI.

The collaterals had information regarding COVID 19 preventive measures and fighting the social stigma associated with the COVID 19 survivors. The BI's team ensured that the information was shared in real-time, thus, keeping it relevant for the audience on social media platforms. Further, the BI staff members also cascaded this information by posting them on social media platforms to various beneficiary WhatsApp groups and amongst other official and personal contacts ■

SNAPSHOT SOCIAL MEDIA COVID19



Top Follower followed by 1,096 people



Nat Waran

@profnatalie **FOLLOWS YOU**

Prof 'One Welfare' and Exec Dean at EIT, Napier NZ.
Hon. Prof and Inaugural Director of Jeanne Marchig
Animal Welfare at Edinburgh Uni. Views my own!

[View profile](#)

Top media Tweet earned 1,686 impressions

BI Partner unit in Vadodara, Gujarat helps equine owning families and equines during the lockdown. 110 masks and 60 sanitizers distributed, 310 families receive Govt. food ration, emergency treatment facilitated through Govt. Vets.

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[#AnimalWelfare](#) [#NGO](#) [#Covid_19India](#)
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FOCUS ON EQUINE WELFARE AT BKs

During the lockdown, fodder shortage for the equines at BKs became an important issue, which needed immediate redressal. BI's team explored various avenues of reaching feed and fodder for equines in their operational areas. The team also approached BK owners, who employed thousands of equine owners during the lockdown to assist. BI's efforts resulted in several BK owners agreeing to provide as well as assist in procuring fodder for the equines. The BI team also got in touch with the local administration to find plausible ways of providing fodder to animals through existing government schemes ■

STORIES FROM THE GROUND

Provision of Fodder for Donkeys at BKs

In the second phase of the lockdown (April 20-May 3, 2020), the government permitted the functioning of BKs in a limited capacity. Thousands of migratory workers including those with equines were living and working at these BKs. These workers could go to the market for only two specified hours in a day during the lockdown. Further, feed supplies in the market were diminishing, as replenishments were difficult to come by due to restrictions in the entry and exit of the suppliers.

Amar Jadhav, an equine owner working at one of the BKs in Amabajogai observed the absence of a feed seller at the market place for two consecutive days and feared a shortage of fodder for his donkeys. He reached out to Manisha, the FACE, through phone for help, upon analysing the situation, Manisha contacted the chickpeas bran sellers in the region and enquired about possible solutions to make the feed available to the equine owners working at the BKs.

One of the sellers agreed to sell the feed on the condition that the equine owners themselves would have to visit his farm and transport it back to the BK. Equine owners requested the BK owner to lend them his tractor for fetching feed for their animals. Considering the gravity of the situation, the BK owner heeded to Manisha's and equine owners' request and agreed to let them use his tractor for transportation of feed till such time the situation got back to normal. The supply of fodder is now being ensured for the donkeys, giving the equine owners a certain amount of relief from the dire situation they were in.

"When I visited the BK again, I was happy to see the donkeys having their feed on time." – Manisha, Field Assistant, Brooke India ■



Seven Abandoned Donkeys Receive Care and Shelter

During the first two phases of lockdown (March 25-May 3, 2020), equine owners working at the BKs in Satara district were stuck without proper food and shelter. Desperate to evade the situation, they decided to head back to their villages on foot, along with their working donkeys. As a safety measure, all of them were screened for COVID 19 before entering the village boundaries. Unfortunately, one of the equine owners tested positive.

Immediately, the identified equine owner was quarantined and admitted to Satara Civil Hospital. Amidst all the safety measures followed at the human level, the animals owned by the very equine owner who tested positive were abandoned as the equine owner's family members were also placed in quarantine. The fellow villagers were reluctant in providing shelter to the donkeys, due to the misconceptions of being infected as well.

BI's team, received a call from a community person and informed them regarding the abandoned seven donkeys. PEWU team members' prior liaising with the Sarpanch (Village Head) helped them receive permission for building a temporary shelter for the donkeys. The Gram Panchayat arranged 1 trolley of fodder and 1000 litres of water for the abandoned donkeys. Post the sensitization session on COVID 19 conducted by the team, two of the equine owners from the same village agreed to take care of the seven donkeys until the owner and his family members return ■

BI periodic Health Checks & linkage with BK owner ensures green fodder provisions

Seasonal employment at BK is the only option of livelihood for thousands of equine owners in Uttar Pradesh. The restrictions imposed during the lockdown limited these migrant workers' movement.

The BK owner in Marori block of Pilibhit suggested the labourers from the nearby village to reside at the BK. Accepting the offer, the labourers moved to the BK along with their equines. However, soon they started facing trouble in arranging fodder for the animals. During one of the health check visits to the BK, the equine owners highlighted the issue in front of Dr Deepak Verma, BI's MCVO of the BI's PEWU of BI Partner NGO "Uttar Pradesh Banwasi Sewa Sansthan". Dr Verma observed that most of the equines BCS was low and felt an immediate need for making fodder arrangements.

He spoke to the BK owner and explained the ill effects that the lack of good fodder can have on the equines and indirectly on the work at BK. As a response, the BK owner bought the green fodder produce from a nearby seller and paid him for supplying green fodder until the COVID 19 lockdown period ended ■

COMMUNITY SERVICES UNDERTAKEN BY EWGs

BI strives for making the working equine owning community self-reliant and resilient. This was done by facilitating the creation of CBOs. The primary building block in the formation of a 3 tier CBO system, is the creation of EWGs, which is a form of Self Help Group. EWGs are made at the village level. BI has encouraged the formation of male, female and heterogeneous EWGs over the past few years. As of March 2020, 1992 WEWGs and 157 Men EWGs are functional. During the lockdown, not only did these EWGs sustain themselves but were also able to help others in need ■

STORIES FROM THE GROUND

Arrangement of Food Essentials for the Equine Owning Families

The equine owners' livelihood in Lalpur village of Lakhimpur, Uttar Pradesh is dependent upon people using their service of transportation of goods. When movement during the COVID 19 was completely blocked, they could not earn even a single rupee and were unable to arrange for even one square meal for their families. As a response to this situation, Amit Mishra the PEWU's FACE, got in touch with the block level authorities working with the NRLM. He received the information that under the scheme there are Risk Management Funds earmarked specifically for such emergencies. The crisis was discussed with the NRLM officials and it was agreed that the RMF would be used to provide the community with essential food items. On April 5th, 2020, 25 equine owning families received five kilograms of rice and wheat, two kilograms of pulses, half a litre cooking oil and INR 100 each, which provided the equine owning families of Lalpur village with an immediate source of sustenance. Liaison was also done with the local panchayat by PEWU staff to ensure that the community's equines were able to graze and eat green grass from the unused farms on common resource properties.

"This help received from BI's team is a big support for us. We don't know what the situation will be later but for now, we have received enough to survive for the next few days."

— Rahman, Equine Owner ■

Community Level Initiative by the WEWG Members

In 2018, two WEWGs consisting of 20 members started their group in Fatehpur, Uttar Pradesh, with a saving of INR 100/each member. Some of the women members started IGAs by taking a loan from the group. The dedication and unity with which the group functioned, resulted in a sufficient amount of savings held by them.

When struck by the unforeseen lockdown, the women members observed families in their village struggling to arrange meals for themselves. The women understood their suffering well and were empathetic towards their condition. Collectively, they decided to arrange rations for the starving families in the village by utilizing a part of the group savings. The ration arranged was distributed amongst 20 families in their village. The initiative gave the women members an idea for starting IGA of Anaaj Kosh (selling wheat produce). They are planning to buy wheat produce during the harvest season, store it, and then sell it during the offseason. Anaaj Kosh will be started soon and the members of these WEWGs are excited about this new initiative ■

BI's EMERGENCY FUND UTILIZATION: SPECIAL PAGE

BI's Emergency Support Fund (ESF) to Deal with COVID 19

Following Government restrictions to control COVID 19, BI devised robust procedures to help equine owning communities to cater for the needs of the working equines. A special ESF was created to support equine owners led CBOs across BI's operational areas in 12 States and Union territories. During the lockdown period from April to June, the collective strength of these CBOs was harnessed to route BI's subsidised aid and relief from the ESF to the equine owning community. The support provided to the equine owning families was in the form of subsidization of balanced feed supply, FAK, Tetanus vaccination and dewormers etc. BI's Emergency ■

PHASE I (APRIL-SEPTEMBER 2020)

BI COVID19 Emergency Fund support through Community-Based Organisations

In the first phase (April to Sept) of BI's COVID 19 ESF, subsidized aid worth INR 13.5 lacs (approx. GBP 13,500) was given to the neediest and most vulnerable of the equine owning communities. The equine owning community-led CBOs were used to subsidize and provide 58,404 Kgs of equine fodder, 55,049 Kgs of balanced feed, refill/distribute 547 FAKs, administer Tetanus vaccination to 726 equines through BI trained Paravets linked with CBOs and provide dewormers to 268 needy equines. Overall, BI provided support to around 17,000 neediest equines & 6000 most vulnerable equine owners. In addition to this, BI provided capacity building virtual training to 280 CBOs leadership teams, to assist them to plan, design and deliver emergency response during such crises.

As a part of sustainable community development and building up livelihoods and resilience in working equine owners, BI supports the formation of CBOs at various levels. During the COVID19 pandemic, the collective strength of these CBOs was harnessed to route the aid and relief provided by BI to the community. This approach developed skills in the community to handle such future crises, whilst gaining financial strength by adopting effective business models in providing relief materials to the community at a subsidized cost along while making modest profits.

During the COVID19 pandemic, the collective strength of these CBOs was harnessed to route the subsidized aid worth INR 13.5 lac to the community during the quarter ending June 2020 ■

PHASE II (OCTOBER 2020- DECEMBER 2020)

BI's ESF to Deal with COVID 19



Figure 1: Balanced feed sold through Animal Resource Centre linked with CBOs in Muradnagar, Ghaziabad.



Figure 2: Equine owner Gyan Singh with his horse after recovery at RM BK, Garhichatola, Dholpur, Rajasthan. During lockdown these kits are proving a boon for ailing equines.

In the second phase of its COVID 19 ESF, which started from 1st October to December 2020, BI expanded the scope of its activities. The subsidy was provided for the construction of two temporary animal shelters at a cost of INR 64,000 (approx. GBP 640) in the Vadodara region under the EWP thereby providing safe shelter to 68 working equines.

Similarly, the BI Equine Welfare Project in Baharaich, Banda, Fatehpur, Pratapgarh, Lakhimpur, Kaushambi, Lucknow and Amritsar, provided ESF of around INR 4 lacs (approx. GBP 4000) which benefited by 722 working equines and 701 equine owners. This ESF also assisted in the sustenance of 50 EWGs- a form of self-help group and the basic building block of CBOs.

Through this initiative, BI also provided 13,301 Kgs of Balanced Feed to the community, supported the construction of four temporary equine shelters, and provided 20 FAKs.

In the coming months, BI will continue to provide the necessary support to the equine owning communities to deal with difficult circumstances arising out of the COVID 19 pandemic. We will also attempt to link EWGs to government assistance schemes. The COVID 19 ESF has been extremely helpful during these uncertain times. The community and the equine owners have expressed their gratitude towards BI ■

Temporary Equine Shelters built with support from ESF to ensure a safe resting place for working equines



BI: SUPPORT LETTERS TO THE GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

BI reached out to various central, state, and local bodies and offered its services during the lockdown. The communication was sent to ten State AHD, NDMA, SDMA, District Magistrates, and NITI Aayog. BI intimated these agencies of the work being executed on the groundwork by BI Partner and PEWUs and offered to partner and extend support to Govt. departments and local bodies, involved in administering the COVID 19 response.

- **Veterinary Services:** BI has a cadre of well-qualified and well-trained veterinarians. With the help of State and District Animal Husbandry Departments, BI is providing equine health and welfare services, as and when required. BI is also providing online and telephonic consultations to GVOs and LHPs.

- **Beneficiaries linkages with government schemes:** BI has been working with various local administrations to ensure fodder for the working equines and linking the equine owners to government schemes to ensure adequate ration for them and their families.

- **Dissemination of COVID 19 related authentic government information through social media:** BI is leveraging its social media presence to create awareness about COVID 19 and its prevention by publishing and communicating content on COVID 19 of the GOI /MoHFW and other authorised agencies.

- **Dissemination of COVID 19 related authentic government information in rural areas:** In all its operational and exit areas, BI used its network of CBOs to leverage penetration of information into the rural hinterlands to create awareness about COVID 19 and its preventive measures ■

BI and NDMA

Since early March 2020, BI was coordinating with NDMA, the nodal agency for COVID 19 response in India, to assist in their COVID 19 response as well as inform them about the ground situation and its bearing on our beneficiaries. BI informed NDMA about the veterinary services provided by the organization along with facilitating the EWGs for stitching face mask and PPE kits. Senior officials of NDMA lauded BI's efforts and invited BI to contribute the animal welfare aspect to the guidelines being made on “Community-led Disaster Risk Reduction” by this nodal agency.■



INCOME GENERATING ACTIVITIES: REINVENTING THE LIVELIHOOD OPTIONS

The COVID 19 pandemic reduced primary livelihood options for the equine owning communities, due to countrywide lockdown and immediate closure of BKs, where 70% of equine owners work. With little savings in hand, they were struggling to make ends meet. Through our interactions with community members, we realised that loss of livelihood and their uncertain future was making them anxious.

Understanding the market demands and lockdown restrictions, BI started exploring various avenues for providing support to the communities. For the financial support, meetings were conducted with local administration, linkages with government schemes were established and keeping the market demand in mind, a few IGAs were shortlisted. These included cotton face masks, pottery, PPE kits, essentials such as vegetables, brooms, to name a few. To further enhance the quality and quantity of the produced items by the EWG groups, the team provided online trainings, manuals, and resources. The success of these initiatives has helped in building resilient communities ■

STORIES FROM THE GROUND

IGA of Stitching Face Masks Across BI's Operational Areas

Considering the skyrocketing demand for face masks, WEWGs in consultation with BI staff in Ahmednagar, Maharashtra, initiated a pilot project of stitching face masks. The project proved to be successful as the WEWG involved was able to stitch and sell 972 masks to the community members at an affordable rate. Observing the success of this initiative, the BI field staff, across its operational areas, started promoting the adoption of the same IGA amongst the EWG members. Simultaneously, a positive thrust was given by the Ministry of Rural Development, GOI, wherein it directed the SRLMs to involve SHGs for making facemasks.

Gaining the confidence through BI's staff support and understanding the need of the hour, some of the EWGs utilised their savings for procuring the raw materials and sold face masks for INR 10-15, with a profit margin of INR 3-4 on each piece. The training of stitching face masks was provided to them by the BI team through YouTube tutorials and manuals. Further, the team also facilitated meetings of WEWGs with SRLM authorities to seek their support in their respective locations. The SRLM authorities agreed to provide the required grant/raw material for the stitching of cloth facemasks. For the WEWGs which received the raw material, it was decided that each woman will receive the stitching cost of an average INR 4-5/per piece.

As of June 2020, over 100 WEWGs across BI-partner units have stitched approx 20,000 face masks and made a significant contribution towards the availability of affordable facemasks in rural areas. By making the choice of adopting this IGA, the women in these groups not only benefitted but also provided a low-cost solution in the fight against COVID 19 in the country.

This contribution of WEWGs has been communicated to the NDMA, in one of the high-level CSO meetings in May 2020. NDMA officials were impressed and lauded the efforts of WEWGs during these dire times ■

IGA of Pottery in Morena, Madhya Pradesh

Since May 2017, BI's team has been working with the Prajapati community in Morena, Madhya Pradesh towards ensuring equine welfare and economic development. During the past three years, the team established a strong bond with the community members, and intensive field interactions led to the formation of EWGs in the district.

When the movement restrictions were imposed, the BI's team made all possible efforts to keep in touch with these groups, through the phone as well as video calls. In one such call, the economic plight of the community was highlighted. It was clear that the community was in desperate need of an alternative IGA with minimum financial investment. Considering the COVID 19 scenario and the skill known by the majority of Prajapati community members, pottery was the obvious choice. To further motivate the community, the team presented a cost-benefit table of pottery as an IGA and presented it to the EWG groups. There was initial hesitancy towards restarting their traditional skill in Pottery. However, when BI staff explained to them the workable business model and possibilities of a market for due to the renewed interest and demand for pottery items, they were keen to start an IGA based on this skill. The IGA was also beneficial, as it would replace the non-environmental friendly products such as plastic pots. Post the discussion with the EWG members, a linkage was also established with a wholesale buyer which improved sales better. About 35 EWG members started the IGA of making and selling pots. Each piece was sold for INR 60 -70 and each member was able to make a profit of INR 5000 per month. The group members and the families involved in the IGA are currently planning to adopt it permanently.

The BI Dholpur team's small steps for making communities adopt/re-establish their traditional skill has made the EWG members resilient enough to cope up with the hostile situation of COVID 19. They are now capable of taking good enough care of their families and owned equines. Further, the team aims at enhancing the capacity of community members to produce more quality, quantity and designer products through training from Khadi Village Industries Commission. Also, linkages will be established with the Government schemes/Institutions which will help the equine owners avail subsidies on electric pottery machine/equipment purchases and other benefits ■

IGA of Selling Vegetables on Horse Carts

Inter loaning is one of the prominent concepts for financial growth amongst the EWG members promoted by the BI's team. For more than 20 years of BI's working, this concept has enabled equine owners to start multiple micro-businesses. Similar loan taking processes helped 45 equine owners from the Puduwa village in Uttar Pradesh during the COVID 19 lockdown period. Their main source of income was through the transportation of people. Restrictions on movement decreased the demand for their service. Hence, with the loan money, the equine owners started the IGA of selling vegetables on their horse carts. Through this, they were able to earn an approximate amount of INR 300-400/ per day. The initiation of this IGA not only helped the equine owners but the vegetable farmers and other community members as well. The farmers received the required market on time for selling their perishable agricultural produce and the community members received unrestricted access to vegetables. Thus, ensuring survival through the lockdown period ■

IGA of Embroidery in Churu, Rajasthan

The demand for embroidery work is periodic in Rajasthan, and it peaks, especially during the wedding and festival season. After the successful formation of WEWGs in Churu district, the BI's team facilitated discussions amongst the women members on the potential of using their embroidery skills for starting an IGA. The approximate earning made by each woman member through this IGA is INR 100/ per hour, which in turn brings them an additional monthly income of INR 4000-6000.

During the COVID 19 lockdown, the family members of WEWG members lost their primary source of income, i.e. transportation of goods by equine cart. BI's team analysed the situation to check the effect of the lockdown on the market demand for embroidered products. The local demand for the embroidered products had decreased, however, the demand from wholesale buyers and warehouses remained intact. BI team kept in constant touch with the contractor buying the products from these WEWGs. The BI team encouraged the WEWG members to invest extra 3-4 hours every day. These women were able to generate an income of INR 540,000 at the end of three months of the lockdown period.

This IGA continues to run successfully. The WEWG members worked four days a week from their homes and support their families and fed their animals, even when transportation-related work opportunities were slim to none. The earnings brought in by the women helped in making others value their work and increase their respect in the community. These empowered women have now attained a certain amount of freedom having proven themselves as breadwinners for their families.

The WEWG members wish to keep the IGA running as they say, ***“Uncertain times will keep bringing troubles, but with the ability to work and earn we will have the strength to fight and prevail against adversity.”***

IGA of PPE Kits in Lakhimpur, Uttar Pradesh

During the COVID 19 pandemic, PPE kits were an essential requirement for doctors, nurses, and other paramedical staff. With the rise in cases, the need for the medical personnel increased and so did the requirement for PPE kits. To meet the demand for the latter, the government strategized to utilize the rural workforce in the form of SHGs, linked with NRLM.

Since 2017, BI team has been working towards enhancing the financial power of the women equine owners and established WEWG groups which usually consists of 12 women equine owners as their members. Previously, as a part of the same initiative, the WEWGs were linked with NRLM for the IGA of stitching School Uniforms. Through this, the women were able to earn extra income for their families and equines. On the other hand, their tailoring skills and the ability to meet a certain target was then appreciated by the NRLM authorities.

Keeping the previous positive experience in view, the local NRLM authorities allocated the required resources and funds for stitching PPE kits to the same WEWGs in Lakhimpur. They all received adequate training and material, post which they stitched 500 PPE kits within 10 days ■

BI's PARTNER NGOS PLAYED A STELLAR ROLE DURING COVID 19

From April 2020, BI has been implementing all its programmatic intervention through local NGO partners. Their local networking with panchayat/block/district administration proved beneficial for equine owning communities during the lockdown ■

Government Scheme linkages

During the lockdown, the majority of the migrant workers found themselves suddenly jobless as production in factories stopped, supply chains shut down and construction linked services halted. The Central government responded to the national crisis by announcing several social protection schemes, including direct cash benefit transfers under Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PMKSN) , Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Scheme and free cooking gas refills, grains, and pulses for the poor and job guarantee schemes such as the MGNREGA. For example, in Jammu, BI's Partner NGO Sahyog India liaised with the local administration & the Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board to provide relief to poor equine owners at the Shrine.

1119 equine owners received dry food ration from Deputy Commissioner (Reasi) & CEO Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board. Besides, 646 women, equine owners received INR 500 in their Jan Dhan accounts, 36 equine owners got employment under MGNREGA, 112 equine owners received INR 2000 quarterly installment under the PMKSN, 112 equine owners received free cooking gas cylinder under the Ujjwala scheme and 1569 free face masks were distributed by a government department as part of general awareness.

Similarly, in Sonipat, Haryana, BI's partner NGO Adarsh Seva Samiti ensured that 586 equine owners received INR 500 in their Jan Dhan account, 30 equine owners got employment under MGNREGA, 232 equine owners received benefitted linked with labour card. 134 equine owners received quarterly installment under PMKSN, 327 equine owners received free cooking gas cylinders under the Ujjwala scheme, 212 equine owners benefitted under National Livelihood Mission Scheme & 1041 equine owner received dry food ration supply. Besides, the State AHD provided 230 de-wormers tablets & 68 kilograms' mineral mixture to needy equines.

In Uttarakhand, BI's partner NGO, Shri Bhuvneshwari Mahila Ashram team coordinated with the local administration to ensure equine owners get access to available government schemes. In Rudraprayag district, 270 equine owners received Rs 500 in their Jan Dhan accounts, 437 owners got employment under MGNREGA scheme, 50 owners received benefit linked with the labour card, 323 equine owners received minimum income support under the PMKSN, while 43 equine owners from five villages received three months' ration supply under the government scheme. The government department distributed 1411 free facemasks ■

Intervention to Restore Livelihood

BI's PEWU "Uttar Pradesh Banvasi Sewa Sansthan" in Pilibhit district helped Aarif, an equine owner, to resume his livelihood during the lockdown. Before the lockdown, he used to supply goods on his horse cart. Due to movement restrictions, police in the region did not allow him to move outside the village. Aarif reached out to Karan, BI's FAAH, and Dr Deepak, BI's MCVO, who spoke to the government officials, including the Sub Divisional Magistrate and obtained a movement pass for Aarif, for supplying essentials around the district. The team also helped him to establish a link with the wholesalers of fruits and vegetables. He was sensitised by the BI team regarding precautionary measures against COVID 19, such as keeping the face covered and washing hands with soap, frequently. During the lockdown period, he earned INR 250 to 300 in a day by selling fruits and vegetables on his horse cart. The timely support by BI enabled him to take good care of his family and his horse ■

Transect Walks for Equine Welfare Awareness

BI's PEWU "Zila Yuva Vikas Sangathan, Ambala, took the initiative to ensure equine welfare is not forgotten during the lockdown. For this, they conducted transect walks in the region while taking proper precautionary measures. The numbers of the team members involved were kept low to ensure social distancing. During these walks, awareness was raised amongst the equine owners regarding COVID 19 and good equine husbandry practices. The team also distributed 145 facemasks for the safety of the equine owners. Similar transect walks were carried by our NGO partner Grameen Evam Samajik Seva Sansthan, which ensured the welfare of equines in Dholpur, Rajasthan ■

Assistance to Other NGOs

In Sangli, BI's PEWU "Astitva Sanstha" provided food kits containing essential items (5kg of Rice, 5 kg of Wheat, 1 kg of Edible Oil, 1 kg of Pulse, 1 kg of Groundnuts, 1kg of Salt, half kg of Chili powder, 2 Dettol soaps, 1 kg of Onion, 1 kg of Potato, 1kg Washing Powder) to 51 donkey owners in one of its operational site. These kits were sponsored by Oxfam India & Tere Des Homes, Pune. Similarly, in Vadodara, Animal Help Foundation (AHF), with support from Reliance Foundation provided cooked food to 14 equine owning families. In Uttar Pradesh 8 Partner NGOs viz. "Panchsheel Development Trust" in Bahraich, UP Vanvasi Sewa Sansthan (UPVSS) in Lakhimpur, Nehru Yuva Sansthan-Tisi in Banda and Fatehpur, Doaba Vikas Ebam Utthan Samiti (DVUS) in Kaushambi, Tarun Chetna Sansthan in Pratapgarh and Gramin Vikas Sansthan in Ghazipur and Ballia collaborated with agencies like Action Aid, Child Rights You, Child Line, Azim Premji Foundation, who provided immediate relief funds. Besides, the help was also acquired for the communities through linkages with various social and commercial ventures/institutions (Banks, Dealers), and individuals who willingly supported through cash and kind ■

Financial Linkage with NRLM Scheme

In Patan, Lok Seva Trust (LST) provided telephonic consultation to WEWGs in 20 villages as a result of this technical support these EWGs stitched 1000 face masks, LST team also distributed 250 food ration packets to widows, destitute & homeless. In Himmatnagar, LST contacted Sabarkantha Zila Panchayat President & coordinated with NRLM officials for a grant to horse & donkey owners for initiating income generation activity by providing amla (Indian gooseberry) processing machine ■

Distribution of Dry Food Ration Packets

In Beed, Yuva Gram Vikas Mandal carried rapid need assessment in the Ambajogai city area to identify stranded donkey owners & post assessment provided 35 food ration kits to most vulnerable owners ■

BI's Intervention with community movement during COVID 19

BI's partner NGO, "Shri Bhuvneshwari Mahila Ashram" (SBMA) EWP in Chamoli, Rudraprayag. During the lockdown, the SBMA team actively responded to the situation and reached out to equine owning communities in the hilly terrain. In the initial phases of the lockdown, the team sensitised equine owners, Ashwamitras and LHPs through phone calls regarding preventive measures against COVID 19. As a result of this sensitisation, the community members ensured that no new individuals enter their villages without undergoing the mandatory COVID 19 screening. Quoting an instance from the village, when BI trained Ashwamitra, Balram Singh, observed a group of migrant workers returning to the village without getting screened, he immediately informed village Pradhan (Village Head) & ASHA workers. Further, the authorities ordered them to stay under quarantine for 14 days and each one of them was screened.

During all the five phases of the lockdown, the strength of our NGO partners was tested to the core. Despite immense challenges, our partners have emerged as a key force multiplier in BI's COVID 19 response. Their networking with local administration & the communities has immensely helped BI in achieving its goal of providing relief to working equines and our beneficiaries during these dire times.

BI would express its heartfelt gratitude to its Partner NGOs and their dedicated staff who played a crucial role in our COVID-19 response ■



RESONATING BI'S VALUE OF COMPASSION & CARE

Amid the pandemic, the BI's team made all the possible efforts to ensure livelihood for the equine owners. The thought behind the initiative was to help equine owners maintain dignity and be independent of charity. Thereby, the team developed request letters stating the condition of the equine owning communities and sent them to those who held the capacity to offer income generation opportunities to them.

The letters were received well, and in turn, the equine owners were offered the work of transportation, considering the availability of equine carts with them. Blocking vehicular movement was impacting the local transit of essentials. With the help of equine carts, the owners transported fruits & vegetables, hardware, ration, and so on. The equine owners were able to earn at least INR 300-400 in a day.

As many would think, this would be the end of any team's task and efforts working towards development and welfare. However, BI works in a slightly different manner. The organisation holds the core values of being considerate, respectful, compassionate, and most importantly, being thankful. The team wrote gratitude letters to the shopkeepers and other people who offered work to the equine owners ■

Ref:-

Date:-

सेवा में

ब्लाक -

जिला - फतेहपुर

विषय - अश्व पालकों को रोजगार दिलाने के सन्दर्भ में

महोदय,

संस्था नेहरु युवा संगठन टीसी फतेहपुर पंजीकृत खोखिक संगठन है जो सोसायटी रजिस्ट्रेशन एक्ट 1860 व एफ०सी०आर०ए० के अन्तर्गत पंजीकृत है संस्था 2017 से जनपद फतेहपुर के गांवों में गरीब और पिछड़े समुदाय मध्य समाजिक, आर्थिक, विकास के लिए प्रयासरत है

संस्था द्वारा ब्रुक इंडिया के सहयोग से फतेहपुर जनपद में "सतत अश्व कल्याण कार्यक्रम" चलाया जा रहा है जिसके अंतर्गत लगभग 1100 परिवार और 3000 अश्व (घोड़ा गधा व खच्चर) जुड़े हुए हैं जो भट्टो पे ईट भराई व गाँव में सामान ढुलाई का कार्य करके अपने परिवार पशुओं का पालन पोषण करते हैं

संस्था के माध्यम से इनके पशुओं के रखरखाव, स्वास्थ्य, बीमारी एवं अश्व पालकों को सरकार की कल्याणकारी योजनाओं से जुड़ाव हेतु पशुपालन विभाग के साथ मिल कर कार्य किया जा रहा है

आपको अवगत करना है कि कोरोना वायरस महामारी के चलते लाक डाउन की स्थिति में अश्वपालकों की आजीविका का संकट खड़ा हो गया है जिसके चलते परिवार व पशु का पेट भरने की समस्या आ खड़ी हो गई है और उनका जीवन यापन पूरी तरह से प्रभावित होगया है अतः आप से अनुरोध है कि आप के माध्यम से अश्वपालकों के रोजगार का सुजन जो भी सम्भव होसके करने की कृपा करें

संस्था मैनेजर
डॉ० बीरेंद्र कुमार वर्मा
नेहरु युवा संगठन टीसी फतेहपुर
मो०न० - 8299711720

Ref:-

Date:-

धन्यवाद पत्र

सेवा में

महोदय,

कोरोना 19 महामारी के चलते पूरा देश लॉक डाउन जैसी समस्या का सामना कर रहा है। वहीं हमारे अश्वपालक भी इसी समस्या के चलते कई परेशानियों से गुजर रहे हैं। जिसकी वजह से जो सवारी लाने ले जाने व माल ढुलाई व ईट भट्टो में जो काम मिला रहा था वह पूरी तरह से बंद हो गया है और उनको बेरोजगारी का सामना करना पड़ रहा था, उनका जीवनयापन बुरी तरह से प्रभावित हो गया था जिसकी वजह से परिवार और पशु का भरण पोषण कर पाना मुश्किल हो गया है।

इस विकट परिस्थिति में आप ने जो हमारे अश्वपालकों को रोजगार देने का अति सराहनीय कार्य किया है जिस की वजह से उनको दो वाक्त की रोटी और बेजुबान पशुओं को चारा मिल सका है।

इसके लिए हमारी संस्था और पशुमालिक आपको कोटि कोटि धन्यावाद देते हैं।

धन्यवाद !

संस्था मैनेजर
डॉ० बीरेंद्र कुमार वर्मा
नेहरु युवा संगठन टीसी फतेहपुर
मो०न० - 8299711720

MEDIA COVERAGE HIGHLIGHT BI's COVID RESPONSE TO SUPPORT WORKING EQUINES & THEIR OWNERS

Vets, NGOs handle 250 emergency equine cases amid lockdown

INDIA'S NEWS
COVID-19 has led to a sharp decline in the number of emergency equine cases being treated by vets and NGOs. The lockdown has also led to a sharp decline in the number of emergency equine cases being treated by vets and NGOs. The lockdown has also led to a sharp decline in the number of emergency equine cases being treated by vets and NGOs.

Covid: NGO takes care of equines, dependent families

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politicalbusinessdaily

Covid: NGO takes care of equines, dependent families



The article discusses the impact of the COVID-19 lockdown on the equine industry. It highlights how the lockdown has led to a sharp decline in the number of emergency equine cases being treated by vets and NGOs. The article also mentions that the lockdown has led to a sharp decline in the number of emergency equine cases being treated by vets and NGOs.

krishijagran.com

Care and Compensation for Working Equine Riders Supreme for Brooke India During the 21-Day Lockdown

14 April 2020 14:00:37 by Chandra Mohan



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Technology comes to rescue of 2,500 equines stuck at UP brick kilns

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politicalbusinessdaily

Vets' key role in preventing pandemics emphasised



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बूक इंडिया की अनूठी पहल

250 से अधिक अश्वों का इलाज कराया

बूक इंडिया की अनूठी पहल

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CITY AIR NEWS

COVID-19: India's equine industry faces challenges

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Brooke India Assisting Community-Based Organisations through Covid-19 Emergency Support Funds

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NBT नवभारत टाइम्स

बढ़ते के मानक बनाकर किसान रोहतास, पर बंद के पैकेज का रहीं किसानों

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वाँकनेक्शन

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Collaterals: Posters

With rising temperatures and high humidity, it is possible that your equine might suffer from heat stress.



What are some of the behavioural signs indicating Heat Stress?



- ❖ Panting or laboured breathing with wide open nostrils/flared nostrils
- ❖ Droopy, lowered head and dull/apathetic behaviour
- ❖ Increased respiratory rate and depth
- ❖ Increased head movement/ nodding

How can one ensure prevention against Heat Stress?



- ❖ Offer water to equine 8-8 times a day
- ❖ Let your equine rest under shade as and when you take break
- ❖ Provide regular hair clipping to facilitate cutaneous heat loss
- ❖ Avoid overloading
- ❖ Avoid work in peak heat hours
- ❖ Offer green fodder daily

The Welfare Needs of Working Equines During Covid 19 Pandemic



- ❖ Compassionate Handling
- ❖ Adequate access to water
- ❖ Nutritionally Balanced feed
- ❖ Regular Grooming
- ❖ Clean Shelter
- ❖ Regular Foot Care
- ❖ First Aid Kit



Essential Care for Working Equines During Covid19 Pandemic



Essentials for Equine Owners



- ❖ Timely provide feed to your animals.
- ❖ Add salt in your equine's diet to prevent indigestion.
- ❖ Avoid sudden changes in quantity of fodder to prevent colic.
- ❖ Give water to your equines at least six to eight times a day.
- ❖ Minimize fear, pain, stress and suffering.

Essentials for Equine Professionals



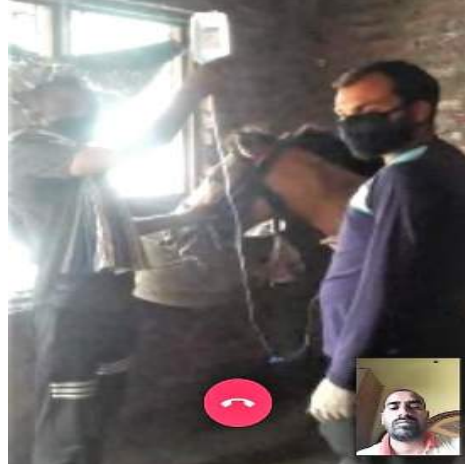
- ❖ Use video call/phone call if possible.
- ❖ Use your own halter/head rope.
- ❖ Consider wearing coveralls, gloves and mask.
- ❖ Maintain at least 3-6 foot distance and have the handler stand on the opposite side of the horse.
- ❖ Wash hands/use sanitizer frequently.

First Aid Kit for Working Equines (Maintained by Community)



*Dose Rate i.e. Per 100 kg Body Weight
For more Information and Treatment Contact Veterinary Doctor

Photo Gallery





Brooke Hospital For Animals (India)
E-61, Preet Vihar, New Delhi -110092
Website:<https://www.thebrooke.org/our-work/india>