

**Supporting the Frontline Workers during the COVID-19 pandemic**  
**Partner: Centre for Urban and Regional Excellence (CURE)**

Under the USAID supported *Pani Aur Swachhata mein Sajidhari* (PASS) project, CURE is engaged with the slum communities to form Self-Help Groups (SHGs), Women's Federations, Swachhata (Cleanliness) Groups etc. to increase WASH awareness and continuously reinforce the importance of hand washing and safe sanitation in the slums and low-income settlements.

In its work in Dharamshala, Himachal Pradesh CURE, among others, created and supported eleven women SHGs with 55 members to propagate WASH awareness and safe practices as well as help them to increase the livelihood opportunities for the poor women. These SHGs were federated to form the Women of Krishna Kunj Area Level Federation (ALF) for efficient management. As part of the livelihood generation program, CURE trained and supported the ALF members to stitch cloth bags from unused and discarded clothes.

The nation-wide lockdown had resulted in shortage of masks and the Dharamshala Municipal Corporation (DMC) was urgently looking for support towards accessing masks for its frontline workers. The DMC approached ALF and CURE for support. Responding to the request, ALF volunteered to produce the masks. The President of ALF, Neelam Narchad gave her willingness to stitch some masks. She also motivated four other women of ALF. Together the five women, have stitched and delivered over 2000 single layered masks to the DMC till date. DMC, in turn, is distributing the masks to its *Safai Karamchari*, the police personnel, the hospital's non-medical staff and ASHA workers.

Under the USAID supported PASS project, CURE is currently engaged in 148 slums reaching over 108,000 households in seven selected cities in four states in the country.



Figure 2 Member Shakuntala stitching masks



Figure 2 President Krishna Kunj ALF Stitching Masks for DMC