

## Support to the Vulnerable Groups as part of the COVID response

### Partner: Centre for Urban and Regional Excellence (CURE)

Under the USAID funded PASS project, the Centre for Urban and Regional Excellence (CURE) has been working in various slum settlements on WASH initiatives particularly for increased access to improved water and sanitation services. During the current lockdown situation, CURE is working closely with the slum communities, local administration, and the private sector. As part of WASH advocacy dissemination, CURE staff has established virtual groups via digital platforms, i.e. WhatsApp and Twitter Accounts with the communities. Till date, 24 CBOs or *Swachhata* groups and SHGs were formed by CURE with 2200 women and men members. As a result, the communities are being regularly sensitized about handwashing and safe sanitation as a strategic approach towards personal hygiene and protection.

Since the lockdown the CURE staff are in regular communication with the slum groups through the virtual platforms such as WhatsApp and Twitter handle. The group members, in turn, are regularly communicating with their neighbours and all the residents in their communities to receive feedback and understand the ground situation. The constant interaction during this period has also focused on increased social awareness and cohesion. This in turn, has led to heightened community awareness and increased social surveillance for security against trafficking and domestic violence which usually increases during disasters and calamities particularly for vulnerable communities.

One of the major challenges that was identified in the slums was food insecurity of the vulnerable population within the slum settlements particularly the tenant households or renters, who are daily wage workers and migrant labourers. Through the virtual groups, CURE strengthened the resource persons located within the slums to identify and prepare a list of the most vulnerable people who don't have any access to emergency food. These are mostly renters and migrants working as daily wage workers, and who have suffered loss of livelihood and don't own a ration card (an official document issued by state governments in India to households that are eligible to purchase subsidized food grain from the Public Distribution System).

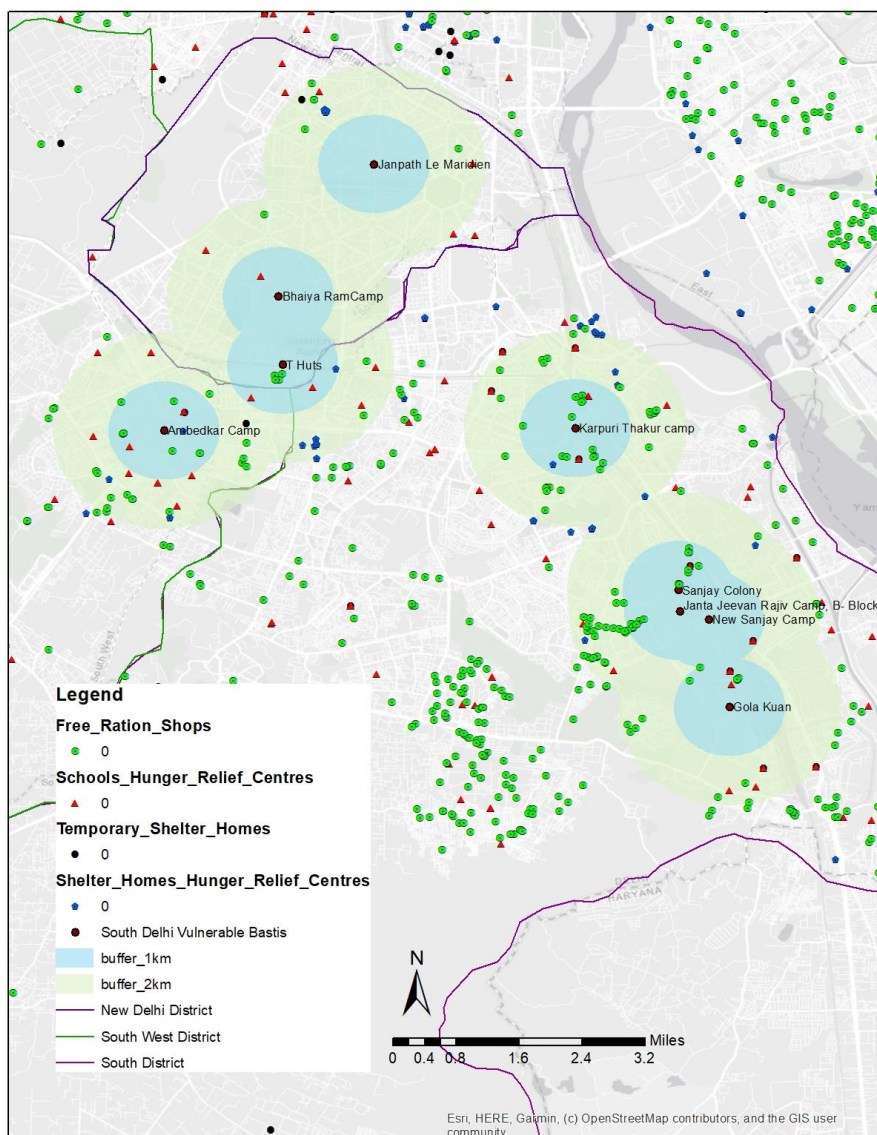
Till now, CURE has raised around Rs. 2,00,000/- through private, voluntary donations and in tie-up with another NGO, SEEDS and other agencies, reached 88 community groups in the 7 cities to distribute food ration (flour, rice, pulses, sugar, cooking oil etc.) to 2235 people (refer table below)

S.no.	City	No. of community groups	Total no. of members
1	Shahjahanpur, U. P	10	97
2	Dharamshala, H. P	7	488
3	Jaipur, Raj.	7	42
4	Agra, U. P	12	406
5	Delhi	48	1130
6	Ghaziabad, U. P	3	47
7	Shamli, U. P	1	25
<b>Total</b>		<b>88</b>	<b>2235</b>



Pictures of food distribution by CURE and partners to the vulnerable groups

Using the existing digital platforms and IT application for map-making already developed under the USAID supported PASS program to locate and map WASH hotspots consisting of water and sanitation stressed neighbourhoods in the city, CURE has adopted similar approach to support the Delhi Govt. in their current effort to provide shelter and food relief through the opening of Free Ration Shops, Schools as Hunger Relief Centres, Temporary Shelter Homes and Night Shelters as Hunger Relief Centres. CURE has prepared maps which will allow the authorities to identify the location of these facilities where the maximum vulnerable groups are located and whether they are within accessible range.



Map prepared by CURE to assist the Delhi Govt. in their efforts to better target relief to the vulnerable groups