



**COVID 19 Relief Program for Daily Wagers during  
the 2020 Lockdown**

## **Background**

The COVID-19 lockdown had a profound impact on daily wage earners, a group particularly vulnerable to economic disruptions. As the pandemic forced widespread closures and halted non-essential activities, millions of daily wagers found themselves without work overnight. In India alone, it is estimated that around 400 million workers in the informal sector were at risk of falling deeper into poverty due to the lockdown. With limited savings and no social security net, these workers struggled to meet their basic needs, including food and shelter. A survey conducted during the lockdown revealed that 90% of the daily wage earners had lost their primary source of income, and 50% of households could survive on their savings for less than a week. The sudden loss of employment not only exacerbated economic hardships but also led to a humanitarian crisis, highlighting the urgent need for targeted relief and long-term policy measures to protect this vulnerable population.

## **Intervention**

SGIF set up a helpline with the intention of connecting people who needed help to people who wanted to help in any little way possible. The person in distress would give a missed call on a number that was shared out among various groups and forums. SGIF team would call back the people and collect details on what their situation was and what was the urgent need.

An amount of Rs250 was determined for each adult member in the family.

In instances where we were able to connect the funders directly with the families in need, ration was purchased and delivered at the door step of the beneficiary.

## **Impact**

Total number of calls received between 30th April to 12th August 11,313 calls. Several of these calls were repeat calls.

Individual calls received: 4225.

The helpline got published across 28 states without any publicity or broadcasting. People reached us entirely through word of mouth.

The entire project was carried out by volunteers to whom we're immensely grateful. Without the perseverance and dedication of our volunteers, more than 768 people would have had to go hungry with their families. Our volunteers made a total of 3006 spending more than 600 odd hours.

Number of people who needed/requested help: 768. Out of this 527 people received direct cash transfers amounting to Rs.10.7 lakhs. More than 150 people received direct help with groceries, medicines etc.

Total number of people helped 4280