



Pooja Parab Gaonkar



Pratiksha Chanankar



Sunita Jagtap



Shruti Ghatwal



Manasi Naik



Lata Naik



Priti Kerkar



Monika Salgaonkar



Nayani Shetgaonkar



Shreya Mandrekar

Rural SHG Women: The *Secret Angel* During COVID Times



INTRODUCTION

Women Self Help Groups in rural areas have emerged as an effective frontline warrior in the Covid-19 pandemic situation. By reaching out to address the shortfall of masks, providing tiffin services, supplying essential goods to creating awareness on sanitization and hygiene related to Covid-19.

These secret angels did their work silently without any expectation from the society. Their work towards the social well-being was never identified. This documentation has recognised the work of Rural SHG women which will motivate other women from SHGs to come forward and carry out such tasks in the future. It also provides an insight into the efforts and the determination of these SHG women to fight against all odds and achieve their goals.

Goa Institute of Public Administration and Rural Development (GIPARD) and Goa State Rural Livelihood Mission (GSRLM) “Streeshakti” is always proud of their contribution through the hard work and initiative taken by them in such grievous times.

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Lata Naik
Block Resource
Person
Bardez Block

Mrs. Lata Naik is a simple rural woman, a resident of Calangute Panchayat. She was happy and busy with her family life. She joined Shri Shantadurga Devi Rashtroli Prassann SHG in the year 2007. At that time the group was already under the care of DRDA. Mrs. Lata Naik joined the DRDA in the year 2016 as a Block Resource Person. For this she had received training from DRDA and GIPARD following which she started forming groups. Around 61 SHGs and 4 Village Organisation were formed in Village Panchayats of Parra, Nerul, Candolim and Arpora.

Mrs. Lata said that most of the members in the SHGs were locals who were involved in activities such as flower vendors, fish vendors, grocers etc. To help the women in the SHGs to earn a livelihood, she encouraged them to sell eatable products in small stalls and shops.

She organized many courses and classes on Mushroom cultivation, Paper bag making and Tailoring for around 60 SHG members, so that the women become more skilled and capable of improving and earning a livelihood. Not only this, she had also organized other functions such as celebration of Women's Day in

people who cannot afford to buy it". Hence masks were distributed to the Safai Karamcharis

Mrs. Lata Naik worked during the pandemic situation to provide essential services to people in need. She provided

the Village Panchayat of Calangute where many women participated in different kinds of competitions.

COVID-19 Pandemic and Lockdown

The lockdown had a major effect on Calangute constituency as it is an active tourist spot. Many of the women were



earning their livelihood based on the number of tourists who visited the village. And as the lockdown

kept on extending, the conditions started to get worse. During this time Mrs. Lata thought of ways in which she can help her fellow members. She involved the women to set up small stalls on the main road so that they could sell vegetables and other eatables like laddus, shervalyo, chakri and earn some livelihood.

She donated 100 free face masks with help of her SHG members to the



Health Centre to give it to the 50 Safai Karamcharis who go to collect the Garbage waste from door to door. She says, "Using only one face mask daily makes it difficult to maintain the hygiene level, besides many people cannot afford to buy the masks. It will be better if the Health Centre distributes some masks to the

cooked meals to 25 COVID19 positive patients. She also ensured the distribution of Homeopathy tablets, which are provided by the Government as immunity booster, to nearly 150 families with the help of SHGs.



Appreciation Certificate received from Candolim Primary Health Centre.

Challenges and problems faced

As far as the challenges which were faced by her, one of the biggest obstacles was getting out of the house during the starting days of the lockdown. Because she was able to ride a bike, following the guidelines of the Government it was possible to do so but convincing other women to follow the same was not an easy task. In spite of the lockdown period, she was able to help many people during the pandemic situation.



***Manasi Naik
Community
Resource Person
Anjuna - Bardez***

Manasi Naik was a bright student during her college days. After completing her education from Institute of Hotel Management she started working in the hospitality industry. In the meantime, she got married and was blessed with twins. Due to this she had to quit her job and started looking after household activities. Mrs. Manasi Naik was involved in a lot of social activities before she was introduced as a CRP of Anjuna village. In

Anjuna, Manasi Naik was a part of vibrant activities like beach cleaning drives, fort cleaning drives as well as cleaning of the entire ward along with the help of ward members. She joined Prerana SHG in 2017 in Anjuna Village Panchayat.

As a CRP, Manasi Naik has taken a lot of initiatives to bring about a change in her ward. She formed three SHGs and one Village Organisation in Anjuna Panchayat. She has organized many classes for the SHG women to learn new things and have opportunities to earn a livelihood. Some of the classes include making Macrame items, jute bags, food processing and, confectionery classes, beauty parlour courses. These classes were also attended by the youth of her ward.

COVID-19 Pandemic and Lockdown

Apart from being a CRP, Manasi Naik says, "During COVID-19, we took initiative to provide handmade reusable face masks and also donated (face masks) to health centres-Siolim & Panaji, Mapusa Urban Centre, Mapusa Fire Station and police stations – Sanquelim and Bicholim, Drivers and Conductors of Kadamba Transport. Besides that, we have also donated masks to Red cross volunteers and, JCI team who were working towards helping needy people specially the migrants". Not only this, other works done by her include; distribution of essential goods to the needy people.

She also helped create awareness about Covid -19 to the villagers through sticking posters in Public Places regarding Covid-19. She personally went door to door to most of the SHG members who were tailors and requested them to help in stitching masks. She arranged for the material for stitching of masks. Around 50 SHG members were given

livelihood by giving them orders to stitch face mask. These SHG members were from Tiswadi, Bicholim, Pernem and Quepem talukas.

She again requested SHG members to contribute grocery items to help the genuinely needy people. She helped donate masks to an old age home in Moira. She says, "The objective behind visiting old age home is to make them (senior citizens) aware about conditions of the outside world as they are frequently visited by many well-wishers".

More than 100 SHG members were involved in these activities.

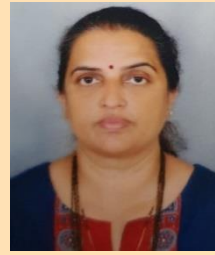


Providing essentials and other goods to senior citizen during pandemic situation

Challenges and Problems Faced

Despite the lockdown, with the restrictions imposed on movement within and outside the State, securing a 'pass' for internal movement was difficult. Procuring material for stitching the masks was unavailable; the demand was high however providing these masks was difficult.

The family members were uncomfortable with her moving around in the village or outside, and were gripped with the fear that she might get infected by Covid-19.



Monika Salgaonkar
Block Resource
Person
Salcette Block

Mrs. Monika Salgaonkar is a well-qualified woman with a degree in Bachelor of Science. She was a working woman prior to the birth of her child. Since her child was mentally challenged, she had to quit her previous job in order to look after him. Mrs. Monika Salgaonkar joined Padmavati Self Help Group at Davorlim, Dipcarle in the year 2002. In 2006, she got license from FDA and started providing Mid-day meal service from 1st June 2006 with the help from other SHG members. This experience of being self-dependent made her realize how a Self-Help Group can motivate and change the life of a woman and enable them to stand on their feet.

Keeping her experience in mind, she arranged 6 batches of skill training through Jan Shiksha Abhiyan for around 120 SHG members on different activities which include embroidery flower making, bakery, tailoring etc. out of which nearly 30-40 SHG members are actively involved in generating self-employment by selling their products in the market.

Mrs. Monika joined as Block Resource Person under the NRLM scheme of RDA on 1st November, 2020 in Salcette Block. Soon after joining as BRP, she was able to form 36 SHGs and 3 Village Organizations in Davorlim – Dipcarle Panchayat, Aquem Baixo Panchayat, Velim Panchayat and Navelim Panchayat areas.

Covid-19 Pandemic and Lockdown



When the initial lockdown was imposed in April, 2020, Mrs. Monika along with the support of local social

and other group provided grocery and other essential items to nearly 400 distressed families. At the same time, she also took permission from the Collector South office to supply cooked food at



nominal rate for the migrants and needy people residing in South Goa District. Around 5000 food parcels were cooked in their

kitchen and distributed to the people in need during the lockdown period.



Preparation of food in kitchen for distribution during lockdown situation.



Nayani Shetgaonkar
Community Resource
Person
Pernem Block

Mrs. Nayani Shetgaonkar was a working woman in a private company prior to her start as a Block Resource Person. Due to personal reason she had to quit her job. Since she was at home, she was advised to join Shri Satpursh Dadoba SHG at Morjim - Pernem in 2013. Soon after joining she started learning more about the SHG and its importance, so she, along with few other ladies in her neighbourhood, decided to form more SHGs. Around 40 SHGs and 3 Village Organisations were formed and are mentored by her in the Village Panchayats of Morjim, Parcem, Agarwada, Korgao and Mandrem.

Mrs. Nayani started her journey as BRP and begin to form a new SHG and even took responsibility of maintaining its accounts and auditing works. Apart from this she is also a member of various institutions such as Biodiversity Management Committee, Goa Livelihood Forum and also affiliated to social and political organisation. There were many training programmes initiated by her in her block like Jute Bag Making Program, Candle Making, Agarbatti Making Course in which more than 80 women are actively involved. These programmes have helped the women in her block enhance their skills and even made them capable of earning their own livelihood. Adding more to the progress of the block, the women in Mrs. Nayani's block have also started taking orders for making sweets and other eatables such as Rice Laddu, Sayechi Kappa (Coconut barfi) and other goan handmade delicacies. These women market their products at

local super centre, local shops etc. also Village Organisation of Morjim has started a shop named “Swavalambhi Sakhi” which provides the market to these products of the SHGs.

COVID-19 Pandemic and Lockdown

Since going out was a problem due to the



lockdown, it was difficult for senior citizens to get medicines, she helped them buy it and even delivered them at their residence. Also, when team JCI

& Red cross was asking people to donate ration, cereals, eatables and other basic necessities to help the genuinely needy people, Mrs. Nayani and the SHG members in her block took it very seriously. They helped in distribution of rice, flour, biscuits, blankets, soaps etc. to help the needy. After the lockdown was imposed and everything



came to a standstill, it was important to help the people who were put to hardships during this time. Mrs. Nayani has helped many foreign nationals during the lockdown. Around 25 foreign nationals stuck on the coastal belt (Morjim, Mandrem, Agarwada, Arambol) in her block contacted her to provide



essential goods. She supplied vegetables and other essential goods to nearly 20 Covid positive patients and also to people under home quarantine during second wave of the pandemic. She also provided food and care for street dogs in her area. A blood donation camp was also conducted with the help of Goa Medical College and MLA of Mandrem Constituency during this time at Mandrem in which 65 people participated.

Challenges and Problems faced during COVID-19

When asked about the difficulties encountered during this time, she said that there were hardly any. People were very supportive and willing to give generously. Hence there weren't any financial problems or setbacks faced by Mrs. Nayani when carrying out the noble deed of helping the public in such grievous times.



**Pooja Parab
Gaonkar
Block Resource
Person
Bicholim Block**

Mrs. Pooja Gaonkar was housewife looking after her daughter who was born differently abled. Alongwith her household responsibility, Pooja was actively involved in many social work activities in her area. She was working with 'Fugadi' groups in her village when she came across SHGs and became a member of Sanskruti SHG in Village Panchayat Pilgao in 1999 and later in the year 2016 joined the DRDA as the Block Resource Person. 93 SHGs and 7 village Organisations were formed under her guidance in the Village Panchayats Pilgao, Sal, Carapur and Mencurem of Bicholim block.

Being a farmer herself, she had a keen interest towards nature and natural products. Along with her husband and some other farmer friends, they used to communicate via WhatsApp on the changes they should bring in the village that will help the people to earn a living. Another training programme which was initiated in the village was a course on the removal of coconuts (Paddy) from the tree. She invited people from the



Training on Phenyl & Detergent soap, Bakery products were given to the

Agriculture Department to give lectures and provide training regarding the same. Training on Phenyl & Detergent

SHG members of Pilgao Panchayat, around 30 women participated out of which 15 have started earning their livelihood by selling their products in the local market.

Not only this, with the initiative of Mrs. Pooja many women were involved in making 'Farsan', and other eatables which they sold in the market in order to earn their livelihood. Apart from this, there were also women entrepreneurs who had catering and other businesses but were only limited to their village.

Also, she has organised Breast Cancer Detection camp for Pilgao village women with the help of Manipal hospital, Panaji. Around 80 women benefited from this camp.

COVID-19 Pandemic and Lockdown

Since her village was in the countryside, most of the activities that could be done were related to agriculture, therefore she brought in the changes accordingly. She said that there were fields which were not cultivated hence she raised awareness about the benefits of cultivating vegetables, rice and other crops which the people could grow and have an opportunity to earn a livelihood. Creating awareness about the importance of growing vegetables was



undertaken during the early phase of the lockdown period.

Prior to the pandemic, Mrs. Pooja and nearly 25

members from the SHG had taken up cultivation of tomatoes. When the lockdown was announced and there was shortage of vegetables and groceries in the state, these people started selling these home-grown vegetables to the general public. The total harvest was 200 kgs. Many people from across the state came to buy and these were sold at a very reasonable price. Mrs. Pooja also said that many people were impressed by the

fact there was availability of organic vegetables in this period of chemicals and pesticides.

When she was asked about the problem and difficulties faced during this period, she said that there were hardly any. The cost of growing the tomatoes was zero and also the sale of seeds added to their income.

Mrs. Pooja was also involved in distribution of free masks during Tika Utsav to around 400 people on 17th April, 2021.



Distribution of masks to people at Tika Utsav.



Pratiksha Chanankar
Community Resource
Person
Latambarcem -
Bicholim

Mrs. Pratiksha Chanankar lives in joint family. Being a joint family, she had to look after many responsibilities including her kids and also day to day house activities. Before 2016, Pratiksha Chanankar was a member of a club in Latambarcem village. The club used to carry out various tasks in the village. When Pratiksha met Pooja Prabhu Gaonkar, BRP- Bicholim, she came across the term SHG. After acquiring more information and knowledge about the ideas and the concept of the SHGs, she along with few other women, formed the Shree Varad Vinayak SHG on 10th October 2016.

The following year, she became the Community Resource Person. As the CRP, she has undertaken various tasks and has created various opportunities for women to create a livelihood.

As a CRP, she started to spread awareness about the existence of the SHGs and commenced forming more SHGs in her allocated area. She formed around 10 SHGs and 4 VOs in Latambarcem. She introduced the Pashu Palan scheme from the Department of Animal Husbandry to the SHG members. Through this scheme, took poultry activity and created opportunities for them to earn a livelihood in Latambarcem, Pilgao, Mayem and Kudnem.

Along with this scheme, she has also made two women avail the Kamdhenu Gai scheme from the Department of Animal Husbandry. Along with Agriculture Department, she established

12 units of Vermi-Compost project in the Bicholim Block at Latambarcem, Mayem, Pilgao and Maulinguem and is running it smoothly with adequate sales.

COVID-19 Pandemic and Lockdown



The 2020 COVID-19 pandemic had hit the state of Goa very badly. Neither was it expected nor was anyone prepared to face the consequences. As the complete Lockdown was imposed, people were unable to accept the reality of the situation. Thousands became unemployed.



People such as the wage workers were helpless to the extent that even having a meal a day was a challenge. In times like this, people staying in rural villages such as Latambarcem were helpless. To help these people in need, Pratiksha along with the aid of the Red Cross Community and the Federal Bank, Mapusa, gathered daily dietary and sanitary necessities and distributed them to the needy people. With her single request, the people in the SHGs contributed to this noble deed.

Be it Rice, Pulses, Vegetables, Legumes or daily sanitary products. Around 35 needy people



received much needed help. She donated Medical kits/ tools such as Walker, Toilet Chairs, Disinfectant Liquids, Sanitizers ,etc. to the Sports Club in the locality.

She started taking orders of making face masks that were washable and reusable. She bought and sold the cloth and materials, ensuring that the masks were stitched in an orderly and uniform manner as directed by the health guidelines. Apart from this, she was also involved in many donations works. She gave free facial masks to the people.



When asked about her future plans, she says that after the pandemic situation cools down, she wishes to conduct a Blood Donation Camp for the people of Bicholim.

Covid Vaccination Camp -Tika-Utsav was planned by the Panchayat and the Health Department, in which she actively participated to motivate and create awareness in Village Panchayat of Kasarpal – Latambarcem. Two camps were conducted, in which 85 villagers above the age of 45 years took vaccine in Ladfe village on 10/04/21 and 80 people took vaccine in Kasarpal village on 16/04/2021.



Tika Utsav at Kasarpal Latambarcem for people aged 45 years and above.



Priti Kerkar
Block Resource
Person
Bardez Block

Mrs. Priti Kerkar got married at a very young of 19. Following her marriage, she is blessed with two kids. She started as a housewife and took care of her home. The year 2003 became a turning point in her life as she joined a Self-Help Group in Thivim named Zambleshwar SHG. The group had many members ranging from senior citizens to youngsters at that time. PritiKerkar learned to make some edible products such as Angel rings, Fennoris, oil less lemon pickle, etc. She started making these products and selling them in the shops. With the passage of time, she also learnt to take care of groups' accounts and audit work. She and her husband had established their own business of tours and travels with the financial loan received from SHGs. In 2016, she joined DRDA as a Block Resource Person of Bardez.

For the past more than four years she is working tirelessly in the block to bring about change and for the women to become more self-reliant and capable of standing on their own feet. She has introduced various programs, given training on different topics such as concept of SHGs, livelihood, Panchsutra, accounts etc. Till now around 64 SHGs and 8 Village Organisations of Village Panchayats at Siolim-Marna, Oxel, Sodiem -Siolim, Nachinola, Ugassaim, Aldona and Moira are formed and mentored by her. Some of her works include a Mushroom Training programme with the help of Agriculture department. This programme enabled more than 20 women to earn a living.

Another major program was the RBI Loan Distribution Programme which helped women to start their own small-

scale business. Some of the self-start ups were tailoring outlets, beauty parlours and boutiques, etc. For the SHG women to have new opportunities to promote and sell their products, with the help of MLA of Siolim Constituency and also the CRPs of the block, they opened a small outlet at the main junction in Siolim. In this small shop cum store items made by the SHG members were sold. Edible items such as laddus, chivdas, Shankar pallis, nevryos, etc. Other items such as agarbattis, crocheted works, baby dresses, handmade brooms and many more.

In October 2019, Goa was the host of a Global Business Summit, Vibrant Goa. In this summit more than 300 foreign delegates and more than 400 domestic delegates were present. PritiKerkar worked as a coordinator between the SHGs and the Vibrant team. For this she had been preparing for months. She went to the most remote village to find the best of products which represented the Goan Culture at its best. At this summit, stalls were set up and products such as garam masala, spices, organic rice, mats made from natural materials and coconut tree leaves, baby dresses, baby blankets, baby mattress, fragrant candles and many other items were showcased. More than 100 SHG members were engaged for this event.

Also in November 2019, Priti Kerkar attended the World Trade Centre Exhibition in Mumbai where she promoted many Goan products



Showcasing a Goan item to Goa Chief Minister Dr. Pramod Sawant at Vibrant Goa Summit.

COVID-19 Pandemic and Lockdown

The Covid-19 breakout was a great loss for everyone. Even though there were fewer positive people, the threat was not gone. So, in the early stages of the pandemic, and when there was no lockdown announced, she saw a great possibility for the prevention of this deadly disease. She had already given orders for making face masks that were washable and reusable to the women in the SHG. For this she had to deal with the buying and selling of the cloth and materials, ensuring that the masks were



stitched in an orderly and uniform manner as per the guidelines provided by the

Health Department, and even delivered them to the venues of the Party. The first sample of the mask was shown to the health officer of Siolim Primary Health Centre for the approval and then only production of mask was started.

Under this program more than 106 women got a chance to earn livelihood. Almost 15,000/- was earned by each woman involved in the stitching work. More than 50,000 face masks were made and delivered to the private as well as public sector.



Stitching of masks by members of SHG for distribution.

Apart from this, she was also involved in many donations works. Such as giving ration, groceries, cereals and other basic necessities to the genuinely poor from the remote areas. Some of those include the Latambarcem village and also an old age home in Moira along with other people.

Challenges and Problems faced during COVID- 19



Distributing essentials to people in remote areas.

Due to lockdown, all transport and shops were closed. People were not allowed to move out of house and face masks were need of the hour. Calls from health centres, police department were coming in to supply masks to them. In this situation, she somehow contacted the Chief Officer of Mapusa Municipal Council and requested him to grant the permit to just open the backdoor of a well-known clothing shop in order to get cloth material required for making masks. This is how they could supply face masks. Also, her neighbours and family members were bit hesitant to send her out of the house as there was panic and lack of clarity in the society regarding the Covid-19 situation.



Shreya Mandrekar
Community Resource
Person
Moira Panchayat –
Bardez

Mrs. Shreya lives in a well to do family. Despite being content with her living, she always wanted to create her own unique identity in the society. To fulfil her dream, Mrs. Shreya joined her SHG in the year 2012 and at the time she served as the Treasurer of the group. She has been an active member of her SHG for the last nine years. Later she joined DRDA and after receiving training from GIPARD, she started working as the Community Resource person. It has been more than three years now that she has been working as a CRP.

After receiving training, she started her work through formation of new self-help groups. A total of 22 SHGs were created and they were finally able to form a Village Organisation at Moira. After the Village Organization was created, she was asked if she can work as the Chairperson of the Village Organisation, to which she agreed. She says, "The EC Committee elected me as the Chairperson of Village Organisation".

During this time, she introduced a private course herself namely Paper bag making course, cooking course, and many other small courses. With the help of Handicraft Department there was a tailoring course in which 8-10 women trained for tailoring courses. CRP Shreya also said that this training helped the women learn and start their own tailoring business and started earning a livelihood. She says that there are women who wanted to try different businesses. There was availability of coconut, vegetables and other edible products which could be sold.

COVID-19 Pandemic and Lockdown



During the first three days of the Janata Curfew, grocery and other daily necessities were easily available but real problems

began later on. People started facing shortage of daily ration, grocery and other daily necessities. She started receiving phone calls from many people under her ward. She started distributing some groceries in the area. Unfortunately, problems were just piling up. If groceries were done than ration, cereals were not available. Thinking that people need to be fed and keeping in mind that most of the needy people in her ward were old and unable to move out or earn a living during that time, she used her own money to buy ration such as rice, wheat flour, dal, and other cereals. For this she said that she took help from her husband and son. The senior citizens were attended to in the village.



Packaging of grocery and daily essentials at home with help of other members.

Sanitization and cleaning in her ward:
Since only public and important places were sanitized, she thought that sanitizing each and every household was a very important and urgent matter

which needed to be dealt with at the earliest. But there was no labour present and also a shortage of funds. She then approached some youth in her ward and asked if they were willing to help in this program to which they happily agreed. As a VO Chairperson, she called the Fire Station and requested for water supply and sanitizing liquid and involved the youth in the sanitizing the wards. On hearing that the women in the SHGs are taking such keen interest in cleaning and spreading social awareness during the pandemic the Village Panchayat were surprised and wholeheartedly supported the initiative.



Packing of chapatis and bhaji for Covid-19 affected patients and families



Sanitizing and cleaning of wards from her Village Panchayat during pandemic situation with the help of village youth.

When second wave of Covid -19 hit Goa, Aldona area was declared to be red zone at that period, almost 200 food parcels every day for the lunch and dinner were supply to the Aldona Food Helpline which provides free nutritional vegetarian food for the Covid-19 patients in Aldona Constituency.



Shruti Ghatwal
Block resource Person
Bicholim Block

Mrs. Shruti Ghatwal, a resident of Sirigao Panchayat, is a very humble and down to earth person. She always had the motive of serving the society in any way possible. Keeping this in mind, she along with other women in her village came together to form Shree Ganesh SHG in 2002. In 2016 she got the opportunity to be a Block Resource Person of Bicholim Block under the Streeshakti NRLM Scheme. As a BRP she formed 20 SHGs and formed 4 VOs of Village Panchayat Sirigao, Mulgao, Sal and Velguem of Bicholim taluka. Her main objective was to bring all the women together in a Village Organisation and empower them



Inauguration ceremony of Mulgao Rural Mart

by providing opportunities to earn their livelihood with the help of various Departmental Schemes. In order to achieve her objective, she came in contact with officials from the Agriculture Department, Animal Husbandry Department, Khadi and Handicraft Department, NABARD and the officials of different national banks. With the help of these departments, income generation training such as 2 batches of coir doormat training, 3 batches of jewelry making training, Jute bags, micro classes (2 batches) were organized for SHG members of Sal Village Panchayat.

In Mulgao Panchayat area, a Velvet bag making course, 3 batches of catering classes were provided to the SHG women. In Sirigao Panchayat only one batch of coir doormat making class was taken up. Three batches of awareness camps on Ayurveda for maintaining health and prevention of diseases were organized for Sirigao, Sal, Mulgao Village Organisation.

Covid-19 Pandemic and Lockdown

During the pandemic period, Mrs. Shruti along with the help of NABARD, a rural mart was launched along the main road in Mulgao. Around 20 SHGs are reaping the benefits of this mart by selling their products.

She has also provided free essential items to senior citizens living in Sirigao and Mulgao Panchayat areas during the pandemic period.



Distribution of essential goods to senior citizens during pandemic situation



The Tika Utsav, a Covid vaccination programme, was organized by the Health Department and Village Panchayat Mulgao for people aged 45 years and above. Being a BRP, Shruti motivated and created awareness among the people about the vaccination programme. Around 234 people from the Mulgao Panchayat received vaccine during this programme.



107-year-old senior citizen woman taking Covid Vaccine during Tika Utsav at Mulgao.



Sunita Jagtap
Block Resource Person
Balli - Quepem Block

Mrs. Sunita Jagtap, residing in Balli Village Panchayat was a happy go lucky woman with two kids and family. In the year 2015 at the age of 40 her life took a serious turn when she lost her husband due to cancer. The responsibility of her family fell completely on her shoulders. In order to make ends meet she joined Bramhadev SHG in Balli. With the support of her SHG she soon started to take orders for tailoring and embroidery and sometimes she also used to make agarbattis to earn a livelihood.

As she was doing well in her activities, in the year 2015 Sunita was selected as a Block Resource Person for Quepem Block. She formed around 45 SHGs and 7 Village Organizations from Village Panchayats of Assolda, Balli, Barcem, Fatorpa, Betul, Morpirla, Cavrempirla, Molcornem and Ambaulim.

With help of Laxmi Mahila Mandal, she organized Agarbatti and Jewelry making classes. Also, with the support of Agriculture Technology Management Agency (ATMA) she organized Soap and detergent making classes, Cotton bag classes and Food processing classes for ST community women. Nearly 60 women took part and around 20-25 of them are earning their livelihood by improving their skills and marketing their products at local markets.



Covid-19 Pandemic and Lockdown

During the lockdown period Mrs. Sunita saw that the poor and needy people were not able to get access to grocery items and therefore faced difficulties in day to day lives. Hence, she decided to take up the matter and provided grocery items free of cost to these people. Also, she supplied medicine to senior citizens who could not go out to buy medicines.

Mrs. Sunita observed that some senior citizens were diabetic patients and require to take insulin injection every day. To solve the problem, she took medical training and learned to give injections with the help of a Para Medical



staff and started giving insulin injection to senior citizens by visiting them on daily basis. She gives injection to 4 patients every day in Balli Village.

Providing insulin injections for senior citizens during pandemic situation.

She also supplied 6000 face masks to a private company and in the process provided livelihood to the 7 other SHG members who knew to stitch the masks.



SHG members involved in the process of making face masks.

In order to create awareness on Covid-19. She conducted an online awareness programme by providing information on Covid-19, its precautionary measures and vaccination for the SHG members of Balli Village Panchayat.

She says, "During this pandemic period we need to help each other so that we can overcome this difficult situation".