



NEWSLETTER

June/July 2020

VEERNI PROJECT





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Date: July 14th 2020

Dear Friends,

Greetings from the Veerni Project, Jodhpur.

We hope you are doing well and safe during this difficult time of the Covid-19.

The Corona-virus outbreak has created an alarming health emergency situation across India. And there is a constant surge in Covid-19 cases in the county. India's Corona-virus's tally reached passed the 850.000 with 22.674 deaths as of today. More than 25 thousand cases are occurring daily throughout the country.

The situation in Rajasthan is very alarming as the numbers of cases are increasing day by day; currently the tally is 25000, with 499 deaths. More then 4000 cases have reported in Jodhpur, with 70 deaths.

ACTIVITIES AT THE VEERNI PROJECT

The New Academic Year:

We are planning for the safe re-opening of the Veerni Institute and Veerni Balika when permitted. In the meantime, we are expecting Veerni girls to be at home for some time as the Government of India has indicated that older students are likely to be welcomed back to school as a priority. However, Veerni will make ensure no girls are left behind with their education.

Re-opening of the Veerni Institute and Veerni Balika: From Mid-March onwards, both the institutes were closed as the country entered in strict lockdown to try and contain the spread of Corona-virus. The gates of the Veerni institutes were closed and the dormitories, study-rooms, dining hall have been sitting empty. The silent institute is an eerie contrast to the laughter, noise and energy of the girls who would otherwise today be thronging in through the Veerni institute gates and enjoying meals, playtime and learning opportunities together.

In the month of June, Veerni team has made all the preparation for the re-opening the Veerni institute and the Veerni Balika program. The minor repairing works have been done of the Veerni building. But as per the new update received from the government regarding the re-opening of the schools, the government of Rajasthan has decided to extend one more month. Now the schools will be re-opening from 1st August across the state.

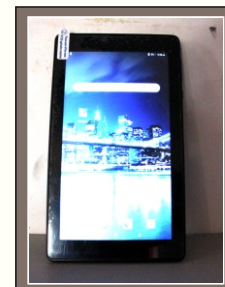
School Kits: Veerni team were also engaged in preparing school kits (Books, school bags, notebooks and other stationery) for the Veerni students, which will be distributed to them on their arrival at the both the institutes.



Online Classes: The Veerni staff is in touch with the school administrations to conduct online classes for the Veerni girls from class 6 to 12. A class-wise digital content will be provided by the schools, which we will circulate to Veerni girls through WhatsApp groups. There are 30 girls who have been identified who do not have the technology to access these digital contents. Veerni will aim to provide them Tablets enabling to follow the online study through the download of chips. All these new Tablets have the technology to carry this out. Where necessary, the Veerni staff will go to the villages to provide support and access to learning opportunities to the Veerni girls.

Board Examinations and Preparation Support:

In June, when rescheduled dates of board exams (class 10 and 12) were announced, Veerni reviewed how to support the students of these classes. The Veerni team circulated study material to these girls through WhatsApp groups. All the girls sat their board examinations at the end of June, a remarkable achievement in the circumstances, and we are now we are awaiting their results.



New Admission:

For the academic year 2020/2021, parents have been continuously contacting Veerni for admission of their daughters at the Veerni. 191 parents have approached Veerni to date for 7 places. It has come to the notice of the project that this year, parents from lower-middle social-economic background have also been approaching Veerni for admission of their girls. This is due to the covid-19 situation, most of the lower-middle families affected in numbers. Presently, they cannot afford their daughters' education and are seeking help from Veerni. However, we informed them that Veerni is waiting for government guidelines and only afterwards Veerni will start the process of new admission.

Distribution of Hygiene and Food Kits:

Hygiene Kits: Veerni has been distributing Hygiene kits to all Veerni girls, and deprived ladies in the villages. This kit contained a hand sanitizer (1 package), a sanitary napkin (1 package), a washable mask (1 package), bathing soap (4 soaps), and laundry soap (4 soaps), and information leaflets about Covid-19. Until now, near 85 Hygiene kits have been distributed by the Veerni team.

Food Kits: Veerni did a small survey in the old Veerni villages through the Veerni former village representatives (promoters) and identified 95 families (Veerni girls and other in need) who are lacking basic food. After the survey, the Veerni team distributed food kits to some of the families in the villages as the government provides only wheat to the villagers. Veerni's food kit contained rice, sugar, spices, oil, and green pulses. Until now, 105 Food kits have been distributed by the Veerni team.



Health Outreach Program:

Veerni team has been visiting villages to ensure understanding and awareness of Covid-19 amongst villagers so that people know how to keep themselves and their families safe. Veerni team is providing general information about Covid-19; actions to prevent the spread of the virus; what to do if you become unwell or suspect someone has the virus; how to engage and support community members. Veerni distributed information leaflets to the villagers and shared health advice and information.



The following important points have been discussed by the Veerni team with the villagers to make them aware about the symptoms of the virus so that they can take proper precautions to prevent the infection of the virus: -

- Corona-virus symptoms can take five to six days to appear; however, it can take up to 14 days as well.
- The most common symptoms include fever, dry cough and tiredness. Less common symptoms of Covid-19 disease are aches, sore throat, diarrhea, conjunctivitis and loss of taste and smell.
- One should seek immediate medical attention if he/she develops serious symptoms such as difficulty in breathing or shortness of breath, chest pain and loss of speech or movement.
- Older people and those with underlying medical problems like high blood pressure, heart and lung problems, or diabetes are at higher risk of developing serious illness. However, anyone can catch Covid-19 and become seriously ill.

Thank you

We are extremely grateful to those who have made donations to support our work as we adapt how we can ensure ongoing provision of education and healthcare to our girls and villagers. This is an extremely challenging time for all of us. It is both heartening and humbling to witness the dedication of our local team members and the kindness of our donors as together we do what we can to minimize the impact of Covid-19.

Mahendra Sharma
(Director, Veerni Project)



Picture Gallery: Distribution of Food Kits



Picture Gallery: Distribution of Hygiene Kits

