

Printed from

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Women led micro enterprises, SHGs keep govt departments, poor supplied with masks

TNN | Apr 4, 2020, 06.27 PM IST



NEW DELHI: Quietly working behind the scenes, steering the fight against Covid-19, women-led micro enterprises (MUs) and Self-Help Groups (SHGs) have collected so far by the ministry of rural development. 66,000 women from over 14,500 SHGs have made 1.32 crore cloth masks to beat the virus and provide a durable and reusable option to communities who cannot afford to buy masks once.

There are an estimated 6 crore women-led MUs registered under the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) ministry of rural development. According to the ministry of rural development, more and more SHGs in states are now producing cloth masks and more are coming on board to take up a range of activities. The data for 1.32 crores masks, phone and emails and efforts are on to consolidate the data further to plan the way forward.

The ministry of rural development, more and more SHGs in states are now producing cloth masks and more are coming on board to take up a range of activities. The data for 1.32 crores masks, phone and emails and efforts are on to consolidate the data further to plan the way forward.

The ministry has issued detailed advisories to state missions under NRLM on the wide range of activities involved with to contain the spread of Corona virus. The list also includes making masks, providing food to the hungry through community kitchens.

Of those showing the way, Kerala is a case in point. Besides reaching out to people through women-led micro enterprises under the Kudumbashree – State Poverty Eradication Mission, Kerala has made more than 14.50 lakh cloth masks and over 2,100 litres of hand sanitisers. Priced between Rs 10 to Rs 15 per mask, the micro enterprises have by that measure grossed a turnover of around Rs 20 crore, helping in meeting the demand for masks and providing a durable, reusable option in cloth masks through bulk orders by government departments and essential service providers sending them to the field.

The women working in these units themselves bought the cloth and started work while e tailoring units, said S Harikishore, executive director at Kudumbashree. Bulk orders for m Kerala Medical Service Corporation, Airport Authority and Food Corporation of India have started on March 16 across all 14 districts of Kerala and sanitiser production started two c

In Bihar for instance, all 38 districts have been involved in making masks. As per data shi development ministry, 800 households engaged in the activity have produced over 2 lak government departments. These masks have been vetted by the health department of B distributed among poor families.

In far off Andaman and Nicobar Islands too the SHGs have started work on masks. Accor commissioner, Nicobar, SHGs started making masks a week back from cloth and these m workers, government department staff and community members for free.