

The State of India's Poor: Volume 1

April-June 2020

Social Group: Denotified and Nomadic Tribes



State of India's Poor: August 2020
In Focus: Denotified and Nomadic Community

1. Introduction

1.1 Context

The Denotified and Nomadic Tribes (DNT-NT) constitute approximately ten per cent of the Indian population (Renke Report (2008). 150 years ago, these tribes were notified as 'criminals' under the Criminal Tribes Act, 1871, which at one instant deemed generations to come as 'born criminals'. Nearly 198 tribes were listed under this notification, which gave sweeping powers to the police to control and monitor the movement of these communities. Similarly, many Semi-Nomadic and Nomadic Tribes were viewed with suspicion by the colonial rulers, as they moved from place to place. The British laid emphasis on sedentarisation – a sedentary community was, by definition, easy to control (Dandekar 2014) and easier to tax.

While Independent India repealed the Act in 1952, thereby 'de-notifying' these tribes, it was replaced by the Habitual Offenders Act across different states in the following years. To this day, many of these communities face false allegations and are picked-up by the police for crimes they have not committed. The DNT communities have a disproportionately high number of crime allegations against them based purely on the fact that they are from this community.

The DNT-NTs are a heterogeneous community and have been involved in varied work. They include pastoralists, sellers and providers of services and goods, entertainers as well as religious performers and astrologers. Each of these hereditary occupations has been affected by industrialisation and modern ways of entertainment, as a result of which, most communities have been forced to look for alternate livelihoods. Some occupations were deemed 'illegal' based on new amendments and laws that were brought, and some professions such as street performers were unable to perform due to the Bombay Prevention of Begging Act, forcing these communities to break their close ties with their traditional work, as well as their ties with animals and nature. The traditional practices of many of the DNT-NT communities, including the Sapera and Madari communities have been marked illegal under the Wildlife Protection Act. In addition, cow breeders and traders like the Banjara communities are being attacked by the cow vigilant mob in recent years¹. While some communities have adapted their traditional work and continue pursuing work in the same sector, some have been forced to take up daily wage work or beggary to survive.

The Covid-19 pandemic has affected their lives greatly. Some of these communities still pursue a nomadic way of life along with their animals, making the lockdown particularly difficult in terms of mobility. For those who were able to move to some locations, the fear of Covid has meant that they were unable to access any kind of support or relief. Many of them are also cut-off from mainstream village administration, making access to relief tough for them at this time. As a large number of the community members are artists and performers, the lack of tourism and travel has meant that they have had to survive on the very little savings, many have been forced to take up manual work during this time.

¹ <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/2-hurt-as-cow-vigilantes-strike-in-Rajasthan/article15470833.ece>

1.2 Geographical coverage

As part of the COLLECT initiative, information is being collected for 1,000 villages and towns across 100 districts in India with a focus on hamlets from Leave No One Behind Communities (LNOB) communities who comprise those marginalised due to caste, tribe, denotified tribe, religion and gender.

Till date information from Denotified and Nomadic communities has been

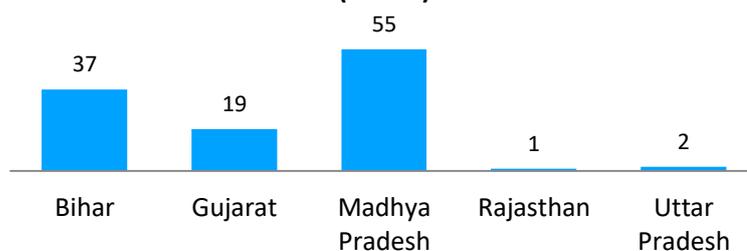
collected from **114** urban and rural locations across **22** districts from **5** states in India. The distribution can be seen in table 1 alongside.

TABLE 1: Distribution of DNT Habitations in Sample

States	Number of Districts	Number of Villages/Towns
Bihar	12	37
Gujarat	2	19
Madhya Pradesh	6	55
Rajasthan	1	1
Uttar Pradesh	1	2
Grand Total	22	114

The distribution of the DNT study locations across the five states is detailed in Chart 1 alongside.

Chart 1: Distribution of DNT Locations across States (n=114)



1.3 Domains for which the information was collected

The major domains for which information was collected are detailed in Table 2 below (and a more detailed list of Covid related entitlements have been detailed in Annex 1)

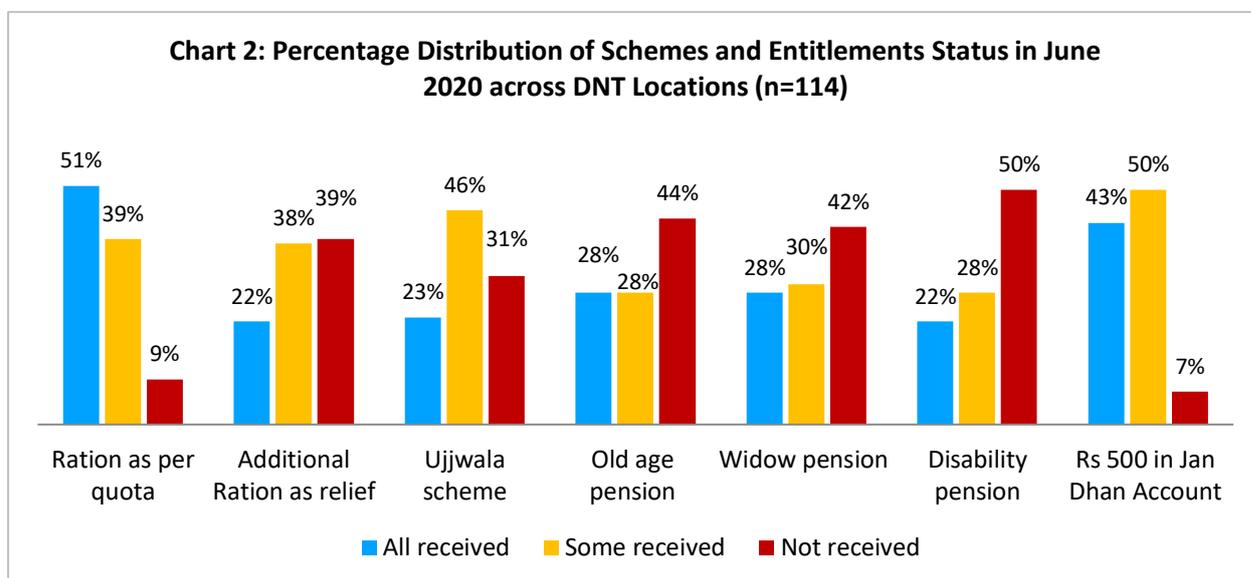
Table 2: Data collection domains

Entitlements and Schemes	Special Registration	Economic & Social Issues
Right to Food and Nutrition (PDS, MDM)	Unorganised worker registration	Agricultural procurement
Right to Work and Livelihood (MGNREGA)	Registration of Non-ration card holders	Online education
Pension Schemes (old age, widow and disability)	Returning migrant workers	Indebtedness and Bank Credit
Special Covid Bank Transfer (Jan Dhan)		Physical and mental health
Gas cylinder subsidy		Domestic violence and child abuse
Kisan Samman Yojana		

2. Overall Findings

2.1 Access to Entitlements in June

Charts 2 below provide a snapshot summary of status of relief entitlement access for the 114-DNT locations for the month of June 2020.



Entitlements and services that are solely set aside for reducing hardships and drudgery of the poor and the marginalised communities caused due to Covid'19 pandemic are not accessed by a majority of the target groups. While around 51 per cent households received ration as per quota, close to 40 per cent of the eligible households did not receive additional ration. A high percentage of locations had not received any of the three pensions, 44 per cent did not receive old age pension, 42 per cent for widow pension and 50 per cent for disability pension. In 50 per cent of the locations, the situation was such that some had received Rs 500 in their Jan Dhan accounts, while in 43 per cent locations all had received this amount. In close to 30 per cent of locations no families received any free gas cylinders as part of the Ujjawala scheme.

“The DNT hamlets are often on the outskirts and government schemes and entitlements do not reach them. In addition to this, the stigma of sex work which is the main work for many of the DNT communities here, is another reason for them to be excluded.”

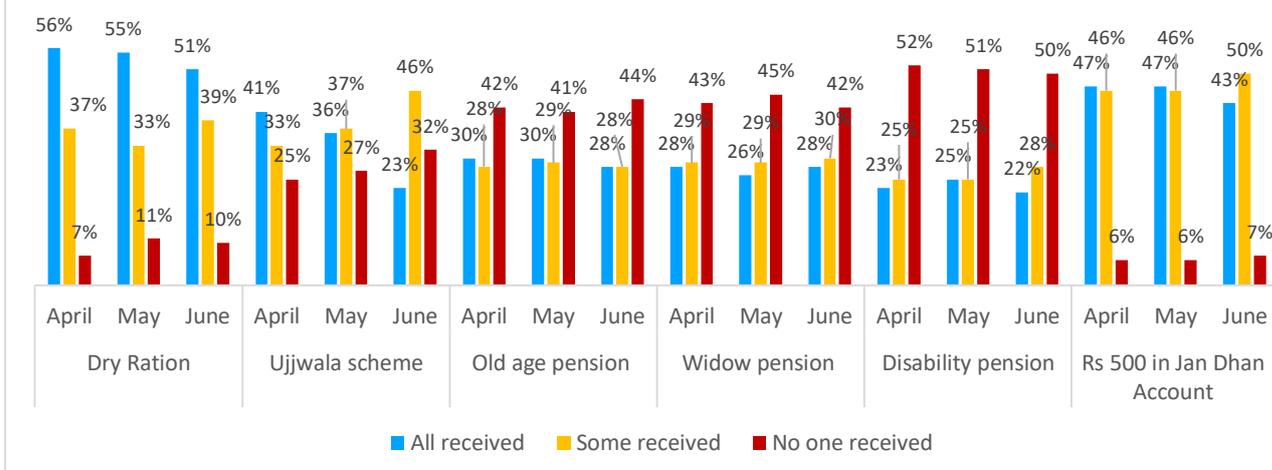
“In the case of Nomadic communities living in tents, no government action has been taken to try to include them in schemes and entitlements that could benefit them.”

- Reported from Araria, Bihar

2.2 Temporal trend across entitlements

Data for these locations has been collected since April and chart 3 below provides a temporal analysis of the status of the various entitlements.

Chart 3: Percentage of Schemes and Entitlements Status from April - June 2020 across DNT Locations (n=114)



Across the study locations, it was found that in a little over 50 per cent of the locations, all eligible families reported that they have received ration as per their quota. However, with all other schemes and entitlements less than 50 per cent habitations reported that all eligible families have received the same. 47 per cent locations reported that families received Rs 500 in their Jan Dhan accounts, while only close to 30 per cent reported having received their Widow, Disability or Old age pension. While seven to 11 per cent of all habitations reported that no families had received dry rations across three months, with all other entitlements including the three pension schemes, Ujjwala scheme and Jan Dhan, a very high percentage of habitations that did not receive their entitlements. A little over 40 per cent of the locations did not receive the Widow and Old age pension, while close to 50 per cent did not receive Disability pension.

"In some cases the government asked for caste certificates to make ration cards. For the caste certificate, records from 1950 were asked, this has been a major hurdle for the community to access ration."

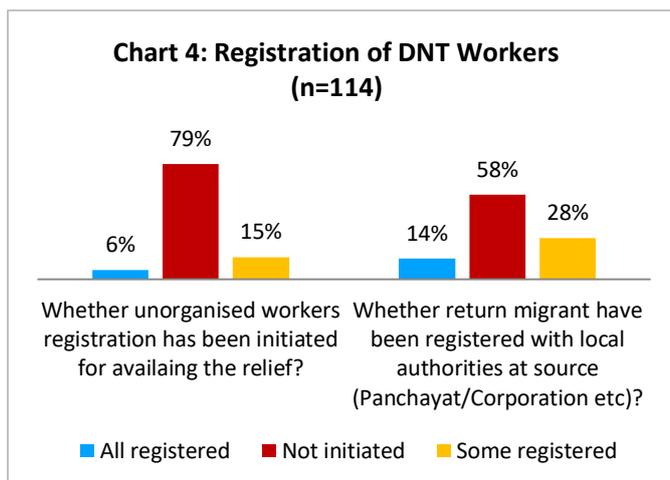
"The linkage of the adhaar card with the ration was another problem faced. In a family of seven, if the aadhar was linked for only two then they were given ration only for two. With no access to the internet, linking the aadhar card during this time was impossible."

- Reported from Morena, Madhya Pradesh

With regards to the additional ration allotted during the covid pandemic, close to 40 per cent of the locations had still not received this in June. Of those who did receive ration, through their quota or additional relief, only around 20 per cent locations reported having received good ration across the three months. Close to 15 per cent locations reported that the ration quality was poor and inedible. In terms of nutrition, 68 to 73 per cent of the DNT locations did not receive any **rations in lieu of the mid-day meals** or **supplementary nutrition from the Anganwadi** for pregnant and lactating mothers as well as young children, in the months of April, May and June.

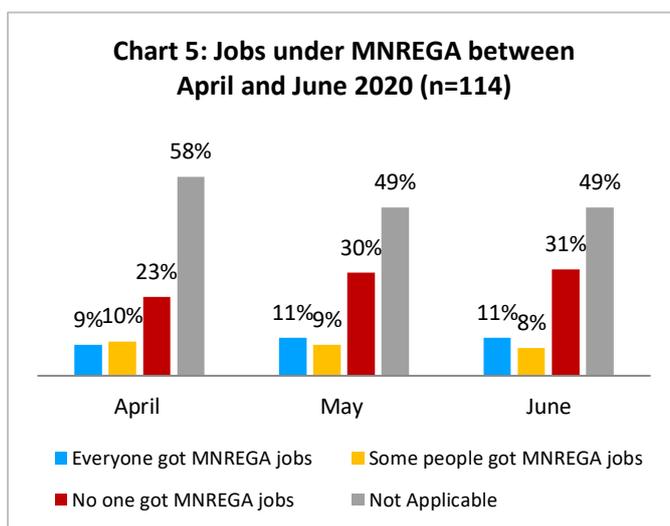
2.3 Registration Trends

Data was sought on whether there has been any registration of unorganised workers for availing relief and also of returning migrant workers with the local authorities. As seen in chart 4 alongside, across the 114 locations, in 79 per cent of the cases of unorganised workers and 58 per cent of the returned migrants no process had been initiated.

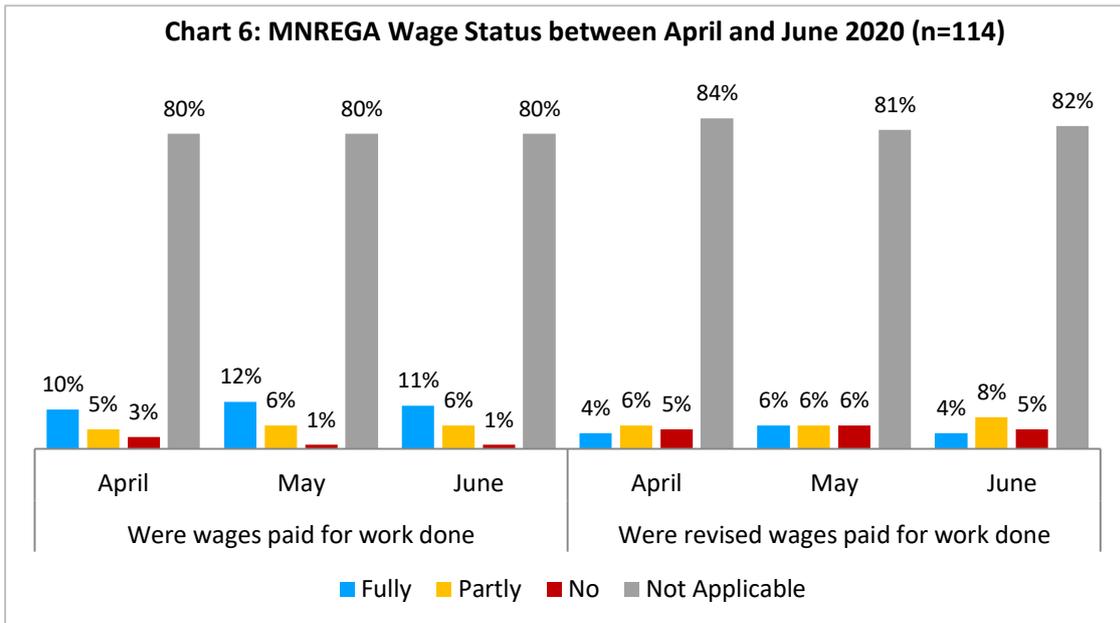


2.4 Economic and Social Issues

As soon national lockdown was announced, with restrictions on movement and mobility, tens of thousands lost their livelihoods and many families were dependent on the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme for an income. Charts 5 and 6 below detail the jobs and wage status of MNREGA between April and June 2020. While trying to explore if there were any outstanding **MNREGA dues to people** (Before April), 6 per cent of the hamlets reported that there were dues, while 19 per cent reported that all dues were cleared.



With regards to getting jobs under MNREGA, between 9 and 11 per cent of the hamlets reported that all eligible persons got MNREGA work between April and June, while between 23 and 31 per cent of the hamlets shared that no one got MNREGA jobs. Between 4 to 11 per cent reported having received full wages for the jobs done in April, May and June.

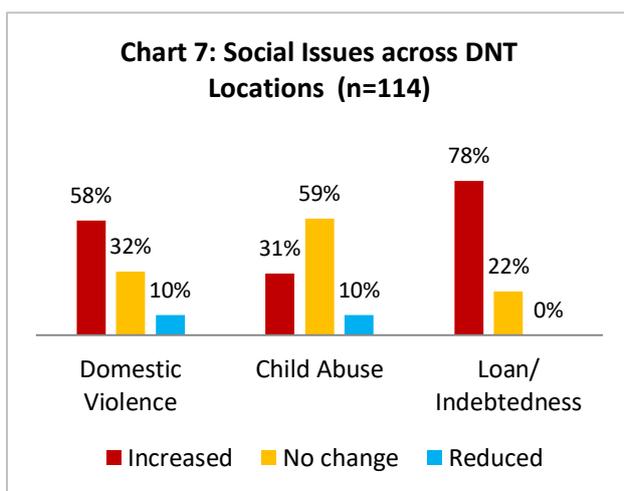


Given the lack of stable livelihood options, many have been forced to take loans and high levels of indebtedness have been reported from across geographies beginning as early as March.

“There is strict restriction on the mobility of members from the DNT community. In the time of Covid-19, we can't even enter the main village. In this situation no one is ready to give us any job, even in their farm. They fear that we may will bring covid-19 along with us. They think we move around with the virus inside us.”

- Reported from Araria, Bihar

Loans are often taken from employers, money lenders, neighbours and relatives and indebtedness has always been a trigger for other social and economic exploitation, causing a rise in trafficking, bonded labour and child labour. Information was sought for each location on whether indebtedness has increased or stayed the same and across locations it was reported that across 78 per cent of the locations it has increased as seen in chart 7.



In alignment with news from across the country and world pointing to increasing trends of domestic violence and child abuse during the lockdown, these areas of enquiry were included in the research instrument. Data from the 114 DNT hamlets shows as seen in chart 7 that while in 58 per cent of the cases domestic violence had increased as had 31 per cent of the cases of child abuse, in 10 per cent location there had been a reduction in both domestic violence and child abuse. A few reasons for the reduction in cases of abuse as mentioned were the closing of alcohol shops.

In terms of healthcare, while only 44 per cent of the hamlets replied in the affirmative for having a **Government health facility** at the location, only 23 per cent shared that treatment and medicines were available through April and June. 53 per cent locations reported that **no immunisation** for children had taken place between April and June, while in 29 per cent some

were able to get immunisation and only in 17 per cent of the locations were all children immunised. For **mental health** support, 61 per cent of the locations stated that there were no mental health services available at a Government facility.

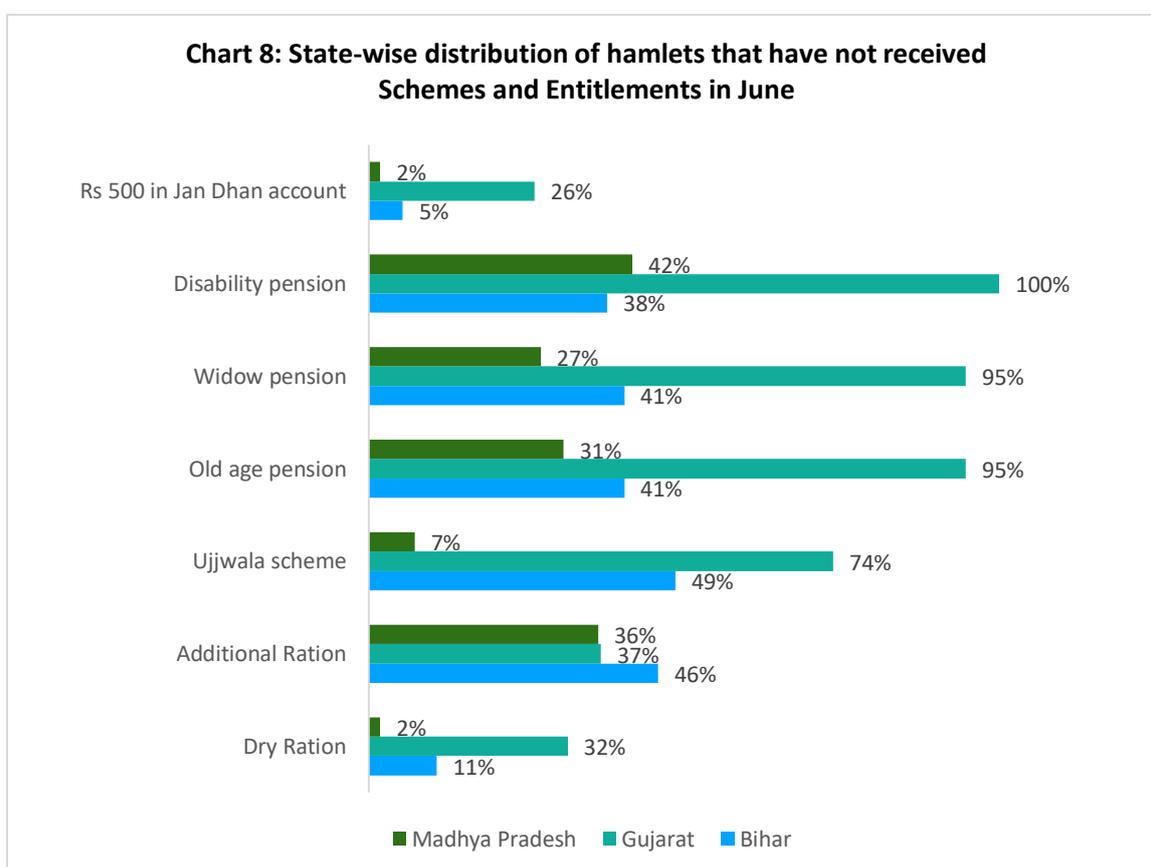
“During the pandemic, the Banchada community here has been surviving only on loans. All these loans are from private moneylenders and at a very high interest rate. The fear is that this could lead to an increase in the trafficking of girls for the repayment of loans.”

- Reported from Neemuch, Madhya Pradesh

With regard to **access to education**, as many as 78 per cent of the locations stated that children were unable to access any kind of online education, in the remaining 22 per cent locations only some children were able to access this. In only 7 per cent of the locations were children provided with free text books.

2.5 Location-wise Access to Entitlements

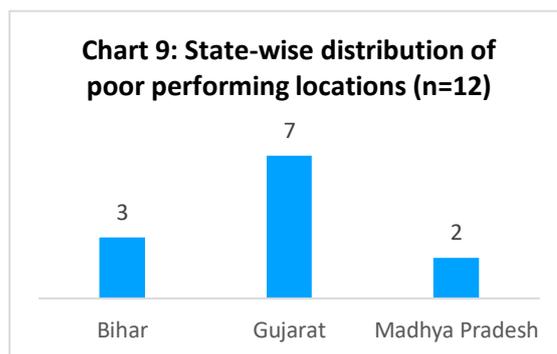
Using the geographical lens, chart 8 below details the percentages of hamlets that have not received any benefits from the basket of six schemes and entitlements.



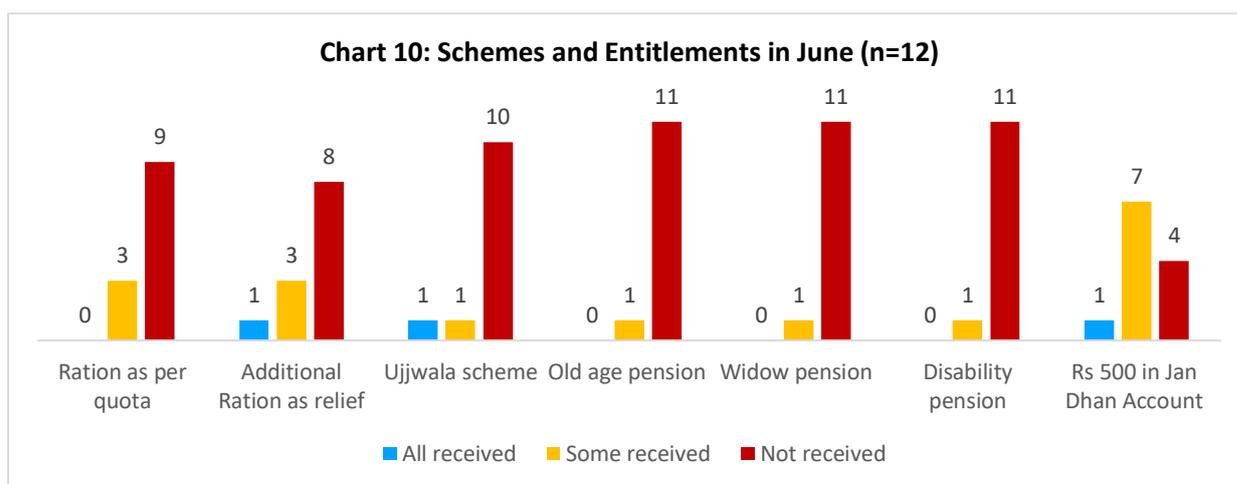
In Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Bihar the three pensions – old age, widow and disability – all show a very low success rate. The situation was particularly bad in Madhya Pradesh, where none of the locations reported to have received the disability pension, while 95 per cent locations did not receive widow and old age pension. On the other hand, the scheme that most people benefited from, across the three states, was the Jan Dhan account, only 2 per cent locations in Madhya Pradesh, 5 per cent in Bihar and 26 per cent locations in Gujarat reported not receiving Rs 500 in their Jan Dhan account. In terms of additional ration, given as relief during the pandemic, around 40 per cent of the locations, across the states did not receive this support.

3. Findings of Poor Performing Locations

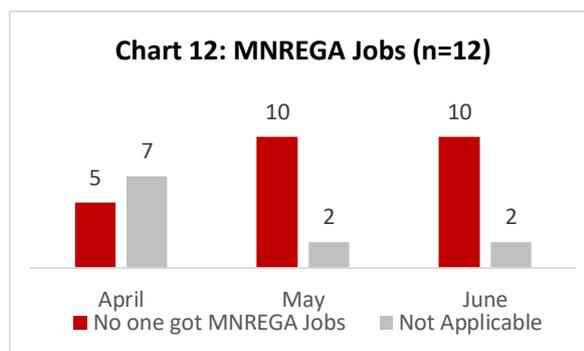
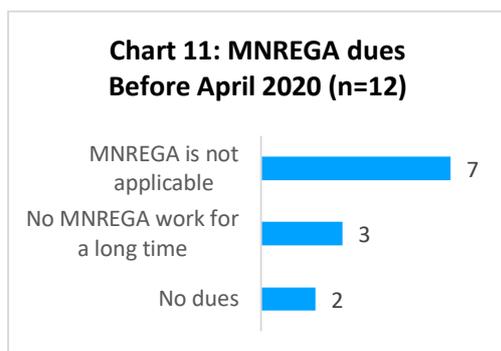
Among the 114 DNT locations for which data was collected, twelve locations as seen in chart 9 were the poorest performing on the basis of their access to the various relief entitlements.



Their performance across schemes in June is detailed in chart 10 below and the starkest performance has been in the access to ration as per quota and pensions where not a single hamlet has stated that all families have received the same.



In terms of **livelihood**, charts 11 and 12 below detail the pre-COVID scenario and current scenario as of June 2020.



In the context of **health**, only one of the twelve locations had government health facilities available at the location or close by. In none of the twelve locations did the **immunisation** of children happen between April to June.

With regard to **education**, across the 12 locations none of the children had access to online platforms and only in one location some of the children received textbooks. An increase in **indebtedness** was reported in 10 of the 12 locations with 2 reporting that the situation was same as before. In terms of **domestic violence**, 9 locations reported an increase, 2 stated there was no change and one location reported a reduction. Regarding **child abuse**, 4 locations reported an increase while 8 reported no change.

4. Key Inferences

Limited Access

Among NT-DNT as per the data it is clear that these communities have limited access to entitlements and services. The state fails to keep up to their promised and in most of the cases an additional promised made by the government like extra ration and mid-day meal and supplementary nutrition via the Anganwadi did not reach all community members. The main reason behind limited access to entitlements and schemes are tedious documentation, stigma of criminality, fear of approaching service providers due to impending discrimination, corruption and lack of information.

Stigmatisation and Discrimination

State prejudice has been observed in most DNT locations. Around 60 per cent of the data has been collected from communities that are involved in sex work or dance bars. The stigmatisation of their occupation, in addition to the tag of 'criminality' has made access to any kind of support from administration very difficult. In many locations members have reported that administrators do not even their locality. This has meant that many of these communities have been left out of any kind of schemes or entitlements that could benefit them.

State fails to reach last person

Apart from the Jan Dhan Yojana, rest of the schemes, have shown a very poor outreach in DNT locations. The data shows a big gap in fulfilling the promises made by the State. Infact, the trend is worrying, as the situation of aspects such as loan and access to work is in most cases, getting worst with time.

“Systemic virus or bottlenecks within the delivery system”

The data reveals that existing service delivery and administrative systems do not favour justice and rights. The schemes are designed with the intention of bringing about justice and protection of rights of the most deserving (marginalised and vulnerable) families. But, there exists systemic negligence in the administration of schemes and delivery of pandemic mitigation services. The service delivery and administrative systems through which the schemes are implemented has failed to facilitate implementation of schemes as envisaged to reach out to all the target groups.

Unresponsiveness and apathy to local contexts

The data presents a wide range of differences across villages, districts and states in terms of accessing entitlements and services by the DNT communities. The local power structure holds strong biases, as these communities has been historically victims of stigma and criminalisation. In the time of this pandemic, instead of reaching out to these communities and showing empathy, the local power structure keeps them excluded. As per the community, there have been cases of raid by the police in the name of sex work, where young girls have also been picked up by the police. In many places restriction on entry for DNT communities into main villages has also been reported. There need to be concerted efforts taken to mitigate these variances and make sure that all DNT households are able to access entitlements and services earmarked for them.

Annex 1: Entitlements Announced By Central & State Government As Measures To Covid-19 Outbreak

Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY): The main objective of the scheme is to ensure food security and to create hunger-free India. AAY scheme covers the poorest of the poor in India by supplying food and other important commodities for their daily needs on subsidized rates. Under this scheme, wheat is provided for Rs.3 per kg and rice is given for Rs.2 per kg. Eligible family gets 35 Kg of rice per month. AAY families can buy 1 kg of sugar at a rate for Rs.18.50 per kg from ration shop. Rural families with an annual income up to Rs.15000 are eligible for Antyodaya Anna Yojana including old age pensioners, small and marginal farmers, landless agricultural labourers, physically handicapped persons, destitute widows, rural artisans or craftsmen such as potters, weavers, blacksmiths, carpenters and slum dwellers, Urban families with annual income below Rs.15000 will get benefit under this scheme. People living in slums, daily wagers such as rickshaw-pullers, porters, fruit and flower sellers on pavements, domestic servants, construction workers, snake charmers, rag pickers, cobblers, households headed by widows or disabled persons or persons aged 60 years or more with no assured means of subsistence or societal support will get benefit of AAY.

To apply for **AAY**, eligible beneficiaries in rural areas need to approach the concerned gram sabha while the urban beneficiaries have to reach out to Urban Development Department with application. Applications are verified by the designated authority before issuance of AAY ration cards to the Antyodaya families. The ration card contains details regarding Antyodaya family and scale of ration. Required documents include- BPL certificate, income certificate, deletion certificate or Affidavit saying that the applicant does not hold any ration card previously.

Public Distribution System's provision of additional ration: Under Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana (**PMGKY**), the central government announced to provide **5 kgs of wheat/rice to each member of a family including 1 kg pulses to each family per month** for April, May and June 2020. This is in addition to the usual 5 kg of rice/wheat per month to which beneficiaries are entitled under the National Food Security Act (NFSA). During later June, Prime Minister declared five months extension of the ration benefit till November 2020. Each ration-card holding household is entitled for an additional benefit of 5 kgs grain.

Rations as a substitute for Mid Day Meal (MDM) Programme: The HRD Ministry announced three measures as substitutes to MDM scheme for school going children under Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme. The children either have to be served hot meals at doorstep or the families will be given monthly ration kits or they will be given Food Security Allowances of Rs.300 per month.

Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS): All IGNOAPS beneficiaries aged 60–79 years receive a monthly pension of Rs. 300 (Rs. 200 by central government and Rs. 100 by state government). Those who are 80 years and above receive a monthly pension amount of Rs.500. The eligibility for the scheme is- destitute, belonging to below poverty line category, age 60 years and above, does not have any income or source of income owning fixed assets valuing less than Rs.50000/-, does not have any relative of 18 years of age and above in the category of son, son's son and other related persons who normally live together. **3 crore aged widows and people in divyang (disabled) category will be provided Rs. 1000 for next three months**, as announced by the central government.

To apply for **IGNOAPS** under Ministry of Women and Child Development/ Ministry of Rural Development, eligible applicant should submit the application form along with all documents i.e. ration card / Aadhaar card and age proof to the concerned District Social Welfare Officers

(DSWO). An applicant from urban area can directly submit the application to concern DSWO. Application will be scrutinized / verified by officers from social welfare department and they will recommend the beneficiaries to District Social Welfare Officer. The final sanction will be made by District Level Sanctioning Committee (DLSC). The final sanction will be made by District Level Sanctioning Committee (DLSC). Alternatively after the submission of application with DSWO, applicant can track application status with sanction order number / application number/ mobile number and applicant name by visiting NASP official website: <http://nsap.nic.in/applicationTrack1.do?methodName=showStatus>.

Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme (IGNWPS): BPL (Below Poverty Line) category widows in the age group 40 to 64 (later revised 40 to 59) years receive a monthly pension of Rs. 200 per beneficiary within the ambit of IGNWPS under Ministry of Women and Child Development/ Ministry of Rural Development. After they attain the age of 60, they qualify for pension under Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS). The eligibility for the scheme is- applicant should be a widow, age 40 years and above, destitute falling under BPL category, does not have any income or source of income owning fixed assets valuing less than Rs.50000/-, does not have any relative of 18 years of age and above in the category of son, son's son and other related persons who normally live together. **3 crore aged widows and people in divyang (disabled) category will be provided Rs. 1000 for next three months**, as announced by the central government.

To apply for **IGNWPS**, eligible applicant should submit the application form along with all documents i.e. filled in application, copy of ration card / Aadhaar card, proof of age and death Certificate of husband to the concerned District Social Welfare Officers (DSWO). An applicant from urban area can directly submit the application to concern DSWO. Application will be scrutinized / verified by officers from social welfare department and they will recommend the beneficiaries to District Social Welfare Officer. The final sanction will be made by District Level Sanctioning Committee (DLSC). Alternatively after the submission of application with DSWO, applicant can track application status with sanction order number / application number/ mobile number and applicant name by visiting NASP official website <http://nsap.nic.in/applicationTrack1.do?methodName=showStatus>.

Indira Gandhi National Disabled Pension Scheme (IGNDPS): This scheme under Ministry of Women and Child Development/ Ministry of Rural Development is meant for individuals aged 18 years and above with more than 80% disability and living below the poverty line. A sum of Rs. 300 is provided to people whose age ranges between 18-79 years, whereas a sum of Rs.500 is provided for people who are above 79 years. **3 crore aged widows and people in divyang (disabled) category will be provided Rs. 1000 for next three months**, as announced by the central government.

To apply for **IGNDPS**, the application form along with all documents i.e. copy of ration card / Aadhaar card, proof of age, disability certificate issued by District Rehabilitation Officer has to be submitted to the concerned Tehsil Social Welfare Officers. An applicant from urban area can directly submit the application to concerned District Social Welfare Officer. Application will be scrutinized or verified by officers of Social Welfare department and they will recommend the beneficiaries to District Social Welfare Officer. The final sanction will be made by District Level Sanctioning Committee (DLSC). Alternatively after the submission of application with DSWO, applicant can track application status with sanction order number / application number/ mobile number and applicant name by visiting NASP official website <http://nsap.nic.in/applicationTrack1.do?methodName=showStatus>.

Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY): The scheme under National Mission for Financial Inclusion (NMFI) covers both the urban as well as the rural areas and provides an indigenous Debit Card (RuPay card) to each of its account holders. No minimum balance is required for opening an account under this scheme. The beneficiary can open his/her account in any bank branch or Business Correspondent outlet at zero balance. Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana provides each beneficiary with basic banking accounts with a debit card with inbuilt accident insurance. Rs. 5,000 overdraft facility for Aadhar-linked accounts as well as a RuPay debit card with inbuilt Rs. 1 lakh accident insurance cover is one of the main features provided by this scheme. For accounts that are opened between 15th August 2014 and 26th January 2015, a Life Insurance cover of Rupees 30,000 is provided to the eligible beneficiaries. Also after remaining active for 6 months, the beneficiary will be eligible for an overdraft of up to Rs 5,000. It is a national mission with an aim to provide access to various financial services including Remittance, Credit, Insurance, Pension, Banking Savings & Deposit Accounts in an affordable manner. With the outbreak of Covid-19 in India, the Finance Minister of India, Nirmala Sitharaman made an announcement to provide **an ex-gratia of Rs. 500 per month to every Women Jan-Dhan Account Holders covering nearly 20.40 crore women for the next three months**. This announcement was made on 26th March, 2020 as an initiative towards the loss caused by the outbreak. Any individual above the age of 10 years is eligible for the scheme.

To open a **PMJDY** account, an individual is required to submit the requisite KYC documents to the bank branch/ Business correspondent. Aadhaar Card/Aadhaar Number is required, in case of change of address, a self-certification of current address will be required. If Aadhaar Card is not available, one of the following Officially Valid Documents (OVD) is required- Voter ID Card, Driving License, PAN Card, Passport, MGNREGA Card. These are applicable as 'Proof of Identity and Address' if address is mentioned. If Officially Valid Documents are not available, and individual is categorized as 'low-risk' by banks, one of the following documents is required- Identity Card with applicant's photograph issued by Central/State government departments, statutory/regulatory authorities, public sector undertakings, scheduled commercial banks and public financial institutions, letter issued by a gazette officer with a duly attested photograph of the person.

Pradhan Mantri Ujjawala Yojana (PMUY): To promote women empowerment, provide a healthy fuel for cooking and prevent health-related hazards among millions of rural population due to the use of fossil fuels, this scheme under Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas has been implemented since 2016. Eligible families are identified through the Socio Economic Caste Census (SECC) list. The scheme covers the cash assistance upto Rs 1600/- for providing new LPG connection and this cash assistance is provided by the Central Government. The customer bears the cost of hot plate and purchase of first refill. The customers also have option to take hot plate on purchase of first refill or both on loan basis from OMCs at zero interest and the same is recovered through EMIs. The eligibility for the scheme is- the applicant must a woman above the age of 18 and a citizen of India, should be a rural resident with a BPL (Below Poverty Line) card and applicant family's home should not already have LPG connection. To obtain the subsidy amount of a female applicant, there should be a savings bank account in any nationalized bank across the country. Under Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana, **gas cylinders would be provided free of cost to 8 crore poor families**.

To apply for **PMUY**, individuals have to first procure the form available at all LPG outlets across the country or register online <https://pmuy.gov.in/Viewdata.html>. This filled-in form with documents has to be submitted to the closest LPG outlet. The necessary documents include- BPL Ration Card, BPL certificate authorized by the Head of Panchayat / Municipality, a photo ID (Aadhar card or voter ID card), a recent passport size photo, basic details like name, contact information, Jan Dhan / bank account number, Aadhar card number etc. Individuals also have to mention the type of cylinder that they require based on their necessities. The undertaking form

for availing loan on refill/ LPG stove can be downloaded from the link-
<http://www.pmujiwalayojana.com/download.html>.

Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN): The PM-KISAN scheme aims to supplement the financial needs of the small and marginal farmers (small and marginal farmer defines a family comprising of husband, wife and minor children who collectively own cultivable land upto 2 hectares as per land records of the concerned State/UTs) in procuring various inputs to ensure proper crop health and appropriate yields, commensurate with the anticipated farm income at the end of the each crop cycle. Under the Scheme, a direct payment of Rs. 6000 per year will be transferred in three equal installments i.e. Rs. 2000 in every four months into the Aadhar seeded bank accounts of eligible small and marginal farmers' families. All land owning farmers' families, who have cultivable landholding in their names are eligible to get benefit under the scheme. For the outbreak of COVID pandemic, it was announced that the **first installment of Rs.2000 to 8.7 crore farmers due in 2020-21 will be front-loaded and paid in April 2020.**

To apply for **PM-KISAN**, one can do a self-registration at Farmer's Corner in the official PM-KISAN portal (<https://pmkisan.gov.in/registrationform.aspx>). New Farmers can register through this link and submit their details online. The online Form has certain mandatory fields as well self-declaration regarding the eligibility. Citizenship certificate, landholding papers, Aadhaar card and bank account detail are required for application. Once the form is filled in and submitted successfully by the farmer, the same is forwarded by an automated process to the State Nodal Officer (SNO) for verification. The SNO verifies the details filled in by the farmer and uploads the verified data on the PM-KISAN portal. Thereafter the data is processed through an established system for payment. Alternatively one can also visit the nearby authorized Common Service Centre for registration. Centres can be located here: <https://locator.csccloud.in/>

Employees Provident Fund (EPF): At the onset of nationwide lockdown, the Government of India announced to pay **EPF contribution of the employer and the employee - 12% each making a total of 24% for the next three months** – April, May and June 2020. Establishments with upto 100 employees where 90% employees draw a salary less than Rs.15000 are eligible for the scheme. The EPFO in its order said that the employees are allowed to withdraw 75% of their Provident Fund or three months salary (whichever is lower) as advance from the provident fund account after one month of unemployment and still keep the EPFO account active.

To claim the **EPF** advance, one needs to login to the EPFO portal with username and password and then provide UAN and password. After verifying the bank account number, a scanned copy of cheque or passbook needs to be uploaded. As reason for withdrawal of advance is asked, 'outbreak of pandemic' needs to be selected, an Aadhaar-based OTP will be generated and once the claim is processed, it will be forwarded to the employer for approval.

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS): MGNREGA guarantees 100 days of employment in a financial year to any rural household whose adult members are willing to do unskilled manual work. The Village Panchayat will issue job cards to every registered individual. Payment of the statutory minimum wage and equal wages for men and women are the notable features of the scheme. Eligibility for the scheme is- applicant has to be a job seeker who has completed 18 years of age at the time of application, must be part of a local household (i.e. application must be made with local Gram Panchayat) and applicant must volunteer for unskilled labour. The government announced **an increase of Rs.20 in the MGNREGA wages** with effect from April 1, 2020 **benefitting 13.62 crore families.**

A **MGNREGA** job card application form may be availed from the local Gram Panchayat or the application may be made on plain paper. Currently, the MGNREGA job card application process is conducted completely offline primarily because of the low internet penetration in rural India. However, the Official MGNREGA website (www.nrega.nic.in) does give individuals the option to

download NREGA job card application form for free. The application for registration may be submitted on prescribed form or plain paper to the local Gram Panchayat. They will complete the verification within a fortnight and will issue the job cards to eligible households. Documents and details that need to be enclosed with application are- photograph of applicant(s), name, age and gender of all NREGA Job Card Applicants from the household, name of village/ Gram Panchayat/ Block, Details of whether the applicant(s) is/are beneficiaries of SC/ST/IAY/LR, specimen signature/thumb impression of applicants, proof documents such a ration card, voter card, Aadhaar, PAN card.

Special Relief Assistance by State Governments

Tamil Nadu government announced Rs. 3,280 crore special relief packages under which the rice ration card holders will be provided cash assistance of Rs 1,000. The vulnerable section of the society including auto-rickshaw drivers, construction workers and registered pavement hawkers are eligible to receive Rs.1000. people who have worked under the Mahatma Gandhi Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme in March will get two day additional special wages.

West Bengal government announced two schemes - 'Sneher Porosh' for migrant labours and 'Prochesta Prokolpo' for workers in unorganized sector. In Prochesta Prokolpo, each beneficiary under BPL will get Rs.1000 as assistance. The beneficiaries need to apply online with supporting documents like Aadhar card, copy of daily wagger job card, bank account details, copy of BPL card, mobile number and residence proof.

Bihar government announced that all migrant workers coming to Bihar will be reimbursed their fare and would be given Rs. 500 on leaving quarantine centres.

Uttar Pradesh government announced to provide Rs.1000 to each of 20.37 construction workers registered under labour department, 15 lakh self employed cart owners, small shop owners and rickshaw pullers through the system of Direct Benefit Transfer.

Maharashtra government announced to give Rs. 2000 to each worker registered under Maharashtra Building and Other Constriction Workers Welfare Board.

Odisha government announced to provide financial assistance of Rs 1,000 to each of 94 lakh poor families covered under the food security scheme.