



HDRC COVID19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE

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Report by:

Human Development & Research Centre (HDRC)

St. Xavier's Non-Formal Education Society, St. Xavier's College Campus,
Navarangpura, Ahmedabad – 380009 Gujarat (INDIA)

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Highlights of Covid 19 Emergency Response

SUPPORTED **MARGINALISED COMMUNITIES** BY DIVERSE MEDIUMS

1. FOOD & HYGIENE KITS DISTRIBUTION

- **18,390** KITS TO MIGRANT WORKERS, SLUM FAMILIES, WIDOWS, ELDERLY, SINGLE MEMBER FAMILIES, DAILY WAGE LABOURERS, DISABLE, TRIBALS & DALITS.
- **40,000** MASKS PREPARED BY WOMEN SELF-HELP-GROUPS SUPPLIED TO GOVERNMENT AND OTHER ORGANISATIONS.

2. INCREASING AWARENESS

- SIMPLIFIED CENTRAL AND STATE GOVERNMENT SCHEMES IN GUJARATI LANGUAGE TO SUPPORT VILLAGE COLLECTIVES.
- POSTER FOR SAFETY GUIDELINES, EMERGENCY HELPLINES, MASK PREPARATION AT HOME.
- BOOKLET ON COMMUNITY WORKERS RESPONSIBILITIES DURING COVID EMERGENCY TO SUPPORT CHILDREN.

3. CAPACITY BUILDING

- ORGANIZED WEBINAR ON MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE SCHEME (MGNREGS) FOR VOLUNTEERS.
- ORGANIZED **ONLINE YOUTH TRAINING** TO BUILD PERSPECTIVE IN DIFFICULT TIMES.
- REGULAR ONLINE TRAINING FOR STAFF AND COMMUNITY LEADERS ON GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND PACKAGES.

4. ADVOCACY

- PETITIONED HIGH COURT OF GUJARAT TO ADVOCATE FOR THE RIGHTS OF DOMESTIC WORKERS, STREET VENDORS, MIGRANT LABOURERS AND SEWAGE WORKERS.
- LAUNCHED INCLUSIVE MONITORING FOR IMPROVED ACCESS TO ENTITLEMENTS IN **528 VILLAGES** AND **24 SLUMS** OF AHMEDABAD.
- COORDINATED WITH LOCAL ADMINISTRATION TO IMPLEMENT MGNREGS IN **247 VILLAGES** TO SUPPORT LIVELIHOODS.
- SUPPORTED **10,580 MIGRANT WORKERS** TO REGISTER FOR TRAINS AND BUSES TO GO BACK TO THEIR NATIVE PLACES.
- SUPPORTED **2180 CONSTRUCTION WORKERS** TO REGISTER FOR UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION.
- NETWORKING WITH DALIT HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS THROUGH “**WE CLAIM**” MOBILE APP IN 5 STATES OF THE COUNTRY.

5. COLLABORATIONS

CITIZENS INITIATIVE FOR SHELTER ALLIANCE, AHMEDABAD, INTER AGENCY GROUP (IAG) GUJARAT, HUMAN RIGHTS NETWORK (HRLN), AZIM PREMJI PHILANTHROPIC INITIATIVES (APPI), AMERICAN INDIA FOUNDATION (AIF), ISABEL MARTIN FOUNDATION, MISEREOR, ALBOAN PDO, MENTXU ORMAETXE, BILBAO SPAIN, HABITAT FOR HUMANITY INDIA AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES.

**SUPPORTED 37 TALUKAS IN 16 DISTRICTS OF GUJARAT AND
5 STATES IN THE COUNTRY**



Introduction

A nation-wide complete lockdown was declared in our country on March 24, 2020 due to the Corona Virus health emergency. The sudden unplanned complete shutdown of the nation for three weeks, left millions of underprivileged desperate for food to survive. The Human Development and Research Centre (HDRC) received several calls from their programme intervention areas in Gujarat, requesting emergency food supplies.

The First Response: Immediate Relief Initiatives

Any emergency hits hardest those who are already disadvantaged. HDRC with its clear mandate to support the marginalized communities immediately decided to identify the most vulnerable.

Grocery kits distribution and Information sharing (March – April 2020)

Working from home, the HDRC staff got into action to identify the worst affected with food scarcity. In the initial four to five days in Ahmedabad city, HDRC in partnership with UCD provided 4450 cooked food packets to families in 20 slum areas. These families had lost their jobs in the factories due to the lock down and had no means of survival. During this period, HDRC also provided information to migrant workers in Ahmedabad city on Ren Basera (night shelters), community kitchens and other services being provided by the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation. In a number of cases, HDRC team guided the migrant workers to access the bus services that was started by the government to go back to their native villages.

HDRC team members also managed to motivate families from the housing societies in Vatva area of Ahmedabad, to pool in money for providing 3330 grocery kits to underprivileged families for 15 days. This housing society has also committed that in future if the families need help, they will support them.

HDRC collaborated with Community level collectives and local leaders to make a quick assessment of support required in their project intervention areas. They came out with



Dry Ration Kit Distribution

Ambavadi, Ahmedabad

the first list of 365 families that needed urgent support. This list included 150 widows, elderly, single member families and 50 migrant workers. A grocery kit for 15 days was quickly prepared and dispatched. This kit was prepared in consultation with the community and was based on the local needs. It enabled a family of 5 members to survive for 15 days; till they could access the government relief package and schemes.

Networking to expand Relief Activities

Expanding its reach HDRC collaborated with CISHAA (Citizens Initiative for Shelter Alliance, Ahmedabad) to support 32 slum families. CISHAA is a partnership between SAATH, Aajeevika Bureau, Mahila Housing Trust, Childline Ahmedabad, Centre for Development, Centre for Labour Research Action, Habitat Forum and HDRC to work on shelter programme for the underprivileged. A total of 503 families were supported through the CISHAA platform. HDRC used this platform for relief especially in areas where multiple organizations were working to ensure there was no duplication.

Funding Relief Initiatives

HDRC planning team did some quick thinking on funding this entire unplanned initiative. They came up with a plan to strategically re-allocate balance funds from the projects of Misereor and Isabel Martin Foundation (ISMF). Projects supported by these donors were ending in May 2020 and it would be difficult to utilize the remaining funds in the current situation of health emergency. The donors promptly accepted this proposition to reallocate the remaining funds for relief work. These funds were used to support 150 widows, elderly and 50 migrant workers. The relief work was intensified with requests for support from underprivileged families of





Khambhat taluka, in Anand district. HDRC team coordinated with Janisarbhay (Social Activist residing in Khambhat) and Ishwarbhay from Antyodaya Vikas Shikshan Centre to provide support for 1 month to 255 families. This immediate relief was possible with the generous support of Azim Premji Philanthropic Initiatives (APPI). APPI further, enabled HDRC to repurpose project funds to support 350 more vulnerable families in Ahmedabad. Misereor also donated for relief activities in Saurashtra region of Gujarat. In the first three weeks of relief work, HDRC provided grocery kits to 6743 families in 10 districts of Gujarat.

The Second Step: Relief and Rehabilitation Initiatives

Regular life as we all know has been disrupted for now over two and a half months. Thousands of people have lost jobs and several are fighting for their lives in hospitals. The entire economy has slowed down. In this grim situation HDRC continues to make efforts to support the worst affected by providing relief through the distribution of grocery and hygiene kits, creating awareness about government schemes and advocating for the rights of the excluded communities in the rehabilitation process.

Distribution of Grocery kits and Hygiene kits (May – June 2020)

As the lockdown began to be relaxed HDRC staff intensified its efforts by reaching out directly to the vulnerable communities in the month of May.

- A total of 18,390 grocery and hygiene kits have been distributed in the last ten weeks by HDRC in various locations of Gujarat. 6425 of these grocery and hygiene kits were supported by the local sangathans, local community, grocery shop owners and individuals.
- Kits were distributed to single women, widows, women headed families, elderly, migrant



workers, wage labourers, vegetable and fruit vendors, tribals, Dalits, minorities, families facing social boycott, persons with disabilities, industrial labourers and other marginalized groups.

- HDRC initiatives supported 38 talukas in 16 districts of Gujarat. The main areas covered included Ahmedabad City and Bavala taluka of Ahmedabad District, 12 talukas of Banaskantha district, 3 talukas of Anand district, 7 talukas of Suarashtra, 3 talukas of Sabarkantha, 2 talukas of Aravalli, 3 talukas of Panchmahals, 3 of Dahod and 1 taluka of Bharuch districts of Gujarat. (Refer Annexure 1 & 2 for District and Talukawise Distribution details).
- HDRC purchased and distributed 40,000 masks. Out of this 32,550 were prepared by the Self-Help Groups (SHG) of Tharad and Danta talukas in Banaskantha district, Poshina taluka in Sabarkantha district, Bhiloda in Aravalli district, Ankleshwar in Bharuch and Limbi in Dahod district of Gujarat. HDRC actively encouraged women to make these protective masks. These women are now supplying to the government and other organizations.

Information Sharing, Increasing Awareness and Capacity Building

The most vulnerable groups of society are also least equipped to access information regarding their rights and entitlements. HDRC took up the initiative to study the government circulars for sharing information and creating awareness among those worst affected by COVID19.

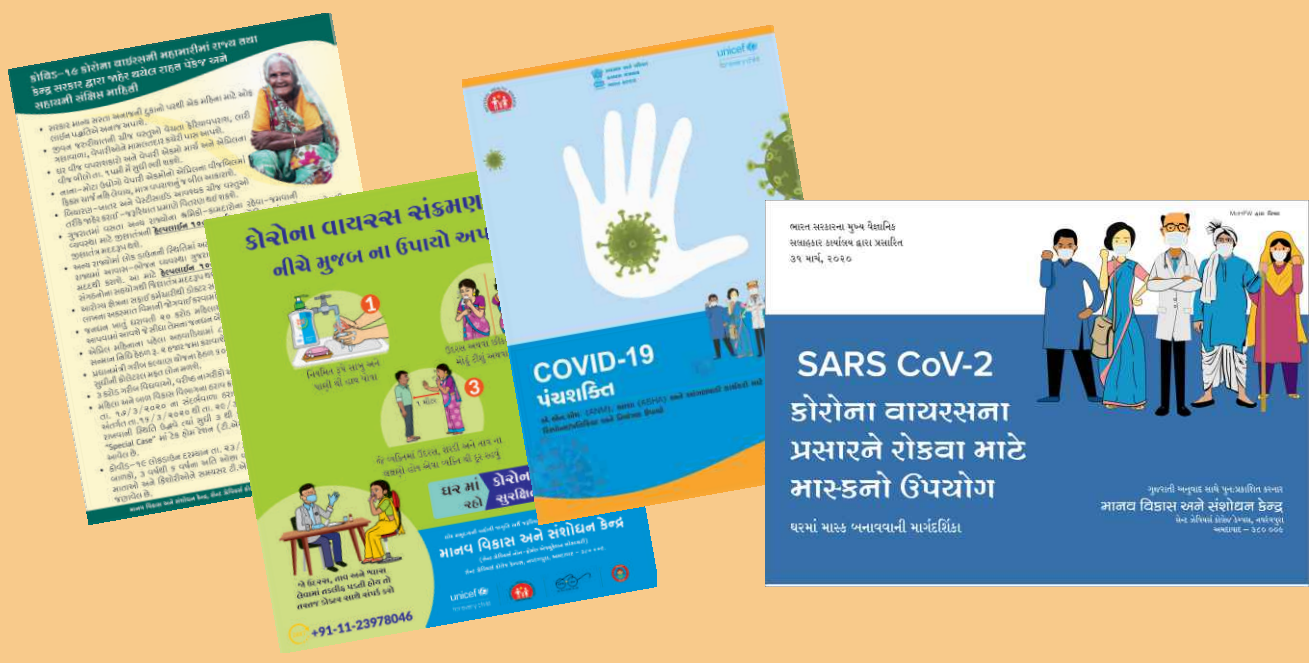
Some of the main activities undertaken were:

- HDRC simplified the COVID 19 related schemes /policies announced by the Central and State

Government and translated it into Gujarati to make it accessible to the local population. This information was widely circulated through WhatsApp groups among village leaders, village collectives, Community Based Organizations (CBO) and Civil Society Organizations (CSO) engaged in Covid19 Relief work.

- Created a poster on how to be safe during COVID 19 with emergency helpline numbers to contact in case of possible infection. This poster also gave information regarding making and maintaining masks prepared at home. This material was also translated in local language.
- Developed awareness material in Gujarati on roles and responsibilities of Auxiliary Nurse Mid-wife (ANM), Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA) and Anganwadi workers on how to deal with children affected by COVID 19. This material has been printed in the form of a booklet and is being widely circulated.
- Organized webinar on Government Schemes for Village Development. Organized online training for Volunteers, village leaders and Community Based Organizations (CBO) on Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) in the COVID 19 context.
- Organized online training and discussion to engage the youth on Gender, Money management, Career Development and Personality Development to build their perspective in these difficult times.
- Webinar and online trainings were also organized to share regular information with the HDRC team, Community Leaders and Sangathans to keep them updated on the policies, packages and overall situation under COVID 19.

IEC Materials



Networking and Advocacy

HDRC collaborated with local and national level networks to advocate for the rights of the most vulnerable and marginalized groups in the Covid19 lockdown.

- As part of, “My City, Our City” network HDRC submitted a memorandum requesting for a relief package for street vendors in urban local bodies of Gujarat in the light of COVID 19 pandemic.
- HDRC supported HRLN (Human Rights Law Network) to file a petition in the High Court of Gujarat to highlight the miserable situation of domestic workers, street vendors, migrant workers, sewerage workers who are dependent on their daily earnings to provide them food security, health care and shelter. The petition brought attention to their lack of access to government systems and mechanisms for relief. The court passed an order asking the state to file an action taken report in two weeks' time.
- As part of the concerned organizations and citizens' forum, HDRC engaged in preparing guidelines and recommendations for Affordable Rental Housing Complexes; which is part of the government package that has been announced. These guidelines and recommendations will be submitted to the Government of India and Government of Gujarat.
- HDRC along with other CSOs advocated for providing transportation to migrant workers for other state for returning back to their native villages.
- As part of Citizens for Shelter and Housing Alliance Ahmedabad (CISHAA), HDRC submitted a memorandum to the Chief Minister of Gujarat regarding adequate and urgent response to the conditions of the migrant labour community and other vulnerable groups in urban and industrial areas of Gujarat in the wake of the COVID 19 lockdown.
- As part of DHRD (Dalit Human Rights Defenders) network HDRC coordinated with CSOs in other states of India to ensure that migrant workers and other vulnerable families stranded on the way were supported by the local organizations.



- Networked with CSOs in Gujarat to enable food and hygiene kit distribution in districts where HDRC does not have a direct presence.
- Coordinated with the local administration at the taluka and district level to provide support to migrant workers stranded in HDRC intervention areas. The local administration supported by providing food, shelter and other essential items.

Inclusive Monitoring for Improved Access to Entitlements

HDRC initiated a process of Inclusive Monitoring in all its programme intervention areas to ensure that the marginalized communities get access to their entitlement during and after the disaster. This monitoring data helps in advocating effectively for the needs of the vulnerable communities.

In the first round of the monitoring during May, 528 villages and 24 slums of Ahmedabad City were covered. The completed forms are being analyzed and a report will be prepared soon. With each round of monitoring HDRC aims to cover more villages to gather authentic data. The issues that are highlighted will be taken up for advocacy at the local level and if required at the State level.

HDRC is working in coordination with the local administration at the village, taluka and district level, to ensure the marginalized groups are provided immediate food and hygiene material and they are able to access the schemes and packages announced by the government. In HDRC's intervention area, work has been demanded under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee scheme (MGNREGS) in all the villages.



As a result, the implementation of the scheme has started in 247 villages as per the details given below:

Regular monitoring is being done by Community leaders in all locations where MGNREGS work has begun, to ensure social distancing is maintained and masks are being distributed to the people to cover their faces. In 66 villages a formal request to start MGNREGS work has been submitted. Simultaneously, in villages where the implementation of the scheme has not yet started, efforts are being made to start work at the earliest by contacting the Sarpanch and the Taluka Officers.

The government has announced trains and buses to take the migrant workers back to their villages. The process of registration is online and most migrant workers do not have the knowledge to register. Regular support is being provided to these workers to register for tickets/tokens to board these trains and buses. Till date 10580 migrant workers from Ahmedabad and other areas have been supported to get registered and return to their native villages. Support was also provided to 2180 construction workers to register online for unemployment compensation.

No.	Region/ District	Talukas	MNREGA work started	Demand Submitted
1	North Gujarat		45	45
		Vav, Tharad, Suigam	4	
		Danta	5	25
		Amirgadh	16	
		Dhanera	20	20
3	Tribal Belt		89	21
		Meghraj	14	
		Bhiloda	18	
		Vijaynagar	13	
		Poshina	20	11
		Khedbrama	24	10
4	Saurashtra		113	
	Porbandar	Ranavav, Kutiyana	21	
	Junagadh	Mendarda, Bhesan, Manavdar	21	
	Rajkot	Upleta, Dhoraji	30	
	Gir Somnath	Veraval, Kodinar, Talala	41	
		Total	247	66

“We Claim” - Access to Rights and Entitlements

HDRC as part of the Dalit Human Rights Defenders (DHRD) network is working jointly on the National Campaign for Dalit Human Rights (NCDHR) in 5 states of the country. The NCDHR has designed a mobile application “We Claim”. This mobile app will identify Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe and Minority and other marginalized communities/households that have not received the entitlements that are their due. It will facilitate the process of application for relief on behalf of the respondents to the local administration. It will also disseminate awareness about the relevant public helplines to assist communities to gather information on Covid-19 and report their concerns in relevant government departments. This will be a sustained initiative to facilitate the underprivileged in accessing their rights and entitlements.

Future Plan

Gujarat State is among the top five Covid19 affected state in the country. Hundreds of people are dying every day and thousands are losing their livelihood. There is uncertainty of how people will protect themselves from this pandemic with a broken economy. In these circumstances, HDRC in collaboration with all the CSO and generous donors continues to intensify its efforts to reach out to the vulnerable families in Gujarat. Consistent efforts are being made to expand its reach through nation-wide collaborations to support people across the country.

HDRC Focus

- To regularly follow up on the marginalized families who have been provided support with grocery and hygiene kits to support them to access their rights and entitlements.
- Prioritize support to the vulnerable groups including the elderly, widows, single women, women headed families, family dependent on single earning member, persons with disabilities, socially excluded people like the Dalits, tribal and other marginalized communities.
- To publish regular Inclusive Monitoring Reports of the marginalized families to ensure that these families are able to access rights and entitlements that have been announced by the Central and State Governments.
- Continue to develop IEC material and create widespread awareness about safety norms and government schemes among the most vulnerable people.
- Build capacity of HDRC staff, community leaders, CBOs, leaders of the women's cooperatives by organizing online training on the recently announced schemes. So that they can give authentic information to the marginalized communities confidently.
- Advocating for the rights and entitlements of the marginalized communities will be a major

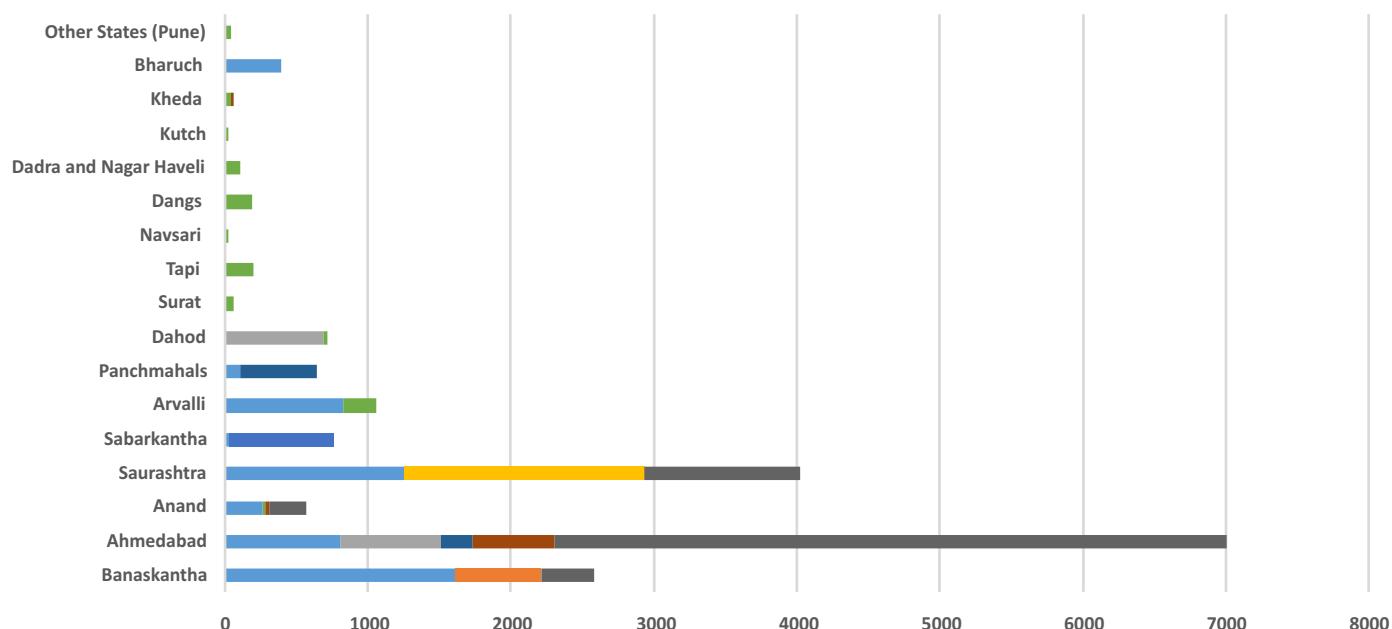
priority for HDRC and it will work closely with many CSO coalitions and platforms like NCDHR, NCW, HRLN, DHRD net, National Coalition for CSOs, Gujarat IAG to reach out to people across the country.

HDRC works with the hope that every dark cloud has a silver lining and these difficult Covidtimes will pass with everyone's support. The journey of rehabilitation is a long arduous one and each one of us has to continue supporting each other to collectively survive this unprecedented crisis. HDRC is most grateful for all the generous support provided by all civil society organizations, community leaders, community-based organizations, local administration, donors and every common citizen who has joined hands to support the most vulnerable in our society.



ANNEXURE 1: DISTRICTWISE DONOR SUPPORT FOR GROCERY AND HYGIENE KITS DISTRIBUTION

Districtwise Donor Support for Grocery and Hygiene Kits Distributed by HDRC
(Total Kits Distributed 18,390)



■ APPI
 ■ AIFT
 ■ Isabel Martin Foundation
■ Misereor
 ■ Alboan PDO
 ■ Mentxu Ormaetxe, Bilbao Spain
■ Habitat for Humanity India
 ■ CISHAA and HDRC own
 ■ Local Community/ GDS/BDS/SDS

ANNEXURE 2: DISTRICT& TALUKAWISE GROCERY AND HYGIENE KITS DISTRIBUTION BY HDRC

No	District/Talukas	APPI	AIFT	Isabel Martin Foundation	Misereor	Alboan PDO	Mentxu Ormaetxe, Bilbao Spain	Habitat for Humanity India	CISHAA and HDRC own	Local Community/ GDS/BDS/SDS	Total
1	Banaskantha										
1.1	Palanpur, Deesa, Lakani, Deodar, Kankhrej, Dhanera, Dantiwada, Vav, Tharad, Suigam	1092								375	1467
1.2	Danta	49	600								649
1.3	Amirgadh	466									466
2	Ahmedabad										0
2.1	Ahmedabad City	806		705					568	4710	6789
2.2	Bavla Taluka							220			220
3	Anand										0
3.1	Khambhat Taluka	255								110	365
3.2	Tarapur Taluka									150	150
3.3	Anand Taluka						20		26		46
4	Saurashtra										0
	Junagadh				493					978	1471
	Porbandar	25			285						310
	Gir Somanth (Other Talukas)				497						497
	Gir Somanth (Talala Taluka)	1044									1044
	Rajkot	40			410					110	560
	Jamnagar	70								2	72
	Bhavnagar	70									70
5	Sabarkantha										0
5.1	Himmatnagar Taluka	30									30
5.2	Khedbrahma Taluka					250					250
5.3	Poshina Taluka					475					475
6	Arvalli										0
6.1	Meghraj	730					30				760
6.2	Bhiloda	90					200				290
7	Panchmahals										0
7.1	Jambugoda Taluka	100									100
7.2	Kalol Taluka							250			250
7.3	Halol Taluka							290			290
8	Dahod										0
8.1	Dahod City			70							70
8.2	Jhalod Taluka			360			32				392
8.3	Fatepura Taluka			250							250
9	Surat (Zhankvav and Umapada)						52				52
10	Tapi (Songadh and Dholavan)						196				196
11	Navsari (Unai)						19				19
12	Dangs (Subir, Ahwa)						189				189
13	Dadra and Nagar Haveli (Velugam)						100				100
14	Kutch (Bhachau)						15				15
15	Kheda (Dakor)						40		20		60
16	Bharuch (Ankleshwar)										0
16.1	Ankleshwar Town	135									135
16.2	Ankleshwar Taluka	250									250
17	Other States (Pune)						41				41
	Total	5252	600	1385	1685	725	934	760	614	6435	18390



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