
Greetings from The Gujarat Team to all Our Gujarat Journey family members.

We hope that all of you are keeping well and are taking the necessary precautions to stay healthy. We pray that God ease the burden and sickness of all those affected by Covid-19, and we also pray for eternal peace and rest for all those who have succumbed to this disease. Ameen.

We thank you for attending our Zoom Event “Our Virtual Journey Through Gujarat” on April 10, 2021. We were heartened by your presence, encouragement, the show of support, and your prayers. These are the sentiments that have sustained our work in Gujarat over the last 17 years. The goals we had set for ourselves when planning this event were as follows:

1. To connect with as many of you as possible, virtually,
2. Provide updates about the students and families we support,
3. Covid-19 related disruptions and hardships,
4. Our responses and initiatives to mitigate them.
5. Introduce a young, but very talented singer from Rajkot, Gujarat, Reeshma Mavani
6. Experience, as one big family; fun and happiness during these stressful times.
7. Bring together our Gujarat Journey family, high-ranking Institutional leaders from Gujarat and around India and our Team Members from Gujarat, Canada, and the USA to witness and derive a sense of the scope of our engagements in Gujarat.

This event was not a fund-raising event. Our intentions were solely to apprise you of the programs we operate in Gujarat, and Covid-19 related difficulties we are dealing with.

We are delighted to acknowledge, with utmost humility, that we met all our goals and more.

Your feedback and comments on Zoom chats and your emails and text messages afterwards were most heartening and encouraging.

As you all are very aware, India is facing a catastrophic level of Covid-19 and its variants within its vast population. Mortality numbers are extremely high, and the health system is near collapse. Necessary items like respirators and oxygen are not easy to come by. Under these harsh and difficult scenarios, the students and families under our programs are desperately looking for help and support from us.

The situation is exacerbated by lockdowns and restrictions which make it very difficult for our team members to physically access them and provide the necessary help.

Having said that, our enterprising team members, staff, and social workers managed to overcome many of these challenges and succeeded in providing much-needed assistance. To illustrate the outcomes of their hard work, we outline below some cases we have dealt with. This will be done by way of video and audio clips.

Seema

Yes Seema, who has not heard about her. You may call her our “poster child”! She has been featured in a few of our past Newsletters. Hers has been one long rollercoaster life!



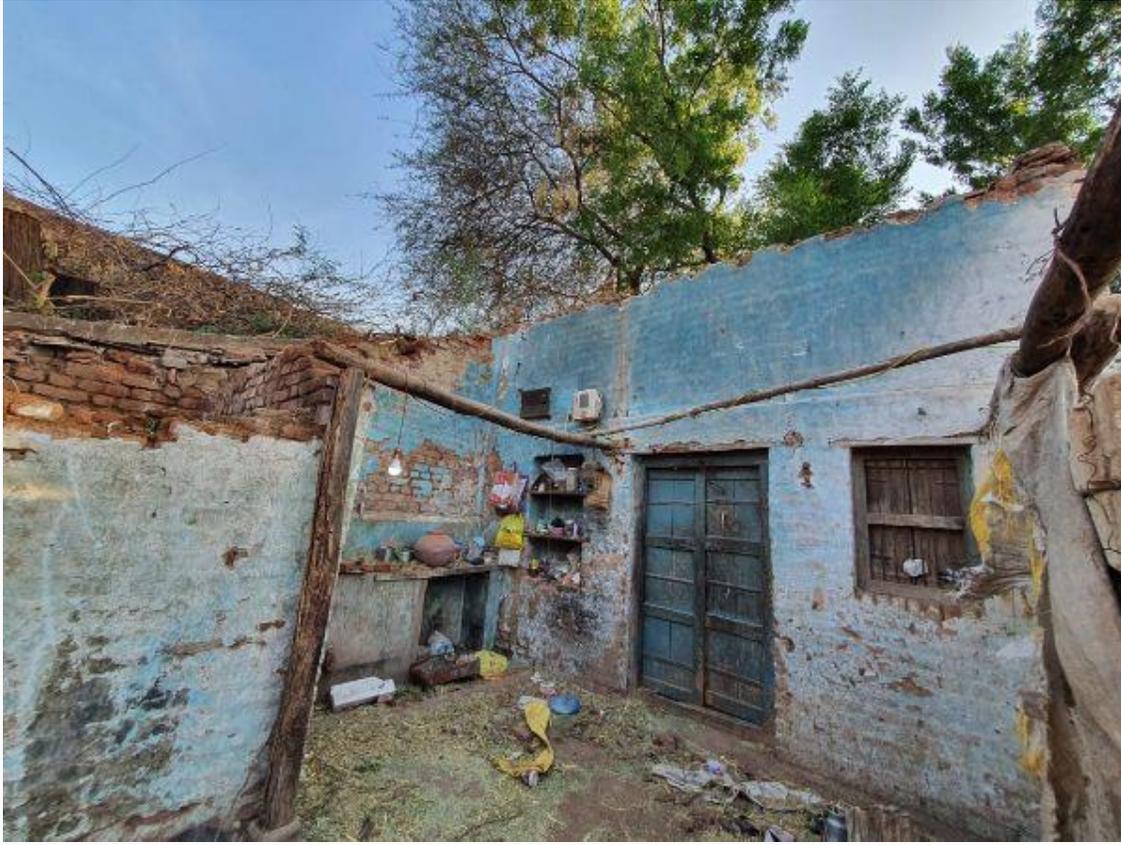
Seema and her eldest brother stay with their Dada Bapa in Timbi.

Her younger brother stays with her Mom and Nani Ma in Khamba.

Today we were informed that Nani Ma's house's roof in Khamba had caved in.



*Nani Ma inside the Khamba house.
Notice no roof!*



Khambha house without a roof.

Saloni Popatiya

Saloni Popatiya contracted Covid while staying at the Girnar High School Hostel so the local health authorities ordered her to go home and observe quarantine measures. It was not going to be possible to achieve this as the family was large and had no extra room to assign one for quarantine purposes. After extensive back and forth with the local health authorities, they agreed to let Saloni's father stay at the hostel until the quarantine stipulations were satisfied, including negative Covid tests for Saloni and her father. To stay with Saloni at the hostel, Mr. Popatya faced a loss of earnings during this period. Knowing he was the only bread earner in the family, the Gujarat Team financially supported this family until he resumed his business. The Team also paid for all the tests, transportations that complied with medical authorities' guidelines and requirements and for the extra work, the hostel and its staff had to undertake to make these extraordinary arrangements possible. We are happy to report that Saloni and her father returned home healthy and happy!



Saloni and her father in a 3-wheeler aka Auto Ricksha!

Saloni Popatiya
Khajawad Ranavav
Dt: 12/April/2021

To,
Agakhan Hostel,
Management Committee
Girnar High School
Education chairperson

Sub: Written Gratitude

I Miss Saloni Popatiya living in Agakhan Hostel and Studing in Girnar High School in Grade 10. I was affected by Covid but Hostel Committee, Hostel staff and our Educational Chairperson Madam Raziya Nathani Suleman supported me a lot.

I was allowed to reside in Hostel and my father was permitted to stay with me, while I was staying in Hostel with my father Raziya Madam took care of all basic expenses of my family. She also bore my medical and fruit expenses. Now as I have been tested negative, she will be helping me and my father by providing travelling expenses to go back to my home.

I shall be forever grateful to Raziya Madam, Hostel Committee and Staff.

Thankyou!

Your obediently

Saloni

Handwritten Thank you note from Saloni!

Meal Kits

Social workers, health board members and leadership in many small towns and villages realized that the spread of the Covid virus and its variants were so rampant that the only way to short circuit this would be to encourage the people in these places to subject themselves to 10 to 14 days of self-imposed quarantine. This would mean that most of them would not be able to work and not be able to provide food and daily necessities of life. A scheme was undertaken to supply meal- kits to these families that would provide household items and food to last for at least 10 days. The Gujarat Team supported this initiative by underwriting the cost to supply meal kits to 100 families. This was a huge undertaking, but the volunteers did manage to pull it off, thank God!

Following photos, audio and video clips show the work done by the volunteers and the families that were the beneficiaries of this endeavour.



Meal kits provided to Mahuva and districts.



Video of Altaf Vasaya (Chairperson, Social Welfare Board) expressing his gratitude.

Our work in Gujarat continues under difficult and challenging circumstances. The modes of services being delivered may be different, but we remain steadfast in our humble desire to alleviate poverty amongst our brothers and sisters of Gujarat. This

has been possible mainly due to your ongoing trust, support, encouragement, and prayers for The Gujarat Team. Please continue to pray for all those fighting to stay well and the brave frontline workers who endanger their own lives to make sure that the best possible treatment is provided.

We conclude with a letter written to The Gujarat Team by one of our many long-standing and generous supporters. He certainly made our day and gave a huge boost to our morale. We thank him and many others who have reached out to us to assure us that they see value and necessity in what we do and urge us to continue the path we have been on for the last 17 years.

Thank you. Stay safe and healthy. God bless us all. Ameen.

Letter from Nurdin Kassam:

“Thank you for the videos. I watched them and felt gratified that you and your team are producing results we can see and hear. I have always admired this and always will. I know that the present conditions warrant a lot of money and no matter how much we do; it will still not be enough. However, if at any time you need any additional resources for any cause or case you think needs support, you can count on me.

You can go to sleep in the knowledge that your work is saving lives, improving the quality of life of many, and giving an opportunity for many like us to participate. It is a privilege for which I am grateful.

P.S. We are looking for experienced teachers interested in volunteering. If you have the skills and are interested then [please click this link to email Razia.](#)

The Gujarat Team.
