



# RAM Update

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COVID-19 RELIEF EFFORTS



*My four children  
have not had  
milk for three  
months...*

Since COVID-19 lockdowns began in March, families living in poverty and enslaved in brick kilns have suffered greatly due to the lack of work and food shortages. Of those, religious minorities have been hit hardest: even when the government provided cash assistance or meals were handed out, widespread discrimination ensured they received little to no aid.



# *We and 30 other families are living on bread scraps and water...*

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In some cases, brick kiln workers already enslaved by thousands of dollars of debt with astronomical interest had to take out new loans simply to eat.





In addition to the pandemic, the worst locust plague in decades and a heavy monsoon season have destroyed many crops.

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Photo credit: PakistanToday



Photo credit: Str/Xinhua/IANIS

*Despite the  
flooding and  
flour shortages,  
RAM  
Foundation has  
distributed ...*



to 975 families

Food and hygiene kits  
five times



at different brick kilns and the  
Sablone House.



Each feeds four for one month.





## *Each food and hygiene package contains:*

- Lentils (4 different types)
- Chickpeas (2 different types)
- Vermicelli
- Oil
- Rice
- Semolina
- Tea
- Dry Milk
- Dry spices
- Wheat flour
- Sugar
- Soap
- Multipurpose Cleaner
- Dish washer Soap
- Face Masks
- Gloves
- Hand Sanitizer





As the weather is changing, cases are going up again and the government is implementing smart lockdowns in many areas.

In addition, the lack of crops, government-controlled wheat supply, and sugar fraud are causing many to starve.

In October alone, RAM has received more than 500 additional requests for food.



# Testimonials

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# Ashiq Masih



Ashiq lives in a small village in the outskirts of Lahore along with his family. Ashiq leased some land from a Muslim landlord to grow vegetables and crops and then Covid-19 hit Pakistan. Everything became locked down and it was extremely hard for him to find the required fertilizer and pesticides for his crops. He still managed to find the fertilizer at almost triple the price of the original cost due to the shortage in the market. He took a loan from relatives to buy the fertilizer and pesticides.

In September when his crops were almost ready, severe monsoon rains caused flooding in the area and his crops were destroyed. Now the people he borrowed from asked him to return the loan. The Muslim landlord was also asking for the lease money. When he came to the Sablone House for food, we were told that he and his family did not have food for the last couple of days. He was very thankful for the food and hygiene kits.

# Abid Masih



Abid was working in a small steel factory before Covid-19. When Covid-19 started, his factory was closed due to the lock down in Pakistan and Abid lost his job. He did not even get paid for the month he worked in the factory.

Abid told us he and his wife only eat once a day so that they can save the food for their kids and sometimes they don't eat anything at all. He said it has been three months since his young children have had any milk.

Abid is still struggling to find a job. He was grateful for the food and hygiene kits, especially the dry milk for his kids.



# Sajid



Sajid and his family have been enslaved in a brick kiln for generations. His father and mother died working in the brick kiln. He inherited his parents' loan of \$6000 which is impossible for him to pay back.

Abid told us when Covid-19 started, due to the lock down his brick kiln was closed. He did not have any option except to take another loan at a hefty interest rate from the brick kiln owner for food and essentials.

However, about a month ago the owner stopped giving them any funds. He told us that 30 families who work and live at his brick kiln have been surviving only on water and a few bread pieces. He was thankful for the food & hygiene kits.

# Hameeda



Hameeda lives in a small village with her family. Last year her husband died due to tuberculosis primarily because of the lack of medical facilities in her area and their inability to afford the expensive treatments.

Before Covid-19 she was working in several houses as a housekeeper. Her daily commute was 40KM. When Covid-19 started, she lost her job because of the travel restrictions in Pakistan. Now that the restrictions are lifted the houses where she was working do not want her anymore.

Hameeda told us that there was no one that she could go to and ask for help and that her children did not have food to eat, which forced her into begging. She simply could not see her children sleep hungry.

When she found out that we are distributing food and hygiene kits she registered to receive them. She is very thankful to RAM Foundation and World Compassion Fellowship for providing her food and hygiene kits.













*RAM Foundation thanks you for your generosity towards Pakistani brick-kiln workers, Christians and religious minorities, and the poorest.*