BRAIN LETTER

Bosco Refugee Assistance Initiative News Letter



COVID Special Edition

April - June 2020

Vol:1 Issue:1

Refugee Assistance Projec BOSCO -UNHCR Covid 19 Relief Programm

Reached out to 20000

Refugees & Asylum Seekers





Refugee Assistance Programme UNHCR-BOSCO initiative



DIRECTOR SPEAKS

After the Covid-19 pandemic started overturning the world order in the first quarter of 2020, people on the margins have suffered the most, as always. Across the globe, refugees and asylum seekers became the most vulnerable, naturally and in reality. The pandemic made life more hellish for those stateless, homeless groups who have nothing to fall back on except human kindness. But history shows that crises like these also bring out the power of goodness latent in humanity.

As soon as the lockdown was put in place and everything was shut down, BOSCO realized that we have a chance to do something extraordinary especially in collaboration with UNHCR for the refugees. Ever since, we have been putting in our best efforts to help the refugee communities get through this crisis. Our various teams started looking for alternative ways to reach out to the refugees and help them continue with their life activities. Distribution of food kits, providing healthcare facilities, online education, taking care of women, children and the elderly, motivation and mental healthcare, nurturing of creativity, etc were undertaken successfully.

In all this our volunteers have been walking the extra mile to keep the smile on the faces of those hapless people. Their spirit of service gives us the hope that the world can overcome this pandemic too. Hats off to them!

> Biju Akkilettu SDB Director BOSCO Delhi



Refugee and asylum seeker families from Afghanistan, Iran, Myanmar, Somalia, Sudan and other African countries have been staying in Delhi since fleeing their home countries. All refugees living in various refugee sites have been left to fight the coronavirus pandemic on their own. The strict lockdown for people to prevent the spread of the virus has turned into a human tragedy for many, particularly the migrant workers, daily wage earners, street vendors and several others whose survival depends on their daily earnings. Most of the social protection packages announced by government to feed and pay the working class daily wagers have no provisions for non-citizens including the refugees and asylum seekers. Due to Corona virus pandemic and consequent national lockdown, these families have been pushed to a point of starvation.

Realising the gravity of the situation, UNHCR-BOSCO initiative distributed 6040 ration kits to the refugees and asylum seekers families with the support of community leaders till 7th June. For distribution in accordance with the social distancing and government protocols we have taken the support of the community representatives and volunteers who received the training on safety measures.

> RATION DISTRIBUTION

Ration distribution was organised at Shaheenbagh

GLIMPSES OF RATION DISTRIBUTION





Number of ration kits distributed (1st and 2nd Round)

Area	Afghan	Hindu Sikh Afghan	Chin	Roghingya	Other Nationalities	Total No. of kits
West Delhi	713	81	1624	-	1	2419
Malviya nagar	829	-	-	-	384	1213
Bhogal	736	-	-	-	25	761
Wazirabad	238	-	-	-	52	290
Rohingya sites	-	-	-	1357	-	1357
Total	2516	81	1624	1357	462	6040



ONLINE CRECHE, BRIDGE & TUITION CLASSES





The BOSCO education centres remain closed amid the COVID-19 lockdown but not the classes. Online classes are in full swing. The teachers are putting more efforts to continue giving education to children. Virtual classes and worksheets are given to the students. In addition, various activities such as online lectures on different subjects, sessions on child rights, summer camps, children's club meetings and library sessions were conducted. To enable students to spread awareness about the pandemic in the society, various creative activities including drawing and dance performance on corona virus and message writing on symptoms and preventive measures such as washing hands, wearing mask, social distancing etc were also held. A 10-day summer camp was organised for Creche, Bridge and Tuition students too.

Area	Afghan	Chin	F	Roghingya	Total
Creche	5	12		4	21
Bridge & Tuition	247	14		4	265
Total	252	26		8	286
				1	-

"My name is Suhana Bibi. I study in the 4th class at an MCD school and I am a regular at BOSCO classes. My teacher at BOSCO helps me to do my home work from the school and also gives extra classes for Hindi and English. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to my teacher and to BOSCO".

ONLINE SUMMER CAMP





27th - 30th May: Creche students 2nd - 5th June: Bridge and Tuition Students Besides the online classes, BOSCO Education Team, Budella organised an online summer camp for students of Creche, Bridge and Tuition classes from 27 May to 5 June. The virtual camp had a variety of activities including storytelling, essay writing, drawing and painting, poster making, dance, rhymes and action songs and reading sessions, conducted on Whatsapp platform. The instructors made use of this opportunity to educate children on COVID-19 precautions and healthy food habits.

















5

ONLINE SUMMER CAMP



Exercises, craft making (video was shared beforehand), presentation of fun facts about the world, importance of environment, trees and gardening at home, storytelling and story writing, painting and drawing, healthy food and salad making (in the presence of elders), picture talk and coloring, sentence making and talent hunt were some of the interesting activities conducted during the summer camp held at Malviyanagar.



"We feel like school for an hour when we attend the online classes. We are busy with our studies, homework, drawing, painting, stories and many more. We love it and we learn many new things every week". - Sara and Sediqa, Malviyangar BOSCO Delhi

CHILDREN'S CLUB ACTIVITIES





Children's Clubs in Refugee Assistance Programme organized awareness sessions on "Right use of social media, Child marriage and Child labour" on different online platforms in May 2020 A total of 289 children from 9 clubs, in the age group of 6-14, attended and actively participated in the interactive awareness sessions, learning more about the topics. Speech competition, drawing and painting activities and discussions were also organised as part of the online programme.

June 2020

An online session on Child Labour was conducted in the month of June. Video presentations titled "Education Counts" and "Ammu and Aman - Child Labour" showed the negative impact of child labour on the development of an individual and how it affects his/her future growth. Images relevant to the topic were also shared with the students. After the video presentation students were asked to draw pictures reflecting their thoughts on the topic and share them in the Whatsapp groups of their classes. A total of 271 children attended the activities.



WORLD DAY AGAINST CHILD LABOUR





Children shouldn't work in fields, but on dreams. Still, 152 million children are still in child labour across the globe! To raise awareness about the plight of child labourers, BOSCO Education team organised a drawing activity and a speech competition on the World Day Against Child Labour. The programme highlighted the importance of schooling and education. The child helpline number 1098 was shared with the students and they were encouraged to use it whenever they find a child working as a labourer.



8

WORLD DAY AGAINST CHILD LABOUR





ORIGAMI SESSION

With a view to encourage students to engage in extracurricular activities, Bhogal Education team organized an origami session for children. Students were motivated to participate in the activity through the guidance of their teachers and sharing of easy-to-do origami videos in their group. Parents were also appealed to support and lend a helping hand to the children. As a result, students participated in the session with much enthusiasm and proudly shared their own origami creations in the students group.



9



ONLINE TRAINING & NIOS CLASSES





Area	Afghan	Hindhu Sikh Afghan	Chin	Roghingya	Other nationalities	Total
Computer	124	-	-	9	11	144
English	440	22	1	11	40	514
Hindi	115		-	6	9	130
NIOS	173	-	12	7	15	207
Total	852	22	13	33	75	995

With the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic, BOSCO Training Centers cancelled all the regular activities from the first week of March 2020. Through the impediment of complete lockdown however the centers continued to work in online mode engaging in documentation, preparation of lesson plans etc.

In April, BOSCO started online classes for Training and NIOS courses, Computer, English and Hindi using platforms like Whatsapp, Zoom, Facebook Page, Google Classroom and Viber.

PARENTS TEACHERS MEETING





In month of June, Parents teachers meeting was organised with Vikaspuri and Bhogal Creche, Bridge and Tuition parents. Parents appreciated the teachers their initiative to provide subject wise worksheets and their corrections, and for organising online summer camp. The parents requested to provide stationeries to their children as, lot of drawings, paintings, poster making, art and craft activities involved in the classes. Then information on preventive part of COVID 19 was shared. The parents were advised to clean their home regularly, particularly frequently touched surface like refrigerator handles, door knobs, etc. Also encouraged them stay physically fit, exercise regularly, eat nutritious diet, and don't smoke .





Training and NIOS teachers organized a PTM on the 27th of June to address the parents' concern regarding the children's regularity and continuity of learning during the suspension of centre-based training and NIOS classes. The online class timings were shared with the parents to let them know the engagement of their kids at different times. They were also informed about various activities being conducted such as life skill PPTs, sharing and discussion on topics, grammar quiz and similar programs. The parents were also enlightened about the Whatsapp group platform and various other modes of conducting classes such as Zoom, WebEx, Google Meet and conference call.

DAFI

The outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic and the ensuing nationwide lockdown have thrown the system of education out of gear, as in the case of many other fields. All schools and colleges were closed. Regular classes became nearly impossible. As the unusual situation educational institutions looked for warranted. alternatives to ensure continuity of learning process. Conduction of classes through online platforms soon became the most viable option. Thus during this period DAFI scholars who are pursuing graduation courses from universities across Delhi and other cities have been receiving learning support from their universities through multiple online services and applications like Zoom App, Loom, Skype, Google Classroom and Google Meet. DAFI scholars and alumni have also been regularly monitored by BOSCO through Zoom App, Whatsapp groups and conference calls, keeping in mind their safety and well-being. Useful information on prevention of corona virus, social distancing and other precautions is also being shared on a regular basis. In all, 38 active DAFI scholars and 30 alumni have been reached out. The active DAFI scholars have also been receiving their monthly DAFI SA through online bank transfer.

DAFI scholars and their families contributed in the fight against COVID-19 by distributing handmade masks free of cost in the community and the neighbourhood. They also posted tutorial videos on mask making, which were shared across communities and on the Facebook Page of BOSCO.





Ms.Rin Mawi is making face mask to distribute to the vulnerable families in her neighbourhood



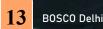






The International Yoga Day is observed on the 21st of June. This year, in view of COVID-19 related restrictions and requirement for social distancing, DAFI scholars celebrated the Yoga Day virtually. On the 13th of June 2020, a session on the theme "Yoga: Fight Stress and Find Serenity in COVID Times" was organized for active DAFI scholars on Webex application with US-based yoga and wellness expert Ms Nandani Jayaprasad as the resource person. She has been conducting Yoga Meditation workshops for refugees in India since 2018.

Yoga can boost one's immunity naturally and uplift one's vitality without having to step out of the house during this lockdown, said Ms Jayaprasad. She also pointed out that yoga has been used for centuries to keep the body fit and functioning fine. Its benefits are holistic and not just limited to stress relief and mental wellness. It can recharge one's body, get rid of the toxins, negative energy and keep the vital organs functioning well.



DAFI



In observance of World Refugee Day during COVID-19 lockdown, a virtual session on Webex application was organized for DAFI scholars with Ms Vaanyasri Goel as the resource person on the 19th of June 2020. (Ms. Goel is a motivational speaker and social work enthusiast pursuing graduation in business studies from USC Marshall School of Business, USA). During the session, the scholars were introduced to the theme of this year's World Refugee Day, i.e. **No matter who you are or where you come from, pandemic or not; every one of us can make a difference. Every action counts**. The theme underlines social inclusion and motivates everyone to embrace cultural diversity. Ms Goel through her presentation explained how important it is for everyone to respect and appreciate each other's culture, values, norms, traditions, language, perspectives, race, skills, beliefs, age and gender.

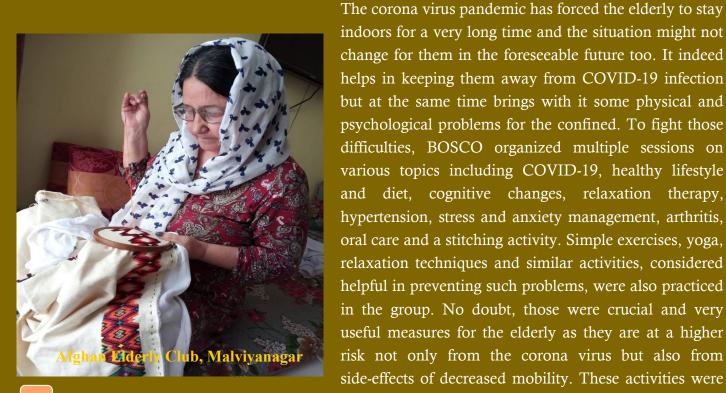


WOMEN'S CLUB & ELDERLY CLUB ACTIVITIES





Stress has become a consequent by-product of the lockdown, covering almost all aspects of life. Refugee participants in particular have been facing financial, emotional and health issues. In response to the situation a relaxation therapy with lots of engaging activities was organised for the women groups. The activities included sessions on fitness, SGBV and PSEA, COVID-19 precautions, self care, family planning, child care, beauty care, stress and anxiety management, entertainment exercise, poetry writing and Eid celebration programs. In addition, online classes in cookery, embroidery and Dari were also organized for the refugee women's clubs.



indoors for a very long time and the situation might not change for them in the foreseeable future too. It indeed helps in keeping them away from COVID-19 infection but at the same time brings with it some physical and psychological problems for the confined. To fight those difficulties, BOSCO organized multiple sessions on various topics including COVID-19, healthy lifestyle and diet, cognitive changes, relaxation therapy, hypertension, stress and anxiety management, arthritis, oral care and a stitching activity. Simple exercises, yoga, relaxation techniques and similar activities, considered helpful in preventing such problems, were also practiced in the group. No doubt, those were crucial and very useful measures for the elderly as they are at a higher risk not only from the corona virus but also from side-effects of decreased mobility. These activities were organized on a weekly basis to keep them active and updated.

HEALTH CARE FACILITIES





I am a Chin refugee from Vikaspuri. BOSCO Health team helped me to get my medicine on time during the lockdown period. It was really helpful for me, as I am not able to survive without medicine.

- Za Nei Thluai (Burmese)

I am in regular medication due to asthma and arthritis. BOSCO always helps me with free medicines, since I am not financially strong and not able to go for work. I was worried about my medicines in the beginning of this national lockdown. But BOSCO helped me to get my medicine without delay.

- Harbans Singh (Hindu Sikh Afghan)

During the lockdown period from April to June, the Health Team has been trying its best to look after the COVID-19 positive cases among the refugees and asylum seekers and at the same time to provide routine healthcare facilities to others in the same way as it was prior to the lockdown.

In this period our team also helped and facilitated a total of 114 refugees and asylum seekers to visit primary healthcare centres and another 365 to visit secondary and tertiary healthcare government hospitals. Overall, 630 persons have accessed the government facilities. Medicines were provided to 370 refugees and medical aid and equipments to 15 POCs. Medical tests and investigations were facilitated for 10 POCs.

Sanitary napkins were distributed to 2,234 women in the last three months. PPE kits, masks, hand sanitizers etc were provided to the CSPs for their own protection against COVID-19.

The Health Team has been extending regular assistance to Rohingya refugees from Mewat, Jammu, Aligarh, Meerut, Mathura and Jaipur through agencies like Action Aid, Save the Children and DAJI and four MRC cases are ready for presentation to UNHCR.

The Health Team organized medical counseling for PoCs on issues related to COVID-19 prevention, accessing hospitals and guidelines on various aspects of individual health. We are also providing the best of medical facilities to 15 cases of HIV infection.

HEALTH CARE FACILITIES



	No. PoCs	received	services
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Services	Male	Female	Total
Total No. of persons referred to Primary , secondary and tertiary medical care	120	359	479
No. of persons receiving medicines from BOSCO	130	240	370
No of Poc's receiving medical reimbuse- ment / Financial assitance for test and investigation	2	8	10
NO of POC's provided with medical aids and equipment	1	14	15
No. of persons reached through health camps/preventive health awareness sessions	3014	4167	7181
No. of PoC trained on reproductive health including ANC/PNC and Institutional delivery	57	139	196
No. of Condoms distributed			1325
No.of women receiving sanitary napkins	0	2234	2234

The COVID-19 lockdown had put pregnant women through difficult times and stressful situations. So with us too! They used to get anxious about every small thing, which is quite understandable. However, in the end, those new mothers had a safe delivery and emerged joyful even in this tough time. BOSCO wishes good health and happiness to all those new mothers, who should rather be called "SUPER STRONG MOTHERS"! We are very proud of them and their families. Our Medical Team will continue to encourage new mothers to breastfeed their newborns at least for 6 months as it is good for their health as well as the baby's. Hope for a stronger and holistic bond between the mother and child as the year 2020 is going to be a specially memorable one for all parents! They could later tell their kids about the times they were born – about the situation of the world while they were inside their Mama"s tummy and about the chaotic and stressful days when they were rushed to the hospital!

Till date since the lockdown, BOSCO centres have been able to support **16 deliveries** at different government hospitals. **7** BOSCO Delhi

Labour and delivery



BOSCO HAILS PREGNANT Women and New Moms Amid Lockdown "Super Strong Mothers"

GLIMPSES OF DISTRIBUTION











DISSEMINATING AWARENESS





Realizing that awareness is the most important weapon in the fight against the pandemic, we organized general health awareness sessions and COVID-19 awareness campaigns during this period. Approximately **7,181 PoCs** attended the campaign through Whatsapp, Viber, Zoom and person-to-person phone calls.

For effective dissemination, awareness videos on corona virus were shared in native languages. They highlighted the importance of preventive measures which need to be strictly followed to keep individuals and their families safe during the pandemic. In an attempt to educate their classmates and the community about COVID-19 pandemic and precautionary measures, the students, on their part, made drawings, paintings and dance videos and posted them in the social media.



Creating awareness through whatsapp groups and Facebook on COVID 19 preventive measures



Health officer is interacting with Training students



Children's club members from Budella and Hastal made a video presentation on 'Importance of washing hands and wearing mask.

I SUPPORT CAMPAIGN



BOSCO youth clubs have come together to support and encourage each other in the fight against the Covid-19 pandemic. The best way to prevent it and to slow down its transmission is to be well informed about the new virus. Youth clubs used various means and methods to reach out to different age groups of the refugee community to spread awareness about precautionary measures such as frequent hand washing for 20 seconds, sanitizing of frequently touched objects, wearing of mask, social distancing etc.



COVID-19 & PSYCHOSOCIAL WELL-BEING

Total Participants in Counselling Sessions

1773 PSS Counselling

270 CPT Counselling

32 BIA

05 HRIT

12 SGBV Session

64 Self Approach

Group Sessions

Nationality	No. of Participants
Ethnic Afghan	34
Somalia	13
Chin	18
Rohingya	3
Other Nationality	4
Total	



With the on-going pandemic and the lockdown, we have slowly begun to understand and accept the "new normal" that would follow the lockdown. With this understanding, the Psychosocial Team has been providing tele-counselling to the PoCs in order to reduce the fear surrounding the pandemic and the "new normal" that awaits us. As a psychosocial team, our prime focus at present is to fully understand the challenges that refugees are facing due to the pandemic and accordingly shift our approach for effective interventions with available resources.

35

Landlord Intervention

184 Elderly Follow up

188 PWD Follow up

The team conducted teleconference session on SGBV and CPT awareness with Women's Club Bhogal (58 participants), which was facilitated by the Bhogal training team. We also co-facilitated a session on the topic of 'self care' with Health team for Vikaspuri Women's Club. With the Malviyanagar team we co-facilitated four sessions for women's club and two for with elderly club.

BOSCO Delhi

SA Review & Distribution





Medical CSPs and Community animators are distributing SA cheques in the community

Nationality	April to June 2020
Ethnic Afghan	228
Somalia	126
MLI	2
Iran	2
Sudan	4
Ethyopia	4
COD	27
СОВ	2
Hindu Sikh Afghan	54
Chin	230
Rohingya	65
Total	753

Details of SA cheque distributed

"I am a single mother of five children, dependent on SA for our survival. We were really in panic as we thought we wouldn't receive SA this time. But BOSCO and UNHCR made it possible and I received my SA cheque at the doorstep. When I saw BOSCO staff standing in front of my door with the cheque, I really saw God in him. Thanks to BOSCO and UNHCR"

> - Lal Khaw Ngaihi (Chin Refugee)

Innovative Virtual Programmes with Youth Clubs

Youths play a significant role in the community. They can create a profound impact on community life as most of the group activities of spreading awareness and educating are done using social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and Whatsapp. To give the right knowledge to our youths, BOSCO Youth groups attended and participated in a session on the **'RIGHT USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA'** amid the lockdown. The training was conducted on the 14th of May 2020 with 10 different youth groups from different communities. Mr. Imran Khan (Training Team Coordinator, Vikaspuri) was the resource person for the training and a total of 30 youth club leaders attended the training through Zoom app.

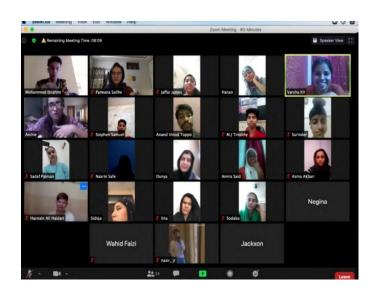






Joining India's fight against the pandemic, BOSCO youth groups took to creating awareness about the Government guidelines and sensitized youths and community members to stand together to fight COVID-19. They encouraged their respective communities to follow the necessary protocol and guidelines to keep everyone safe. The youth came up with creative ideas which they put into various activities like making posters and videos on hand washing and social distancing, sanitizing gadgets and other household articles, DIY of making mask, 7 pleas by the Prime Minister of India etc.

On the 9th of June 2020, two resource persons from NIPCCD, Ms. Varsha and Ms. Archi, were invited to lead a session on 'How to deal with anxiety during lockdown'. The main objective of holding this session was to educate the youth about mental health problems and ways to overcome them. It was also meant to spread the awareness in their community and thus help those who are in need. In the session which lasted for two and half hours, the youths were asked what they liked about themselves and how they would structure their everyday activities during the lockdown.



The session was quite interactive as the youth participated by responding and asking queries. It was attended by 22 youth leaders along with youth coordinator and community animator Ms. Parwana.

WORLD REFUGEE DAY

15th-20th June



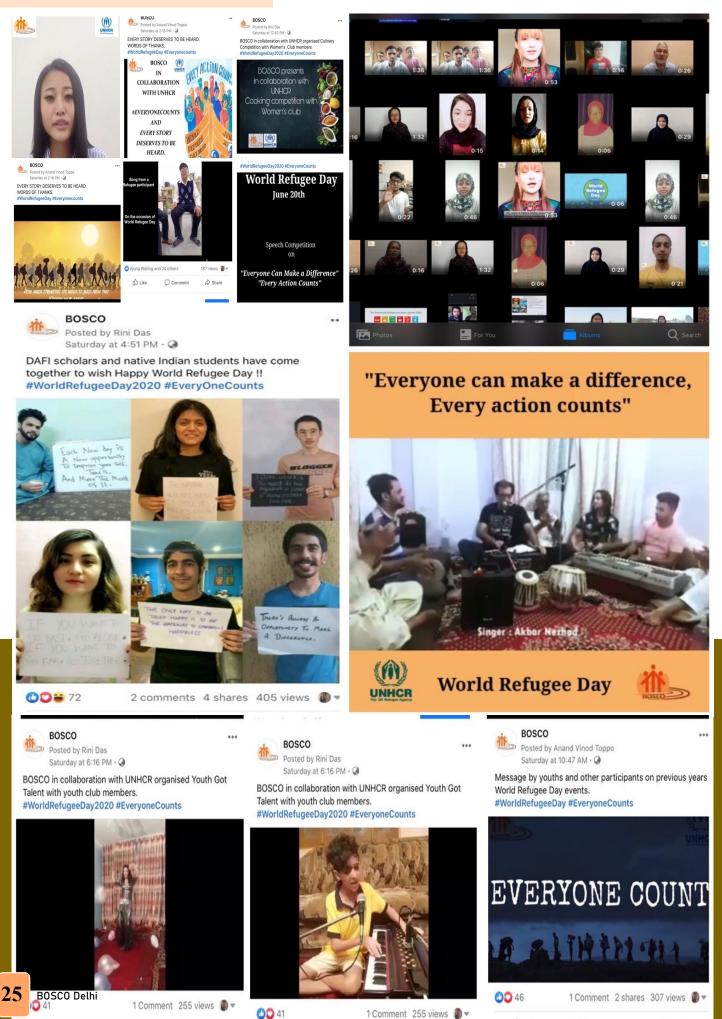
BOSCO organized a week-long program to observe World Refugee Day with the theme of the day, i.e. **"Everyone counts - Everyone can make a difference and Every action counts"**. The Refugee Week was planned with the objective to make it more inclusive with different age groups and nationalities. Keeping in mind the age factor, different activities were arranged for different groups. For example, activities like picture narrative for the youth, speech competition for children, culinary competition for women, storytelling for the elderly and the disabled and finally a youth-got-talent for different BOSCO youth groups. No doubt, it was an amazing and exciting week filled with an interesting list of programs but it was also quite challenging to bring together people from different age groups.



24

GLIMPSES OF REFUGEE DAY CELEBRATION





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CHILDREN DRAW THEIR FEARS AND DREAMS



Volunteer Speaks

"It is my responsibility towards my family to take care of them and also reach out to my community during this COVID-19 pandemic. During this lockdown period I make sure that everyone in my family and community are safe and healthy. Through telephonic calls I follow up with my community members everyday and share information on Covid-19. I also volunteered in the ration and sanitary napkin distribution process held at BOSCO for afghans and other community members. I feel fortunate that I am able to help and contribute towards the well being of my family and community in COVID times."

- Yasamin Zaki, an Afghan volunteer



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