



**CALCUTTA
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Dear Friends of Calcutta Kids,

The COVID-19 pandemic is affecting us all in profound and different ways. The Calcutta Kids team extends our hope that you and your loved ones are safe and healthy during this difficult time. If ever there was a time to express gratitude for the meaningful relationships we have with you, now is that time. We are grateful for you, your support, and for your continued care and concern for the people of Fakir Bagan - especially the mothers and children. We write to you today with an update on the dire situation in Fakir Bagan and the ways that Calcutta Kids is strategically serving and partnering with our beneficiaries.

Our catchment area has been and continues to be a hotspot for COVID-19. The virus has already claimed the lives of numerous inhabitants of Fakir Bagan including two former Calcutta Kids beneficiaries - a mother and a graduate of our adolescent girls' program. We recently learned about several new COVID-19 positive cases in our catchment area – these individuals are now in isolation. The lockdown continues with limited time slots for people to buy food and requiring special permission to seek medical attention. The police stroll the lanes of Fakir Bagan ensuring that residents stay inside. Adding insult to injury, Kolkata was devastated by Cyclone Amphan in late May, which flooded homes throughout Fakir Bagan, and limited residents' access to clean drinking water.

Calcutta Kids continues its imperative work with significant adjustments given these new realities:

- **Virtual Home Visits:** The Calcutta Kids health workers have been working remotely since mid-March. This has been possible thanks to our investments in online health technology, enabling our health workers to access information on beneficiaries through secure tablets and via phone counseling. "Home visits" have increased in frequency and COVID-19-specific content has been added to Calcutta Kids' pregnancy, young child, and adolescent health counseling.
- **Providing Non-Emergency Health Care:**
 - Calcutta Kids' doctors are providing non-emergency medical assistance using telehealth systems.
 - Calcutta Kids has partnered with a group of doctors who specialize in COVID-19 care and are able to provide specific guidance via telehealth when needed.
 - Prescribed medicines and prenatal vitamins continue to be provided free to beneficiaries in a safe and systematic way. Regular "orders" are placed by health workers and then beneficiaries are given spaced appointment times to safely collect their medicines.

- Urgent medical care was, up until last month, also being provided by Dr. Utpal Kumar Roy who has served as a medical doctor for Calcutta Kids since its establishment in 2005. (Last month Dr. Roy was diagnosed with COVID-19 and spent several weeks in the hospital – he is now recovering at home.)
- **Coordinating Access to Urgent and Essential Health Services:** Due to the pandemic several hospitals and clinics used by Calcutta Kids beneficiaries have temporarily closed. Calcutta Kids management is providing the key service of tracking which clinics and hospitals are open. Our staff are coordinating treatment between beneficiaries and hospitals, and facilitating transport permission from local police for beneficiaries to go to the hospital.
- **Pregnant women are delivering healthy children:** Calcutta Kids babies continue to be born with healthy birthweights; more than 60 babies have been born since the lockdown began – all without any COVID-19-related complications. See the smiling faces of some of these babies below.



Calcutta Kids remains steadfast in its commitment to the people of Fakir Bagan. While adjustments will continue to be made in service coordination and delivery, Calcutta Kids prides itself on being an adaptable learning organization. As with individuals and organizations throughout the world, we've never before had to adapt to this level, but our team on the ground is demonstrating great strength and effectiveness at leveraging partnerships (hospitals, police, and local clubs) and balancing employee safety with our enduring commitment to high quality service delivery.

With kindest regards and thanks for your continued support and partnership.

Noah Levinson *Evangeline Ambat*

Noah Levinson & Evangeline Ambat
Co-Directors, Calcutta Kids