



**let's
reach out**
KERALA



CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION

This certificate is proudly presented to

VISHNUJA NAMBIAR

for volunteering with the **Let's Reach Out Kerala** project.
You have helped to reach out to stranded Guest Workers
during the COVID-19 pandemic from March 30 - June 17,
2020. Thank you for your sincere efforts.

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DR. AKHIL MANUEL
PROJECT DIRECTOR, LET'S REACH OUT KERALA
District Migrant Nodal Medical Officer,
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Name: Vishnuja Jegadeesh Nambiar.

Serial Number: 06. UID: 181360. Roll number: 301.

I was a part of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences' initiative called "Let's Reach Out Kerala" to help migrant workers stranded due to the COVID-19 lockdown. These daily-wage migrant construction workers were stranded in the southern states of India as the lockdown measures were implemented, because there was little or no work available for them. So, they wanted to go back to their domicile states. I ensured my complete support and assistance to the workers by facilitating them with issues related to their human rights, the provision of food and ration,

informational and logistical support, the immediate threat of eviction by landlords, and medical and mental health support. I spoke to several government officials about the needs of the migrant workers so that their needs were addressed and met when it comes to the provision of various services, supplies, and threats.

Working in the field of the migrant worker crisis was an especially important experience for me as I could learn from the experience of aiding individuals who needed immediate support and help. I had never done that before. To me, it was a matter of a new headline that I could do very little towards back when I wasn't a part of this initiative. As I joined hands with some of the most competent and resourceful people, I realized that I could do something too. What I learnt from the actual experience of talking to the migrant workers or guest workers was that they had hopes of the future becoming certain but there were still many hindrances to that. It was told to us at the very start that while we talk, we have to be accurate in terms of the information we provide them with regarding the trains, the method of booking the tickets and the other logistical factors but also, we were told that we should not give them any false hopes. That is something I had to work on as I thought saying positive things is good. However, I learnt that it is painting a false image of the uncertain future in front of them. This experience was particularly insightful as I worked under some brilliant minds and with some extremely strong men and women workers. I had to contact local NGOs and government officials to make sure that the workers received food packets and were not being threatened by landlords. I am very grateful that I got this opportunity and that I worked during the first few months of lockdown.