

SELCO 2021 COVID SECOND WAVE RESPONSE PROGRAMME

SEWF is appealing to the international social enterprise community to assist our partner, SELCO Foundation with its urgent response to the COVID-19 crisis in India. SELCO has been at the frontline during the first and second waves of the pandemic and is working with a network of 200 regional social enterprises to deliver a “Relief, Recovery and Resilience” response to benefit 500,000 families. SEWF is encouraging the social enterprise community around the world to support this critical programme.

Introduction

April and May 2021 have been catastrophic for communities throughout India. Unending sirens of ambulances and long lines at cremation centers have been the two most widely recognised images of this never-ending crisis. The focus, understandably, today is on the most urgent healthcare needs of serious patients who require access to oxygen and ventilators. The urgency will change in the coming two quarters and SELCO has made specific plans while prioritizing the needs according to sectors where it can have the most impact because of its prior experience in phase one of the COVID crisis.

In the first phase of the crisis, between March 2020 and July 2020, the actions undertaken by SELCO include:

- a. Built over 60 COVID care hospitals, isolation centers, therapeutic care units and health staff quarters in partnership with public and civil society organizations like Doctors for You, Ashwani Gudalur, Seba Jagat etc. These centers were constructed via social enterprise and their innovations around sustainable building material, solar powered solutions and efficient equipment and are being extensively used during the second phase of the crisis.
- b. Designed and installed 500+ solar powered swab collections centers in remote areas, thus leading to decentralized testing process during critical periods of the 1st phase.
- c. Provided basic rations and other essential supplies to numerous poor families, who were stranded during the country-wide lock down.
- d. Infused capital in 30 last mile clean energy and efficient technology social enterprises for meeting the salaries of technicians and administration staff. Also negotiated with local financial institutions on their behalf to restructure their respective working capital loans. SELCO also facilitated in increasing their credit periods from suppliers and provided crisis mentorship.



- e. Deeply engaged with more than 200 grassroots-based enterprises, in the livelihoods and sustainable energy space, to create appropriate safety nets to prevent them from collapsing.

SELCO had internally restructured and created a COVID Task force to overlook all the operations. The ongoing crisis is at a much larger level than the first one. On top of the existing core task force, it has created 3 more at regional levels, considering the amount of work that would have to be carried out in this phase. The learnings from the 1st phase will be critical, but the team is well-versed and aware of the magnitude and breadth of this catastrophe.

In the second phase of the program SELCO is focusing on three areas.

- a. Health: Complementary efforts needed in the health sector
- b. Social Enterprises and Related Organizations: Partnerships and Crisis Management
- c. Relief Work

COVID-19 Immediate Relief

HOUSEHOLDS / COMMUNITIES

With lockdown announced in March 2020, the ration and PDS systems were also affected drastically in many remote rural and tribal regions. SELCO team constantly stayed in touch with its communities, monitoring the status of food supply. While Government of India and Philanthropies announced ration distribution and relief aid services, there was a lag observed in the distribution timelines and the needs of the remote marginalised communities.

SELCO Foundation forged partnerships with other entities working towards relief and ration distribution in order to utilise its resources efficiently. Efforts were made by SELCO to map marginalised groups and share their needs with larger relief initiatives. **2,710 kits were delivered directly by SELCO Foundation team, which was primarily done for buffer periods before connections were made to other sources.**

CASE STUDY: KUMBHARAPADA POTTERY COMMUNITY

Kumbharapada, a small village of around 500 households in Puri district, by its very name is a moniker for pottery community in the local language. For centuries, the major source of revenue for the resident pottery community came from selling pots to Shri Jagannath temple, an important religious shrine in Eastern India. The temple would serve its offerings in these pots during the daily prayer ceremonies and to its followers.

With COVID turn of events, the government of Odisha placed lockdown and held restrictions in movement in public spaces from March 2020. A major brunt of this regulation were felt by this community who majorly relied on this single source of revenue. With neither in possession of dependable assets to rely on nor access to other supporting revenue streams, many in the community were facing dire situation.

SELCO foundation held consultation with the households and community president, Shri. Prashant Bishoi to understand the condition of local residents and ways to improve the situation. Instead of providing direct money, the consensus was to distribute relief material as a more effective approach in creating a temporary safety net for a period of 20 days. The ration pack consisted of rice, chooda, sugar, pulse, potato, onion, soap and mask. Rather than serving the entire population of 500, a focussed approach was taken to identify more vulnerable cross-section of the community like the handicapped, elderly and single women with young children, narrowing down the beneficiary count to 200 households. To mobilize the ration pack, a local grocery store near the community was contacted. They procured and bundled the essentials. The members of pottery association, headed by Shri Prashant Bishoi, coordinated and planned the logistics for last mile distribution.

As a recovery and rehabilitation strategy, the community has shown interest to diversify its product line and expand its market linkage. Before the lockdown, KVIC had conducted training for traditional potters to diversify into more contemporary product range and strengthen other linkages. These vulnerable community, annually ravaged by cyclonic disasters, are seeing the COVID crisis as a clarion call to envision a more resilient & decentralized local economy.

SOLAR POWERED SWAB COLLECTION KIOSKS

With the incoming of returning migrants, The state of Jharkhand has witnessed a sharp spurt in the COVID 19 cases. The state government is responding to the emerging crisis by upgrading the facilities by involving various stakeholders. The biggest challenge for district health officials however, was screening and sample collection of the suspected cases. One of the designated health facilities in Giridh district was SADAR hospital, one of the biggest and best-equipped with a large OPD to handle the screening for identifying the suspected cases.

Health care workers who are involved in sample collection are coming directly in contact with COVID suspects. Though they are using PPE Kits, still they have fear and apprehension that they may get infected with corona virus. Already under strain and a of resources, the administration was forced to divert meagre budgets towards buying PPE kits like a coat/ face shield/masks/gloves, one of which cannot be worn for over 4-5 hours of use.

To overcome this challenge, SELCO foundation approached the health authorities with a cost effective solution in the form of solar powered sample collection kiosk. The sample collection kiosk was proposed as a mobile cubicle cabin which comes with a pair of gloves attached to it in the front through which the health workers can take samples of the suspected patient. The structure is supported with four wheels at the base for mobility. The swab collections can also be done without any contact with the patient, and the gloves used can be sanitised from outside. This will reduce the need for more PPE kits and will enable more tests in less time.

On 30st May 2020, the Solar Powered Sample Collection Kiosk was installed and was inaugurated by Dr Awedesh, Civil Surgeon. This DRE enabled sample collection kiosk is placed in the premises of Sadar Hospital, Giridih.

The kiosk is also powered by solar which has basic critical loads of light, fan and mobile charging point which will be very useful for the frontline worker working from within the cubicle for extended hours, if required.



39,175*

Individuals Screened in 2 months

3,552,021*

Individuals have improved access to testing facilities

**Across all Swab Collection Kiosks Implemented as of August 2020*

QUARANTINE, ISOLATION AND THERAPEUTIC CARE FACILITIES FOR COVID 19

Infrastructure Gaps

- **Epidemic unpreparedness** of district level health centres such as: **unavailability of additional rooms, isolation beds, testing kits, quarantining & isolation facilities, ventilators and medical supplies**; as the coping mechanism is very much co-related to quality infrastructure
- Local community centres and government buildings converted to **temporary isolation wards lack access to reliable power supply**- critical for well-being and treatment of the patients
- Due to **unreliability of the grid (power cuts and voltage fluctuations)**, these buildings rely on **generators** resulting in high operational costs
- **Not originally designed to serve as isolation wards**, these temporary isolations wards also can **lack basic sanitation such as clean water, disinfected toilets and drainage facilities**
- Certain states/regions in India (which will also be the case across other developing countries) have **severe shortages in ambulances and oxygen cylinders** - leading to poor accessibility of health services and broken supply chains for critical infrastructure like ICUs
- **Social distancing is a hard concept to follow in dense urban slums and vulnerable institutions** catering to large number of individuals living in close proximity or using **common infrastructure- such as toilets, water points etc.** This may aggravate the community transfer of COVID-19

The shortfall of infrastructure, is being seen primarily in two ways

OPTION 1

Existing public buildings such as community centres, panchayat buildings, government residential schools, training centre of the NGOs, stadiums, etc can be upgraded and renovated to function as quarantine or isolation wards.



OPTION 2

Renovation, quick upgradation and extension of existing hospitals



Relief, Recovery and Resilience - COVID 2021

SELCO has embarked on a 9 month – **Relief, Recovery and Resilience COVID 2021** program to cater to more than 10,000 families and provide infrastructure that could directly benefit at-least 500,000 families. The budget allocated for the program is 2.9 million Euros.

Programs

In phase two of the COVID-India crisis, SELCO Foundation shall focus on the following initiatives:

a. Health: To Replicate successful projects done under phase 1, including:

1. Partner with existing health partners to construct quick deployment additional covid related facilities in peri urban and rural areas that would be run on solar power.
2. Scale up the solar powered swab collection and immunization centers in more high-risk geographical areas.
3. To provide support to last mile human resources in health sector.
4. Provide reliable power via solar to multiple ICUs, ventilators, and other critical parts of the health chain.

Action: To deliver 8 large scale interventions with 2-3 health partners.

b. Last Mile Partnerships with Social Enterprises: Social enterprises (Both NGOs and privately structured) are very critical in delivering essential services during these times. SELCO has partnered with grassroots social enterprises to scale up the delivery of needed services in the most effective manner. Some examples:

1. To partner with Mahila Housing Trust, Ahmedabad, to mitigate many of the uncertainties faced by their women cooperative members in home-based income generating activities.
2. To partner with Harsha Trust in Odhisa to evaluate and solve COVID related barriers to many of the small and marginal farmers who are mostly from the tribal populations.

Action: To partner with 10 social enterprises, leading to 500 direct interventions in the energy-livelihoods, energy-housing and energy-education nexus.

RESILIENT MICRO-BUSINESSES

With the effects of the COVID-19 crisis, re-imagining the "new normal" for micro businesses needed to be looked at closely. In today's world when multiple businesses are piloting and restructuring their approach, ways of operations, space and interactions, linkages etc., one needs to closely look at and support the micro and small enterprises, who are the backbone of our economy, to be able to do the same. SELCO Foundation invited such businesses to re-imagine, design, develop and implement their "new normal" and decided to partner with micro-business to co-develop ideas and solutions to strengthen, diversify and grow their current businesses.

The program is designed to pilot and restructure the approach, ways of operations, space and interactions, linkages etc. for micro-businesses as a response to the pandemic. The concept of the Resilient Micro businesses program is to help resilience building for enterprises, to not only tide through the current crisis but also stay sturdy for the future. The program seeks to do this by supporting businesses in:

1. Value creation strategies and resources
2. Sustainable Competitive strategies
3. Asset generation (ie infrastructure, machinery and equipment)

Through these interventions the program seeks to strengthen the ecosystem pillars for building resilience for all such micro-businesses across different typologies of enterprise such as retail/service outlets.

Note: As of July 2020, a wide variety of applications were received by SELCO Foundation. Some applications were sent by people who had plans to start a micro enterprise but could not due to the pandemic induced lockdown which consumed their savings. There were people who had lost jobs and were looking at starting or restarting their businesses. Many applicants were looking to diversify. High priority was laid on applications from the most vulnerable segments i.e. widows, people from the transgender community, disabled entrepreneurs.

In some manner distances between business and customer had increased and priorities changed. Businesses that were catering to its customers beyond 5 kms required a completely new way of marketing, a new business development strategy to reach out. Support services that allow for businesses to re-think, rather than give up their enterprises and migrate to work as cheap labour was required in order to ensure future social sustainability.

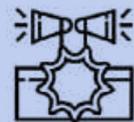
Key Program Support Components include:



Technology and Infrastructure for Improved Productivity



Financial linkage and leverage through Government Schemes



Diversify market linkages through digital channels

Partnerships to Build a Holistic Support Package

SELCO Foundation partnered with organizations in order to provide selected enterprises with a complete package of digital sales, networking and branding, as well as space design. Redesign of space was identified as a key aspect specifically in the context of COVID-19- ie redesign considering physical distancing protocols, thermal comfort, in order to cater to customers.

Designing Built Environment for Improved Productivity and Safety:

Partners Studio RR were brought on board for designing appropriate solutions for micro entrepreneurs in the geographies of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu respectively. They bring in the expertises of product design and space design with a climate responsive approach. The designs are co-developed with the inputs and aspirations of the enterprises. Designs have been developed for ten enterprises so far which include space and furniture design (as and where required). With requests from the end user followed by site visits conducted by SELCO Foundation field teams. The site layout, photographs, requirements are shared with Studio RR virtually and they are connected to the end user. Once the designs are vetted and approved by the end user and SELCO Foundation, the design is handed over to the field team who liaison with local fabricators for implementation.

Digital Channels and Business Support

SELCO Foundation partnered with Vendo for exploring market linkages for the enterprises through digital channels. This includes Entrepreneur Training, Brand Building and Digital Inclusion, eventually leading to Market Linkages. They have trained and conducted sessions with over 30 enterprises. They are training on general business strategy and on how to grow their business through digital channels as the medium. Some micro entrepreneurs want to now re-position their business a certain way post COVID, for example, Bhagyavati, a potter who wants to rebrand her pottery workshop into a training centre.

The prerequisite for an end user to be shortlisted is to ensure that they have a customer base beyond a 2 km radius, as it doesn't make sense to digitalize. The digital presence of a tailor, chips making entrepreneur or potter who sells to larger distances matters more than one who has a market base within a short radius. Vendo gets a list of these end users and screens them to gauge if they are keen on taking up this training. For the first training session, 12 enterprises were shortlisted, out of which 6-7 micro entrepreneurs will be selected for developing a business strategy, brand positioning, business growth training.

Training sessions : The first training session which was one on one was on setting up google locations and reviews, developing collaterals, understanding their customer base, on how they want to brand, rename etc. The second and further sessions will be conducted with people who are receptive> These sessions will be custom made to each end user to see how they can grow.

Branding

SELCO Foundation collaborated with Srishti school of design where the students developed branding design, furniture design and business strategy solutions for 6 enterprises through user centred design approach- deliverables included business program development, logo designs, vehicle modifications.

c. Safety nets for Livelihoods focused grassroots Enterprises – Crisis management:

Numerous smaller enterprises, primarily informal sector micro-businesses, who provide doorstep services, are on the verge of collapse. Many of them are run by very vulnerable communities. SELCO shall make sure to strengthen these small enterprises with a focus on the ones working at the juncture of livelihoods and sustainable energy. Some of the examples in this category are:

1. Numerous roadside eateries, catering to different local end user segments, will have to be trained to become home delivery units. Initially they would need substantial management support to change their business model.
2. Many from transgender communities have lost their livelihoods. SELCO plans to work with multiple community associations to set up alternate livelihoods options in the areas where they reside.
3. The other vulnerable category under this portfolio are the street vendors and various solar powered livelihoods in the semi-urban and rural areas.

Action: To impact at least 500 small enterprises affected directly by COVID.

d. Hand-Holding Clean Energy Social Enterprises: Numerous grassroots based clean energy enterprises will have a critical role to play in the coming days and weeks. Decentralized Renewable Energy based interventions (livelihoods etc.) will be an important catalyst in some of the alternate options needed to kick start the local economy. Some of the actions in this category are:

1. Safety assurances to some of the experienced staff, especially those in the lower rungs of the financial ladder.
2. To work with local suppliers to extend credit periods to ease the cash flow situation of the enterprise.
3. Set up support services to bring in additional local revenues.

Action: To work with 25 clean energy grassroots-based enterprises and enable them to tide over the crisis.

e. Relief Program: Numerous vulnerable groups in rural and urban areas are facing day-to-day hardships like:

1. Financial resources for sickness in the family.
2. Unsteady weekly rations.
3. Inability to access government driven subsidy programs.



4. Lack of Oximeters with frontline workers to check oxygen levels of the affected families in peri urban and rural areas.

Action: To be directly involved in 300 various relief programs impacting 6000 families.

RELIEF FOR NGOS WORKING WITH VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES

The COVID-19 outbreak presented a unique set of challenges for different segments of the population, especially for medical personnel and social welfare staff working at the frontlines of this global crisis.

Organizations working directly with members of vulnerable communities or with individuals who require special care face a set of challenges around social distancing and regular safety measures that are harder to combat. Contact between caregivers and people with disabilities is inevitable and many of these individuals are in need of constant care. People with certain kinds of disabilities are also at a higher risk of contracting the virus owing to compromised bodily functions. These are exacerbated by the fact that many of these institutions and facilities have low access to resources and may be located in areas that are poorly served by infrastructure and essential services.

While providing assistance to institutions for food supplies, this was primarily done to buy time for these organisations to set relevant protocols. **Consultative sessions were held between medical professionals, organisations specialising in setting guidelines for care givers and institute partners.** Through the learnings from these sessions, **a toolkit was prepared listing some of the basic guidelines on managing facilities that face issues of space constraints, lack of resources and are unable to adequately follow social distancing norms and offers low-cost alternatives to otherwise resource-intensive precautionary measures.**

Voice of World (VoW) was founded in 1992 as a residential school and rehabilitation centre for children and youth with multiple disabilities. They primarily cater to 300 children from poorer backgrounds who have been abandoned by their families due to their physical disabilities and rescued from the streets in Kolkata, West Bangal. They have residential facilities, as well as a school which also caters to children from Kolkata who have special education needs (ie beyond the 300 children housed by VoW).

Before the lockdown was announced, VoW had shifted all its 300 residents to one single campus. Additionally, about 11 staff members had also shifted to the campus, away from their families- committing their time to the care of the children during this time. Isolation in this manner was deemed important by them to make sure that the children do not get exposed to the virus in any way. However, the organization had food supplies for only 1 week, and the sanitary needs to ensure safety from the virus had not been accounted for. The usual modes of charity that the organization dependent on did not seem feasible due to the lockdown.

The cost of ration and cleaning supplies was covered for a period of 1 month. This was done to allow the organization and the staff time to set the right protocols in the early days of the lockdown and virus spread, without worrying about fund raising and outreach. These protocols were around safety, cleaning of food supplies, interacting with external members, preparing for care for children showing early symptoms.



[Link to the Guidelines](#) on Prevention of COVID-19 in Institutions for People with Disabilities. The toolkit was also translated in Kannada by the Chief Minister's Office in Karnataka and circulated for reference in the state.

Budget

		Per unit average (INR)	Timelines	No of units	TOTAL	EUROS
1	Supporting Health Partners and Building Resilient Medical Value Chains in response to COVID19	5,000,000	June to Aug 2021	10	50,000,000	609,756
2	Partnerships with Other Social Enterprises delivering Essential Services during COVID19	2,500,000	June to July 2021	10	25,000,000	304,878
3	Handholding grassroots focused clean energy enterprises	500,000	June to August 2021	25	12,500,000	152,439
4	Support micro social entrepreneurs (end users of solar livelihoods) to tide over the crisis (Safety Net Creation)	250,000	June to Sep 2021	500	125,000,000	1,524,390
5	Direct Interventions with Livelihoods/Relief Centers/Misc Services	100,000	June to Dec 2021	300	30,000,000	365,854
TOTAL INR					242,500,000	2,957,317
TOTAL EUROS					2,957,317	
HR and overheads leveraged from existing core partners						

SOLAR POWERED OPD & STAFF QUARTERS FOR COVID RESPONSE IN BIHAR

Masarhi village in Patna district of Bihar hosts a hospital known as Vistex Hospital. The health centre has served more than 25,000 patients since November 2015 and it a population of over 200,000 poor communities. The hospital has had a huge number of emergency cases recently. With no other speciality care health facility nearby, Vistex hospital is the only hospital located in the area that can provide quality emergency health care services.

In view of the recent COVID 19 outbreak in the state, the Bihar State Government has directed Doctors For You (DFY) - who have partnered with doctors without Borders to aid Vistex Hospital in becoming a COVID 19 screening and management centre. In response to COVID 19, DFY in partnership with SELCO Foundation has designed a COVID speciality Isolation facility with reliable and sustainable energy resource and climate responsive, quick deployment infrastructure for OPD, IPD and COVID staff quarters as an expansion. Read more about Doctor's For You here.

“We are located in a rural area, where electricity is unreliable. Solar solution is helping us manage mild, moderate and severe cases in a rural hospital, without worrying about electricity breakdown. It has provided great support in terms of COVID-19 response and mental peace, as all medical equipment and electrical appliances are running efficiently because of solar, without any fluctuation or breakdown.

The built environment solution done in staff quarters has also provided good thermal comfort. During summer, it was at least 4-5 degree cooler indoors.

Because of our reduced running cost and low maintenance we have been able to respond for longer and more efficiently to this crisis than what we had planned earlier.”

Dr. Ravikant Singh, Founder, Doctors for You

3,081

Patients admitted
for COVID Care

200,000

Individuals have
improved access to
COVID Care



Efficient Medical
Appliances and Efficient
Building Design resulting
in **58% savings in energy**