

Sangat Series | Chapter 4 : Invigoration

Introduction
Intervention
Impact
Invigoration

Welcome to the last chapter of our four-part Sangat Series. In today's newsletter, we shall look into the work done by our partnering CBOs independent of Barefoot College International, understand the overall challenges faced by them, look into the measures they are undertaking to sustain the relief work they initiated with BCI and get a sneak peak into how the relief work is being invigorated by BCI to build truly resilient communities.

WORK DONE BY OUR PARTNERS INDEPENDENTLY

Taking into consideration the plight of **59 migrant families from Jharkhand** who lost their **jobs and got stranded in Solan with no means of support**, **SUTRA approached the High Court (HC) directing the state government to distribute food-grains to them.** In response, the HC directed the District Administration to undertake immediate distribution of ration to all such families.



AIDA has been **supplying sanitizers, fogging machines, and thermometers to 44 schools** in the interior villages of Upper Assam so that the safety of the children can be ensured. **Anganwadi centers are also being supported** in Longding district of Arunachal Pradesh.

Manav Sewa Sansthan supplied sanitisers and disinfectants in bulk to the SSB (Border Patrol Force), local courts and government departments. Moreover, Mr Rajesh Mani, the director of the organisation who is appointed as UNESCO's counselor for Banaras **is counseling individuals in quarantine centers and shelter homes** through the phone. He also supports webinars and workshops as a facilitator.



The **Ayuaskam** with the support of government departments **trained women elected representatives** on aspects of **infrastructure and food management** as well as treatment so that the temporary quarantine centers opened at the village levels could be operated smoothly.

Bundelkhand Sewa Sansthan distributed seeds to small and marginal farmers with the help of Bharat Rural Livelihood Foundation (BRLF) and **provided chicks for poultry farming** to 40 of the most vulnerable families in their communities to supplement their income.



CHALLENGES FACED

Civil society organisations that played a vital role in identifying the needs of the community and dealing with the crisis were themselves plagued with challenges. The prominent challenges faced by our partners include **getting access to funds to cater to large and diversified sections of the society, receiving permissions from government bodies** for their support in relief implementation, **figuring out logistics** and **taking care of the safety of own staff in the organisation.**



"Limited resources with a large number of people to cater to"
A beneficiary looks on as the Ujjalla team distributes relief kits

"We had limited resources but a large number of people to cater to. So we had to sometimes divide a kit originally meant for a family between three families. Yet even this fell short. Moreover, the police and sometimes the village leaders stopped our staff and then we had to give explanations and share authorisations to carry forward our work. So it was important that before any relief work was initiated, we informed the local government bodies about our plans and the protocols we will follow."

-Annagh Ji, President, Paharpur Ujjala Samaj Human Care Welfare Society

The past 7 months haven't been easy for the ALOK team. One of the team members had come in contact with a COVID positive patient and had to be quarantined. Hence, the organisation had to close down operations to ensure the safety of the staff. Then came the flood in Bihar which hit their community hard.

-Jagdish Ji, Alok Sansthan



The ALOK team distributing the soaps and masks to children in the community



The rugged, mountainous terrains made it challenging for The Helping Hand team (above) to reach out to their communities

Even when we do get funds, we have to sometimes spend four times the amount we received for transportation purposes. For example, to distribute food kits we had to hire a vehicle to travel till the end of the motorable road and then get the kits transported on mules. This caused the expenses to shoot up drastically "

-Mr. Mehboob, chairman of Helping Hands (Doda, J&K)

TOWARDS SUSTENANCE

While the phase-1 of the CBO Relief Initiative provided organisations support for immediate response to an emergency situation, our ground partners have been devising ways to sustain the initiative and continue value generation in the community even post our funding support. Here are some examples:



SUTRA - Realising the extent to which the lockdown has affected a child's eco-system, SUTRA is going to work with children of garbage pickers residing in the industrial area bordering Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, and Haryana whose education has come to a standstill due to the absence of smartphones.

Sarathi Trust - Sarathi Trust plans to work towards medical facilities, housing, and counseling support for the LGBTQ community thereby building a continuous support system for them.

SUPPORT (Hazaribagh) is working with the tribal communities in tapping and marketing lac.



SARC - After receiving positive responses from the community for their cluster-wise-vegetable cultivation initiative, SARC has collaborated with Orissa State Rural Livelihood Mission to support their communities in setting up kitchen gardens at home. They are also working with tribal communities in promoting orchard cultivation as a means of livelihood security.



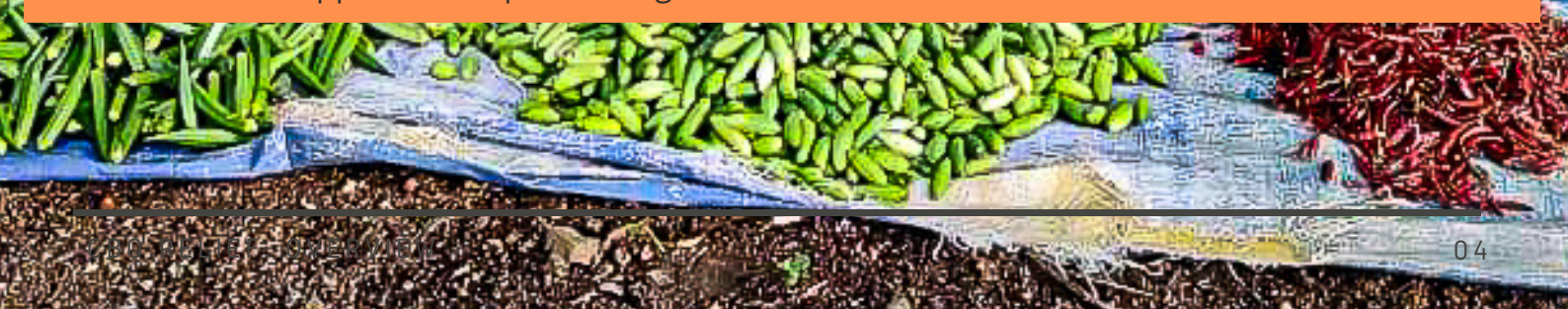
TOWARDS PHASE-2

Looking towards long-term plans

While the CBO Relief Funds was initiated by Barefoot College International at a time when immediate aid was required on the ground with regards to awareness generation, food security, safety, and sanitation; with the gradual lifting of the restrictions imposed and reopening of economies some of these needs have been met. However, it is widely understood that the pandemic will have ramifications for a long time to come. Hence, Barefoot College International has strategically decided to develop this initiative into a medium to long-term program (6 -18 months) that promises significant and sustained impact in our communities even post the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.



In the second phase of the CBO Relief Initiative, we shall be supporting organisations in running projects in the livelihood (agriculture & allied activities) and education (non-formal /alternate Education) domain that has long-term viability, scalability, and replicability. The vision is to scale and replicate the selected programs on a wider scale within our network once the desired impact is achieved and suitable pivots are made based on the learnings from the pilot. Through this new phase, we hope to carry on our work to build self-reliant and resilient communities with the continued support of our partner organisations.





Fighting at the forefront: Staff from AIDA (Top left), MACS (top right) , JKGUS (bottom left) and Balsakha (Bottom right) spearheading the relief efforts in their community

CONCLUSION:

This brings us to the end of the Sangat Series. We hope that the series has been a pleasurable read for all of you. We have no words to express the gratitude we feel for our partner organisations whose passion, dedication, and courage inspired our team to always remember the 'why' behind our work and keep trudging forward. We are also thankful to our donors and our colleagues who voluntarily contributed to this effort and thereby provided strength to our partners and our communities. We are optimistic that this is just the beginning and that this network we have built shall create long-term, positive, and sustaining transformation in our communities!

We would also like to thank all our readers for being with us on this journey. We shall come back to you with a similar newsletter series post the completion of the Second Phase of the CBO Relief Initiative. See you on the other side!