

## **Battling the second wave: addressing emergency health needs; protecting livelihoods**

### **Background: situation on ground and main challenges**

The second wave of COVID-19 has spread quickly and ruthlessly, affecting both urban and rural parts of India. Largely due to an unprepared and overwhelmed health infrastructure, there has been a loss of many lives and livelihoods. The pandemic also continues to generate immense fear in people.

The impact of this crisis has fallen disproportionately on informal women workers. Women are primarily tasked with caring for the sick, as well as responsible for household work. They have lost their source of income, putting them and their households in great distress.

The needs of our members are centred around availability and access to basic medical resources like oximeters, thermometers, along with a basic health kit with sanitisers/soaps, paracetamol, Vitamin D, C, B-complex with zinc, and masks. Since many of the members have either tested positive themselves or have at least a family member who is positive, easy access to emergency services like oxygen cans and concentrators is also required.

As the crisis worsens and livelihoods are significantly impacted again, food insecurity is increasing and therefore both livelihood support and ration kits are becoming critical.

Finally, the need for awareness and information via various means remains high: testing information, vaccine awareness and precautions on COVID-19 (prone position, breathing techniques). The awareness campaign also needs to re-emphasise the importance of masks, washing hands and social distancing.

### **Our proposed response**

Informal women workers need support in major four areas: Relief resources for their health needs, information and awareness, ration, and livelihood support

**Areas of work:** Bihar, Delhi, Haryana, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Nagaland, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, West Bengal

### **Health and relief strategy**

**Household level:** We shall be distributing, through aagewans (grassroots women leaders) and frontline volunteers, a health kit and a ration kit. The health kit will include: 5 masks, 5 units of soap/sanitiser, paracetamol, immunity supplements, sanitary napkins and oximeters/thermometers where needed. The health kit is aimed at supporting households in taking preventive and primary mitigation measures. The ration kit will include: dry staples (foodgrains and cooking oils), to ensure that protein and nutrition needs are met.

**Community level:** Ours will be a community-based approach where **1160 aagewans and frontline workers** will be focal points in providing relief and information. As states take various

measures to curb the spread of the virus, our frontline volunteers will be critical to ensuring that support to communities remains unhampered.

1. **Emergency Needs:** Work closely with local government health authorities and private providers to ensure access to oxygen and hospital beds for medical needs
2. **Oxygen access:** Oxygen (6 litre cans) can act as an emergency aid and oxygen concentrator. These will be available as per need, through our health cooperative, Lok Swasthya SEWA, through its low-cost medicine shops in Ahmedabad, and in partnership with public and private partners in our other states, and kept at our SSKs (community centers in each community we work in) for emergency distribution to families in need
3. **Access to doctors:** We will set up a helpline number with a network of doctors, who will be available for consultation to those who are in need.
4. **Access to information:** Capacity-building of **1160** aagewans and frontline workers through digital tools:
  - Latest COVID-related information and awareness, its prevention, treatment and where to go for referral care.
  - Promoting prone position and deep breathing to improve oxygen level;
  - Promoting vaccination: dispelling myths and fear, eligibility, registration process;
  - Encouraging home-isolation, and use of oximeter and thermometer;
  - All messages in audio or video formats
5. **Emergency health interventions:** Each aagewan and frontline volunteer will be provided with emergency relief kit to protect themselves and to meet the needs of the community, which will include the following:
  - PPE for distribution work and community awareness: gloves, masks, and shields
  - Health kits for emergency use: oximeter, thermometer, paracetamol and vitamins
6. Frontline workers will handle on the ground logistics of procurement, delivery, and distribution. To do so, they will be provided with:
  - Emergency passes for when curfews are in place
  - Transportation to enable procurement, delivery, and distribution

### *Livelihood strategy*

Livelihoods for many have come to a standstill once again. We are actively involved in promoting use of masks and also manufacturing them locally through our artisans company. Because of the crisis much of our work is now through digital means. However distribution of masks is through our centres and our networks. Production of masks is in women artisan's own homes, after which they are sanitised and distributed. SEWA members in Ahmedabad run a healthcare enterprise which is manufacturing sanitisers and immunity boosters.

As our women microentrepreneurs and women-owned collective enterprises struggle for survival, there is a high need for working capital so they can be agile and respond quickly to the changing market, securing work and income security for their members. The revival and strengthening of Gujarat cooperatives will be undertaken by the SEWA Cooperative Federation. We need a corpus of ₹50,00,000 to support 15 women-owned enterprises in recovering from the economic effects of this crisis.

### Expected impact

Level	Cost (per unit)	Units	Total Impact
Community outreach	₹27,000	1160 aagewans	200 individuals each Total: 230,000 individuals
Household Health Kit	₹800	39,050 kits	145,250 individuals
Oxygen concentrators or 12 litres with flow meter and cannula	Varies	500 units	As per need
Food kits	₹1000	32,000 kits	160,000 individuals
Livelihood fund		15 enterprises	5400 members (average)

### Budget

- **Reaching health kits, information, tests, vaccines, hospitals and oxygen linkages to families:** ₹ 78 million / ₹ 7.8 crores
- **Supporting Ration needs:** ₹ 32million / ₹ 3.2 crores
- **Supporting Livelihood:** ₹ 5 million / ₹ 50 lakhs

### Our experience and impact in 2020

In the first wave, the emerging needs of members were food and health kits. Therefore, our immediate response was distribution of food and health kits to **21,582 households**. We used digital tools for health training on COVID-19 do's and don'ts, gender-based violence and psycho-social care, and reached more than **300,000 members in 11 states of India**.

The enterprises incurred significant revenue loss which directly affected income of members. Therefore, we supported cooperatives to re-strategize their businesses, access markets, and access financial resources that would enable them to adapt to the uncertainty induced by pandemic. We also linked enterprises to working capital, negotiated with employers for full payment during lockdown, and provided training on use of digital tools and technology.

**If you would like to support us, our banking information is as follows:**

***For donations from India***

1. To support work **across 10 states** (Delhi, Bihar, Haryana, Jharkhand, Nagaland Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand and West Bengal), please contribute here:  
<https://sewabharat.org/donation/>
2. To support work in **Gujarat**, please contribute here:

Bank Account Name	Lok Swasthya SEWA Trust
Bank Name	Bank Of India
Bank Address	Ellisbridge Branch, Ahmedabad, 380006
Bank Account Number	200420110000556
Branch Code	002004
IFSC Code	BKID0002004

## ***For donations from overseas***

### **1. To support work in Gujarat, please contribute here:**

Bank Account Name	Lok Swasthya SEWA Trust
Bank Name	State Bank Of India
Bank Address	FCRA Cell, 4th Floor, State Bank Of India, New Delhi Main Branch, 11 Sansad Marg, New Delhi 110001
Bank Account Number	40015366358
Branch Code	00691
SWIFT Code	SBININBB104
IFSC Code	SBININ0000691
FCRA Registration Number	041910390

### **2. To support work across 10 states, please contribute here**

Bank Account Name	SEWA BHARAT
Bank Name	State Bank of India
Bank Address	FCRA Cell, 4th Floor, State Bank of India, New Delhi Main Branch, 11 Sansad Marg, New Delhi - 110001
Bank Account Number	39949139050
Branch Code	00691
SWIFT Code	SBININBB104
IFSC Code	SBIN0000691
FCRA Registration Number	041910128