

# COVID-19 Action Agenda

## Leaders on the Front Line: Why Social Entrepreneurs Are Needed Now More than Ever

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**“We call on all actors to stand by social entrepreneurs as front-line responders to the COVID-19 crisis and as pioneers of a green, inclusive society and economic system.”**

Members of the COVID Alliance  
for Social Entrepreneurs

Aavishkaar Group, Acumen, Africa Venture Philanthropy Alliance (AVPA), Agora Partnerships, Argidius Foundation, Ashoka, Asian Venture Philanthropy Network (AVPN), Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs (ANDE), B Lab, CASE at Duke University, Catalyst 2030, Co-Impact, DOEN Foundation, Draper Richards Kaplan Foundation, Echoing Green, Euclid Network, European Venture Philanthropy Association (EVPA), Fundación Avina, GHR Foundation, Global Impact Investing Network (GIIN), Global Innovation Fund, Global Steering Group for Impact Investing (GSG), Greenwood Place, IIX, IKEA Foundation, IKEA Social Entrepreneurship, Impact Assets, Impact Hub, International Labour Organization, Johnson & Johnson, KIVA, Latimpacto, Lex Mundi Pro Bono Foundation, Mercy Corps Ventures, Motsepe Foundation, NESsT, Nonprofit Finance Fund (NFF), Open Road Alliance, Rippleworks, Root Capital, Salesforce.org, SAP, Schwab Foundation, Shell Foundation, Skoll Foundation, Sorenson Impact Foundation, Thomson Reuters Foundation, UNDP Business Call to Action, UNDP SDG Impact, United States African Development Foundation (USADF), USAID Center for Innovation and Impact (CII), Village Capital, Yunus Social Business, 60 Decibels

# Foreword



**Hilde Schwab**  
Chairperson, Schwab  
Foundation for Social  
Entrepreneurship



**François Bonnici**  
Head, Schwab Foundation  
for Social Entrepreneurship



**“Everything we do during and after this crisis must be with a strong focus on building more equal, inclusive and sustainable economies and societies that are more resilient in the face of pandemics, climate change and the many other global challenges we face.”**

When UN Secretary-General António Guterres spoke of the effects of the crisis and what it meant for the efforts of change-makers all over the world to build a better world, it was clear that today's systems are not shockproof or able to manage the immediate and long-term consequences of the pandemic.

One by one, countries have gone into lockdown, people are withdrawing into their homes and circles, and vulnerable and marginalized communities are being hit the hardest: those living in poverty, without the security of a job or furlough scheme when jobs disappear, migrants or the homeless – the list goes on. The World Bank estimates that over 420 million additional people will be pushed into poverty, writing off all the gains made to alleviate poverty since 2016. These communities need global solidarity urgently.

At the Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship, we have worked for the past two decades to help social innovators and entrepreneurs build and scale their important work to find alternatives to our systemic failures and inequalities. Now more than ever, we need these leaders – not only to help provide the immediate assistance to the vulnerable, but also to inspire a “reset” of our society that is failing so many today.

In March of this year, when the scale of the COVID-19 pandemic became apparent, social entrepreneurs across the world – including many in our Schwab Foundation community – were quick to stand by their communities and clients,

their employees, and the families whose lives they touch. They were able to bring affordable healthcare to those in need, protect thousands of jobs and provide emergency relief swiftly.

For social entrepreneurs to lead, however, they need each of us – funders, investors, corporations, supporting intermediaries and governments alike – to connect them with capital and support to adapt, continue and expand their work.

**The COVID Response Alliance for Social Entrepreneurs** is collaborating with 60 leading social-change organizations towards a common goal: to **support social entrepreneurs who protect the most vulnerable in this crisis and shape the transition to a new normal in its aftermath.**

The support of the Schwab Foundation and its partners, the GHR Foundation, Yunus Social Business, Duke University and Catalyst 2030, enabled the Alliance members to understand the needs of social entrepreneurs during the COVID crisis, coordinate and amplify their respective support efforts, and collectively outline an Action Agenda towards this goal.

By means of this *COVID-19 Action Agenda*, members of the Alliance invite their peers, businesses and governments, to join them in action. The Action Agenda builds on the commitments and actions that our members have already taken and seeks to both inspire and provide practical guidance on the “why”, “what” and “how” of the recommendations included in this document.

Unprecedented times call for unprecedented actions. We urge you to join us and other members of the Alliance to take bold and immediate action. The time to get behind our social entrepreneurs, many of whom are working on the front line of the crisis, is now.





**Raj Panjabi**

Chief Executive Officer,  
Last Mile Health, USA

“Social entrepreneurs play a critical role in serving the most marginalized members of our global society. Their work has never been more important as we respond to COVID-19. We call on leaders across the public, private and social sectors to invest in these first responders now.”



**Muhammad Yunus**

Chairman, Yunus  
Centre, Bangladesh;  
Chairman, Yunus Social  
Business, Germany;  
Nobel Peace Prize  
Laureate (2006)

“Before COVID-19 struck, the global economy was like a high-speed train heading for self-destruction. The pandemic has stopped the train and given us an opportunity to redirect the tracks with social businesses in the lead.”



**Achim Steiner**

Administrator, United  
Nations Development  
Programme (UNDP),  
New York

“To achieve the SDGs and shape a new tomorrow from the global pandemic, we must scale up sustainable solutions. Social entrepreneurs are critical to achieving the SDGs as they offer financially self-sustaining models for positive social and environmental change.”



**Jon Abrahamsson  
Ring**

Chief Executive Officer,  
Inter IKEA Group,  
Netherlands

“Now, more than ever, we need to come together to lay the groundwork for an inclusive recovery. We are committed to standing by our different partners, including social entrepreneurs. This is a critical way for us to contribute, learn, innovate and scale for positive impact on people, the planet and society. We are in this together.”



**Amy Goldman**

Chief Executive Officer  
and Chair, GHR  
Foundation, USA

“This pandemic reminds us that our differences in faith, culture or politics are superseded by what we have in common. Whether someone is a social entrepreneur or a member of a faith community or both at once, we all share a deep desire to alleviate suffering, support human dignity and help people build a better future. This Alliance is going to help people do exactly that.”



**Janet Longmore**

Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Digital Opportunity Trust (Catalyst 2030 and Schwab Social Entrepreneur)

“The pandemic is having a devastating impact on the planet and its citizens, particularly on those who are marginalized. We must come out of this with a transformative change that addresses our critically flawed social and economic systems and is driven by the experience, principles and mindset of the social entrepreneur.”



**Cheryl Dorsey**

Founder and President, Echoing Green, USA

“As the pandemic disproportionately impacts marginalized communities in real time, social entrepreneurs confront these inequities by reimagining the systems that work for too few of us. By joining forces to foster change using an alliance-based model, we have a real chance of transforming the world.”



**Michael Sneed**

Executive Vice-President, Global Corporate Affairs, and Chief Communication Officer, Johnson & Johnson, USA

“The COVID-19 crisis only strengthens our resolve at Johnson & Johnson to support social entrepreneurs leading the changes so urgently needed to put good health in reach of everyone, everywhere. We stand with our partners around the world to act swiftly now more than ever.”



**Precious Moloi-Motsepe**

Founder and Chief Executive Officer, African Fashion International (AFI), South Africa

“The outbreak of COVID-19, and the subsequent lockdown restrictions imposed, have resulted in significant alterations to the livelihoods of Africa’s most vulnerable people. We can only reach the other side of this crisis if we collaborate, and take on this fight together.”



**Hilde Schwab**

Co-Founder and Chairperson, Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship

“Social entrepreneurs are battling at the forefront of this pandemic using their ingenuity to confront the problems on the ground. The Alliance was launched to help them to play their part and be the role models for a new societal reality that they are.”

# Executive summary

While some countries are already addressing the aftermath of their COVID-19 outbreak, the World Health Organization projects that the worst is yet to come in many developing and emerging countries, with the global pandemic expected to last at least another year.

As of August 2020, over 20 million cases of COVID-19 have been reported, of which one-third are in Africa, Brazil and India. Marginalized communities worldwide are being hit the hardest by the health and economic effects of this crisis and will thus continue to struggle. The pandemic has a much greater impact on these communities: an additional 100 million<sup>1</sup> people could slip into extreme poverty – a number that could easily climb higher. Decades of work to tackle impoverishment are being erased as the world witnesses a rise in global poverty for the first time since 1998.

With citizens and decision-makers shifting their attention to the immediate effects of the crisis, and with a global recession looming, the future of people and the planet, embodied by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Sustainable Development Agenda, is at risk of permanently falling behind.

For decades, social entrepreneurs have effectively reached and helped vulnerable populations and have served as the guardians of people and the planet. Often and increasingly, they:

1. Bring vital products and services to those on the fringes of society, while acting as first responders during a crisis
2. Sustain jobs and social security, at a time when the effects of losing one's income can be particularly devastating
3. Innovate to address the intractable social and environmental challenges society faces
4. Champion the sustainable development agenda, calling for an inclusive and green economy and a reset of markets
5. Empower and create agency among communities so they can develop and advance their own trajectories and solutions.

The social entrepreneurs' track record and ingenuity to confront immediate problems on the ground are vital to the collective ability to weather the crisis today and shape a new tomorrow.



Yet, for social entrepreneurs to play their part, significant capital as well as non-financial support are needed; many face important operational and viability challenges, with a large number even facing bankruptcy. In this area also, those social entrepreneurs serving or working with low-income households seem to be disproportionately affected.

For social entrepreneurship to survive and thrive, these entrepreneurs critically need capital support so that they can adapt, expand and protect their impact during the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath. The exact amount of capital needed is difficult to estimate, but it is significant. According to the multistakeholder initiative Collaborative for Frontier Finance, before the COVID-19 crisis, the global financing needs of small and growing businesses (SGBs), which include social entrepreneurs, amounted to \$930 billion with the SDG financing gap estimated at \$2.5 trillion. There is little doubt that these already considerable gaps have widened significantly due to the crisis.

The **COVID Response Alliance for Social Entrepreneurs** was launched in April 2020 by 60 leading social-sector organizations aiming to help mobilize support and raise awareness of the vital role these entrepreneurs play in tackling the crisis and beyond. In various capacities, the members of the Alliance support over 50,000<sup>2</sup> social entrepreneurs across the world. The entrepreneurs, in turn, have a direct or indirect impact on the lives of nearly 1 billion people according to their own estimates, providing access to employment, food, affordable energy and other critical services.

In this **COVID-19 Action Agenda for social entrepreneurs, members of the Alliance commit to and call on their peers to stand by social entrepreneurs in their capacity as front-line responders to the health crisis and as pioneers of a green, inclusive society and economic system.** Along with a group of social enterprise representatives participating in the Alliance, the members have identified five core COVID response principles and concrete areas in which different actors can take action.

The five COVID-19 response principles for those seeking to support social entrepreneurs are to:

1. Make the voices of social entrepreneurs and their communities heard
2. Prepare to respond, recover and reset – taking the opportunity to shape a new tomorrow
3. Collaborate across sectors in recognition of the complexity and scale of the crisis
4. Look beyond healthcare, given that COVID-19 touches all areas of people's lives
5. Support the shovel-ready solutions that grassroots organizations are already able to provide today.

Keeping these principles in mind, the *COVID-19 Action Agenda* calls on:

- **Intermediaries and networks** to provide fitting support to social entrepreneurs and the communities they serve, and to make known the needs and priorities of social entrepreneurs on the ground
- **(Impact) investors** to adapt their investment priorities and processes, and to provide flexible capital as well as must-have technical assistance
- **Corporations** to stand with social entrepreneurs within their supply chains and the broader ecosystem, fulfil their agreements and extend their support to build a more inclusive and resilient economy
- **Funders and philanthropists** to expand and expedite their support to social entrepreneurs and intermediaries, taking risks reflective of today's unprecedented times
- **Government institutions** to recognize social entrepreneurs as a driving force in safeguarding jobs and in pioneering a greener and equitable society, as well as to back them accordingly.

The COVID-19 crisis will continue to disproportionately affect excluded and vulnerable populations negatively for years to come. All sectors' help is needed to create the enabling conditions for the social enterprise ecosystem to survive, thrive and hold everyone accountable to raise the bar on what is currently an economic model that our planet cannot sustain.

The members of the COVID Response Alliance for Social Entrepreneurs will continue to take and invite engagement in each of the action areas mentioned in this Action Agenda. Leading up to the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2021, the goal is not only to help safeguard the future of social entrepreneurs but to inject their perspectives as pioneers of a new economic reality into the [Forum's Great Reset initiative](#).

**Below:** Kids' Educational Engagement Project (KEEP), Social enterprise in Liberia, supported by Alliance Member Acumen

1

# COVID-19: A global crisis, hitting the most vulnerable the hardest



In the first six months of 2020, COVID-19 affected almost all countries and over 20 million people around the world.<sup>3</sup> Beyond the adverse health effects and human tragedy caused by the virus, it is widely recognized that the pandemic has triggered the most severe economic crisis in a century.

The crisis has brought about radical uncertainty, with more than half of the world's population experiencing lockdowns with strong containment measures. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) predicts global economic activity to fall between 6% and 7.6% in 2020,<sup>4</sup> depending on whether a second wave of infections hits before year-end. Unemployment levels and the number of aid seekers have increased, in some cases dramatically. And the impact of the crisis will be felt for a long time as the direct response, subsequent recovery and rebuilding efforts will take years.

The impact of the crisis on people's lives is drastically uneven. The virus has exposed and exacerbated many underlying structural inequalities in the social fabric, disproportionately affecting women, black populations, minority groups, informal workers and those systematically excluded from participating equally in our society and economy.

Lockdowns in their varying degrees of severity and other forms of social distancing have made it possible to avoid loss of life. Yet these measures have also come at a human cost.

As the crisis continues to accelerate in emerging and developing markets, many of which are ill-equipped to handle a pandemic, the extreme impacts of COVID-19 on low-income populations are significant. The poorest in these countries, including daily-wage labourers and migrant workers – rural and urban – lack access to even the most basic necessities like food and water, and are forced to choose between their health and their livelihoods. The tough choices these populations are forced to make lead to additional distress. COVID-19 is causing an undeniable slide backwards, slipping away from the SDGs. In June 2020, the World Bank projected that as many as 100 million additional people could be forced into extreme poverty – living below \$1.90 per day – due to COVID-19.<sup>5</sup> Undeniably, global extreme poverty is increasing for the first time since 1998.

For each of us, but most importantly for these communities, a comprehensive and sustained response to the crisis and its aftermath is a matter of life and death.

## Respond, Recover, Rebuild – Reset

As COVID hit the world, experts recognized three phases in the crisis: response, recovery and, ultimately, rebuilding. Throughout, there is an opportunity for a Great Reset of our economies and systems.

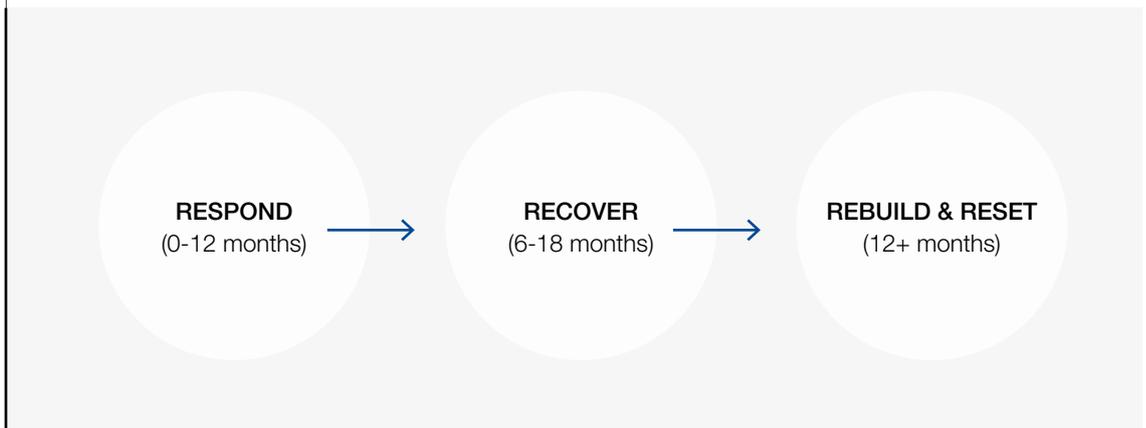


FIGURE 1

**Foremost COVID-19 concerns among low-income households**

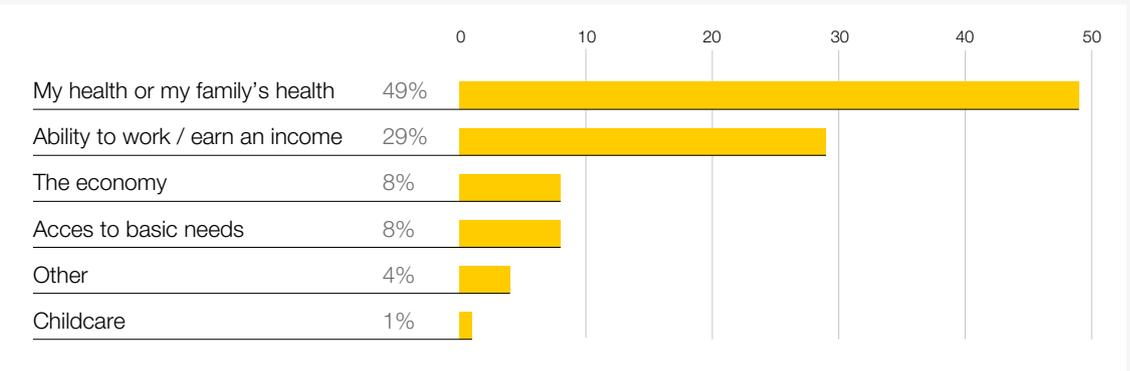
To better understand the impact of COVID-19, Alliance member 60 Decibels conducted over 15,000 phone interviews in low- and middle-income countries across Asia, Africa and Latin America. The goal was to gather information from low-income households on

the effects of COVID-19 on their lives and to identify their most urgent needs and concerns. Tracking how the pandemic affects these households over time, 60 Decibels discovered jarring facts on how the lives of the poorest have been affected by COVID-19.

Source: 60 Decibels, "Listening in the time of Covid-19: Explore the insights", 15 August 2020, <https://app.60decibels.com/covid-19#explore>

**Primary concern**

Q: What is the primary concern you have related to COVID-19 right now?

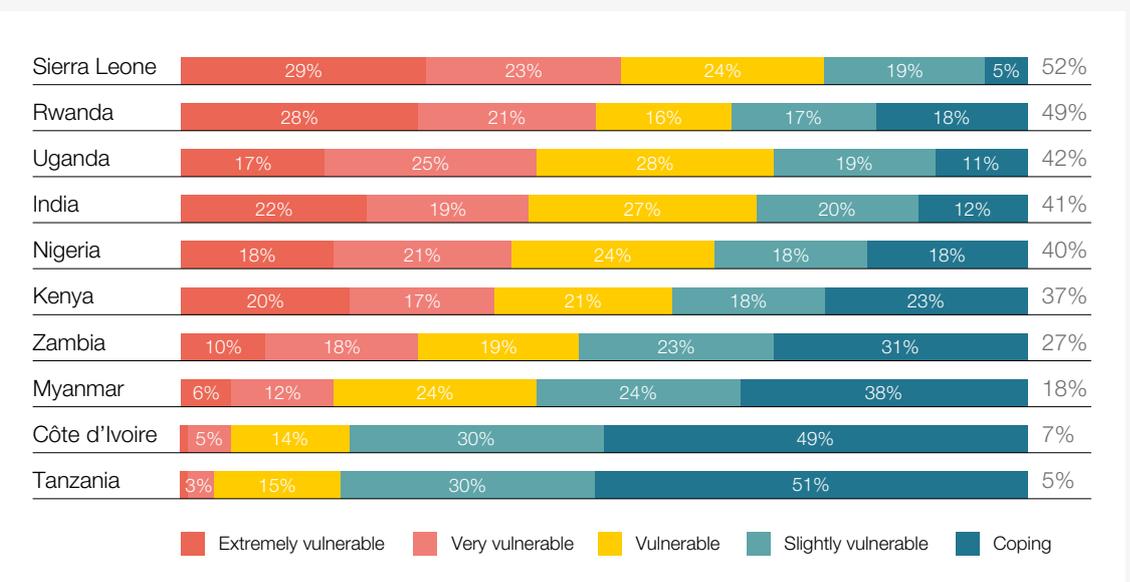


To understand national and community-level vulnerabilities, the organization developed a Vulnerability Index, evaluating who is hardest hit by the pandemic. The Index takes into account such factors as respondents' food consumption and financial well-being, and their likelihood of living or slipping into poverty. Insights from the Index revealed that female-headed households

face higher levels of risk and vulnerability than male-headed households (40% vs 25% for households headed by men), confirming the worldwide perception that the crisis actually deepened existing structural inequalities. Other stories show similar social fault lines; for example, black business owners have been hit harder than other owners.

Source: 60 Decibels, "Listening in the time of Covid-19: Explore the insights", 15 August 2020 <https://app.60decibels.com/covid-19#explore>

**Vulnerability by country**





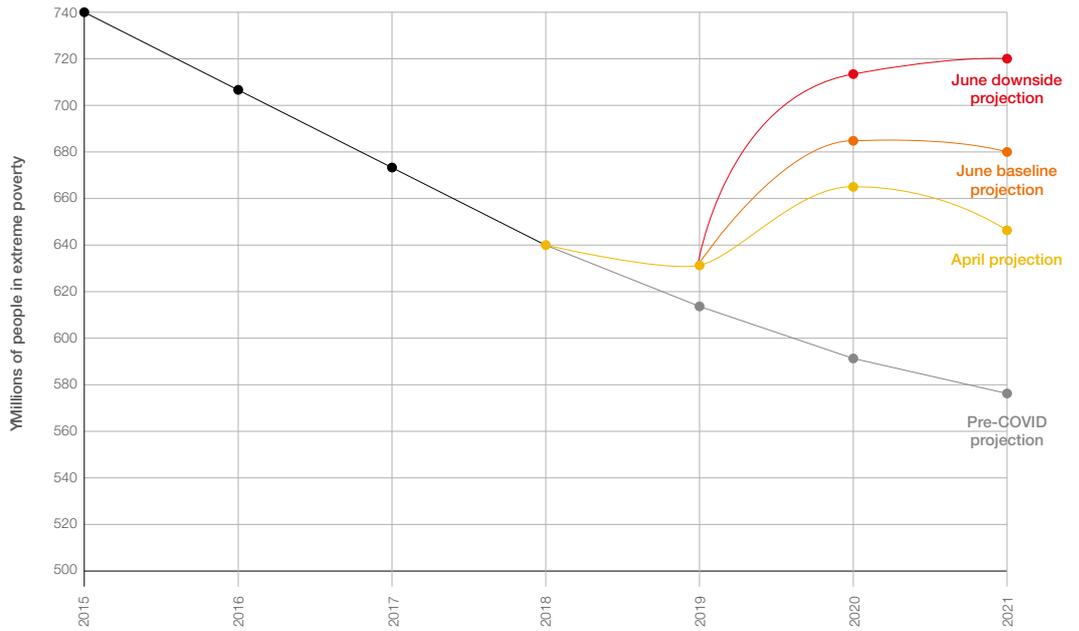
“Yes, we are now saving on every possible front and eating only as much as required. There is not a single rupee that is spent without thinking.”

60 Decibels respondent, India

FIGURE 2 The impact of COVID-19 on global extreme poverty

**Note:** Extreme poverty is measured as the number of people living on less than \$1.90 per day.

**Source:** Gerszon Mahler, Daniel, et al., “Updated estimates of the impact of COVID-19 on global poverty”, *World Bank Blogs*, 8 June 2020, available at <https://blogs.worldbank.org/opendata/updated-estimates-impact-covid-19-global-poverty#:~:text=Under%20the%20baseline%20scenario%20we,comes%20with%20even%20more%20uncertainty>.



2

## Why social entrepreneurs are needed now more than ever



Social entrepreneurs have been working to solve market failures and demonstrate more sustainable models to build inclusive economies for years. These entrepreneurs:

1. Bring vital products and services to those on the fringes of society, while acting as first responders during a crisis
2. Sustain jobs and social security, at a time when the effects of losing one's income can be particularly devastating
3. Innovate to address the intractable social and environmental challenges society faces
4. Champion the sustainable development agenda, calling for an inclusive and green economy and a reset of markets
5. Empower and create agency among communities so they can develop and advance their own trajectories and solutions.

The Schwab Foundation 2020 report *Two Decades of Impact* demonstrates how its network of 400 leading social innovators and entrepreneurs alone have improved the lives of more than 622 million people in over 190 countries<sup>6</sup> by protecting livelihoods, driving movements for social inclusion and environmental sustainability, and providing improved access to health, sanitation, education and energy.

When COVID-19 brought disarray to communities across the world, social entrepreneurs everywhere instantly assumed first responder roles. From providing reliable information, services and care to the most vulnerable, to developing community tracing initiatives or mental health support through mobile phones, the work of the social entrepreneurs became even more critical during the pandemic.

Over the last few months, notable stories of social entrepreneurs who have gone above and

beyond their regular mandates have emerged. Many chose to maintain jobs through the pandemic despite their halting businesses, while those in a position to do so provided last-mile support – for example by delivering essentials like masks and sanitizers to those unable to afford the bare minimum to keep themselves safe. Their existing relationships with low-income customers or beneficiaries and the trust they had built on the ground positioned them well as early responders to the pandemic.

These entrepreneurs' decades of societal R&D – and their tested shovel-ready solutions and models of running inclusive, sustainable organizations that serve society – will be critical to the COVID-19 response and recovery period.

The need for social entrepreneurs is clearer now than ever before. They are a crucial social safety net for our systemic inequalities and market failures. The social entrepreneurs who are “system change leaders” have an especially invaluable role to play in triggering a reset of today's markets and societies. They have managed to enable whole groups of society to become agents of their own change and have effectively managed to navigate the complex arrangements of institutions of power.

Social entrepreneurs are uniquely positioned to represent a new yardstick for leaders in the 21st century. Their knowledge, experience and existing on-the-ground infrastructure can play a vital role in revitalizing the sustainable development agenda and building more inclusive, shockproof and resilient markets and societies.

Yet, many social entrepreneurs face significant and immediate operational and viability challenges and need backing; significant capital and non-financial support is vital to put social entrepreneurs in a position to effectively protect the most vulnerable in the crisis and help shape the transition to a new social and economic reality.



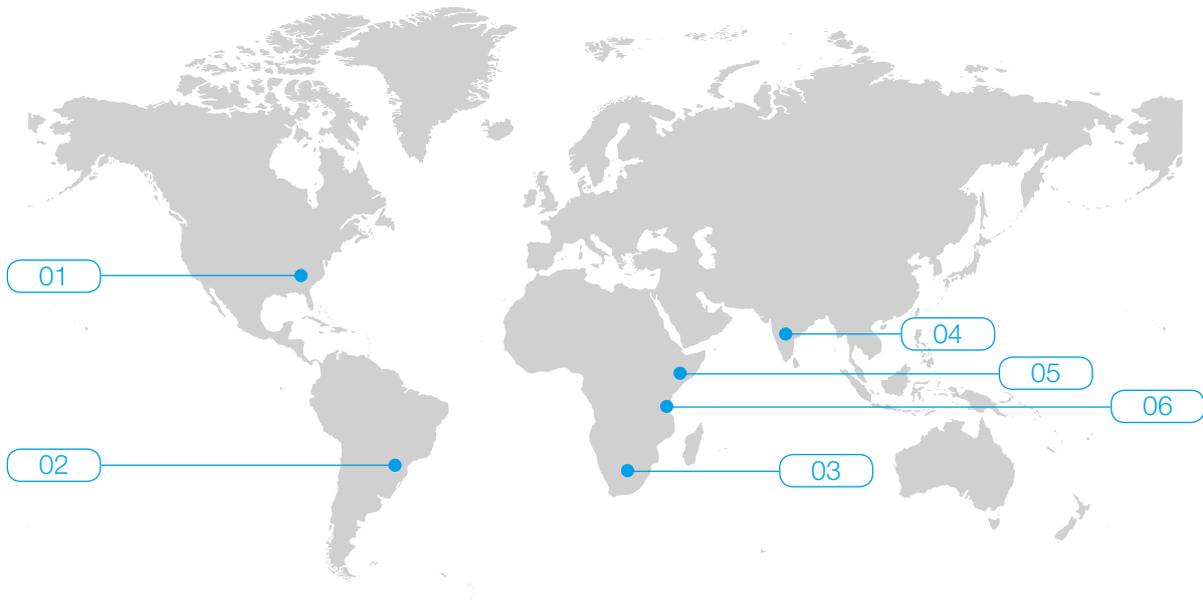
**“COVID-19 has exposed both the vulnerabilities facing low-income communities and underlying power imbalances. Social enterprises represent diverse local leaders needed for inclusive change. We joined the Alliance to take action alongside others to sustain and champion these vital new voices.”**

**Jacqueline Novogratz**, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Acumen, USA

# Stories from the front line

FIGURE 3

Stories from the front line: Social entrepreneurs across the world responding to the COVID-19 crisis and its aftermath



01

## Family Independence Initiative | USA | Cash transfers

**TYPE** Non-profit social enterprise  
**FOCUS** Response and Recover



**ABOUT** Founded in 2001, Family Independence Initiative (FII) provides families with direct cash transfers, a digital platform and peer groups to accelerate the exchange of financial and social capital in low-income communities across the USA. FII has collaborated with over 250 community-based organizations to help families escape the cycle of poverty.

**COVID RESPONSE** Through the [GiveTogetherNow](#) campaign and the [UpTogether](#) platform, FII raised over \$100 million and provided direct cash transfers to over 100,000 low-income families who were struggling to make ends meet and to care for their loved one.

**ALLIANCE MEMBER INVOLVED** Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship

02

## Instituto Muda | Brazil | Job creation

**TYPE** For-profit social enterprise  
**FOCUS** Response and Reset



**ABOUT** Established in 2007, Instituto Muda provides recycling collection services in residential areas, companies and schools around São Paulo. It allocates more than 300 tons of recyclable materials per month to cooperatives that employ people living below the poverty line.

**COVID RESPONSE** Instituto Muda stepped in to provide the cooperatives not only with financial help to pay their workers to support their families, but also with a supply of masks, equipment and disinfectant gel.

**ALLIANCE MEMBER INVOLVED** Yunus Social Business

03

### Praekelt.org | Global and South Africa | Health information provision

**TYPE** Hybrid social enterprise  
**FOCUS** Response and Recover



**ABOUT** Praekelt, a mobile technology company, harnesses the power of communication between patients, health workers and the health system to ensure that patients are informed and empowered; health workers are supported and valued; and health system officials have the information they need to make informed and effective decisions to improve service delivery and quality.

**COVID RESPONSE** With countries and organizations experiencing a massive need for direct communication of reliable information, Praekelt partnered with the World Health Organization and WhatsApp to develop the WHO's global public health WhatsApp information tool for citizens. In addition, 11 national health systems, primarily in Africa and South-East Asia, launched local versions of this service. These solutions provide citizens and health workers with reliable, up-to-date information and relevant services related to COVID-19 and are reaching over 20 million people in 20 languages worldwide.

**ALLIANCE MEMBER INVOLVED** Johnson & Johnson

04

### Jan Sahas | India | Immediate relief and post-crisis recovery of migrant workers

**TYPE:** Non-profit social enterprise  
**FOCUS:** Response and Recover



**ABOUT** Jan Sahas is a 20-year-old community organization working with excluded social groups on safe migration and workers' protection in 14,000 villages and urban areas in 57 districts in India.

**COVID RESPONSE** In response to COVID-19, Jan Sahas provided food to over 420,000 migrants, 11,000 personal protective equipment kits, and emergency transportation to 17,000 migrants and their families. It is now launching a grassroots-led collaboration with approximately 80 partners to ensure the safe, responsible recovery of migrant families and their livelihoods post-COVID.

**ALLIANCE MEMBER INVOLVED** Ashoka

05

### Eneza Education | Kenya | Continuous learning

**TYPE** For-profit social enterprise  
**FOCUS:** Response and Reset



**ABOUT** Eneza Education provides SMS-based learning to students who do not have access to a classroom or need additional support.

**COVID RESPONSE** In the wake of COVID-19-related school closures, Eneza Education leveraged strategic partnerships to open its platform without charge to learners in Kenya and Côte d'Ivoire, reaching 2.2 million learners who do not have steady access to the internet with its USSD/SMS-based learning resources. It has now launched its platform in Rwanda to serve users in that country.

**ALLIANCE MEMBER INVOLVED** Sorenson Impact Foundation

06

### Barefoot College | Zanzibar | Emergency community support

**TYPE** Non-profit social enterprise  
**FOCUS** Response and Reset



**ABOUT** Barefoot College Zanzibar is a joint venture set up in 2015 by Barefoot College and the Government of Zanzibar. Barefoot College Zanzibar has been training women solar engineers, women beekeepers and women seamstresses for five years.

**COVID RESPONSE** At the start of COVID-19, the Government of Zanzibar turned to Barefoot College to provide personal protective equipment to more than 70 communities on the island. Its community outreach team educated communities with the result that the incidence of community transmission was cut by more than 80%.

**ALLIANCE MEMBER INVOLVED** Catalyst 2030

### 3 What social entrepreneurs need to play their part



The lockdowns, the mandatory social distancing norms and the uncertainty with what lies ahead have been devastating to SGBs and entrepreneurs. The OECD has indicated that measures to contain the virus' spread have hit small and medium-sized enterprises and entrepreneurs particularly hard. Not surprisingly, social entrepreneurs, most notably in emerging

markets, have been deeply affected given their disproportionate focus on low-income households on whom the effects of the crisis are even more immediate. Many face significant and pressing operational and viability challenges, severely limiting their ability to act as first responders to the crisis, let alone as pioneers of a new economic model (see Figure 4).

FIGURE 4 COVID: Social entrepreneurs and SGBs in crisis

Alliance member Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs (ANDE) has been surveying its constituents since the start of the crisis in an attempt to **take the pulse of the on-the-ground COVID reality** among small and growing businesses (SGBs). Its data presents a worrying reality.<sup>i</sup> In April 2020, almost **42%** of SGBs indicated being **at risk of failure**. By June, ANDE concluded that **12%** of SGBs had already failed while an additional **37%** were at high risk of failure. At the same time, many SGBs had forced layoffs or had temporarily shut down operations.

Another Alliance member, Intellectap, corroborated these findings in its June 2020 research<sup>ii</sup> of the 106 Indian and African entrepreneurs it surveyed, **32%** had already **closed their businesses** while **27%** had **laid off employees**.

<sup>i</sup>Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs "The Small and Growing Business Sector and the COVID-19 Crisis: Emerging Evidence on Key Risks and Needs", 18 May 2020, <https://www.andeglobal.org/blogpost/737893/348170/The-Small-and-Growing-Business-Sector-and-the-COVID-19-Crisis-Emerging-Evidence-on-Key-Risks-and-Needs>.

<sup>ii</sup>Intellectap, "Impact of COVID-19 on the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem", June 2020, unpublished.

Source: World Economic Forum

The pandemic hampers the operations of social entrepreneurs due to such factors as movement restrictions, difficulty in shifting to virtual models or a lack of strategic or transition support.

Their challenges are financial and non-financial in nature and are different at each of the stages of the crisis. Many entrepreneurs have difficulties or are challenged to:

1. Ensure operational and impact continuity in direct response to the crisis
2. Strengthen their balance sheet and operations during their recovery
3. Allow their return to growth in a new market context and reality to build their organizations back up.

Figure 5 summarizes social entrepreneurs' real and anticipated financial and non-financial support requirements across three "horizons of need." Alliance members derived these insights from a qualitative assessment of the needs of each of their networks and portfolios.

#### The immediate and sustained need for capital

Last year, well before the crisis hit, the United Nations had estimated that the annual gap in financing for the SDGs was \$2.5 trillion.<sup>7</sup> It is hardly a surprise that this financing gap is expected to widen further in the aftermath of COVID-19 and as a global recession looms.

FIGURE 5 | Social entrepreneur and SGB requirements across the “horizons of need”

RESPOND (0-12 months)	RECOVER (6-18 months)	REBUILD & RESET (12+ months)
<p><b>Focus</b> Ensure business and impact continuity</p> <hr/> <p><b>Priorities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Minimize disruption</li> <li>- Secure immediate liquidity</li> <li>- Secure payroll</li> <li>- Protect constituents</li> </ul> <hr/> <p><b>Nature of Support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Emergency Grants</li> <li>- Interest-free loans/Repayment holidays</li> <li>- Financial planning support</li> <li>- Mental health support</li> </ul>	<p><b>Focus</b> Strengthen operations and balance sheet</p> <hr/> <p><b>Priorities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pivot as needed</li> <li>- Re-establish operations</li> <li>- Improve financial ratios</li> <li>- Access relief as feasible</li> </ul> <hr/> <p><b>Nature of Support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Patient equity</li> <li>- Soft loans</li> <li>- Strategic or pivoting support</li> <li>- Operations support</li> </ul>	<p><b>Focus</b> Return to growth in a new market context and reality</p> <hr/> <p><b>Priorities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Adjust and adapt business model for the new normal</li> <li>- Identify sources of growth</li> <li>- Reassess crisis outcomes</li> </ul> <hr/> <p><b>Nature of Support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Patient equity</li> <li>- Working Capital and Capex Loans</li> <li>- Market intelligence support</li> <li>- Capital raising support</li> </ul>

Source: World Economic Forum

The exact impact of COVID on social entrepreneurs’ financial needs is unknown. Yet, it is clear that COVID-19 has created significant and exacerbated financing challenges for the sector, including the following:

1. Alliance members who directly fund or support social entrepreneurs indicate a dire need for grants as well as working and patient capital.
2. In a survey of SGB capital providers in Sub-Saharan Africa, 97% of the 90 parties surveyed said they require incremental capital to support their portfolios due to COVID. Considering that SGBs already faced an estimated financing gap of \$930 billion per year before the coronavirus pandemic, the challenges are significant.<sup>8</sup>
3. Nearly four in 10 US non-profits could close due to COVID-19-related revenue shortages during the next three years. Many US-based NGOs have come together to urge Congress to release \$60 billion in emergency funding, without which these NGOs will not survive the crisis.<sup>9, 10</sup>
4. According to the Global Impact Investing Network, 41% of impact investors indicate that having decreased capital to deploy is a challenge to making COVID-related investments<sup>11</sup> (see Figure 6 for more information on the capital gap).
5. While significant relief funding and government stimulus packages have been announced in response to the crisis, only a slim portion of the announced capital has found its way to entrepreneurs.

**SDG Financing Gap**

**\$2.5 Trillion SDG Gap**  
Annual gap in financing the SDGs - estimated in September 2019, well before the pandemic started

Source: United Nations

**Gaps in funding Small and Growing Businesses**

**\$930 Billion Shortfall In SGB Funding**  
Includes market-based social entrepreneurs

**Increased Capital Needs**

**97%\* of SGB Capital Providers with Incremental Funding Needs Due to COVID-19**  
\*Sub-Saharan Africa Only

Source: The Collaborative for Frontier Finance

The conclusion based on these anecdotal figures is that the COVID capital gap can only be filled with a shift in risk and behaviour on the part of asset owners across sectors.

FIGURE 6 | The social enterprise COVID capital gap: Alliance members' experience

In a small survey (a sample size of 14) among Alliance members between June and August 2020, respondents were asked to estimate the capital needs of their portfolio over the next 12 months. At that point, cumulatively, these members had already deployed \$85 million in COVID-19 response capital, flagging an additional \$140 million needed to help their portfolio organizations pull through the year ahead.

Regarding the type of capital needed, 74.1% involved grants or patient equity to enable approximately 1,200 social entrepreneurs to

respond to their immediate operational challenges and the needs of their communities.

The findings of this survey are supported by anecdotal experiences of Alliance members that were already providing or facilitating the provision of capital to social entrepreneurs. For example, visitors to Duke University's COVIDCAP.com (see Figure 7) indicated struggling to identify funding that would fit their profile. Open Road Alliance meanwhile received over 1,300 applications from across the world for its emergency relief facility, amounting to over \$188 million in support requests, 10 times the usual volume it receives.

Source: World Economic Forum





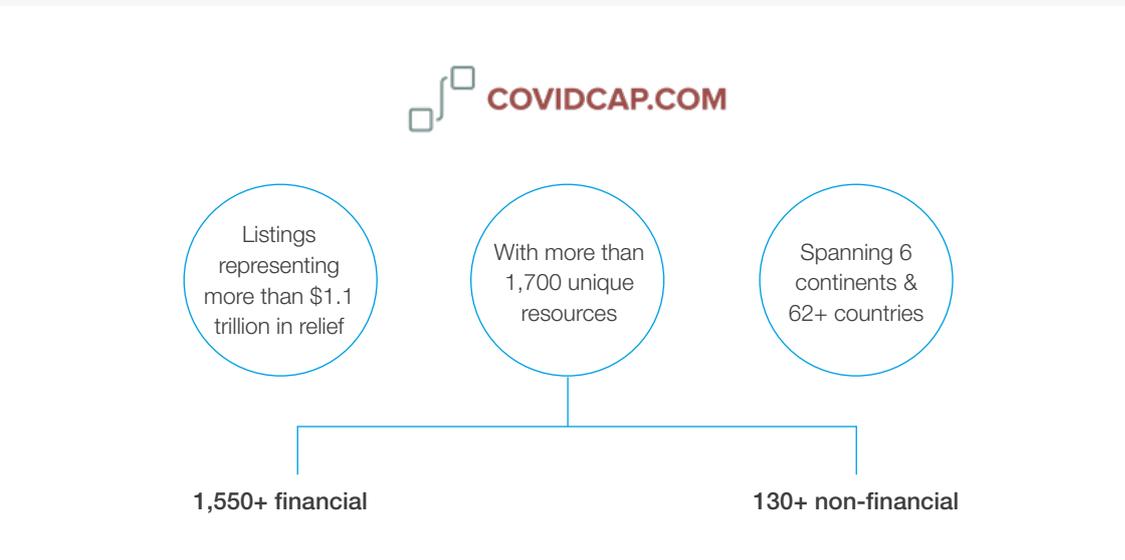
“It is clear that the cash need is highest among those in developing markets, and we learned from our follow-up survey that many organizations are still unable to locate the resources they need.”

**Cathy Clark**, Faculty Director, Center for the Advancement of Social Entrepreneurship, Duke University, USA; Initiator COVIDCAP.com

On 26 March 2020, the Center for the Advancement of Social Entrepreneurship (CASE) at Duke University’s Fuqua School of Business launched COVIDCAP.com. COVIDCAP.com is a searchable website that helps social entrepreneurs (for-profit, hybrid and non-profit) struggling from the economic impacts of COVID-19 to locate cash relief and non-financial resources in their community. With support from the Alliance and partners such as ANDE, USAID, the Mission Investors Exchange, Living Cities and Big Society Capital, the platform gathered over 1,700 unique resources that collectively represented more than \$1.1 trillion in relief, spanning six continents and 62 countries. Since its launch, the website has received over 30,000 visitors.

While an invaluable resource for the market, the team at CASE faced a number of challenges:

- 1. Regional skews in available funding:** Despite extensive searches for COVID funding outside of the United States, the majority of surfaced funds (66%) were purposed for US domestic use only.
- 2. Infrastructural limitations:** Effectively matching supply and demand by optimizing search functions and ensuring the right filters could be applied required significant time investment and manual work.
- 3. Reach and uptake:** Ensuring that social entrepreneurs worldwide would easily find COVIDCAP in their search for capital and non-financial support was not easily achieved and required the database’s active promotion by CASE’s vast network of global social enterprise networks and communities.



<sup>1</sup>Impact Finance Network, “Impact Platforms”, 2018, [https://impactfinance.network/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Impact-Platforms-Report\\_Final.pdf](https://impactfinance.network/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Impact-Platforms-Report_Final.pdf).

Source: World Economic Forum

The lack of a strong online infrastructure able to efficiently match supply and demand between social entrepreneurs, investors, funders and non-financial-support providers has been a long-standing challenge in the sector, limiting its scale and impact.<sup>1</sup> As the COVID-19 crisis took off, the

absence of scaled marketplaces has, according to some, even proven to be the Achilles’ heel of the ability of social entrepreneurs to truly play their part and provide must-have support on the ground and effectively channel resources to those in need.

## The vital role of non-financial support

Navigating through the crisis requires expertise in a myriad of domains. From managing their own mental health and well-being and that of their team members, to strategizing to change course to cope in a new market reality, the skills entrepreneurs must have and the tasks they need to perform span a wide spectrum.

Given such needs and pressures, the role of non-financial support in social entrepreneurs' survival and success cannot be underestimated. Even if entrepreneurs already possess these skills, completing a job when time is of the essence is another matter.

Given the diversity and scale of the varying types of assistance needed, certain key success factors related to the provision of non-financial support

should be considered, although many have proved challenging:

1. It must be easy for organizations to quickly validate and assess the likely support needs and priorities (see Figure 8).
2. High-quality support needs to be available in the market, be it through intermediaries, investors, corporations or governments.
3. Non-financial support needs to run in lockstep with entrepreneurs' access to fitting capital throughout the crisis.
4. Efficient ways to connect supply and demand are crucial to make sure that support reaches entrepreneurs in time (see Figure 9).

FIGURE 8 Social entrepreneurs/SGB immediate non-financial needs by segment

What type of non-financial support needs do social entrepreneurs and SGBs have? As Alliance members discovered when they discussed this support, the exact needs depend on the type of entrepreneur that one deals with.

A few needs are common to all entrepreneurs, including legal support or mental wellness coaching.

Beyond these, nuances start to appear as some entrepreneurs are able to pivot their organization to address the changing times (**"Pivot(er)"**), while others see their pre-COVID business models benefit from sudden tailwinds (**"Thriver"**). These social entrepreneurs urgently need strategic guidance to adapt their models and establish new partnerships to scale or launch (new) products and services.

### PIVOT(ER)

1. Tech support
2. New partnerships
3. Customer insights/data
4. Product development support

### THRIVER

1. Cash/Financial management
2. Scaling logistics or manufacturing
3. Team building and rapid recruitment

### SURVIVOR

1. Cost management
2. Refinancing
3. Legal support
4. Renegotiating contracts

### STRUGGLER

1. Mental support
2. Scenario planning
3. Strategic support
4. Peer-to-peer sparring

Source: COVID Response Alliance analysis, 2020

Others have been less fortunate and their organizations do not lend themselves well to the shift online; they are forced to hibernate (**"Survivor"**) or have seen such a rapid decline in demand that they have limited chances of surviving through the crisis (**"Struggler"**). These entrepreneurs crucially need support to

renegotiate their existing arrangements or moral support to get through the immediate crisis. Building on the work of such members as Agora Partnerships, ANDE, Impact Hub, Intellectap, Lex Mundi, Salesforce and SAP, the Alliance has distilled the top non-financial needs of each "archetype" entrepreneur.

## Taking a systems view: The need to fuel and enhance an entire value chain

COVID-19 has exposed deeply systemic bottlenecks that cut across the value chain and stand in the way of the sector’s ability to “fuel” on-the-ground organizations – market based and otherwise (see also Figure 7).

Figure 9 provides an overview of the roles various actors in the social economy play as well as the stress points and challenges they face, underpinning the painful reality that many social entrepreneurs are battling to stay in business and are hindered to play their part in fighting the impacts of the pandemic on the world.

FIGURE 9 Challenges of social entrepreneurs’ value chain actors



**01. CHALLENGE**

Struggle for survival and experience significant operational hurdles themselves

**02. CHALLENGE**

Struggle to relax the terms on their capital invested or shift their mandates, and/or convince their backers to do so

**03. CHALLENGE**

Struggle to determine how to best support the social entrepreneurs they work with and in their supply chains

**04. CHALLENGE**

Struggle to increase their capital commitments beyond their own portfolios at the speed needed

**05. CHALLENGE**

Lack the resources and infrastructure to provide critical relief and connect effectively with social entrepreneurs

Source: World Economic Forum

4

# COVID-19 Social Enterprise Action Agenda





## “Poverty is an ongoing disaster in the life of a vast majority in the world. Why do we wait for a disaster to stand with them?”

Anshu Gupta, Founder and Director, Goonj, India; Catalyst 2030 Social Entrepreneur

The COVID Response Alliance for Social Entrepreneurs was founded in April 2020 by 60 leading organizations to help mobilize support and raise awareness of the vital role social entrepreneurs play during the crisis and beyond.

Through this *COVID-19 Action Agenda*, the members of the Alliance call on all their colleagues to stand by social entrepreneurs as first responders to the needs of vulnerable populations during the COVID crisis and as pioneers of a green, inclusive society and economic system.

Recognizing the need to listen, collaborate across sectors and build on what exists, Alliance members identified five principles that should lie at the heart of any COVID-19 response effort:

### 1. Make the voices of social entrepreneurs and their communities heard

Vulnerable and marginalized populations around the world trust social entrepreneurs to represent them. Their voices must be publicly and consistently elevated and invited to the decision-making table.

### 2. Prepare to respond, recover and reset – taking the opportunity to shape a new tomorrow

It is important to recognize and act on urgent and unmet human needs and make necessary changes to allocate resources towards creating systems and infrastructure that make social entrepreneurs and the constituents they serve more shockproof to future crises.

### 3. Collaborate across sectors in recognition of the complexity and scale of the crisis

Every sector brings unique assets and capabilities. Corporations, investors, civil society and governments should team up, accept and absorb risk and do what is in their power to support social entrepreneurs and their constituents through the crisis.

### 4. Look beyond healthcare, given that COVID-19 touches all areas of people's lives

The most vulnerable can only truly be supported if the broader impacts of this crisis are considered and the human cost of inaction is kept in mind. Labour markets are hard hit and entire groups or areas are cut off from essential goods and services.

### 5. Support the shovel-ready solutions that grassroots organizations are already able to provide

Social entrepreneurs have already built local, grassroots-driven solutions that can tackle the challenges this crisis presents. Individually or collectively, these solutions can be combined to develop a holistic response that goes beyond COVID-19.

Which actions an organization can and should take will depend on what role it plays and where it resides in the system. The *COVID-19 Action Agenda* therefore extends a unique invitation to lead and collaborate to five actors. Importantly, each invitation is paired with five actor-specific action areas and with snapshots of live initiatives by Alliance members that relate to each action area.

The COVID Response Alliance for Social Entrepreneurs looks forward to collaborating with its colleagues and peers from across the world and to implementing meaningful action together.



## COVID-19 Social Enterprise Action Agenda

The members of the COVID Response Alliance for Social Entrepreneurs stand by social entrepreneurs as first responders to the needs of

vulnerable populations during the COVID crisis and as pioneers of a green, inclusive society and economic system.

5 core COVID-response principles				
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
Make the voices of social entrepreneurs and their communities heard	Prepare to respond, recover and reset – taking the opportunity to shape a new tomorrow	Collaborate across sectors in recognition of the complexity and scale of the crisis	Look beyond healthcare, given that COVID-19 touches all areas of people's lives	Support the shovel-ready solutions that grassroots organizations are already able to provide.

FIGURE 10 Action agenda for social entrepreneurs' value chain actors



Source: World Economic Forum



We call on supporting intermediaries to provide fitting support to social entrepreneurs and the communities they serve, and to make known the needs and priorities of social entrepreneurs on the ground.



**“When we strengthen intermediaries, we strengthen the world’s ability to surface the innovations to help us achieve the Global Goals. Now, more than ever, we need creative, strategic partnerships across industry actors to help these vital, on-the-ground organizations succeed in their mission.”**

**Ben Powell**, Chief Executive Officer, Agora Partnerships, USA

## COVID challenges and opportunities

**Support organizations and networks play an important role in ensuring COVID-related strategic and operational assistance is available to social entrepreneurs. Yet, they themselves – especially those working with vulnerable populations – are affected by the pandemic.**

As leading players in the social entrepreneurs’ value chain, supporting intermediaries are organizations and networks that provide non-financial assistance to mission-driven entrepreneurs and SGBs, and often serve as their voice at the market or ecosystem level.

In response to the crisis, many capacity development organizations have responded by delivering new programming. Yet, not surprisingly, COVID-19 is having significant adverse effects on capacity development providers also, especially those working in emerging markets or supporting social entrepreneurs that serve marginalized households or severely affected areas.

Alliance members encourage capacity development providers to stay on top of and pivot their support models to the changing needs of their constituents. Funders and supporters in the meantime should leverage and assist intermediaries as they confront the crisis.

FIGURE 11

### Supporting intermediaries and networks in times of COVID-19

In a June 2020 SGB sector and COVID-19 crisis addendum published by ANDE, of the capacity development organizations surveyed (a sample size of 40), 21% cited “existential” or “high” risk to their operations, and 14% had laid off staff.<sup>i</sup>

Similarly, in its June survey (with a sample size of 50) focused on Sub-Saharan Africa, South and South-East Asia, Intellectap found that 40% of support organizations had delayed support activities, while as many as 20% had temporarily suspended their programmes.<sup>ii</sup>

<sup>i</sup> Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs, “The Small and Growing Business Sector and the COVID-19 Crisis: Emerging Evidence on Key Risks and Needs – Updated Data Addendum”, June 2020, [https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.andeglobal.org/resource/resmgr/publications/ande\\_covid\\_issue\\_brief\\_adden.pdf](https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.andeglobal.org/resource/resmgr/publications/ande_covid_issue_brief_adden.pdf).

<sup>ii</sup> Intellectap, “Impact of COVID-19 on the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem”, June 2020, unpublished.



## Recommended actions

**Alliance members invite their colleagues to join them by taking action in five ways:**

RESPOND

### 1. Be customer and community driven

Intermediaries should listen to their constituents and determine what their immediate and anticipated needs are. They are encouraged to seek out on-the-ground social entrepreneur leaders so that recovery efforts are shaped and driven by local needs. In doing so, they should keep it simple, recognizing that social entrepreneurs are already overloaded by data requests.

**Mercy Corps** - Mercy Corps teams are the first to reach populations with critical health and safety information in many areas not yet informed through radio, television or the internet. Supporting intermediaries have a unique role to play in being the voice of marginalized communities. Mercy Corps is systematically sourcing these insights to adapt its response.

### 2. Lean in and adjust

Intermediaries should adjust their course as needed and prioritize providing (access to) fitting, high-quality support to social entrepreneurs that enable them to recover and rebuild. This incorporates support to adapt to business and commercial models that meet the new reality, including as it relates to the digitization of their organizations.

**B-Lab Best Practices Resource** - B-Interdependent, a B Lab Global initiative, launched a resource portal to support impact businesses worldwide by offering relevant and essential resources, including stories of hope, best practices to adjust to COVID-19 norms and localized resource hubs.

RECOVER

### 3. Share insights and best practices

Intermediaries are encouraged to exchange market insights and share best practices to improve the sector's collective response to the crisis. This includes collaborative data collection, impact assessments and the promotion of solutions that work.

**Acumen, Root Capital and Yunus Social Business** - In the early stages of the health crisis, these organizations exchanged best practices, ranging from decision-making frameworks and needs assessments, to impact metrics, to strengthen their individual responses to the crisis and its aftermath, and to better prioritize the allocation of their relief funding.

### 4. Establish smart partnerships

Smart collaborative constructs with local, regional and global governments, funders or corporations are a vital ingredient for supporting social entrepreneurs at scale and channelling essential resources to the entrepreneurs and the populations they serve.

**Wellbeing for Changemakers Series** - In partnership with the Wellbeing Project, the Impact Hub Network, Skoll Foundation and Ashoka initiated a series of live, virtual gatherings to extend much needed yet often overlooked well-being support to their social entrepreneurs.

REBUILD/RESET

### 5. Take an ecosystem approach

Intermediaries are urged to create action coalitions to expand and streamline COVID-19 support efforts. Such coalitions, which are often geographically or thematically defined, are good ways to accelerate the roll-out of efforts, dialogues with investors and the mobilization and deployment of funds to do so.

**Emprendedores Frente Al COVID-19 (Entrepreneurs Facing COVID-19)** - Agora Partnerships and over 50 leading Latin American incubators, accelerators, funds and support agents created a regional COVID-19 alliance with the goal of helping impact entrepreneurs in the region weather the crisis.



We call on (impact) investors to adapt their investment priorities and processes, and to provide flexible capital as well as must-have technical assistance.



“The COVID crisis calls for business as unusual. We call on our colleagues to stand with the poor and our entrepreneurs on the front lines of the crisis.”

Vineet Rai, Founder and Chairman, Aavishkaar Group, India

### COVID challenges and opportunities

**Despite their vital role in times of crisis, (impact) investors struggle to increase their investment activity and to provide much needed non-financial support to social entrepreneurs within their portfolios and the periphery of their investments.**

As the direct capital providers to social entrepreneurs, impact investors play a vital role in facilitating the growth of the social enterprise movement. Their continued function as conduits of capital to social entrepreneur leaders is even more indispensable in times of crisis like today.

COVID-19's uneven effects have emphasized long-standing social and environmental issues. However, as the crisis is still unfolding, ongoing uncertainty about the future continues. As a result, despite the need for greater capital to be mobilized, in the GIIN's 2020 Annual Impact Investor Survey, only 16% of impact investors indicated that they are likely to increase their investment activity in response to the pandemic – in many cases having

to hold back allocations they themselves lack additional capital to deploy.<sup>12</sup>

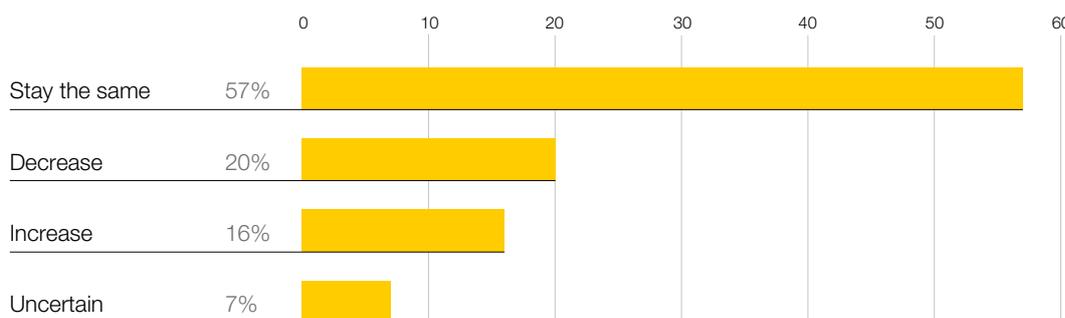
Even those select investors who are able to deploy capital in this period require an abundance of innovation and efficiency. They have to navigate against the old and new challenges the pandemic has created or magnified. According to the GIIN, the key challenges that impact investors face when trying to deploy capital in the current environment are related to due diligence (52%), limited resources, including capital availability (41%) and staff time (27%), and deal sourcing (29%).<sup>13</sup>

Nevertheless, a subset of investors has continued to navigate the rough waters, taking the opportunity to adapt or, in some cases, even reinvent the way they invest.

Alliance members call on investors to strengthen and adapt their investment priorities and processes to support social entrepreneurs and the communities they serve with flexible capital and must-have technical assistance.

FIGURE 12 Changes to investment activity

Source: Global Impact Investing Network, *The Impact Investing Market in the COVID-19 Context: An Overview*, June 2020



## Recommended actions



**Alliance members invite their colleagues to join them by taking action in five ways:**

RESPOND

### 1. Revisit processes and terms

Impact investors are encouraged to review and streamline internal processes so they are able to accept greater risk where feasible and release funding in an expedited manner for social entrepreneurs on the front lines of the pandemic. This includes adapting impact measurement practices and relaxing terms of repayment, impact reporting, etc.

**NESsT Fund** - In reaction to the pandemic, the NESsT Fund created a short-term working capital instrument that acts like revolving credit so companies, particularly in the food and agriculture sectors, can supply products more quickly. This ensures suppliers earn a sustainable income and companies streamline operations, delivering on contracts.

### 2. Be a conduit to grant capital

Investors are uniquely positioned to channel resources to their portfolio. Given their pre-existing relationships with their portfolio organizations, investors are uniquely positioned to act as a conduit to channel philanthropic support to on-the-ground social entrepreneurs so they can sustain their operations and direct immediate relief resources to employees and constituents.

**Yunus Social Business and Greenwood Place** - Yunus Social Business, with philanthropy accelerator Greenwood Place, responded quickly to the pandemic and supported the payroll for employees of its portfolio companies, including São Paulo-based Instituto Muda, which collects recycled waste and works with cooperatives that employ waste pickers living below the poverty line.

RECOVER

### 3. Expand technical assistance

Beyond capital, social entrepreneurs also require support in adapting their operations and business models to the post-COVID era. The provision of non-financial support is critical to safeguarding social entrepreneurs' sustained success.

**Root Capital** - Root Capital is increasing its mobile and digital capabilities to help businesses implement new processes, policies and best practices. Focus areas include crisis management and emergency operations; financial management and analysis; and digital data collection and analysis.

### 4. Collaborate and co-invest

Impact investors should share pipelines and due diligence, pool resources, explore blended finance tools and co-invest to diversify risk. This will accelerate the deployment of capital and ensure that high-impact opportunities do not fall between the cracks in this crucial period.

**COVID-19 Coalition** - The Sorenson Impact Foundation, in partnership with Village Capital, launched the COVID-19 Coalition and leveraged the Abaca platform to build a pipeline of entrepreneurs responding to COVID-19 and investors actively looking to support big, urgent ideas.

REBUILD/RESET

### 5. Plan for the long term

The socio-economic disruption caused by the pandemic will last longer in emerging markets. The sustained success of social entrepreneurs requires investors to plan for longer-term financing and support needs related to the recovery and rebuilding of their portfolio.

**R3 Coalition** - The Response, Recovery and Resilience Investment Coalition (R3 Coalition) was launched "to streamline impact investing efforts that will address the large-scale social and economic consequences of COVID-19". This project is led by important impact investing networks and is managed by the GIIN.



We call on corporations to stand with social entrepreneurs within their supply chains and the broader ecosystem, fulfil their agreements and extend their support to build a more inclusive and resilient economy.



**“The COVID-19 crisis only strengthens our resolve at Johnson & Johnson to support social entrepreneurs leading the changes so urgently needed to put good health in reach of everyone everywhere. We stand with our partners around the world to act swiftly now more than ever.”**

**Michael Sneed**, Executive Vice-President, Global Corporate Affairs, and Chief Communication Officer, Johnson & Johnson, USA

## COVID challenges and opportunities

**Corporations have partnered with social entrepreneurs for many years and this pandemic and its challenges present an opportunity to build on those partnerships and take decisive steps towards a more purpose-driven capitalism and a greener and equitable future.**

Large corporations are an integral part of the social entrepreneurship ecosystem, acting as customers and market-makers for social entrepreneurs across the world. For many social entrepreneurs, impact at scale is only achievable through integration into corporate value chains. In addition to doing business with social entrepreneurs, a number of corporate leaders have dedicated organizational resources to the sector for years in the form of pro-bono/low-bono consulting and access to services or technology.

COVID-19 has certainly challenged corporations to respond to massive issues, such as global supply chain disruptions, radical shifts to remote work or basic safety concerns of staff. In short, the COVID-19 crisis has created corporate leaders that have positively reacted to the pandemic and who hold the key to the future of corporate responsibility.

For leaders who have already committed to purpose-driven stakeholder capitalism, this is the time to strengthen efforts as shareholders and the larger public have become uniquely aware of the role of companies in addressing this crisis. For companies that are still uncommitted, the pandemic has viscerally highlighted the importance to stand with their stakeholders and constituents to ensure long-term success and value creation.





## Recommended actions

**Alliance members invite their colleagues to join them by taking action in five ways:**

RESPOND

### 1. Honour existing relationships

Corporations are encouraged to stand by existing supplier commitments and extend credit lines to social entrepreneur suppliers/partners. In the near term, assistance can be provided by advancing payments, being flexible on contract terms or moving credit risk to the corporate level by other feasible means.

**Danone** - Danone has allocated €300 million in financial support to 15,000 small businesses in its global ecosystem (farmers, suppliers, service providers) and entrepreneurs in its Manifesto Ventures portfolio, as well as to the Danone Ecosystem Fund projects.

### 2. Forge new partnerships

Corporations should stand by their social entrepreneur partners, using a mix of different types of financial and non-financial support to both social entrepreneurs and their constituents. Alliance members call on them to maintain and adapt engagement programmes like accelerators and business partnerships to meet the need(s) of the day.

**Ikea Social Entrepreneurship** - IKEA Social Entrepreneurship is supporting its partnerships across the social entrepreneurship ecosystem, both by adapting current programmes with intermediaries and adding to emergency relief funds directed to social entrepreneurs as well as directly to artisans, for example through Yunus Social Business and Acumen.

RECOVER

### 3. Facilitate capital connections

Corporations should stand by their social entrepreneurs so they can re-emerge and rebuild after the pandemic. They can do so by providing opportunities for revenue partnerships and forging connections between social entrepreneurs and their financial partners to help with access to financing.

**Moving Worlds and SAP** - In collaboration with SAP, Moving Worlds implemented its Sustainable Growth of Revenues for International Development Program (S-GRID), which helps social enterprises build revenue partnerships with the corporate sector to become more integrated into global value chains.

### 4. Invest in capacity building

Corporations are urged to support social entrepreneurs through individual or multi-company pro-bono/low-bono programmes that provide them with diverse expertise and know-how, such as access to technology and to resources and talent (corporate volunteering).

**Lex Mundi and TrustLaw** - Both Lex Mundi Pro Bono Foundation and TrustLaw (a unit of the Thomson Reuters Foundation) have used their legal expertise to create COVID resources, such as government relief screenings, webinars and pro-bono support for micro, small and medium enterprises and social entrepreneurs.

REBUILD/RESET

### 5. Deepen and widen your footprint

Corporations should take advantage of this step-change moment to commit to sustainable sourcing practices, building local "shock resilient" ecosystems with social entrepreneurs and their communities at the centre.

**Johnson & Johnson** - The J&J Center for Health Worker Innovation invests in scalable social enterprises supporting nurses and community health workers, such as Kenyan emergency response platform Flare, which is boosting the country's emergency operation centre after its critical role in an efficient COVID response.



We call on funders and philanthropists to expand and expedite their support to social entrepreneurs and intermediaries, taking risks reflective of today's unprecedented times.



**“We are now in a defining moment as a global community that requires a rapid shoring up of our collective strength to provide immediate support to those hardest hit by the pandemic, while reimagining a prosperous and sustainable world for all. We call on our fellow funders to take the bold actions and risks that philanthropy is uniquely placed to deliver.”**

**Don Gips**, Chief Executive Officer, Skoll Foundation, USA

### COVID challenges and opportunities

**Funders, unique in their ability to provide immediate grant or patient capital, struggle to increase and shift their capital commitments, within and beyond their own portfolios. Swift, unconventional action and risk-taking are needed to save the day.**

Philanthropic funders – large and small – have played a pivotal role in the incubation and growth of social entrepreneurship. Their capital is catalytic in that it stimulates innovation, crowds in other, more risk-averse, investment capital, and advances the infrastructure that underpins the sector.

With the rise of COVID-19, funding organizations have seen a significant surge in support requests. In response, the sector has exhibited many

extraordinary examples of funders standing by their grantees and investees. Responses have ranged from relaxing repayment terms, to providing emergency relief for affected communities. Those who expanded their capital allocations and purview usually did so only for their own portfolio, while those who expanded their purview were typically inundated with support requests.

Similar to investors, funders note that conducting quick and remote due diligence is proving to be a critical difficulty to the disbursement of capital in today's heightened risk scenario. Yet, with the immediate survival of social entrepreneurs on the line, Alliance members call on funders to think outside the box and play the immediate and long-term catalytic response role only they can play.



**“COVID-19 has created unprecedented challenges that require foundations to consider ideas – even radical ones that would never have been considered in the past.”**

**Darren Walker**, President, Ford Foundation, USA

## Recommended actions



**Alliance members invite their colleagues to join them by taking action in five ways:**

RESPOND

### 1. Expand support

As a first priority, funders and philanthropists should provide immediate, flexible funding to social entrepreneurs and intermediaries to ensure their continued, stable existence, and to help them provide direct COVID-19 support to their constituents. Where feasible, they are recommended to look beyond their current portfolio.

**Skoll Foundation** - In April 2020, a gift by Skoll Foundation Founder and Chairman Jeff Skoll enabled the Foundation to quadruple its annual grant-making to \$200 million. As of 12 August 2020, the Foundation has disbursed \$70 million in grants to address the direct and second-order public health, economic and social effects of the pandemic. The Foundation has actively reduced grant-related burdens, increased transparency in communications and loosened or eliminated current grant restrictions and terms. It continues to work to connect change leaders with peer funders and possible partners.

### 2. Expedite support

Funders and philanthropists can meet this moment of global emergency by speeding up funding decisions; simplifying application and reporting processes; and easing their terms so social entrepreneurs can focus on managing their organizations and provide front-line support.

**Open Road Alliance** - Within one week of the start of lockdowns in the US, Open Road Alliance doubled its 2020 budget for grants and loans. The new criteria included expedited application procedures and a temporary internal reorganization of staff that allowed them to process a significantly higher volume than usual.

RECOVER

### 3. Take greater risk

Funders and philanthropists are encouraged to adjust their risk profiles in line with the challenges and uncertainties the sector faces. They can consider taking first-loss positions, or strengthen their commitment further to organizations working with the most vulnerable.

**Echoing Green** - Echoing Green has partnered with the United States African Development Foundation to offer unrestricted grants to its fellows (with African citizenship) who are working in Africa as they adapt their work for maximum impact during the COVID-19 pandemic.

REBUILD/RESET

### 4. Collaborate and blend

Funders and philanthropists should share pipelines, combine due diligence, blend and co-invest. Collaborative funding – especially when bundling philanthropic, corporate and public funds – will unlock pools of capital commensurate to the crisis.

**Energy Access Relief Fund** - This coalition of investors, donors and industry associations, led by Acumen, CDC Group, SunFunder and Shell Foundation, aims to help the energy industry through the economic effects of the pandemic, unlocking over \$70 million to date thanks in part to first-loss grants and guarantees from philanthropic funders.

### 5. Innovate and experiment

COVID-19 has created unprecedented challenges that require foundations to consider ideas – even radical ones that would never have been considered in the past. This is the time to ask constituents what they need most and to experiment.

**Ford Foundation** - The Ford Foundation will borrow \$1 billion so it can substantially increase the amount of money it distributes. It is preparing to issue 30- and 50-year bonds, a financial manoeuvre common among governments and companies but extremely rare among non-profit groups.



We call on government institutions to recognize social entrepreneurs as a driving force in safeguarding jobs and in pioneering a greener and equitable society, as well as to back them accordingly.



**“Recognizing the significant strains that governments and social partners are under as leading responders to the crisis, it is even more important to acknowledge social entrepreneurs as vital players in protecting the most vulnerable.”**

**Victor van Vuuren**, Director, Enterprises Department, International Labour Organization (ILO), Geneva

## COVID challenges and opportunities

**Grappling with the healthcare impact of the pandemic and needing to mitigate the economic consequences of the lockdowns, it is clear that governments at all levels face unprecedented challenges. Social entrepreneurs are important allies on the path to recovery and growth.**

The pandemic is disproportionately affecting marginalized, often informal, populations. With COVID-19 only hitting developing and emerging markets now, the need for relief, recovery and rebuilding support is significant.

Governments play a critical role in delivering and financing the recovery, including local governments who are leading the COVID-19 responses around the world. They are on the front line of citizen engagement, service delivery, the management of public space and local economic agenda setting.

The role that businesses, SGBs and social enterprises need to play is even larger, especially in countries where welfare systems are weak. They

are crucial to safeguarding the risks and livelihoods of those at risk and are therefore a key ally for the public sector. SGBs and social entrepreneurs are not only an engine for job security, they also provide “last-mile access” to those who may otherwise remain unprotected.

Government funding is the largest source of financing for the global COVID response. Yet relief packages, including international loans and transfers, currently often fail to reach social entrepreneurs. For example, Intellectap indicated in its June 2020 report that there is little to no government support for social enterprises in Sub-Saharan Africa while, in India, they face real hurdles accessing public stimulus packages.

While the strains that governments themselves are under are clear, Alliance members call on them to give social entrepreneurs and SGBs a seat at the table, to include them in COVID response planning and allocations, and to remove red tape so they can play their part in the crisis.



## Recommended actions



**Alliance members invite their colleagues to join them by taking action in five ways:**

RESPOND

### 1. Protect crucial community organizations and jobs

Social entrepreneurs are powerful allies in safeguarding (or bringing back) scores of crucial jobs in the most affected communities. Swift capital and liquidity support from governments and development finance institutions can ensure that social entrepreneurs survive the crisis and are in a position to protect the livelihoods of vulnerable citizens.

**Getting Britain Back to Work** - Intermediaries in the UK collectively approached the government to make the case that social entrepreneurs are job generators – especially among marginalized households and areas. The effort resulted in the release of £150 million in dormant assets that are now used by the UK social investment market to create jobs.

### 2. Allocate and fast track funding

Public sector capital can act as a catalyst in enabling social entrepreneurs. Governments should make COVID-19 enterprise and NGO capital support rapidly available and enable transparent access to it to ensure social entrepreneurs' operational continuity.

**SDG500 Joint Initiative** - SDG500 is an impact investment platform formed by a coalition of private- and public-sector actors dedicated to financing the SDGs. The platform aims to raise \$500 million to fund small businesses in such fields as agriculture, education and healthcare in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean. Coalition partners include the UN Capital Development Fund, International Trade Centre and CARE USA.

### 3. Back existing intermediaries

Government institutions can provide and channel immediate cash and non-cash support through existing delivery organizations, often at a local or regional level, which are better able to assess the situation on the ground.

**KIVA in collaboration with other funders** - KIVA has set up a vehicle that allows trusted intermediaries to access significant amounts of patient capital with ease so they can, in turn, issue much-needed soft loans to their constituents. Principal amounts are sourced from private and public funders alike.

RECOVER

### 4. Remove red tape

Government institutions should unlock regulatory barriers that have historically restricted the growth of the sector. This can include actions that enable social entrepreneurs to competitively and easily participate in government contracts and procurement processes serving this purpose.

**OECD Policy Mapping** - The OECD is compiling data, analyses and recommendations on a range of topics, including for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, to address the emerging crisis, facilitate coordination and contribute to necessary global action when confronting the crisis.

### 5. Usher a new economic reality

Governments at all levels are encouraged to use this opportunity to benchmark themselves against their peers; join coalitions and networks that endeavour to reset the world and economic system(s); and invite social entrepreneurs to the table as invaluable assets in this movement.

**Global Steering Group For Impact Investing (GSG)** - As a collective of over 40 national advisory boards, the GSG has taken on an action programme to support a just and impact-led recovery. Actions range from promoting impact tools and instruments, such as launching a new impact-led market narrative, outcomes-based financing and impact accounting methods.

**UNDP Beyond Recovery Initiative** - Through its "Beyond Recovery: Towards 2030" phase, UNDP works with countries and actors from all sectors to initiate system-level change. The initiative helps decision-makers make choices and manage uncertainty in four main areas: governance, social protection, green economy and digital disruption.

REBUILD/RESET

**“The pandemic represents a rare but narrow window of opportunity to reflect, reimagine and reset our world.”**

**Klaus Schwab**, Founder and Executive Chairman,  
World Economic Forum

Below: Adi Goldstein, Unsplash

5

# The road ahead



The COVID-19 crisis has exposed **deeply rooted inequalities and system failures that had remained unseen to many until now**. The crisis provides an immediate opportunity for all actors to rethink their mandates, processes and systems.

Since the COVID-19 Response Alliance for Social Entrepreneurs was launched in April 2020, the Alliance members have sought to show that **reducing the burden of this inequality is possible over the course of the pandemic**.

The Alliance benefits from the representation of a wide range of social-sector organizations that are committed to leading, individually and as a collective, and that contributed to the concrete recommendations in this report.

The five COVID response principles and recommended areas of action will serve as a guide to the work of the Alliance into 2021. Collectively, as an Alliance, the members will seek to:

- **Welcome new commitments** from business, government and philanthropy in support of social entrepreneurs
- **Mobilize the sector** to take further action on the areas of work outlined in this report
- **Promote collaborative approaches and public-private cooperation** jointly with social entrepreneurs
- **Reinforce key messages and evidence** through advocacy platforms and media
- **Track responses and progress** on this Action Agenda.

Contact the World Economic Forum at [COVIDSocEntAlliance@weforum.org](mailto:COVIDSocEntAlliance@weforum.org) if this report has triggered interest in joining Alliance members in their efforts.

**We are in this together.  
The time to act is now.**



# Appendix 1: Who are social entrepreneurs?

A number of definitional choices and distinctions were made for this report:

## Social entrepreneurs

The Schwab Foundation defines social entrepreneurs as “founders of non-profit, hybrid or for-profit organizations who innovatively address a social or environmental problem, with a focus on low-income, marginalized or vulnerable populations.”

Social entrepreneurs have in common that they combine the mission, commitment and relationships to work with the most vulnerable and marginalized populations and seek to fill socio-economic gaps with entrepreneurial approaches and innovative operating models. They may differ, however, in the extent to which they generate revenue or are “market based” and may have different legal forms.

It is important to recognize here that practitioners reading this report, and even members of this Alliance, have their own definition of what truly constitutes a “social entrepreneur.” For example, some may exclude non-profit solutions, while others may only refer to social entrepreneurs as those who are taking a “systems view” in their work and solutions.

## Small and growing businesses

Given the critical role that SGBs working in an emerging and developing market context play in building thriving local communities, some would argue that these SGBs are therefore by definition social entrepreneurs. SGBs, as defined by the Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs (ANDE), are “commercial businesses with five to 250 employees that have significant potential, and ambition, for growth. Other than creating jobs, SGBs create goods and services that benefit all sectors of society and foster shared prosperity, essential to the growth of the middle class.”

Note: Throughout this *COVID-19 Action Agenda*, social entrepreneurs are assumed to include but are not limited to SGBs that match the definition above. When SGBs are explicitly mentioned, it is often because research is referenced that only focused on such businesses.

What unites the 60 members of the Alliance, however, is a deep commitment and belief in those leaders and organizations who get up every day to help advance the well-being of the people, communities and environment that surround them.



# Appendix 2: About the COVID Response Alliance for Social Entrepreneurs

The COVID Response Alliance for Social Entrepreneurs was founded in April 2020 by 60 leading organizations to help mobilize support for social entrepreneurs and to raise awareness of the vital role they play – during the crisis and beyond.

The Alliance was initiated by the World Economic Forum's Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship and Yunus Social Business with support from the GHR Foundation. Since its inception, the Alliance has sought to pool knowledge, experiences and resources to further its individual and collective firing power in support of social entrepreneurs who are acting as first responders to the crisis throughout the world.

This appendix describes the work and COVID responses of each of the Alliance members. Readers are invited to browse through the extraordinary efforts each member has made to stand by their entrepreneurs and communities in this time of need.

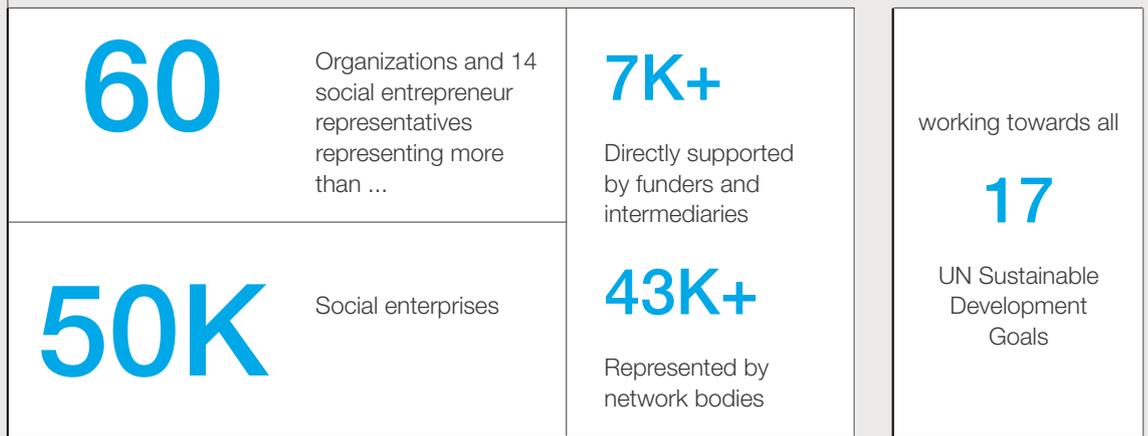
As this report has tried to convey, the impacts of the crisis are only beginning to show, and all the hands and resources available to help social entrepreneurs stay in business and come through for their constituents are needed. To make it easy for readers to join in action, each member has summarized concrete opportunities to partner with them and added contact details to do so.

For any general Alliance related questions, please contact: [COVIDSocEntAlliance@weforum.org](mailto:COVIDSocEntAlliance@weforum.org)

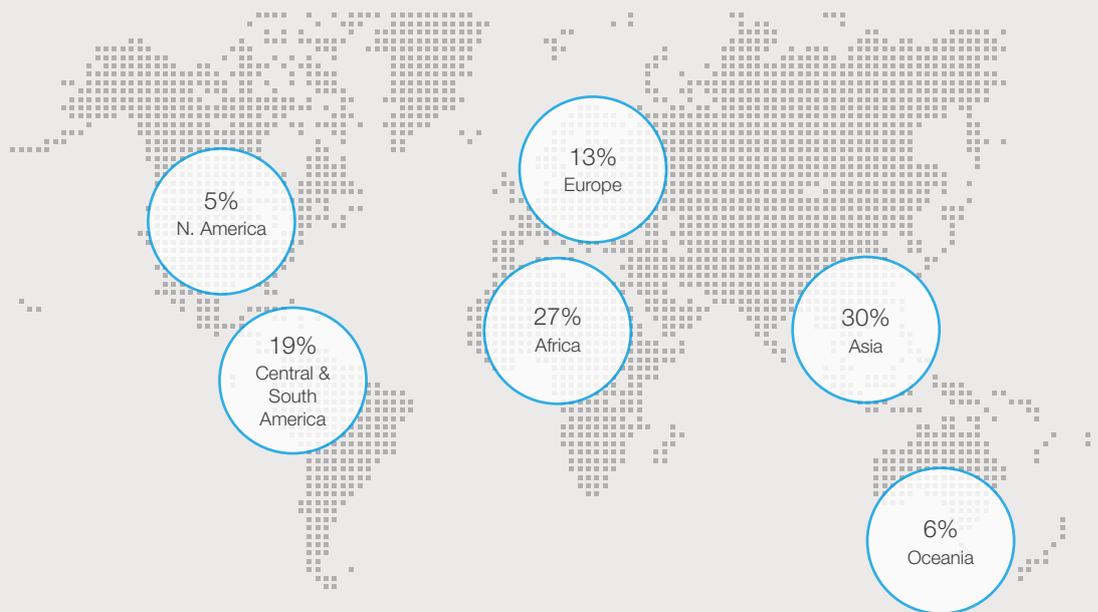


FIGURE 13

The COVID Response Alliance for Social Entrepreneurs in numbers

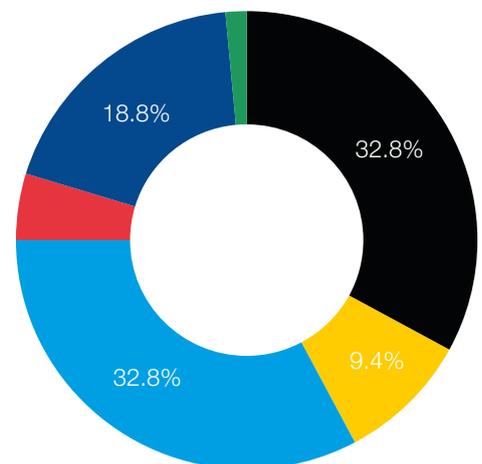


With a focus on emerging markets



The Alliance also encompasses the length and breadth of the social enterprise value chain, from funders and investors to a wide range of supporting intermediaries and academic/research organizations.

- Funder or Philanthropist
- Corporation
- Supporting intermediary
- Government institution
- Network Body
- Academic/Research



## Social entrepreneurs represented in the Alliance

The voices and perspectives of social entrepreneurs were represented by a committed group of Catalyst 2030 Coalition members during the publication of this report and throughout the Alliance's work. Thanks go to the following social entrepreneurs for their invaluable contribution:

**Meagan Fallone**  
Barefoot College  
[barefootcollege.org](http://barefootcollege.org)

**Sue Riddlestone**  
Bioregional  
[bioregional.com](http://bioregional.com)

**Janet Longmore**  
Digital Opportunity Trust  
[dotrust.org](http://dotrust.org)

**Jonathan Jackson**  
Dimagi  
[dimagi.com](http://dimagi.com)

**Celina Desola**  
Glasswing International  
[glasswing.org](http://glasswing.org)

**Anshu Gupta**  
Goonj  
[goonj.org](http://goonj.org)

**Neelam Chibber**  
Industree  
[industree.org.in](http://industree.org.in)

**Raj Panjabi and James Nardella**  
Last Mile Health  
[lastmilehealth.org](http://lastmilehealth.org)

**Jeroo Billimoria**  
One Family Foundation  
[onefamilyfoundation.one](http://onefamilyfoundation.one)

**Shelly Batra**  
Operation Asha  
[opasha.org](http://opasha.org)

**Shona McDonald**  
Shonaquip  
[shonaquip.co.za](http://shonaquip.co.za)

**Urvashi Sahni**  
Study Hall Education

**Fredrik Galtung**  
True Footprint  
[TrueFootprint.com](http://TrueFootprint.com)

**Gary White**  
Water.org  
[water.org](http://water.org)

**Rana Dajani**  
We Love Reading, Jordan  
[welovereadng.org](http://welovereadng.org)



To learn more about Catalyst 2030 and its global movement to gather social-change innovators to achieve the SDGs, visit [catalyst2030.net](http://catalyst2030.net).

The Catalyst 2030 report *Getting from crisis to systems change: Advice for leaders in the time of COVID*, a collaboration by more than 1,600 organizations, was launched during a live online fireside chat with UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina J Mohammed in July 2020. The report is available at <https://catalyst2030.net/getting-from-crisis-to-systems-change>.

## Alliance member profiles

All 60 Alliance members are working to support their entrepreneurs and constituents, recognizing the unique challenges that the pandemic has created. The profiles of each of the 54 public members described in this section include their organization

type, their response and insights to date related to the challenges at hand and concrete opportunities for collaboration. Specific recommendations by the COVID-19 Social Enterprise Action Agenda for each type of actor are also included.

We call on all actors		We call on supporting intermediaries		We call on (impact) investors	
to stand by social entrepreneurs in their capacity as front-line responders to the health crisis and as pioneers of a green, inclusive society and economic system		to provide fitting support to social entrepreneurs and the communities they serve, and to make known the needs and priorities of social entrepreneurs on the ground		to adapt their investment priorities and processes, and to provide flexible capital as well as must-have technical assistance	
P-1	Make social entrepreneurs and communities heard	S-1	Be customer and community driven	I-1	Revisit processes and terms
P-2	Prepare to respond, recover and reset	S-2	Lean in and adjust	I-2	Be a conduit to grant capital
P-3	Collaborate across sectors	S-3	Share insights and best practices	I-3	Expand technical assistance
P-4	Look beyond healthcare	S-4	Establish smart partnerships	I-4	Collaborate and co-invest
P-5	Support shovel-ready solutions	S-5	Take an ecosystem approach	I-5	Plan for the long term

We call on corporations		We call on funders and philanthropists		We call on government institutions	
to stand with social entrepreneurs within their supply chains and the broader ecosystem, fulfil their agreements and extend their support to build a more inclusive and resilient economy		to expand and expedite their support to social entrepreneurs and intermediaries, taking risks reflective of today's unprecedented times		to recognize social entrepreneurs as a driving force in safeguarding jobs and in pioneering a greener and equitable society, as well as to back them accordingly	
C-1	Honour existing relationships	F-1	Expand support	G-1	Protect crucial community organizations and jobs
C-2	Forge new partnerships	F-2	Expedite support	G-2	Allocate and fast track funding
C-3	Facilitate capital connections	F-3	Take greater risk	G-3	Back existing intermediaries
C-4	Invest in capacity building	F-4	Collaborate and blend	G-4	Remove red tape
C-5	Deepen and widen your footprint	F-5	Innovate and experiment	G-5	Usher a new economic reality



Role/Function

Supporting Intermediary

Entrepreneurs Served

10,000K+

People Reached

65 million+

SDGs Tackled

1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 17

Regions

South Asia, South-East

Asia, East and West Africa

Contact details

Urvashi Devidayal

Tarun Mehta

Mukund Prasad

<https://aavishkaar.in/>



Role/Function

Supporting Intermediary,  
Investor

Entrepreneurs Served

250

People Reached

300 million +

SDGs Tackled

1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13,15, 16, 17

Regions

North and South America,

Africa, South Asia

Contact details

Yasmina Zaidman

<https://acumen.org/>

## Alliance Members

**Aavishkaar Group** takes an entrepreneurship-based approach towards development. We boost impact ecosystems in Asia and Africa. The Group's ecosystems include Aavishkaar Capital (equity-led impact investing), Arohan (a tech-led financial inclusion platform), Intellegrow (lender to SGBs), Tribe (fintech), Intellegrow (a sustainability advisory business) and Sankalp Forum (a development-led platform). We manage assets in excess of \$1 billion across equity and credit

### COVID-19 Response to Date

Our organization has provided:

- Additional equity financing
- Technical assistance related to operations, human resources and shifting business models
- Outreach and Network Connections - Sankalp Dialogues on Informal Settlements
- Grant funding to NGOs for relief work in low income states.

Relevant Action Agenda items: S-3, S-4, S-5

**Acumen** invests in early-stage companies whose products and services enable the poor to transform their lives. In addition to providing seed capital, we support companies with the tools, networks, technical assistance and strategic guidance needed to succeed and scale into long-term solutions to overcome poverty. Our Fellows programme (700+ beneficiaries) supports extraordinary individuals with the knowledge, resources and practical wisdom to unlock their full potential as leaders driving social change.

### COVID-19 Response to Date

Our organization has provided:

- Emergency grants and loans via our [Global Emergency Facility](#) and [America Emergency Fund](#)
- Technical assistance related to operations and human resources, shifting business models and management of financials

Relevant Action Agenda items: I-1, I-2, I-3

### Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)

The greatest challenges for our organization are managing uncertainty of revenue, limited ability to complete projects in the field and delivering on our programmes. Entrepreneurs we support in our ecosystem are facing a severe capital crunch, labour shortage and disrupted supply chains, all of which impact the millions of low-income beneficiaries the enterprises support. Capital and technical support are the need of the hour.

### Partnership Opportunity

We invite market actors to join us as we fundraise for:

- The Sankalp Global Summit 2020 (Nov 2-6): Convening the Global South, connecting social entrepreneurs and providers of capital
- Emergency facility for supporting low-income livelihoods (MFIs in India, South Asia and Africa)
- Emergency funding for Aavishkaar Capital Investees
- Defending the livelihood of women poultry producers (Dalit tribe, India)

### Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)

The crisis required a major pivot to accelerate understanding of the issues that our portfolio companies and Fellows face, so that we could match their needs with sufficient capital and support.

For our network, the slowdown of philanthropic and invested capital represents a major challenge: We have seen a significant reduction of funding across the entire spectrum in a context that demands the opposite, namely increased scale and flexibility of funding.

### Partnership Opportunity

We invite market actors to:

- Share available resources from the Acumen Academy with their constituents - incl. courses and webinars on fundraising, business resilience and leadership
- Support our emergency facilities, mentioned in this profile



Role/Function  
Supporting intermediary  
Entrepreneurs Served  
--  
People Reached  
>100 million  
SDGs Tackled  
All  
Regions  
Africa  
Contact details  
Frank Aswani

[www.avpa.africa](http://www.avpa.africa)



Role/Function  
Supporting Intermediary  
Entrepreneurs Served  
400  
People Reached  
6 million +  
SDGs Tackled  
1, 5, 8  
Regions  
Central and South America  
Contact details  
Cecilia Foxworthy

<https://agora2030.org/>



Role/Function  
Funder  
Entrepreneurs Served  
10,000+  
People Reached  
--  
SDGs Tackled  
1, 8, 17  
Regions  
East Africa, Central America  
Contact details  
Nicholas Colloff

<https://www.argidius.com/>

### African Venture Philanthropy Alliance (AVPA)

aims to build a collaborative network of social investors to increase capital flow into social investments in Africa and ensure that they are deployed for maximum impact. Bringing together the continuum of investors from grant makers to impact funds, debt and equity players and governments, AVPA believes that innovative financing approaches are significant in crowding private-sector capital to address the \$500 billion to \$1.2 trillion annual SDG financing gap in Africa to 2030.

### COVID-19 Response to Date

Our organization has provided:

- Convening platforms for investors in Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa
- 10 pan-African webinars addressing issues around vulnerable communities
- Inter-regional webinars in partnership with our sister networks in Asia, Europe and Latin America

Agora Partnerships is a non-profit organization that provides access to knowledge, networks and capital to small and growing businesses in Latin America and the Caribbean. Agora's purpose is to strengthen local inclusive entrepreneurship ecosystems and to increase the flow of resources to entrepreneurs working to solve social and environmental challenges.

### COVID-19 Response to Date

Agora created an action-oriented task force of 50+ top accelerators, incubators and funds across Latin America to coordinate support to entrepreneurs in the region. Additionally, we provided:

- Technical assistance related to operations, pivoting business models, online sales and financials
- Webinars and small-group consulting

**Argidius Foundation** aims to help entrepreneurs build profitable businesses and contribute to the sustainable development of their communities. We do so by improving the effectiveness and reach of small and medium-sized enterprise development services by supporting high-quality organizations to grow sustainably to scale, researching what works effectively in helping businesses grow. In the past five years, our partners have worked with more than 10,000 businesses creating over \$660 million of incremental revenue.

### COVID-19 Response to Date

In direct response to the crisis, we have made our funding more flexible, expanded our support to existing partners and facilitated collaboration

Relevant Action Agenda items: S-3, S-5

### Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)

- Mobilizing funds
- Transferring lessons across countries and regions
- Economic recovery and ensuring job security

### Partnership Opportunity

We invite market actors to:

- Help us run innovative finance capacity-building programmes for social investors in Africa
- Collaborate and co-invest, namely with catalytic capital
- Test new financing models for recovery
- Join our upcoming deal-share platform and gender platforms

Relevant Action Agenda items: S-1, S-3, S-5

### Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)

We have limited bandwidth to fundraise for emergency loans to our portfolio. We aim to strike a balance between working to support entrepreneurs and staff, including analysing and shifting our own business model as well as the virtualization of our programmes.

### Partnership Opportunity

We collaborate with Emprendedores Frente al Covid-19 and CovidCap, and invite market actors to do the same: share resources and opportunities on these platforms to reach entrepreneurs in Latin America. We are also currently working with Alliance partners to design an ecosystem-wide solidarity fund to provide catalytic capital between 100K - 250K to social entrepreneurs across the Americas.

between our partners and new organizations. Recognizing the need for virtual support, Argidius is supporting innovative, digitalized, technical assistance approaches for entrepreneurs,

Relevant Action Agenda items: F-1 to F-5

### Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)

As a foundation, our biggest challenge has been to ensure our partners' transition to virtual delivery of their services in support of their constituent entrepreneurs.

### Partnership Opportunity

We invite you to join us to support initiatives in the field of social entrepreneurship on an ongoing basis, as outlined on our website: [www.Argidius.com](http://www.Argidius.com).



Role/Function  
Supporting Intermediary  
Entrepreneurs Served  
4000+  
People Reached  
--  
SDGs Tackled  
All  
Regions  
Global  
Contact details  
Diana Wells

<https://www.ashoka.org/en>



Role/Function  
Supporting Intermediary  
Entrepreneurs Served  
380  
People Reached  
17,000  
SDGs Tackled  
All  
Regions  
Asia-Pacific  
Contact details  
Naina Subberwal Batra

<https://avpn.asia/>



Role/Function  
Supporting intermediary  
Entrepreneurs Served  
--  
People Reached  
--  
SDGs Tackled  
5, 8, 13  
Regions  
Global  
Contact details  
Jenny Everett

<https://www.andeglobal.org/>

**Ashoka's** vision is that the world is defined by change and requires a new mindset - a world in which all citizens are empowered as changemakers and can contribute to change in positive ways. Ashoka identifies and supports the world's leading social entrepreneurs, learns from the patterns in their innovations and mobilizes a global community that embraces these new frameworks to build an "everyone a changemaker" world. Key focus areas for our activities include changing the way young people grow up, tech and humanity, climate and planet, ageing and equality.

**COVID-19 Response to Date**

Our organization has been co-entrepreneurial at local, regional and global levels, raising the visibility of social entrepreneurs throughout the crisis and creating impact.

**Asian Venture Philanthropy Network (AVPN)**

As the only comprehensive funders' network in Asia, AVPN is a leading ecosystem builder for the social investment sector with 580+ members. AVPN's mission is to catalyse the movement toward a more strategic, collaborative and outcome-focused approach to social investing, ensuring that resources are deployed as effectively as possible to address the key social challenges Asia is facing now and will face in the future.

**COVID-19 Response to Date**

To reduce duplication and increase effective capital mobilization, AVPN launched its COVID-19 Platform to highlight high-impact projects, encourage collaboration around scalable solutions and map our members' COVID-19 responses. To date, our members have deployed more than \$10 billion to address the pandemic.

**Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs (ANDE)**

is a global network of organizations that propel entrepreneurship in emerging markets. ANDE members provide critical financial, educational and business support services to small and growing businesses (SGBs) based on the conviction that SGBs can create jobs, stimulate long-term economic growth and yield environmental and social benefits. ANDE is part of the Aspen Institute, a global non-profit organization committed to realizing a free, just and equitable society.

**COVID-19 Response to Date**

Our organization has provided:

- Knowledge sharing and networking activities
- Advocacy for greater funding to support social entrepreneurs and the intermediaries that support them (e.g. accelerators, training institutions)

Relevant Action Agenda items: S-4, P-1

**Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)**

We are working hard to support social entrepreneurs as they respond to the acute emergencies that COVID-19 creates while at the same time maintaining our focus on the systemic change needed to create a world in which everyone is a changemaker, more important today than ever before.

**Partnership Opportunity**

We invite partners (entrepreneurs, philanthropists, companies and investors) to join our global community of social entrepreneurs in developing powerful new approaches to addressing COVID-19 and the impact it is having on people and communities around the world.

Relevant Action Agenda items: S-1, S-2, S-3

**Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)**

Numerous solutions and projects are under way, with many requiring immediate liquidity to scale their impact.

Greater collaboration is needed to prevent duplication of efforts and resources for more efficient address of systemic challenges.

**Partnership Opportunity**

We have identified resources that projects can tap into to scale their impact and need to invest in capacity building to close the gap between investors and investees.

Support for long-term rebuilding across intersecting areas affected by COVID, such as gender, climate and health, will also be important to ensuring sustainable development.

Relevant Action Agenda items: S-3, S-5

**Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)**

The biggest challenge for our organization is financial uncertainty. Many of our members are facing business-model disruption without grant funders stepping up to fill the gaps. To keep entrepreneurial ecosystems alive post-COVID, it will be critical for funders to help intermediary organizations survive.

**Partnership Opportunity**

We invite market actors to join an SGB Recovery Facility, targeted at intermediaries to provide grant support to help capacity development providers expand and adapt operations to serve SGBs as they adapt to the new economic reality. We believe that capacity-development organizations will have an even more critical role to play in the post-COVID economy.



Role/Function  
Supporting Intermediary  
Entrepreneurs Served  
3,400 (B Corps)  
People Reached  
100,000+ (users of impact management platform)  
SDGs Tackled  
All  
Regions  
Global  
Contact details  
Holly Ensign-Barstow

<https://bcorporation.net/about-b-lab>



Role/Function  
Supporting Intermediary  
Entrepreneurs Served  
200+  
People Reached  
800 million  
SDGs Tackled  
All  
Regions  
Global  
Contact details  
Jeroo Billimoria

<https://catalyst2030.net/>

The **B Lab** Global Network leverages its constituency and market infrastructure - including an online impact management platform - to steer a global movement for economic systems change. B Lab unites and organizes a global network of private-sector leaders who advance strategies for economic systems change, prioritizing the health of workers and communities over GDP, advancing an inclusive economic recovery with accountability to stakeholders over shareholders and people over profits.

**COVID-19 Response to Date**

Our organization has provided:

- Technical assistance related to operations or human resources, pivoting business models, managing supply chains, accessing government support or other relief mechanisms
- Outreach and network connections

Relevant Action Agenda item: S-3

**Catalyst 2030** is a rapidly growing, practitioner-led movement of the world's leading social entrepreneurs from Ashoka, Echoing Green, the Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship and the Skoll Foundation, working in 179 countries globally. Our main mission is to accelerate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by transforming the ecosystem to scale sustainable solutions.

**COVID-19 Response to Date**

Our organization has provided:

- Knowledge-sharing and networking activities
- Advocacy for greater funding to support social entrepreneurs and the intermediaries that support them (e.g. accelerators, training institutions)

Relevant Action Agenda items: P-1, P-3, P-4, P-5

**Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)**

The immediate challenge is to gather and understand the short-term needs of the community to respond quickly to the crisis. Organizationally, we also experience uncertainty regarding earned and philanthropic revenue in the short and long term, which is making it difficult for us to balance the need to respond to the immediate crisis and the need for long-term systemic change.

**Partnership Opportunity**

We invite market actors to support our COVID-19 response programmes in following categories:

- Rural education for children
- AI-based programme driving better financial and health behaviours through and with women (ready to scale)
- Video content to take on health information dissemination and stigma issues in India (needs funding to expand to vaccination)

**Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)**

Funding! Funding is the key priority for almost all social entrepreneurs.

The greatest challenge, owing to the lack of funding, is having to scale back precisely when the need of our communities is the greatest.

**Partnership Opportunity**

We invite market actors to:

- Support Catalyst 2030 members with funding
- Support our advocacy efforts, working towards creating the post-COVID new normal, placing social entrepreneurs at the centre of development so that effective solutions can be scaled



Role/Function  
Academic/Research  
Entrepreneurs Served  
3000  
People Reached  
--  
SDGs Tackled  
--  
Regions  
Global  
Contact details  
Catherine Clark

<http://centers.fuqua.duke.edu/case/>

**The Center for the Advancement of Social Entrepreneurship (CASE)** at Duke University's Fuqua School of Business works to equip leaders and organizations with the business skills needed to achieve lasting social change. CASE provides global leadership for the study and support of social entrepreneurs and impact investing through research, teaching and field-building activities.

**COVID-19 Response to Date**

- CASE Smart Impact Capital provides free access to online training and fundraising, following a public webinar on raising capital during the crisis (13,000+ users in total)
- Covidcap.com – a website listing over \$1.1 trillion financial and over 130 non-financial pandemic relief resources for social entrepreneurs everywhere (accessed 40,000+ times)
- Scaling through Mass Disruption – video series on tactical crisis handling for social entrepreneurs, together with Alliance members Skoll Foundation, USAID and MercyCorps

Relevant Action Agenda items: I-1 to I-5. S-2, S-3

**Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)**

Our main challenge has been balancing rapid action and thought leadership vs. continued

triage of ongoing organizational needs. We have been conducting research, influencing other institutions and adjusting programmes. For social entrepreneurs, CASE:

- Released new collections on scaling through data
- Finalized a new diagnostic tool for scaling readiness
- Published a guide entitled “How do I Raise Capital During COVID-19?”
- Reduced our pricing on CASE Smart Impact Capital by 86% to encourage use by entrepreneurs facing cash challenges, especially in developing countries

**Partnership Opportunity**

We invite market actors to:

- Become bulk partners with our online fundraising training programme, CASE Smart Impact Capital
- Apply to join as funding partners for the F.M. Kirby Social Impact Prize, our new \$100K unrestricted scaling social impact prize for social entrepreneurs everywhere



Role/Function  
Supporting Intermediary  
Entrepreneurs Served  
--  
People Reached  
9 million  
SDGs Tackled  
1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 16, 17  
Regions  
Africa, Asia, Central & South America  
Contact details  
Anna-Marie Harling

<https://www.co-impact.org/>

**Co-Impact** is a philanthropic collaborative supporting locally rooted coalitions working to achieve impact at scale in the Global South. To achieve this, leaders with powerful ideas need support to go beyond singular interventions and focus on deep systemic change. We bring together a group of (40+ and growing) philanthropists and funders with shared values and an aligned vision of what is required to achieve large-scale change.

**COVID-19 Response to Date**

Our organization has supported fundraising and adopted flexible planning and reporting to our constituents.

Relevant Action Agenda items: F-1, F-2

**Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)**

COVID-19 has affected the work of all our programme partners, who are adjusting and responding, working with governments and partners to 1. take on new challenges, 2. pause and adapt work as school and other systems have shut down, and/or 3. continue to advance long-term systemic change.

We view each of these activities as important and legitimate, and support our partners in making sound ethical and strategic judgement in the actions they choose to take.

**Partnership Opportunity**

We invite market actors to contact us for more details about the funding needs of our portfolio.



Role/Function  
Funder  
Entrepreneurs Served  
200 +  
People Reached  
--  
SDGs Tackled  
7, 12, 13  
Regions  
East Africa, South Asia,  
Western Europe  
Contact details  
Michelle de Rijk  
Saskia Werther

<http://www.doen.nl/>



Role/Function  
Funder  
Entrepreneurs Served  
60  
People Reached  
78,000,000  
SDGs Tackled  
All  
Regions  
Global  
Contact details  
Lisa Jordan

[www.drkfoundation.org/](http://www.drkfoundation.org/)

**DOEN Foundation** is a Dutch foundation set up by the Postcode Lottery and supports initiatives from people who are not afraid to take risks while putting their pioneering ideas into practice and inspiring others.

#### COVID-19 Response to Date

- Created internal relief facility of €3 million + in mid-March to support portfolio partners using tailor-made instruments
- Supported sector-wide initiatives that investigated the effects of COVID-19 on vulnerable communities (e.g. in energy access)
- Actively communicated about our actions to the sector, shared learnings
- Sent message to sector that DOEN is still open to new partners

#### The Draper Richards Kaplan Foundation (DRK)

is a global venture philanthropy firm supporting early-stage, high-impact non-profits and social enterprises. Borrowed from our venture capital legacy, DRK finds, funds and supports exceptional leaders with innovative, high-impact ideas that have the potential to address complex, global social and environmental problems at scale. DRK provides capital and ongoing support by partnering with founders to help build capacity in the organization and scale their impact.

#### COVID-19 Response to Date

The entire DRK team is providing lean-in, bespoke support to the current portfolio. In parallel, we set up a limited COVID urgent response initiative (CURI) to support initiatives that can deploy within 90 days to meet urgent social needs arising as a result of COVID. Of note, we have dropped reporting requirements.

Relevant Action Agenda items: F-1, F-5, P-2, I-1, I-4

#### Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)

- Catering support to the needs of the partners
- Distinguishing COVID-related needs or liquidity issues from partners from general issues
- Determining a longer-term strategy integrating uncertainties

#### Partnership Opportunity

- Accessing the network
- Sharing learnings and the pipeline
- Ecosystem support, linking partners to reinforce their capabilities and stimulate crossovers (for instance in the health or energy sectors)

Relevant Action Agenda items F-1, F-2

#### Top COVID Challenge(s)

Supporting ~60 social enterprises and each one's unique needs as they navigate the immediate, medium and long-term impacts of COVID-19. Having a DRK staff member on the board of each organization, our first priority is to help the current portfolio organizations stabilize cash and adapt to crisis leadership.

#### Partnership Opportunity

- DRK seeks early-stage entrepreneurs to support in Africa and India
- DRK shares its pipeline with impact investors and funders to engage in funding opportunities for enterprises with outsized impact
- DRK seeks support from funders to support our fourth philanthropic fund



Role/Function  
Supporting Intermediary,  
Funder  
Entrepreneurs Served  
800+  
People Reached  
4.5+ million  
SDGs Tackled  
All  
Regions  
Global  
Contact details  
Ben Beers

<https://echoinggreen.org/>



Role/Function  
Supporting Intermediary  
Entrepreneurs Served  
100,000  
People Reached  
--  
SDGs Tackled  
All  
Regions  
Europe, Middle East, North  
Africa  
Contact details  
Suzanne Wisse-Huiskes

<https://euclidnetwork.eu/>

For more than 30 years, **Echoing Green** has been in the front lines of solving the world's biggest problems, with transformational leaders willing to challenge the status quo. The organization finds emerging leaders with the best ideas for social innovation as early as possible, and sets them on a path to lasting impact. Echoing Green has provided over \$46 million in seed funding to more than 800 emerging social entrepreneurs around the world.

**COVID-19 Response to Date**

Echoing Green raised and disbursed \$223K in emergency grants to 24 organizations around the world, focusing resources towards organizations with urgent cash flow needs. We opened a second grant application in July 2020 and anticipate distributing an additional \$100K.

Relevant Action Agenda items: I-1, I-2, I-3, I-4, I-5, S-2, S-3, S-5

**Euclid Network (EN)** is the European Network for social enterprises and impact-driven leaders, and a strategic partner to the European Commission. The Network consists of national social enterprise networks, social incubators, social funds and universities, all with the goal of enhancing social entrepreneurship. Together, we undertake projects, advocacy and partnerships to develop a collaborative network of social-impact practitioners.

**COVID-19 Response to Date**

EN conducted a survey among its members (prominent national networks for social entrepreneurship) from 20 countries to assess the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on social entrepreneurship. EN is continuously updating and sharing the results with the European Commission and other stakeholders from the public and private sectors to take coordinated action.

Relevant Action Agenda items: P-1, S-5, G-5

**Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)**

Our primary challenge has been supporting early-stage social entrepreneurs through the crisis, particularly those who report significant financial challenges and the risk of staff layoffs or permanent closure. The COVID-19 crisis has exacerbated long-standing structural inequities impacting vulnerable communities and people of colour.

**Partnership Opportunity**

We invite market actors to accept risk and loosen requirements to fund early-stage social entrepreneurs, particularly BIPOC and marginalized leaders whose communities endure disproportionate impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Echoing Green recently launched an ambitious \$50 million philanthropic fund to support racial equity and inclusive social entrepreneurship efforts over the next three years.

**Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)**

EN's number one challenge is to coordinate and map the current and future needs of social enterprise organizations throughout Europe and its neighbouring countries to address the crisis.

We have also been providing technical assistance related to accessing government support or other relief.

**Partnership Opportunity**

You are invited to join our efforts in:

- Assessing and highlighting needs across member portfolios
- Advancing joint communication efforts to advocate for appropriate fiscal and policy interventions relevant social entrepreneurship, namely, 1. June 2020 report on the response of governments to socio-economic actors in the COVID context, 2. July 2020 policy frameworks, and 3. the European Social Entrepreneurship Monitor, slated for January 2021



Role/Function  
Supporting Intermediary  
Entrepreneurs Served

--  
People Reached

--  
SDGs Tackled  
All

Regions  
Europe  
Contact details  
communication@evpa.eu.com

[www.evpa.eu.com](http://www.evpa.eu.com)

With 300+ members, the **European Venture Philanthropy Association (EVPA)** is the leading network in Europe on venture philanthropy and social investing. We envisage a world in which philanthropy and investment combine to drive sustainable societal impact, enabling 'Investors for Impact' to maximize social impact through increased resources, collaboration and expertise.

**COVID-19 Response to Date**

Coordinating pan-European efforts and streamlining activities, EVPA took the lead in setting up Unitus Europe, a joint platform with the European Foundation Centre (EFC), Donors and Foundations Network in Europe (Dafne), Network European Foundations (NEF) and the Global Steering Group for Impact Investment (GSG)'s national advisory boards to share information, highlight best practices and facilitate supply and demand matching. Around 20 initiatives have been

given visibility, accelerating and streamlining the flow of capital.

Relevant Action Agenda items: P-3, S-3, S-5, I-2

**Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)**

During the emergency phase, the main request was liquidity and direct assistance. Many foundations and social investors concentrated primarily on their existing beneficiaries and known territories. Coordination was only a secondary request. This might change during the recovery and rebuilding phase.

**Partnership Opportunity**

As Unitus Europe is a supply network, further collaboration with the demand side is valuable. Our focus is on pan-European challenges that surpass national boundaries. A concerted effort with multiple partners, including policy-makers, is needed to rebuild in a sustainable manner.



Role/Function  
Supporting Intermediary  
Entrepreneurs Served  
18,000

People Reached  
--  
SDGs Tackled

1, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 16, 17  
Regions  
Central and South America, Africa

Contact details  
Valeria Scorza

<https://www.avina.net/>

**Fundación Avina** is a Latin American foundation focused on producing large-scale change for sustainable development in the region by building collaborative processes among actors in various sectors. Collaborative change processes are the core of Avina's implementation strategy and guiding vision. To fulfil our mission, we work from the South (Latin America and Africa) to advance innovations promoting care for the planet and the well-being of all people.

**COVID-19 Response to Date**

Our organization has provided:

- Emergency grants
- Technical assistance related to operations or human resources, changing the business model, and accessing government support or other relief mechanisms

Relevant Action Agenda items: F-1

**Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)**

Latin America faces a tremendous challenge to come together as a region to implement a coordinated response owing to weak infrastructure for regional integration. As an intermediary federating organization, we aim to act as a convener, seeking to build a regional landscape, to identify, connect, develop and scale common strategies among the various emerging national funds for more effective collaboration.

**Partnership Opportunity**

We invite market actors to mobilize collaborative funds to support civil society organizations in the Global South. We will guarantee the implementation of collaborative, innovative solutions and joint investment through 1. FORGE's Response and Vision Fund, 2. Regional relief response for the urban poor in Latin America, and 3. progress to blended mechanisms for SMEs and NGOs.



Role/Function  
Funder  
Entrepreneurs Served

--  
People Reached  
--  
SDGs Tackled

17  
Regions  
Global

Contact details  
C. Berger

[www.ghrfoundation.org/](http://www.ghrfoundation.org/)

The mission of the **GHR Foundation** is to be of service to people and their limitless potential for good, reimagining what's possible in supporting children in families, shaping robust education models, addressing racial inequities, preventing Alzheimer's disease, and redefining global development for the common good.

**COVID-19 Response to Date**

Financial and non-financial support to:

- Faith, multi-faith and civil society response in communities
- Global platforms advocating renewed systems and values-based change
- COVID-19 therapeutics and immunotherapy research

Relevant Action Agenda items: F-1, F-2, F-3, F-5

**Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)**

COVID-19 response needs are draining funds primarily to front-line responders, including those reserved for longer-term strategic change, and this is not about to adjust. Forward planning is nearly impossible. Reserves will be difficult to build up again in a receding economy resulting in long-term struggles for the sector and its beneficiaries.

**Partnership Opportunity**

We invite conversation with those interested in building coalitions and social change campaigns across sectors capable of reimagining and resetting global development systems at a new level, rooted in human dignity and solidarity.



Role/Function  
Supporting Intermediary  
Entrepreneurs Served  
--  
People Reached  
--  
SDGs Tackled  
All  
Regions  
Global  
Contact details  
Katrina Ngo  
<https://thegiin.org/>

The **Global Impact Investing Network (GIIN)** champions impact investing on a global scale, dedicated to increasing its scale and effectiveness around the world. The GIIN builds critical infrastructure and supports activities and supports education and research that help accelerate the development of coherent impact investing.

**COVID-19 Response to Date**

The GIIN has been supporting the impact investing community in its response to the COVID-19 crisis by providing investors with access to COVID-related data and information, facilitating knowledge exchange on interventions and accelerating collaboration among impact investors. The GIIN serves as the secretariat to the R3 Coalition. Further information is available on our website.

Relevant Action Agenda items: I-4, I-5

**Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)**

Determining how best to support the impact-investing industry to act with urgency in response to the COVID crisis while managing myriad unexpected challenges in deploying new impact investments and/or supporting current investees.

**Partnership Opportunity**

Alliance investor members are invited to join the activities of the Response, Recovery and Resilience Investment Coalition ('R3 Coalition'), seeking to address the negative effects of the COVID crisis by providing investors with insights and convening opportunities to coordinate and accelerate responses to address the crisis. Interested investors are invited to visit our website.



Role/Function  
Investor  
Entrepreneurs Served  
35  
People Reached  
22.7 m  
SDGs Tackled  
All  
Regions  
Africa, Asia, Latin America  
Contact details  
Sarah Alexander

The **Global Innovation Fund** is a non-profit that invests in the development, rigorous testing and scaling of innovations targeted at improving the lives of the world's poorest people. We believe that the best ideas for solving some of the world's most critical problems can come from anyone, anywhere. Through our grants and risk capital, we help breakthrough solutions to global development challenges to maximize their impact and effect meaningful change.

**COVID-19 Response to Date**

Our organization has:

- Supported portfolio organizations to continue their work
- Invested in COVID-related rapid learning mechanisms to help improve field response to the pandemic
- Devoted GIF resources to fund new, COVID-related deals

Relevant Action Agenda items: I-1, I-2, I-3

**Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)**

- Protecting our partner organizations, promoting resilience and social value, to positively impact the lives of 89 million people by 2030
- Ensuring that approaches for the innovation agenda respond in ways that are appropriate to the local context

**Partnership Opportunity**

We invite market actors to a conversation about how the private sector can use its capacity for rapid adaptation and innovation to respond to shocks and uncertainties in collaboration with the public sector, with the ultimate goal of ensuring access to essential health and other services for the vulnerable.



Role/Function  
Supporting Intermediary  
Entrepreneurs Served  
--  
People Reached  
--  
SDGs Tackled  
--  
Regions  
Global, 32 countries plus the EU  
Contact details  
[Clare.Lees@gsgii.org](mailto:Clare.Lees@gsgii.org)

The **Global Steering Group for Impact Investing (GSG)** is an independent global steering group catalysing impact entrepreneurship to benefit people and the planet.

**COVID-19 Response to Date**

The GSG has set out eight action areas to achieve a just and impact-led recovery to benefit all people and our planet. This includes work to boost fund flows to emerging markets, particularly for SME social enterprises and small and growing businesses.

Relevant Action Agenda items: Most from G, F, I, S, especially G-5.

**Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)**

The GSG movement is active in 32 countries, many

in emerging and middle-income situations. We know that many other countries might need our support and tools, but this initial development work is very difficult without face-to-face connection. We believe that healthcare, education, jobs and skills are the critical immediate needs, alongside the challenge of informal settlements. Now is the time for a just and impact-led recovery to benefit all people and our planet.

**Partnership Opportunity**

The GSG has convened the main global and regional impact market builder organizations. Working to achieve together what we cannot deliver individually, we identify key actions, test them with the wider impact movement, and act to achieve a just and impact-led recovery.



Role/Function  
Funder  
Entrepreneurs Served  
--  
People Reached  
--  
SDGs Tackled  
All  
Regions  
Sub-Saharan Africa, South  
Asia, Europe  
Contact details  
[www.greenwood.place](http://www.greenwood.place)



Role/Function  
Supporting Intermediary  
Entrepreneurs Served  
30+  
People Reached  
650,000+  
SDGs Tackled  
1, 5, 7  
Regions  
Africa, Asia, Central & South  
America  
Contact details  
Matthew Newman  
[www.iixglobal.com](http://www.iixglobal.com)



Role/Function  
Funder  
Entrepreneurs Served  
--  
People Reached  
--  
SDGs Tackled  
1, 7, 8, 13  
Regions  
East Africa, South Asia  
Contact details  
Els Remijn  
<https://ikeafoundation.org/>

**Greenwood Place** is a philanthropy accelerator, providing strategic advice and execution capability for a small community of entrepreneurial philanthropists.

#### COVID-19 Response to Date

The philanthropists we support have provided emergency funding to social change leaders undertaking COVID-19 response in Africa, South Asia and Europe and emergency 'surge' funding to our grantee partners whose work has been adversely impacted by COVID-19.

Relevant Action Agenda items: F-1 to F-5

**The IIX (Impact Investment Exchange)** aims to build a more inclusive world by innovating solutions for the empowerment of women, climate action and enhanced community resilience. We have built the world's largest impact investing crowdfunding platform, created innovative financial products like the Women's Livelihood Bond, operated award-winning enterprise technical assistance programmes and established an Impact Institute. The foundation of our work is our proprietary Impact Assessment.

#### COVID-19 Response to Date

Our organization has provided:

- Additional equity financing
- Technical assistance related to pivoting business models, managing financials and accessing government support or other relief mechanisms
- Capital raising support

Relevant Action Agenda items: P-1, I-1

The **IKEA Foundation** works to create a better everyday life for many people. As the philanthropic arm of INGKA Foundation, owner of the Ingka Group of companies, we focus on improving the lives of vulnerable children by enabling their families to create sustainable livelihoods, and on fighting and coping with climate change.

#### COVID-19 Response to Date

The IKEA Foundation supports partners who offer programmes for social entrepreneurs, to identify and understand the challenges they face as a result of the COVID-19 crisis. We have offered partner organizations tailor-made support to ensure that they can continue the important work they do and, where necessary, can adapt to the current situation.

Relevant Action Agenda items: F-1, F-2

#### Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)

Many of our grantee partners have pivoted in order to maintain impact, resulting in significantly increased workload at a time of increased need. Most also face revenue shortfall. These challenges have been compounded by the difficulty for individual team members of delivering in a time of lockdown.

#### Partnership Opportunity

We invite other funders and investors to contact us to find out more about our portfolio partners and their current funding needs.

#### Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)

Since most of the companies we work with operate in a data-poor ecosystem, our main challenge has been to obtain real-time information about the most pressing needs of beneficiaries, to help companies adjust accordingly. The digital tools we have created help us navigate this challenge, and we are about to launch our digital impact verification tool allowing beneficiaries to communicate how they are being affected and what would be the best means of supporting them.

#### Partnership Opportunity

- Use the digital tools we created during the pandemic to ensure continued flow of capital from investors to impact enterprises (regardless of travel limitations)
- Raise capital to support impact enterprises
- Harness IIX's knowledge and experience to effectively deploy grant funding through the IIX Emergency Financing Facility

#### Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)

Since every partner has specific concerns and requests, we consider partner requests on a case-by-case basis and carefully evaluate the options we have to support each partner.

#### Partnership Opportunity

Supporting entrepreneurship initiatives on an ongoing basis with our grant-making, we aim to accelerate the shift towards a green economy by promoting green and inclusive initiatives that enhance livelihoods, create employment and propose innovative solutions to planetary challenges.

For more information on the work that we support, see [www.ikeafoundation.org](http://www.ikeafoundation.org).

Role/Function  
 Funder, Business partner  
 Entrepreneurs Served  
 >100  
 People Reached  
 >2,000,000  
 SDGs Tackled  
 1, 5, 8, 10, 12, 17  
 Regions  
 Global  
 Contact details  
 Åsa Skogström Feldt

[www.ikeasocialentrepreneurship.org/](http://www.ikeasocialentrepreneurship.org/)

Backing and working with social entrepreneurs, **IKEA Social Entrepreneurship** creates greater opportunities and contributes to improving everyday lives around the world. Together with dedicated partners and experienced IKEA co-workers, we co-develop programmes, products and services with our partners to scale up social entrepreneurs' businesses and increase their impact.

**COVID-19 Response to Date**

- Standing by our social enterprise partners
- Maintain and adapting current programmes with intermediaries
- Adding to emergency relief funds via both social entrepreneurs and directly to artisans, e.g. through Acumen and YSB

- Collaborating with other funders and corporates to strengthen the social entrepreneurship ecosystem

Relevant Action Agenda items: C-1, C-2, C-3, F-4

**Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)**

Transparency and accurate assessment of needs.

**Partnership Opportunity**

We are partnering with social entrepreneurs and intermediaries that focus on the vulnerable and marginalized.



Role/Function  
 Supporting Intermediary  
 Entrepreneurs Served  
 650+  
 People Reached  
 --  
 SDGs Tackled  
 8,3,17  
 Regions  
 Primarily focused in the US.  
 Contact details  
 Adrian Kochan

[stopthespread.org](http://stopthespread.org)  
 (PPE/testing)  
[impactassets.org](http://impactassets.org) (other)

The **Impact Assets** "Stop the Spread" COVID Response Program is the convergence of impact investing and private-sector response to solving the immediate and evolving needs caused by COVID-19, including the devastating health and economic impact on communities of colour in the United States. The programme harnesses Impact Assets' impact investing capacity and Stop the Spread's partnership model, connecting and catalysing private- and public-sector response to COVID-19.

**COVID-19 Response to Date**

- Our organization has provided:
- Philanthropic and recoverable grant investment
  - Connecting businesses and organizations to spur production and distribution of PPE

- Vetting and due diligence of COVID-focused entrepreneurs for the investment pipeline

Relevant Action Agenda items: S-4, C-2, F-1

**Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)**

- Equitable access and distribution of PPE
- Affordable testing models

**Partnership Opportunity**

To propose funding opportunities, organizations interested in joining our platform, seeking technical assistance and/or contact with companies according to COVID-related needs are invited to visit our website.



Role/Function  
 Supporting Intermediary  
 Entrepreneurs Served  
 17,000  
 People Reached  
 26 million  
 SDGs Tackled  
 4, 5, 8, 10, 11, 13  
 Regions  
 Global  
 Contact details  
 Gabriela Gandel

<https://impacthub.net/>

The **Impact Hub** is a global network active in 56 countries, supporting over 17,000 social entrepreneurs and innovators with access to a diverse multistakeholder impact-driven community, collaborative space, and over 200 incubation and accelerated capacity-building programmes, from ideation to scale.

**COVID-19 Response to Date**

Our organization has provided technical assistance related to operations or human resources, changing business models, managing financials, managing supply chain, and accessing government support or other relief mechanisms.

Relevant Action Agenda items: S-1, S-4

**Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)**

Our key challenge is to increase support to entrepreneurs given their greater and more urgent needs, when our own resources are tight, particularly in countries without major government support. In addition, funders are primarily focused on supporting ventures in their portfolios, precluding broader ecosystem support.

**Partnership Opportunity**

- We invite market actors to:
- Support our 56 country-wide mapping of financial and non-financial support
  - Develop joint policy influence initiatives on circular economy, social entrepreneurship and inclusive business
  - Provide support to fragile contexts, i.e. countries with a lower developed impact ecosystem and little government support



International  
Labour  
Organization

Role/Function  
Advocacy organization  
Entrepreneurs Served  
--  
People Reached  
--  
SDGs Tackled  
--  
Regions  
Global  
Contact details  
Vic Van Vuuren

<https://www.ilo.org/>

The **International Labour Organization (ILO)** is devoted to promoting social justice and internationally recognized human and labour rights, pursuing its founding mission that social justice is essential to universal and lasting peace.

#### COVID-19 Response to Date

We have taken action on Action Agenda items G-1, G-5

#### Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)

Since the beginning of the crisis, we have been focusing on preserving job creation and on promoting sustainable enterprises supported by adequate social protection.

#### Partnership Opportunity

- Promoting international instruments
- Implementing global programmes to strengthen regulatory frameworks supporting the social and solidarity economy
- Investing in education
- Knowledge sharing
- Engaging in local economic development



Role/Function  
Corporation  
Entrepreneurs Served  
50+  
People Reached  
--  
SDGs Tackled  
3, 5, 10, 17  
Regions  
Global  
Contact details  
Alice Lin Fabiano

<https://www.jnj.com/>

**Johnson & Johnson** believes good health is the foundation of vibrant lives, thriving communities and progress. As the world's largest and most broadly-based healthcare company, we are committed to using our reach and size for good. We strive to improve access and affordability, create healthier communities, and put a healthy mind, body and environment within reach of everyone, everywhere.

#### COVID-19 Response to Date

Our organization has provided:

- Emergency grants
- Emergency debt financing
- Technical assistance related to operations or human resources, and to managing financials

Relevant Action Agenda items: C-1, C-2

#### Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)

Working in locations around the world, the challenges have been:

- Responding to the sheer size and scale of need
- Managing the tension to balance COVID disaster relief grants with maintaining essential health services

#### Partnership Opportunity

We are keen to partner with training institutions, financial lenders, impact investors, catalytic grant-makers to expand scarce, much-needed financing (concessionary and forgivable loans, income share agreements, etc.) Our goal is to increase the pipeline of the health workforce from and representative of the communities the health workers serve.



Role/Function  
Funder  
Entrepreneurs Served  
80  
People Reached  
--  
SDGs Tackled  
1, 5, 8, 9  
Regions  
Global  
Contact details  
Nicolas Lafaye

<https://www.kiva.org>

**Kiva's** mission is to expand financial access to enable underserved communities to thrive. Kiva focuses on global, systems-level change in financial inclusion by crowdfunding loans and unlocking capital for the underserved, improving the quality and cost of financial services and addressing the underlying barriers to financial access around the world. Through Kiva's work, students can pay for tuition, women can start businesses, farmers are able to invest in equipment and families can afford needed emergency care.

#### COVID-19 Response to Date

Kiva has provided:

- Repayment moratorium for 18 social enterprises
- Emergency liquidity injections
- Technical assistance focused on ensuring COVID-19 resilience

Relevant Action Agenda items: I-1, I-2, I-3, F-1, G-4

#### Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)

Assessing needs for our social enterprise portfolio, delivering a quick turnaround in response and mobilizing capital.

#### Partnership Opportunity

Kiva is seeking:

- To connect with other impact investors to bridge financing needs for social enterprises
- To provide support to fund COVID-19 resilience loans on [www.kiva.org](http://www.kiva.org)

Role/Function  
Supporting Intermediary  
Entrepreneurs Served  
--  
People Reached  
--  
SDGs Tackled  
1, 10, 17  
Regions  
Central and South America  
Contact details  
Carolina Suarez  
<http://latimpacto.org/en-us/>

**Latimpacto** seeks to foster greater collaboration and co-investment along the entire continuum of capital to mobilize social impact capital. It promotes the exchange of knowledge on the most innovative and effective models of social investment, management and impact measurement. By grouping different capital providers (foundations, corporations, investors, family offices, professional services, academia and public-sector sources), Latimpacto strives to unlock more resources directed at scaling social and environmental solutions in Latin America.

**COVID-19 Response to Date**

Latimpacto has been connecting investors with social entrepreneurs.

Relevant Action Agenda items: S-4, S-5

**Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)**

Our main challenge has been to connect investors (willing to provide venture philanthropic or highly concessionary and patient forms of capital) with social entrepreneurs.

**Partnership Opportunity**

We invite you to visit our website for opportunities to connect and exchange knowledge, practices and identify synergies.

Role/Function  
Supporting intermediary  
Entrepreneurs Served  
800+  
People Reached  
--  
SDGs Tackled  
All  
Regions  
Global  
Contact details  
Isis Bous  
[www.lexmundiprobono.org/](http://www.lexmundiprobono.org/)

The mission of **Lex Mundi Pro Bono Foundation** is to engage Lex Mundi's global network of more than 150 leading independent law firms in 100+ countries to support and empower those working to bring about high impact, sustainable social and environmental change. Our flagship service is our legal matchmaking programme, which identifies and vets the quality of transnational legal projects with social enterprises for our firms. We also offer legal mentoring services to help social entrepreneurs think through and prioritize their legal issues and become savvy consumers of pro bono services, create and distribute legal guidance documents, point to resources to assist organizations as they grow, and facilitate clinics and live events for the sector.

**COVID-19 Response to Date**

We have been providing:

- Legal support
- Technical assistance in operations, human resources and access to government support or other relief mechanisms
- Mentoring and advocacy

Relevant Action Agenda items: P-1 to P-5, S-1 to S-5, C-2, C-4, C-5, G-4, G-5

**Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)**

Our own funding and staffing are in danger.

**Partnership Opportunity**

Legal support for social entrepreneurs you are supporting as well as the ability to conduct global legal research and support for cross-jurisdictional projects.

Role/Function  
Funder, Investor  
Entrepreneurs Served  
24  
People Reached  
10 million  
SDGs Tackled  
1, 5, 8, 11  
Regions  
Africa, Central & South America, South-East Asia  
Contact details  
Timothy Edwin Rann  
<https://www.mercy Corps.org/what-we-do/ventures>

**Mercy Corps Ventures** is a seed-stage impact investment fund designed to help early-stage entrepreneurs overcome barriers to growth by providing capital and tailored post-investment support. We make investments ranging from \$100K to \$500K in innovative startups operating in financial services, last-mile distribution, agriculture and youth employment. Our unique value comes from how we leverage the Mercy Corps global platform to accelerate the growth of our portfolio companies.

**COVID-19 Response to Date**

Mercy Corps Ventures has provided:

- Access to emergency financing, including debt relief, equity and grants
- Technical assistance related to pivoting business models, managing financials and accessing government support or other relief mechanisms

Relevant Action Agenda item: S-1

**Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)**

We have seen a major retreat of investment capital, particularly in smaller markets and riskier sectors (i.e. agriculture). We find it necessary to more actively lead bridge rounds or extend capital ahead of other investors. Simultaneously, our team is represented on the boards of most of our 24 portfolio companies, so we have devoted significant time and resources to supporting our founders through these uncertain times.

**Partnership Opportunity**

We invite market actors to:

- Share pipeline and co-investment opportunities, as we intend to accelerate our investments and technical assistance through this crisis
- Partner on emergency financing facilities across the capital spectrum
- Leverage Mercy Corps' programming and field office network to scale innovations

## MOTSEPE FOUNDATION

Role/Function  
Funder  
Entrepreneurs Served  
1000+  
People Reached  
1 million+  
SDGs Tackled  
1; 3; 4; 5; 6; 8; 10; 17  
Regions  
Africa, USA  
Contact details  
Imrhan Paruk  
Nebo Legoabe

[motsepefoundation.org](http://motsepefoundation.org)



Role/Function  
Supporting Intermediary  
Entrepreneurs Served  
30  
People Reached  
3385  
SDGs Tackled  
4, 8, 10  
Regions  
South America, Eastern  
Europe  
Contact details  
Filip Wadowski

<https://www.nesst.org/>

The **Motsepe Foundation** is an African philanthropic organization that works with local and international partners to achieve its vision of alleviating poverty and sustainably improving the living standards of the poor, the unemployed and the marginalized people of South Africa, Africa and the globe. Our mission is to bring hope and build a better and brighter future for all people. The Foundation works on the basis of “Ubuntu”, the African philosophy of giving and caring for your neighbour and other members of your community.

### COVID-19 Response to Date

- Providing PPEs and sanitizers to front-line health workers
- Distributing hand sanitizers and disinfectants to poor and vulnerable communities
- Supplying water-tanks, borehole water and sanitary facilities to poor rural and urban communities
- Building additional classrooms, computer centres and laboratories in low-resource schools, and procuring laptops for students to study online
- Promoting available mental health services and setting up mental health webinars

**NESsT** invests in social enterprises that generate dignified jobs for people most in need. We believe that all people deserve an opportunity to earn a decent livelihood and that social entrepreneurship led by resilient and visionary entrepreneurs can make this possible. NESsT selects early-stage enterprises that are committed to empowering low-income communities to confront barriers and overcome poverty, thus transforming lives. We accompany these social entrepreneurs with business services and patient capital, positioning them for high growth and impact. And we ensure that they have the tools to measure their social, financial and environmental impact.

### COVID-19 Response to Date

- NESsT has provided:
- Emergency grants
  - Emergency debt financing
  - Technical assistance related to pivoting business models, managing financials and accessing government support or other relief mechanisms

Relevant Action Agenda items: P-1, P-2, I-1, I-2, I-3, all F and C.

### Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)

- Sourcing certified PPEs
- Ensuring comprehensive and equitable distribution of laptops and online learning material to university students
- Downscaling of staff and funding from major partners due to lockdown

### Partnership Opportunity

We are supporting initiatives in our core areas of activity on an ongoing basis. For more information, see our website: [www.motsepefoundation.org](http://www.motsepefoundation.org).

Relevant Action Agenda items: I-1, I-2, I-3

### Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)

Limited bandwidth to fundraise for emergency capital for the portfolio; balancing between working to support entrepreneurs and supporting staff; pivoting our own technical assistance to a full virtual platform.

### Partnership Opportunity

We are inviting everyone to use our self-assessment Talent tool for social entrepreneurs.

We invite funders to support our Relief fund. 100% of your contribution to the NESsT COVID-19 Relief Fund will reach a high-impact social enterprise that is working to ensure job security and paid benefits to their employees during this time of crisis.



Role/Function  
Supporting Intermediary  
Entrepreneurs Served  
175  
People Reached  
2835  
SDGs Tackled  
11, 16, 17  
Regions  
North America  
Contact details  
Ketsia Saint-Armand

<https://nff.org/>



Role/Function  
Funder  
Entrepreneurs Served  
245+  
People Reached  
1 million+  
SDGs Tackled  
All  
Regions  
Global  
Contact details  
Caroline Bressan

<openroadalliance.org/>



Role/Function  
Supporting intermediary  
Entrepreneurs Served  
150  
People Reached  
--  
SDGs Tackled  
N/A  
Regions  
Africa, Asia, Latin America,  
US  
Contact details  
Sara Johnson

**Nonprofit Finance Fund (NFF)** works toward a more equitable, responsive and valued social sector. We provide financing and consulting to help nonprofits and their funders better connect money to mission results. NFF is a community development financial institution (CDFI) applying 40 years of experience to today's toughest social challenges, and we share what we learn to speed progress.

**COVID-19 Response to Date**

Our organization has provided:

- Emergency grants
- Emergency debt financing
- Technical assistance related to pivoting business models, managing financial and accessing government support or other relief mechanisms

**Open Road Alliance** was founded in 2012 with an ambitious goal: to help the social sector manage and weather the unexpected risks that threaten to derail their impact. Since then, we have become the market leader in social sector bridge funding, providing over \$45 million in one-time grants and loans to non-profits and social enterprises experiencing unexpected, external roadblocks, helping to keep their impact on track.

**COVID-19 Response to Date**

From March to June 2020, Open Road offered COVID-specific grant and loan programmes. In line with our traditional criteria, we continue to offer grants and loans to social-sector organizations affected by COVID and its economic repercussions.

Relevant Action Agenda items: I-2, F-2

**Rippleworks** brings the practical support entrepreneurs need to scale faster and improve more lives. Through short-term, high-impact projects, social ventures partner with an experienced start-up executive to tackle top operational challenges.

**COVID-19 Response to Date**

Rippleworks has provided:

- Technical assistance in the form of four-month projects
- Expert 1:1 support in addressing questions by entrepreneurs
- Webinars on high-impact topics

Relevant Action Agenda items: S-1, S-3

Relevant Action Agenda item: F-1

**Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)**

We are seeking flexible funding to continue serving our clients and to advance our strategy of shifting resources to community-centred organizations led by and serving people of colour.

**Partnership Opportunity**

Reach out to us for any technical assistance or borrowing needs for non-profit clients, particularly community-centred organizations led by and serving people of colour.

Additionally, we are working on bringing our model of loan funds similar to our work with the NYC COVID-19 Response & Impact Fund and would welcome opportunities to collaborate.

**Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)**

We believe that the uncertainty that we are all learning to live with is here to stay. As we refine our proven processes for preserving impact while managing financial risk, we continue to combine our commitment to investors with the urgency to keep dollars moving to those most in need.

Our biggest challenge: not enough time in the day.

**Partnership Opportunity**

The Open Road Impact Fund, now open to outside investors, invests in social enterprises that are experiencing an unexpected, externally caused cash crunch that our bridge loans help to resolve, keeping impact on track and accelerating toward scale.

Open Road also shares a tailored a grant pipeline with impact-driven funding peers.

**Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)**

We struggle with limited bandwidth on our team and have subsequently needed to hire faster than anticipated to support the demand.

We chose not to deploy capital to our portfolio (as none of our 12 investments needed it) and instead have focused on seeking out new investment pipelines during the pandemic, as well as increasing our ability to run more technical assistance projects.

**Partnership Opportunity**

We invite market actors to refer to us portfolio companies that could use operational support in finance, marketing, sales, HR, data science, technology or other functional verticals.



Role/Function

Supporting Intermediary,  
Investor

Entrepreneurs Served  
137

People Reached  
498,000

SDGs Tackled  
1, 2, 5

Regions

Central and South America,  
East and West Africa,  
South-East Asia

Contact details

William Foote

<https://rootcapital.org/>

**Root Capital** — Rural agricultural businesses such as cooperatives, farmer associations and agro-processors have the power to transform vulnerable smallholder farmers' livelihoods and their communities. They often fail, however, to reach their potential because they are too large for philanthropic microcredit and too small for commercial lenders. Our mission is to invest in the growth of these businesses by providing both financing and financial advisory services ("credit + capacity").

**COVID-19 Response to Date**

Root Capital has provided:

- Emergency grants
- Emergency debt financing
- Technical assistance related to managing financials and the supply chain (for more than 10% of portfolio)

Relevant Action Agenda items: I-3, S-3

**Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)**

During the most acute phases of the pandemic, we need to ensure that families can still eat, grow food for others and earn income. In designing our response, Root Capital is prioritizing measures that will help clients both withstand the present crisis, but also 'bounce forward' to growth and success. Further, securing funding will remain a challenge, particularly for 1. debt relief and 2. preserving the organizational resilience of Root Capital.

**Partnership Opportunity**

Limiting the vulnerability of agricultural businesses to this crisis, we harness their potential as platforms through which to assist communities. We therefore seek to mobilize partners to support us as we 1. provide flexible funding to ensure immediate liquidity and support of the most pressing community needs; 2. implement virtual TA on business continuity planning and crisis management; 3. build our organizational resilience to continue our core work.

Relevant Action Agenda items: C-1 to C-5



Role/Function

Corporation

Entrepreneurs Served  
--

People Reached  
--

SDGs Tackled  
All

Regions

Global

Contact details

Samira Khan

<https://www.salesforce.org/>

**Salesforce.org** is the social impact centre of Salesforce focused on partnering with the global community to tackle the world's greatest problems. We are a business unit dedicated to creating solutions for non-profit, educational and philanthropic organizations so they can have greater impact. Operating within Salesforce increases our capacity to innovate on top of the leading CRM platform, to channel the pro-bono power of 45,000+ employees, and to inspire Salesforce customers and partners to join our global movement for good.

**COVID-19 Response to Date**

Salesforce has provided:

- Emergency grants
- Technical assistance related to operations and human resources, and to managing supply chains
- Free access to products
- Solutions for healthcare systems and small businesses
- AppExchange COVID-19 Resource Center
- Access to trusted COVID-19 global data via Tableau

**Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)**

We strive to serve all our stakeholders during the pandemic — employees, customers, partners, healthcare workers, first responders and the broader community.

- Investing in the health and safety of our employees
- Providing grants and financial flexibility to our customers
- Delivering on innovations such as Work.com and Salesforce Care
- Giving back through pro bono / volunteer hours, grants and PPE

**Partnership Opportunity**

- Free/discounted licenses and products for non-profits and social enterprises (Power of Us Hub)
- Pro bono support for Salesforce users
- Volunteer assistance (technical and non-technical) for Salesforce users and non-users
- Opportunities for joint learning, awareness building, co-design and co-innovation



Role/Function  
 Corporation  
 Entrepreneurs Served  
 --  
 People Reached  
 950,000  
 SDGs Tackled  
 4, 5, 8, 12, 13, 17  
 Regions  
 Global  
 Contact details  
 Alexandra Van der Ploeg

<https://www.sap.com/corporate/en/purpose/social-entrepreneurship.html>



Role/Function  
 Supporting Intermediary  
 Entrepreneurs Served  
 410  
 People Reached  
 622 Million  
 SDGs Tackled  
 All  
 Regions  
 Global  
 Contact details  
 Francois Bonnici

[www.schwabfound.org/](http://www.schwabfound.org/)

**SAP** innovations help 440,000 customers worldwide work together more efficiently and use business insight more effectively. SAP has worked for more than a decade to build trust and add value to the social enterprise sector. Our efforts in inclusive and social entrepreneurship range from partnerships and programmes that focus on inspiring early-stage innovation and new ventures, to accelerating and scaling mature social enterprises. We engage a robust pipeline of social entrepreneurship organizations, accelerators, incubators, as well as direct partnerships with social enterprises.

**COVID-19 Response to date**

SAP has provided:

- Emergency grants
- Technical assistance related to operations or human resources, pivoting business models, managing financials and the supply chain

**The Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship**

has for 20 years supported the world's leading social entrepreneurs in their efforts to create a more just, equitable and sustainable world. The Foundation believes that social entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs are key to tackling global challenges, safeguarding the well-being of the most vulnerable, and improving the state of the world. Our goal is to highlight and expand leading models of social innovation and to work with social entrepreneurs and their ecosystem to do so effectively. The Schwab Foundation Annual Awards programme identifies leading innovators and supports their involvement in World Economic Forum events and platforms.

**COVID-19 Response to Date**

Recognizing the unprecedented scale of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Foundation has:

- Been in constant communication with our 500-strong Schwab Awardee community - offering support where possible
- Initiated the COVID-19 Response Alliance for Social Entrepreneurs (author of this report)
- Continuously advocated for social entrepreneurs through the Forum's COVID Action Platform, community and media

Relevant Action Agenda items: C-3, C-4, C-5

**Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)**

The key challenge for us is to scale our capacity-building efforts to social enterprises. This was already difficult in a pre-COVID world but is even more difficult now that almost all support needs to happen virtually and remotely.

**Partnership Opportunity**

Non-profit organization Moving Worlds launched a revenue growth programme for social enterprises, S-GRID, in partnership with SAP to ensure a sustainable COVID-19 recovery. It will help social entrepreneurs build the skills and capacity needed to plug their social or environmental-positive solutions into global value chains and international corporations via training, peer-based support and pro bono consulting.

Relevant Action Agenda items: S1, S2, S3, S4, S5

**Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)**

Schwab Foundation entrepreneurs flagged a number of challenges to their work:

- Ability to keep their organizations running, despite declining revenues
- Need for new skills and strategic pivots, without the capacity to do so
- Urgency of calling for a new economic reality, while also keeping their organizations afloat

As a Foundation, we have done our utmost to do more and be helpful to all, while keeping our current and longer-term goals and activities squarely on the agenda.

**Partnership Opportunity**

We recognize that there are thousands of networks, intermediaries, corporations, investors, funders and government institutions that share our care for and commitment to social entrepreneurs, working every day to support the most vulnerable. Through the COVID-19 Response Alliance, we invite social entrepreneurs to share their impact stories and field actors to deliver on the COVID-19 Action Agenda with us.

Role/Function

Funder

Entrepreneurs Served

67 (organizations)

People Reached

171 million

SDGs Tackled

7

Regions

Africa, India, Asia

Contact details

Nicholas Jones

[www.shellfoundation.org](http://www.shellfoundation.org)

**Shell Foundation (SF)** is a UK-registered charity, founded by Shell in 2000, that creates and scales business solutions to enhance access to energy and affordable transport. Our purpose is to serve the low-income communities most affected by these issues. We use grant funding and non-grant instruments as appropriate, alongside extensive business support, and allocate one-third of our budget to build a stronger enabling environment for social enterprises in target countries.

**COVID-19 Response to Date**

Shell Foundation has provided:

- Business resilience funding and additional non-financial support for portfolio companies
- First-loss funding to a sector relief vehicle for off-grid energy providers
- Commissioning research to understand the implications of COVID-19 on SDG7
- Support for our Partners to ensure safeguarding remains a priority at a time where risks are heightened

Relevant Action Agenda items: F-1, F-2, F-3

**Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)**

- Business continuity and liquidity challenges faced by portfolio companies, and the ability to realign strategy to changing market conditions
- Slowdown of funding into the sector is a serious issue
- Ability of companies to raise capital (outside of current lenders) will be a major challenge that calls for investor action
- The well-being of management teams dealing with the crisis

**Partnership Opportunity**

We form long-term partnerships with a small number of potential game-changers: pioneers of new products and services that deliver social and environmental benefit to low-income consumers.

We work to identify market failures behind global challenges and use our networks to find potential partners.



Role/Function

Funder

Entrepreneurs Served

116 (organizations)

People Reached

--

SDGs Tackled

All

Regions

Global

Contact details

Claire Wathen

[www.skollfoundation.org/](http://www.skollfoundation.org/)

The **Skoll Foundation** seeks to catalyse transformational social change by investing in, connecting and championing social entrepreneurs and other change leaders who together advance equitable solutions to the world's most pressing problems.

**COVID Response-19 to Date**

Skoll Foundation has provided:

- Emergency grant support to Skoll Awardees that have been adversely impacted by the pandemic and/or are directly responding to it
- Grants to other change leaders undertaking COVID-19 response in Africa, Latin America, South Asia and the United States

Relevant Action Agenda items: F-1 to F-5

**Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)**

Many Skoll Awardees have been hampered in their work by lockdowns and other measures, resulting in programmatic setbacks. Many also face financial challenges (e.g. shortfalls in revenue or donor funding) which have led to difficult decisions such as cutting personnel costs and pivoting programmes. These challenges are compounded by recent natural disasters (e.g. tropical storms) and the fact that some Awardee staff contracted COVID-19.

**Partnership Opportunity**

We invite change leaders to share their COVID-19 responses and partnership opportunities at: <https://skoll.org/connect>. The Foundation will get in touch promptly.



Role/Function

Funder

Entrepreneurs Served

55

People Reached

100 million

SDGs Tackled

1, 3, 8

Regions

Global

Contact details

Meredith Shields

[sorensonimpactfoundation.org/](https://sorensonimpactfoundation.org/)

**The Sorenson Impact Foundation (SIF)** invests in early-stage companies that are developing innovative, scalable solutions for underserved communities around the world. SIF companies operate across five continents and have impacted over 100 million lives worldwide, the majority of which are classified as low-income or base-of-pyramid. As an impact investor, SIF is also dedicated to building the field of impact investing and social entrepreneurship through its annual grant programme.

**COVID-19 Response to Date**

SIF has made several direct investments in social entrepreneurs globally throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and has also been committed to promoting collaboration in the broader impact investor arena to spur more investment activity. SIF was an early supporter and funder of Village Capital's COVID-19 Coalition and the GIIN R3 Coalition.

Relevant Action Agenda items: P-4, P-5, S-2

**Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)**

The need for capital for social entrepreneurs is eclipsing the capacity of single organizations, so collaborating as an investor community and pooling capital to activate solutions are required and to be scaled fast enough to respond to the current crisis and the concurrent economic impact.

**Partnership Opportunity**

SIF is in the process of using Village Capital's Abaca platform to target potential co-investors for the companies in which we invest. We invite other impact investors to join us on the platform to share their own portfolio companies and pipelines, so that we can work together to advance social entrepreneurs playing vital roles in communities worldwide.



THOMSON REUTERS FOUNDATION

Role/Function

Supporting Intermediary

Entrepreneurs Served

1250+ (TrustLaw network)

People Reached

--

SDGs Tackled

All

Regions

Global

Contact details

Giulia Corinaldi

<https://www.trust.org/>

**Thomson Reuters Foundation (TRF)** is the corporate foundation of Thomson Reuters, the global news and information services company. We work to advance media freedom, foster more inclusive economies and promote human rights. Through news, media development, free legal assistance and convening initiatives, we combine our services to drive systemic change. We use the combined power of journalism and the law to build global awareness of critical issues faced by humanity, inspire collective leadership and help shape a prosperous world.

**COVID-19 Response to Date**

Thomson Reuters Foundation has:

- Upskilled reporters covering the health crisis in regions braced for the worst
- Provided legal resources for NGOs and social enterprises
- Provided extensive news coverage of the impact of the coronavirus

Relevant Action Agenda items: S-1, S-2, S-4, C-4

**Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)**

Our biggest challenge has been to deliver our programming and services virtually to continue to support our beneficiaries and meet grant commitments. Additionally, we needed to swiftly understand our social enterprise members' issues to launch a response adequately matching their needs.

**Partnership Opportunity**

Through TrustLaw, the global pro bono legal programme of TRF, we can provide social entrepreneurs with access to legal support, research, tools and webinars to help them navigate legal issues that could arise during the pandemic.

Through TRF's dedicated Inclusive Economies vertical, our journalists cover social entrepreneurship. We welcome collaborations with other organizations to grow this coverage globally.



Role/Function  
 Government / Supporting  
 Intermediary  
 Entrepreneurs Served  
 101 (organizations)  
 People Reached  
 200 million +  
 SDGs Tackled  
 1, 10, 17  
 Regions  
 Global  
 Contact details  
 Luciana Aguiar

[businesscalltoaction.org/](https://businesscalltoaction.org/)

**UNDP’s Business Call to Action** is a global inclusive business platform advancing core business solutions for development to accelerate progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We challenge companies to develop inclusive business models that engage people at the base of the economic pyramid (BoP). Our members are market leaders with a track record of developing innovative, inclusive business models reaching low-income communities and contributing to global development.

**COVID-19 Response to Date**

Business Call to Action has:

- Published guidelines on effective COVID-19 responses for companies engaging with low-income populations
- Set up an online platform for SMEs to help overcome challenges brought by COVID-19, reducing information asymmetries
- Introduced webinars on business resilience, facilitating peer-to-peer learning

Relevant Action Agenda items: P-1, P-5, S-1, S-3, S-4, S-5

**Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)**

Raising long-term funding to support our members’ business continuity for delivering basic services in fragile and least-developed countries.

Strengthening business resilience to overcome the pandemic and its adverse social and economic impact.

**Partnership Opportunity**

We invite market actors to connect with us to share:

- Innovative business models that tackle poverty and inequality
- Solutions that can support governments with COVID-19 responses
- Partnership opportunities with organizations that can create value for supporting entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs in low-income markets



Role/Function  
 Government / Supporting  
 Intermediary  
 Entrepreneurs Served  
 --  
 People Reached  
 --  
 SDGs Tackled  
 --  
 Regions  
 --  
 Contact details  
 Elizabeth Boggs-Davidsen

<https://sdgimpact.undp.org/>

**SDG Impact**, a global initiative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), was launched in September 2018 with the goal of helping to eliminate barriers and drive more investment capital at scale for the achievement of the SDGs. SDG Impact is providing investors and businesses with needed clarity, insight, and tools to support and authenticate their contributions. SDG Impact works on three pillars to address the principal barriers that investors have identified as being key: 1. Impact management, which includes the development of SDG impact standards and seals; 2. Impact intelligence, i.e., market intelligence on the SDG-impact, risks and return profiles of concrete investments including SDG investor maps; and 3. Impact facilitation, i.e., strengthening of national investor and private-public networks to create deals and capitalize on SDG-aligned investment opportunities.

**COVID-19 Response to Date**

Trillions of dollars are being released to recover from the impacts of COVID-19. The SDG Impact initiative is developing tools to ensure investment capital is able to flow to the right destinations and investment opportunities, and scaled and authentic investment practices.

Relevant Action Agenda items: G-2, G-4, G-5

**Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)**

The global economic recession and financial turmoil from COVID-19 risk derailing SDG achievement. Even before the pandemic, the 2020 Financing for Sustainable Development Report (FSDR) of the Inter-agency Task Force noted that there was backsliding in many areas. The heavy losses and intense volatility of markets due to the crisis hamper activity even more.

**Partnership Opportunity**

SDG Impact Standards for enterprises is slated for launch in September 2020. For more information on how you can contribute, please visit our site or contact us at [sdgimpact.standards@undp.org](mailto:sdgimpact.standards@undp.org).



Role/Function  
 Funder (Public Sector)  
 Entrepreneurs Served  
 300  
 People Reached  
 20,000  
 SDGs Tackled  
 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 17  
 Regions  
 Sub-Saharan Africa  
 Contact details  
 Michele Rivard

[www.usadf.gov/](http://www.usadf.gov/)

**The United States African Development Foundation (USADF)** is an independent US government agency established by Congress to invest in African grassroots organizations, entrepreneurs and small and medium-sized enterprises. USADF investments promote local economic development by increasing incomes, revenues and jobs, and creating pathways to prosperity for marginalized populations and underserved communities. Using a community-led development approach, USADF provides seed capital and local project management assistance improving lives and impacting livelihoods while addressing some of Africa’s biggest challenges around food insecurity, insufficient energy access and unemployment, particularly among women and youth.

**COVID-19 Response to Date**

- USADF has been providing :
- Emergency grants
  - Technical assistance related to operations or human resources, pivoting business models, managing financials and the supply chain

Relevant Action Agenda item: F-3

**Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)**

Protecting previously made investments in our active and non-active portfolios.

**Partnership Opportunity**

We are particularly seeking blended finance partnership opportunities, through which USADF would employ its unique development model to provide grant funding alongside other investments. USADF is in multiple such partnerships, particularly in the off-grid energy sector.

Relevant Action Agenda items: F-1, F-4



Role/Function  
 Funder  
 Entrepreneurs Served  
 --  
 People Reached  
 --  
 SDGs Tackled  
 3,5,6,17  
 Regions  
 Global  
 Contact details  
 Ankunda Kariisa

[www.usaid.gov/cii](http://www.usaid.gov/cii)

**The Center for Innovation and Impact (CII)** in the USAID Bureau for Global Health encourages business-minded approaches and accelerates impact against some of the world’s most important health issues. The Center invests seed capital in the most promising ideas and applies a rigorous, market-oriented approach to reduce the time it takes to transform discoveries in the lab to impact on the ground.

**COVID-19 Response to Date**

- We have:
- Shaped a plan for a \$20 million COVID-19 Race to Market Grand Challenge to identify and scale late-stage innovations
  - Curated a list of impact-ready innovations for COVID-19, including landscape analysis and assessment of 200+ responses from Innovation Request for Innovation
  - Provided financial support to several innovators in our network

**Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)**

Our greatest challenge is to identify the most effective way to assist given the great uncertainty, to focus our support where it aligns with our current portfolio and focus geographies, and to identify when and how investment capital is best used (as compared to grant resources, which are far more limited).

**Partnership Opportunity**

We are most interested in partnering with other funders seeking to support the COVID-19 Race to Market Grand Challenge.

Relevant Action Agenda items: P-1, P-2, P-5, I-4, S-2, S-3

**Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)**

Funding to provide more robust support for our programme alumni — most of our capital is highly restricted and directed to supporting new entrepreneurs. We would like to extend and have more structured programming and resources for our alumni companies, which have largely been self-funded to date.

**Partnership Opportunity**

We are most keen to highlight the Abaca COVID Response Pipeline to connect entrepreneurs and investors, as shared on a previous Alliance call.



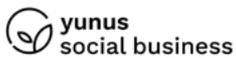
Role/Function  
 Supporting Intermediary  
 Entrepreneurs Served  
 1100  
 People Reached  
 41 million  
 SDGs Tackled  
 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10  
 Regions  
 Americas, Middle East, South Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, Western Europe  
 Contact details  
 Allie Burns

<https://vilcap.com/>

**Village Capital** supports seed stage, impact-driven start-ups around the world. Since 2009, our team has supported more than 1000 entrepreneurs in 28 countries through accelerator programmes, workshops and forums. Our alumni companies have raised more than \$4 billion in follow on capital. In addition, our affiliated fund, Vila Investments has invested in 110 peer-selected start-ups from these accelerator programmes.

**COVID-19 Response to Date**

- Village Capital has been providing:
- Additional equity financing
  - Technical assistance related to pivoting business models, managing financials, accessing government support or other relief mechanisms



Role/Function  
 Supporting Intermediary,  
 Investor  
 Entrepreneurs Served  
 66  
 People Reached  
 13 million  
 SDGs Tackled  
 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 13  
 Regions  
 South America, East Africa,  
 South Asia  
 Contact details  
 Saskia Bruysten

**Yunus Social Business (YSB)** believes in the power of business to end poverty. Our work offers a dignified hand out of poverty to millions of people through Social Business - a model pioneered by our Co-Founder, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Muhammad Yunus. YSB runs philanthropic funds for social businesses and a venture builder for corporate social businesses. YSB is headquartered in Germany with investment teams in Brazil, Colombia, India, Kenya and Uganda. Our social businesses serve over 13 million people in emerging and developing countries.

**COVID-19 Response to Date**

YSB has been providing:

- Emergency payroll grants so social businesses can keep their teams employed and recover more easily
- Technical assistance related to operations or human resources, managing financials and the supply chain

Relevant Action Agenda items: P-1, P-5, I-2, S-1, S3

**Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)**

Raising long-term recovery funding (grant capital) in 2021 and beyond to support our social businesses in dealing with a potential global recession and slow recovery.

**Partnership Opportunity**

Partnering with other intermediaries to raise recovery funding for social businesses serving the bottom of the pyramid in emerging economies and coordinated learnings through recovery response.

**60\_decibels**

Role/Function  
 Corporation  
 Entrepreneurs Served  
 300  
 People Reached  
 --  
 SDGs Tackled  
 All  
 Regions  
 Global  
 Contact details  
 Sasha Dichter

[www.60decibels.com/](http://www.60decibels.com/)

**60\_decibels** is a tech-enabled, social impact measurement and customer intelligence company. Using a Lean Data approach, 60\_decibels collects social impact and customer feedback data through phone surveys and other methods. 250+ trained researchers in 30+ countries speak directly to customers, employees or beneficiaries to understand their experience.

**COVID-19 Response to Date**

Our organization has implemented a global rollout of the measurement of customer-level impact of COVID-19 in 30 countries.

Relevant Action Agenda item: P-1

**Top COVID-19 Challenge(s)**

60\_decibels had to pivot quickly to support data gathering to better understand the impact of COVID-19.

**Partnership Opportunity**

We invite market actors to join us in broadening data-gathering processes during COVID-19 to be able to respond to customers appropriately.

# Acknowledgements

The World Economic Forum thanks the members of the Alliance as well as other leading academic, industry, NGO and government agency experts who provided invaluable insights and perspectives.

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# Endnotes

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