



# ACTIVITY REPORT 2020



HAND IN HAND SWITZERLAND



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## Introduction

Hand in Hand Switzerland is a registered, tax-exempt, non profit association governed by statutes and by Articles 60 et seq. of the Swiss Civil Code.

We initiate social change by engaging in dialogue, knowledge sharing and cross-learning to address the world's pressing problems ranging from poverty alleviation to climate change. We hope to create projects that have impact and ability for policy advocacy and stakeholder engagement.

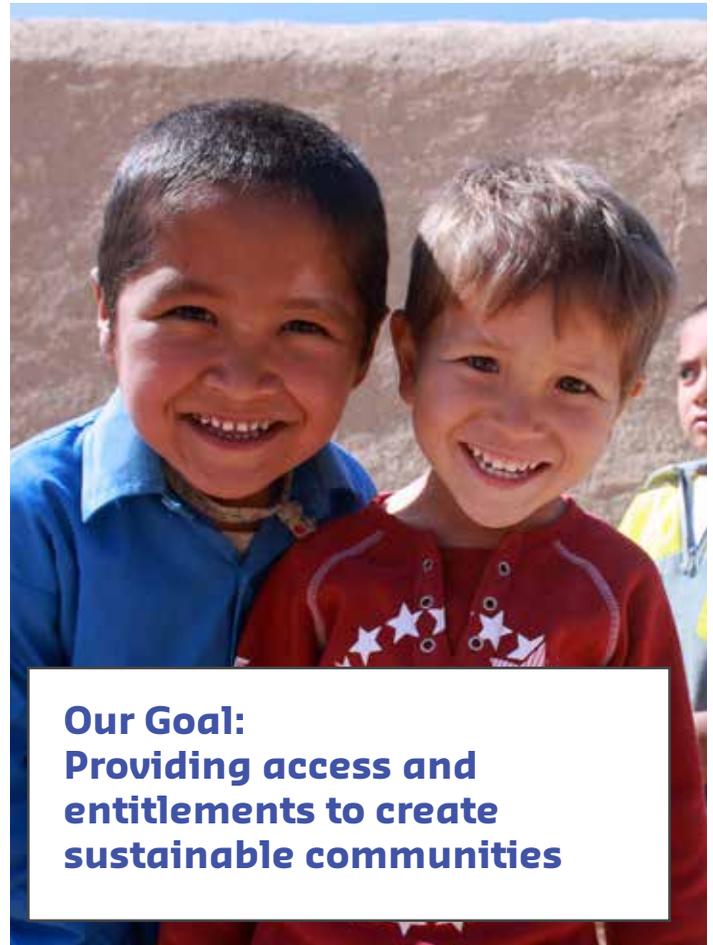
## The association was set up in 2013 with the objectives of

- Arranging for and/or providing managerial, financial, technical support and specialized services such as research, monitoring and evaluation for Hand in Hand India and its group institutions.
- Promoting the Hand in Hand brand in the development sector
- Networking and collaborating with organizations with similar goals etc.

We hope to create projects that have impact and ability for policy advocacy and stakeholder engagement

## Our Approach:

- Pro poor and bottom up approach
- Participatory learning
- Mainstreaming gender in all actions
- Transparency and accountability in all actions
- Partnership and coordination with local institutions
- Fostering global cooperation



**Our Goal:**  
**Providing access and entitlements to create sustainable communities**



## President's Message

2020 has been an extremely productive year for Hand in Hand Switzerland Association. While we have continued to implement several impactful initiatives in India, we have forged new partnerships and have customised programmes and activities to cope with the prevailing pandemic.

In a pre-pandemic world, the residential special training centre supported by Hand in Hand Switzerland's partner, Humanium, would cater to close to 50 girl children often child labourers or school drop-outs. These centres would be completely residential, offering them support in

terms of education, extra curricular activities and psychological. But with schools entirely shut, the team pivoted to implement 'satellite training centres' where the teachers went to the students and taught them in small groups. With support from partners, funding was extended and repurposed to provide tablets and stationary to aid this sort of learning. The smiles in the faces of the children who have a second opportunity at life itself is the true reward!

On the other hand, our projects related to combat climate change through organic farming technology and food processing continue with introduction of state of art

processing technology and regular farmers field schools for tribal farmers. Our state of art ecofarm is supporting 100 farmers in remote pockets, while our new project on well recharge pits with is replenishing the ground water table.

Aside from our existing initiatives, we received a grant for Combatting Covid19 from Lonza. This grant has been used to facilitate production of sanitizers and create awareness on Covid19 protocols to 500,000 households in India. This project has been pivotal in advocacy and preparedness to combat the pandemic and has arrested the spread of the virus! We have also forged new partnerships and have started to implement a new child friendly village and a dream village initiative for community development and upliftment.

To keep in touch with our partners and friends in Switzerland, we hosted a webinar on 'Women Leadership in Crises' with a stellar line up with representatives from Lonza, Giving Women and UNFCCC. The webinar was a timely session to see how women have coped with Covid and in leading teams successfully through these very volatile times! We have also rebranded our name as Hand in Hand Switzerland and are on our way to shifting our headquarters to Geneva.

2020 has taught us several learnings, but most of all, it has taught us leadership, resilience, adaptability and has enabled us to unlock the power to technology and fruit-

ful partnerships for continuing to create impact. I take this opportunity to thank each of our partners and donors for their unflinching support. I thank our Advisory Committee and Board for their support and guidance. I thank my entire team for their passion and commitment to making the world a better place!

**Dr. Kalpana Sankar**  
President

# 1. Combating COVID19

## Supported by: Lonza

The objective of the 'Combating COVID19 by Lonza and Hand in Hand India was to prepare sanitizers, create awareness of the pandemic and distribute safety equipment to frontline workers and the community. The activities were handled by three of our interventions - the Enterprises team, the Solid Waste Management (SWM) teams and the Health team.

Our Enterprises team brought together female-run enterprises of our Self Help Groups to prepare sanitizers, masks and soaps to help combat the pandemic. Jaga enterprises prepared 150,000 containers of 50 ml and 1 litre sanitizer bottles.

Entrepreneurs from Kancheepuram produced 91,000 reusable cotton masks for the general public. A further 9600 handwash soaps have been prepared by our women entrepreneurs to be distributed.

The Solid Waste Management team took on 20 locations across Tamil Nadu state and Puducherry covering a population of 500,000 in these places. Our frontline waste management workers or Green Friends were briefed on the pandemic safety measures both for themselves and for the

public as well. A sample hand sanitizer was distributed to the public in the locations above along with instructions on safeguarding against the pandemic. 1200 of our Green Friends were provided Personal Protective Equipment such as gloves and coats. We also provided power spraying machines to the local authorities for disinfecting common areas. Free hand sanitizer dispensing kiosks were set up by the team at 20 of our project locations.

Our Health intervention team took on the population of 50 villages in Sriperumbudur, Thiruvannamalai and Chengalpattu districts of Tamil Nadu. The team established a toll-free helpline number to help the local community to cope with stress caused by the pandemic. The number had trained personnel providing information about the pandemic, hygiene practices and worked to bust myths and misconceptions about COVID19.

The community was supplied with a sprayer pump and chemical disinfectants. A door-to-door campaign gave information to 10,000 families in 50 panchayats.

The project was extremely well received by the community at large and has significantly contributed to awareness on health and hygiene.

# Our Achievements

150,000 containers of 50 ml

1 litre sanitizer bottles.

Stitching of 91,000 reusable cotton masks

Preparation of 9.600 Handwash soaps

1200 Personal Protective Equipment distributed



## 2. Replenishing the water table through Well Recharge Pits

**Supported by : Audemars Watkins Foundation**

In Aranganur village, Tamil Nadu, locals and farmers faced a problem of dwindling water table. Water for crops was becoming a severe issue and the livelihood of farmers was at threat. The goal of the Audemars Watkins Well Recharge Project is to augment the water table using well recharge pits. During the course of the project, defunct wells will be rejuvenated with recharge pits to harvest rainwater. This will increase the groundwater table and increase the yield of functional wells. The recharge wells will ensure further depletion of the water table doesn't happen. Through this project, we hope to improve food production and better well-being of the community.

**Number of well recharge pits constructed : 42**

**Number of families benefitted : 225**





**Farmers benefited : 50**

**Number of traditional paddy varieties introduced: 6**

### **3. Reviving Traditional Seeds**

**Supported by: Erbacher Stiftung**

Organic farming is catching on fast in India and one of the natural farming processes we encourage among farmers is going back to our traditional crops. However, seeds of these traditional varieties are rare. Farming is also affected by the changing climatic conditions. This project aims to conserve, promote and enable the production of quality seeds of Traditional Paddy Varieties through organic means. The goal of the project is to create access to these seeds for farmers in Kancheepuram district, Tamil Nadu. These paddy varieties are adaptable to climatic vagaries and hence are sustainable. Through the Erbacher Foundation Seed project, existing Farmer Producer Organizations will also be provided support for seed processing, cultivation and sale of these varieties.

At a macro level, the project will also contribute to conserving these traditional seed varieties, and promote a healthier future.

## 4. Creating a Dream Village

**Supported by: J&K Wonderland Foundation and Beatrice-Caterina Zai Stiftung**

The J&K Wonderland Dream Village project aims to transform Melnagarampedu village into a self-reliant and resilient rural community. The project focuses on empowering children and women, providing quality education and preventing dropouts, skill training women to take up business.

In the areas of education, the project has created a Child Learning Centre to support slow learners in specific subjects. Smart classrooms with touch boards and mini-libraries in classrooms help children

keep abreast of current trends. Constant awareness programmes ensure that the community sends children to school. To help young girls with self-confidence and communications, we formed a girls child club, distributed bicycles for an easy ride to school and renovated toilets for girls to help maintain hygiene.

Women in Melnagarambedu have been trained in skills that will help them start a business such as developing seedlings for plant nurseries, Aari embroidery and also group dairy enterprises. To ensure a participatory approach, an exercise was conducted to map the resources of the villages and prioritize the needs of the village and implement the project accordingly.



## 5.Processing organic food at Jawad Hills

**Supported by: City of Onex**

The Jawadhu hills food processing unit of Hand in Hand India has been kickstarted. This project plans to augment the training facilities in the Jawad Hills through the provision of Dormitory facilities such as beds and audio visual aids in the training centre.



# 1. Residential Special Training Centres and Satellite Teaching Centres, Madhya Pradesh

**In partnership with : Humanium**

With the onset of the pandemic in 2020 and a series of lockdowns, schools were closed since March. The Hand in Hand India Residential Special Training Centre at Nalcha, Madhya Pradesh was closed too.

However, to understand the status of the children, the team conducted a study among the parents to see if the children would be able to attend online classes. Though the willingness was there, very few devices were available.

Based on this, the team came up with an innovative idea - Satellite Teaching Centres (STC). Nine such centres were established at 20 locations in Madhya Pradesh where the concentration of RSTC children was high. The teachers take turns coming to the centres that function between 9.30 am to 3 pm. To encourage children, the team distributed education kits - pens, pencils, sharpeners and lesson copies. The STCs have brought much joy to the otherwise mundane world of the RSTC children.



## Our Achievements

**Tablets distributed to Satellite Teaching Centres in Madhya Pradesh - 37**

**Number of children enrolled - 81**

**Number of satellite centres - 9**

## 2. Creating a Child-friendly Village

### In partnership with : Humanium

The Humanium Project at Perumbakkam focuses on creating a child-friendly village. The areas it focuses on are eliminating child labour, providing access to education and child rights protection. During the past year, the team commemorated special days that drew awareness to the causes mentioned - World Day Against Child labour, International Girl Child day and more. Regular cluster level School Management Committee training help in bringing efficiency and awareness of rights in schools.

At the Perumbakkam Child Learning Centre, 29 slow learners are being coached in select subjects, with the help of advanced learning methods and Tablets for digital learning.

During the pandemic, the HiH India team ensured that the streets of the village were sanitized regularly and awareness on hygiene practices were given to the community. A general health camp was conducted where more than 100 people benefitted. A model Eco-farm was established at a new location in Perumbakkam and the eco-certification procedures are in progress. Three different types of paddy were cultivated in the farm during the monsoon season. The team also gave training to the farmers in sustainable farming practices.



### Our Achievements

**Model classrooms  
created - 25**

**School Management Training - 50**

**Family Business  
Created - 100**

**Tablets provided for Child  
Learning Centres in Tamil  
Nadu - 8**

## Completed Projects

### 1. A model school canteen at Bangalore

**Supported by: Bel Foundation**

Through our Child Labour Elimination Programme, we have restored childhoods and enabled the education of under privileged children. One of the many ways we do this is to take up infrastructure upgrades of Government-run schools - rebuilding toilets, classrooms and more. The goal of the Bel Foundation project was to provide a larger and safer kitchen and storeroom for the Basavana-

halli Government higher Primary School at Nelamangala, Bengaluru. The school did not have enough space to cook and serve meals to children in a hygienic manner. The project was completed this year and now gave a safer building of 1,000 square feet and a storeroom too. This would help cook and provide daily meals to 350 children between the ages of 6 and 14. After the launch of the project, an awareness programme was conducted for the 350 students on self-hygiene, hand-washing techniques, the importance of child rights and education



## 2. Upgrading the Food Processing Unit at Jawadhu Hills

**Supported by: City of Onex**

The Onex Project has provided the necessary security infrastructure for the Food Processing Unit that has been established in the Jawad Hills. This has contributed to the stable functioning of the unit without hindrance from outside elements.



## 3. Sustainable Organic Farming Technology

**Supported by: Erbacher Stiftung**

The SOFT project was set up to aid farmers in the Wallajabad block. The project helped the participants, farmers, to adopt organic production using better input production technology. The skill training was given to these farmers helped them in understanding newer technologies that helped them with cost-cutting. The adoption of these techniques saved them production cost and thereby increased income. The varieties of paddy that were identified as suitable for organic production were White ponni and kichadi samba. The Increase in water holding capacity, reduction in the frequency of irrigation, synergy of traditional varieties for organic production methods were the other benefits realized in the farms.

## Activities in Geneva - 2020

### 1. Webinar on Women's Leadership in times of crisis

On October 30th, 2020, Hand in Hand organized its annual event online with a webinar on Women's Leadership in times of crisis. More than 50 participants had the occasion to listen to inspiring panelists including:

**Ms Atalanti Moquette,**  
Founder of Giving Women

**Ms. Claribelle Poujol,**  
Head of Resource Mobilization and Partnerships at UNFCCC

**Dr. Sanna Fowler,**  
Global Head of External Communications at Lonza

**Dr. Kalpana Sankar,**  
President of Hand in Hand Switzerland

**Moderated by Emilie Compagnie,**  
Fundraising Consultant and Partner at A.CommUnity

They all agreed that the COVID-19 crisis has shaken up all sectors internationally and questioned everyone's resilience and ability to adapt and move forward within a fast-changing environment. Nevertheless, the panelists gave examples of adaptation, flexibility and

boldness and debated on how crisis can also be seen as opportunities to foster sustainable change and create positive impact, especially for women. They shared both their professional and private adaptation tips.

The audience could ask their questions and left with key takeaways such as:

- **Pandemic has brought people from all over the world with the capacity to share knowledge with the larger public. It is all about human connections without the borders**
- **Paved way for massive training on technology especially for women and children who can easily adapt.**
- **Adapting both human and production side issues at the company level has inspired solutions and better negotiation process with the governments, which is a great behavioral change.**
- **With the restrictions and lockdown in place staying connected with the family and friends are important. Striking the right balance between personal and professional life is also important. Supporting and helping others through this crisis goes a long way.**

- **Staying positive and accepting help is also a thought to ponder on. Keeping in touch with the team, company, organization is also very important.**
- **With less travel and flexibility between work and home, gives more time for personal activities and family.**
- **Smooth transition of traditional to digital jobs for women is integral.**
- **More transparent and clear communications are needed to stay fear-free.**
- **Taking more responsibility for what we see to bring in more equality.**

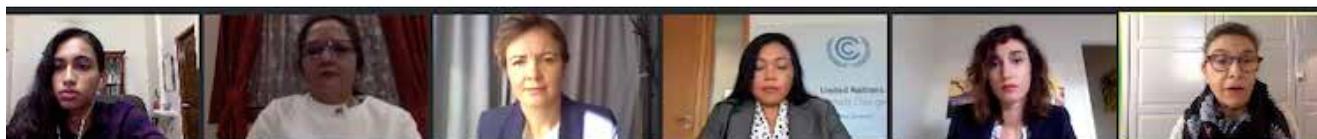
The webinar ended on positive and hopeful notes for the future and the

opportunities for women during this difficult time we are all facing.

## **2. Strengthening our communication**

In 2021, we launched our new website! The website clearly communicates our vision and mission and our key areas of focus in terms of knowledge sharing, partnerships and fundraising. Check out [www.hihswiss.org](http://www.hihswiss.org)

In 2020, we also sent out our very first newsletter. Soon to be a quarterly feature, this will have updates on our work in our partner countries, in Geneva and around Switzerland.



## **Executive Committee**

**Dr. Kalpana Sankar**, President

**Mr. Amitava Tripathi**, Secretary

**Mr. Padmanabhan**, Treasurer

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## **Advisory Committee**

**Mr. Amitava Tripathi**, Chairman

**Mrs. Vera P. Weill Halle**

**Mr. Todd Wade**

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## **Management Team**

**Mr Sandip Mookerjee**, Geschäftsführer

**Mr. Arndt Soret**, Chief Executive Officer

**Ms. Sahaana Sankar**,

Development Officer

**Ms. Emilie Compagnie**,

Fundraising & Development Consultant

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## **Auditors**

**M/s Michel de Preux & Associés SA**

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## **Accountants**

**M/s Consima Treuhand**

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