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# CHANGES AMID CHALLENGES: 'SHARE & CARE 2020 YEAR IN REVIEW' FEATURED IN NEWS INDIA TIMES

**DATE: March 04, 2021**

**IN: Village Upliftment, Disaster Relief, News, Healthcare, Female Empowerment, Education, Sanitation & Hygiene**

We are appreciative to **News India Times** for featuring Share & Care in a multi-page special report on March 5, 2021. Below is the article as it appears in the publication.



Every year we set goals to better serve those in need, and 2020 was no different. We started 2020 with a plan to help 94,920 people through our lifesaving signature programs. We knew it was a big challenge, but we were up for the task.

But then, the COVID-19 pandemic swept the globe, and we had to shift many of our plans to focus on addressing the most urgent needs facing our beneficiaries in the U.S. and India. Although 2020 was a difficult year for all of us, we are proud of what we accomplished.

**In 2020 our grants of 1.5 million dollars in cash and kind helped approximately 110,000 people in our Disaster Relief, Women Empowerment, Education, Healthcare, and Village Upliftment programs.**

## **38th Annual Gala: Over Half A Million In Funds Raised**

The theme of our 38th Annual Gala — "Rising Together" — recognized the changes and challenges presented by the pandemic and honored the bonds of humanity and hope that connect communities around the world. Due to COVID-19 this was our first-ever virtual gala in which all could participate.

The evening included a short film outlining our COVID-19 disaster relief efforts and our ongoing Signature Programs. There was an outpouring of support including warm wishes from Padma Shri Ashaji Parekh and from Congressman Frank Pallone, who recalled a trip to India and thanked Share & Care for the organization's extensive COVID-19 disaster relief efforts.

*"COVID has been a big issue in India. Lots of people have died, especially poor people, because all of them cannot afford to be in the hospital. I think Share & Care has picked up this issue and I am very happy that they are doing such good work for India at this time."* — Padma Shri Ashaji Parekh

*"I've been associated with Share & Care over the years and like the fact that it also encourages a strong partnership in its mission to bring together India and the United States. One of the unique and particularly admirable aspects of Share & Care Foundation is the grassroots effort it supports in promoting development in India."* — Congressman Frank Pallone, Jr.



*Our first-ever virtual gala, curated by global performer Parthiv Gohil (left), also featured entertainment from Manasi Parekh-Gohil, Sudesh Bhosle, Bhoomi Trivedi, and Jahnavi Shrimankar.*

## Sari Collection Drive Benefits More Than 12,000 Families Per Year

In early 2020, we began collecting saris and matching blouses to create 10 sari banks in Gujarat for underprivileged women. Operating like libraries, these banks allow women to borrow garments at no cost for special occasions, then return the items after dry cleaning. In total, we received more than 4,800 items valued at over \$320,900.



*As humans, the way we look and the clothes we wear deeply influence our self-confidence. We are honored to provide this dignity for our beneficiaries in marginalized communities. Our special thanks to all the donors for this project.*

## COVID-19 Disaster Relief: Turning Compassion Into Action

When the pandemic took hold, our Disaster Relief Committee jumped to action. By July 30, 2020, we had already allocated \$300,000 in disaster relief funding and partnered with 16 NGOs to reach thousands of people in the U.S and India — including more than 7,500 struggling families. We distributed grocery kits to families in need, served hot meals to families and daily wage earners, distributed healthcare items such as soap and masks, and served thousands of meals to local healthcare heroes. In December 2020, we also worked with Livingston Lions Club to provide more than 5,000 food boxes for local New Jersey citizens affected by food insecurity and economic instability. In 2021, we are remaining committed to providing relief and rehabilitation to those affected by the pandemic.



*Children receive khichdi meals in Mumbai, Maharashtra.*



*Beneficiaries receive masks and groceries as part of our COVID-19 relief efforts.*

## Creating Opportunities Through Women Empowerment



We exceeded a pledge, made during our 37th Annual Gala in 2019, to empower 20,200 women in 2020. By November, even during difficult times, we had empowered 24,192 women through our programs which provide safety and self-defense training, gender equality education, livelihood skills, character building, and leadership workshops for marginalized women. *A donation of \$500 to our Women Empowerment program empowers five marginalized female students with safe lodging, education, and training for personal growth.*



*Beneficiaries from our Women Empowerment program pose for photos (taken before the COVID-19 lockdowns took effect.) These young women receive holistic education and support, ensuring they are empowered with confidence and life skills while also receiving academic training.*

## Village Upliftment Proves That Real Change Comes From Within

Our Village Upliftment program is empowering about 50,000 people by placing trained Lok Mitras (“friends of the people”) in 12 villages throughout India. Living alongside the people they serve, Lok Mitras provide moral support while also applying their training to create sustainable, positive change within their villages.

In response to COVID-19, they have helped to educate villagers about the virus, organized efforts to implement social distancing, set up sanitation stations, and handed out “Grocery Kits of Gratitude” to more than 1,000 families when food became scarce. *A donation of \$5,000 empowers one village and up to 5,000 individual villagers.*



*Left: A Lok Mitra teaches children math skills (counting numbers and angles) through exercise, giving students a break from bookish learning and helping them to feel refreshed. Right: Lok Mitras receive thorough training, conducted by seasoned experts, before being placed in their respective villages.*

## Healthcare 2 Unreached Expands Access For Remote And Underserved Communities

Share & Care continues the fight toward reversing the healthcare challenges facing today's marginalized poor.

Key achievements in 2020 include: delivering life-saving nutrients and raising awareness to benefit 5,000 women and children in Rajasthan; addressing a shortage of health professionals and poor local governance in Gujarat; bringing a comprehensive community health program to 25 villages in Maharashtra; and helping 100 women in Tamil Nadu through a program addressing the socio-demographic factors affecting pregnancy. Lastly, in five Manipur villages, we provided ongoing essential health services to children and women. *A donation of \$100 to our H2U program empowers one mother and her child with pre- and post-natal care.*



*Women “adopted” through our H2U Pregnancy and Maternal Care project receive medical and nutritional support.*

## With Educate 2 Success, Learning Is Not On Lockdown

As part of our 2020 goals, we aimed to reach **4,050 students** across nine village schools in Gujarat through a program designed to create an educational pathway to current and future job markets for secondary and high school students. As the coronavirus took hold, we adjusted our support, enabling our partners to identify and act on solutions to fit with the world's challenges. To accommodate social distancing and other safety guidelines, teachers shifted to a virtual learning model, incorporating conference calls with students and home “visits” via telephone or video. *A donation of \$130 empowers one at-risk child under age 13 with a secondary education.*



*In some regions, E2S sessions were conducted effectively in their respective villages while practicing all safety norms like social distancing, wearing masks, and using sanitizer.*

## Young Professional Committee

The Young Professional Committee (YPC) is a group with a mission to volunteer and fundraise for the causes Share & Care supports while fostering a community of young professionals to connect.

## Kids4Kids

Kids4Kids (K4K) is a committee hosted for students by students (ages 13-18), with a vision to help underprivileged children in India receive the education they deserve. Before the pandemic started, each member recruited three new members, which increased the total funds raised. These funds provided an additional 23 students in India with tuition and school supplies and raised the total number of children educated to 255. They also raised \$2,900 to benefit COVID-19 relief, and pivoted their events to be social-distance friendly, hosting activities such as a virtual yoga class and a walking challenge to raise funds for those in need.

## Educate 2 Graduate Continues Blazing New Beginnings For Impoverished Families

Our Educate to Graduate program fosters secure futures for brilliant students from low-income families. Seventy-three students were enrolled in the 2019-2020 school year. Although there were some delays in college opening due to COVID-19, the admission process began smoothly with several colleges now operating on a digital platform.

We are putting increased emphasis on supplementary skill development to improve job prospects upon graduation. Of the 1,614 E2G beneficiaries so far, more than 850 graduates are already employed in well-paying jobs. *A donation of \$1,000 empowers one bright, low-income student with a college scholarship.*





*Your donation makes a brighter future possible for families who come from generational cycles of poverty. They can do it, and we can help!*

## There Are Far, Far Better Things Ahead Than Any We Leave Behind

2020 was tough, but Share & Care made a way. We served:

- The widow with no means or education to provide for her family.
- The young girl living with sexual abuse as part of a traditional and still-tolerated patriarchal structure.
- The teen hungry for knowledge but forced into manual labor because his family knows no other path.
- The newborn at high risk of dying before her fifth birthday because of who she is and where she was born.
- Entire villages living with cultural norms that promote inequality.
- Entire families at risk of disability or death from treatable diseases due to poverty, malnutrition, and poor sanitation.
- Migrant laborers who need economic relief and rehabilitation due to COVID-19.

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Our wide-ranging programs continue to thrive thanks to the support of our generous Share & Care community. If you have been inspired by our efforts and would like to create positive, lasting change for marginalized people in the U.S. and India, we encourage you to make a contribution today. Every gift is appreciated, and every dollar makes a difference.

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