



Looking Beyond Borders: Sustaining Development in a Pandemic

By Joan Allmaras, Philanthropic Services Specialist

Even as vaccinations accelerate in wealthy countries and economies begin to re-open, the COVID-19 pandemic is still far from over, and likely to linger longest in low-income and middle-income countries.

Recent surges in southeast Asia, particularly in India, and South America demonstrate the need to quickly vaccinate all communities. Worldwide, only [0.3% of all COVID-19 vaccines](#) have been administered in low-income countries, increasing the likelihood of outbreaks, and that lockdowns and other restrictions will need to remain in place longer.

As a result, much of the progress made on other health and development priorities—education and gender equity, for example—is at risk of slowing down, or even being erased.

The UN attributes the [first increase in global poverty](#) in decades to the pandemic. 90% of students globally have been kept [out of school](#) since the pandemic began. Delivery of [healthcare](#) has also been severely disrupted, which has the potential to cause a spike in illness and death from other communicable diseases, like typhoid, smallpox and polio. Women have borne the brunt of the effects of COVID-19, and reports of [violence against women and girls](#) have increased significantly during the pandemic. Ongoing humanitarian crises and natural disasters remain a consistent threat as well.

As the pandemic continues, donors have an incredible opportunity to make a significant impact. By dedicating charitable dollars to international aid and development, donors help ensure that years of hard-fought gains are not lost due to COVID's long tail and aftereffects. Many of these issues overlap, and in the best cases, gains made in one development area can drive gains in others.

- COVAX is a global collaboration to ensure COVID-19 vaccines reach low-income countries. Until vaccines reach the majority of the world, all aspects of global health and development will continue to experience setbacks. [Gavi](#), [WHO](#) and [UNICEF](#) have partnered to manage the development, manufacturing and delivery of COVID-19 vaccines to communities most in need.

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- While governments around the world have pledged to support India during this most recent outbreak, philanthropy can help as well. Donors can contribute to [PATH](#), which is delivering medical oxygen to some of the hardest-hit communities in India.

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- [CAMFED](#) was founded in 1993 to support girls' education in Africa. Girls are most likely to drop out of school, and staff are focused on providing support to their students to mitigate the negative impacts of lockdowns and school closures.

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- [Room to Read](#) works primarily in low-income communities in Africa and southeast Asia to increase literacy and gender equity in education systems. The organization designed new methods to reach its students in remote areas, such as radio and television programs, and is also offering support via phone.

- [Global Rights for Women](#) seeks to end violence against women and girls around the world through highly customized strategies and projects to address and enact systemic change.

- [Girls Not Brides](#) is a UK-based organization committed to ending child marriage, the risk for which increases in times of severe economic hardship. Their global network of NGOs offers an opportunity for donors to explore projects and connect with activists around the world.

- [Last Mile Health](#) operates primarily in Africa to bring healthcare to rural, remote communities. Their model focuses on designing and building community-based healthcare systems to address the shortage of healthcare workers and reduce the prevalence of preventable deaths.

- Reliable access to clean water is critical to health, especially during a pandemic. [water.org](#) is dedicated to providing water and sanitation solutions to communities and families in 13 countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

- [Conservation International](#) has been working for three decades to protect land and water around the world. Through their worldwide network of thousands of partners, the organization supports sustainable development efforts, recognizing the link between the health of humans and their surrounding natural environment.

These are just a few of the many organizations that have been working for years—even decades—to advance global relief and development efforts. While far from an exhaustive list, many of these organizations address the complex and overlapping challenges facing developing countries, and do so through local, on the ground partners and experts in the field.

For donors interested in direct international grantmaking, NPT's [Philanthropic Services](#) team can help. Contact us at (888) 878-7900 or philanthropicservices@nptrust.org to learn more.

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