



COVID 19 INTEGRATED HEALTH CARE RESPONSE BANGALORE

A PHOTO ESSAY

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Executive Summary

The COVID-19 outbreak has thrown most countries, including ours, into an unprecedented and massive health and humanitarian crisis. The poorest and the most marginalized have been disproportionately disadvantaged as this pandemic continues.

Azim Premji Foundation and Wipro jointly commenced efforts to support the civil society response and help in responding to the pandemic. Our comprehensive response to the pandemic has been in the two inextricably tied dimensions of the crisis - **healthcare** and **humanitarian**.

As cases surged in Bangalore, we implemented an integrated response to the health crisis. We are currently working in **86** wards across Bengaluru city covering close to **8.5 lac** people from the most vulnerable communities that have been traditionally underserved. We are working in close partnership with **21** NGOs, **6** public spirited hospitals, the Health and Family Welfare department of the Government of Karnataka, and the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP). This coordinated response is enabled by **1550** volunteers.

Thus far, **5** high capacity RNA extraction machines have been added to labs in IISC, NIMHANS, BMCRI, NIV and NCBS. **3** RT-PCR labs have been set up in Japaynagar GH, CV Raman Hospital and KC General Hospital and **16** TrueNat™ machines have been allocated for mobile testing at the ward level. A number of Oxygenated beds and ICU beds have been added to hospitals like Bowring, Baptist, St. Martha's and HBS. A COVID-19 Care Centre in Jigani and the COVID-19 wards of the government hospitals in Anekal and Yelahanka have been made functional.



BENGALURU is our 'Home'

In mid-march when COVID- 19 hit India and a nation wide lock down was imposed, Bengaluru responded efficiently and effectively. However, once the city started unlocking, and cases surged in Bengaluru- our home - it was our duty to respond – with empathy, love and care.

Equipped with our understanding of the city and learning from responding to the pandemic in other parts of the country, we felt that a comprehensive healthcare response was required. Thus, in close coordination with the Government of Karnataka, public-spirited hospitals and the civil society organisations in Bengaluru, we implemented an integrated health care response to enhance:

- **Frontline support:** extensive and varied support to frontline workers for widespread awareness building, communication, screening, identifying those with co- morbidities and treating quickly those in distress.
- **Testing:** significantly increase testing capacity by providing equipment like TrueNat™ machines to Primary Health Care Centres (PHC) and laboratories.
- **Treatment:** set up isolation wards and intermediate treatment facilities within existing and new facilities to handle asymptomatic and mild to moderate cases and support the tertiary care system for acute cases.



Our Response

Time was of the essence and our response needed to be thoughtful, strategic and scientific. Along with our partners we realized that we needed to work directly with communities on safety measures and awareness, build their confidence that help was available. We also realized that we would have to build an environment of 'care and support' within the communities and work hard to remove fear and stigma.

Action Aid volunteers in Wards 138 and 139



Our Response

Interventions in high-risk zones included door-to-door surveys, screening of a maximum number of residents, and health camps to identify those at high risk (such as people with co-morbidities, senior citizens, and those with low oxygen saturation in their bodies), in order to detect COVID-19 positive patients as early as possible and to isolate them from the community.

Screening for co-morbidities
at Old Baiyappanahalli



Our Response

We worked closely with the Government of Karnataka, BBMP, local community organizations, civil society organizations, public spirited hospitals and individual volunteers to strengthen their efforts in fighting the pandemic.



Our Partners

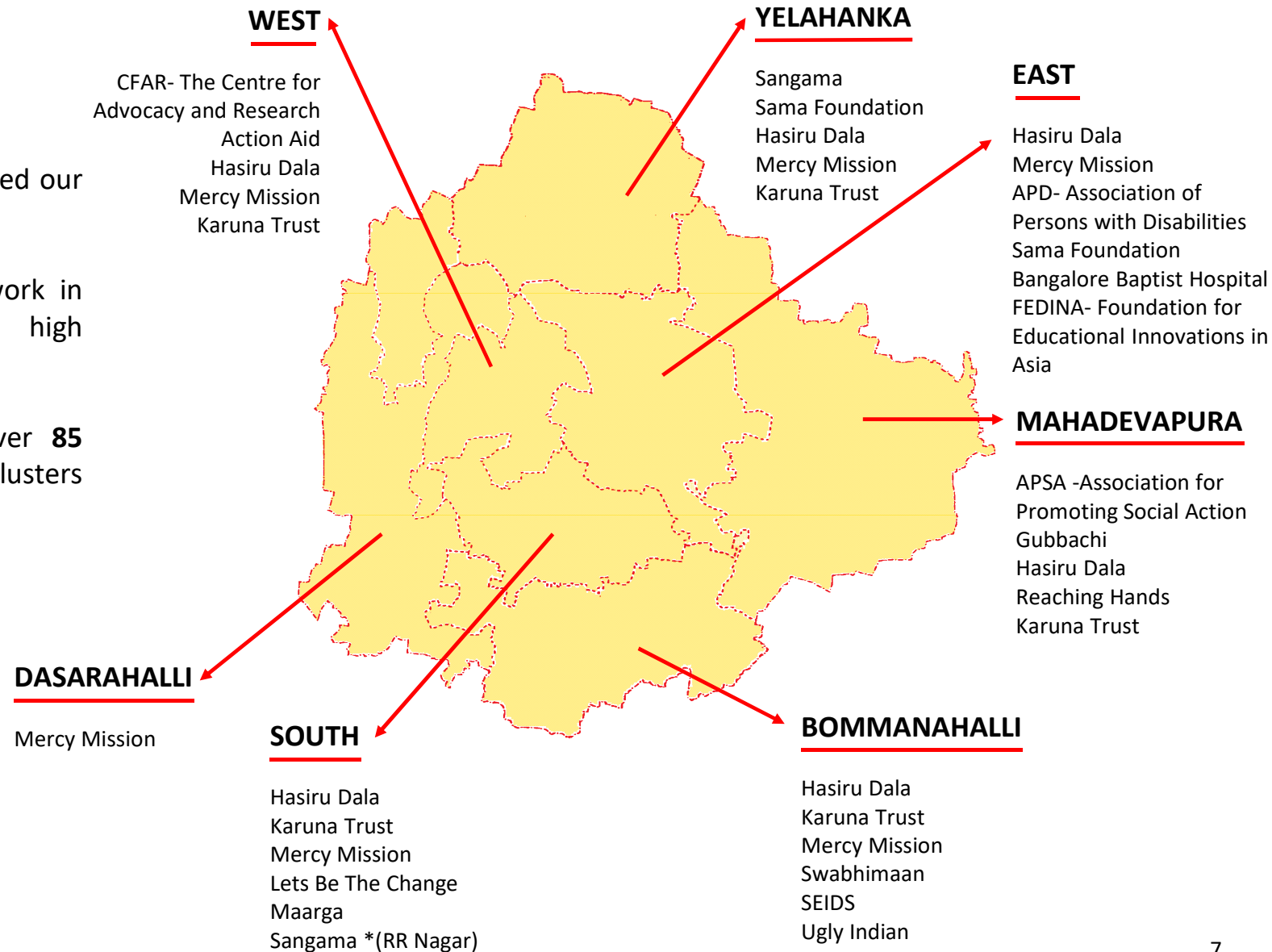
With our partners we have organized our response by 'zones' in the city.

We have focused our frontline work in dense slum clusters with a high probability of an outbreak.

Currently, we are working in over **85 wards** covering 8 such slum clusters across the city-

- Hebbal
- DJ Halli
- Mahadevapura, Koramangala
- KR Market, Majestic
- RR Nagar
- Bommanahalli

Bengaluru City has 8 zones and 198 wards



Communities We Serve



Bengaluru is a metropolis with a high density of population. Large slum clusters that house diverse communities which are deeply vulnerable.

Vegetable Market D J Halli

Communities We Serve

The communities we work in live in difficult and challenging circumstances where the threat of disease is ever present – COVID 19 is perhaps just another name on the list.



Supporting Frontline Workers

By training and equipping frontline healthcare workers for improved awareness, screening, quarantining; we are augmenting frontline resources through our partners and working to build better community ownership. Our frontline response also included working closely with Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) workers, auxiliary nurse midwives (ANMs') and Anganwadi workers in order to improve their efficiency and effectiveness.



Survey & Study

Volunteers from Reaching Hand going door-to door to identify people with co-morbidities, symptomatic persons and others that may be at risk in Kadugodi ward.



Survey & Study

Community workers conducting a survey and speaking to families on COVID-19, raising awareness and reducing fear.

With our frontline partners we have now reached out to over 1.65 lakh households.



Seen here – resident of a small settlement of around 40 households (mainly construction workers) just behind the nursery on Sarjapura Road

Prevention & Screening

Equip and develop capacities of frontline workers to build awareness, conduct screening, trace contacts and quarantine; provide adequate N-95 masks and PPE kits.



Prevention & Screening



Screening camp
at Lingarajapuram

Testing & Tracing

Enable high levels of participation for testing to quickly identify cases for tracing, containment and treatment.



Testing & Tracing

For increasing testing, we work to build capacity across levels through activating the PHC network at a ward level and helping better utilise existing resources in laboratories of large institutions.

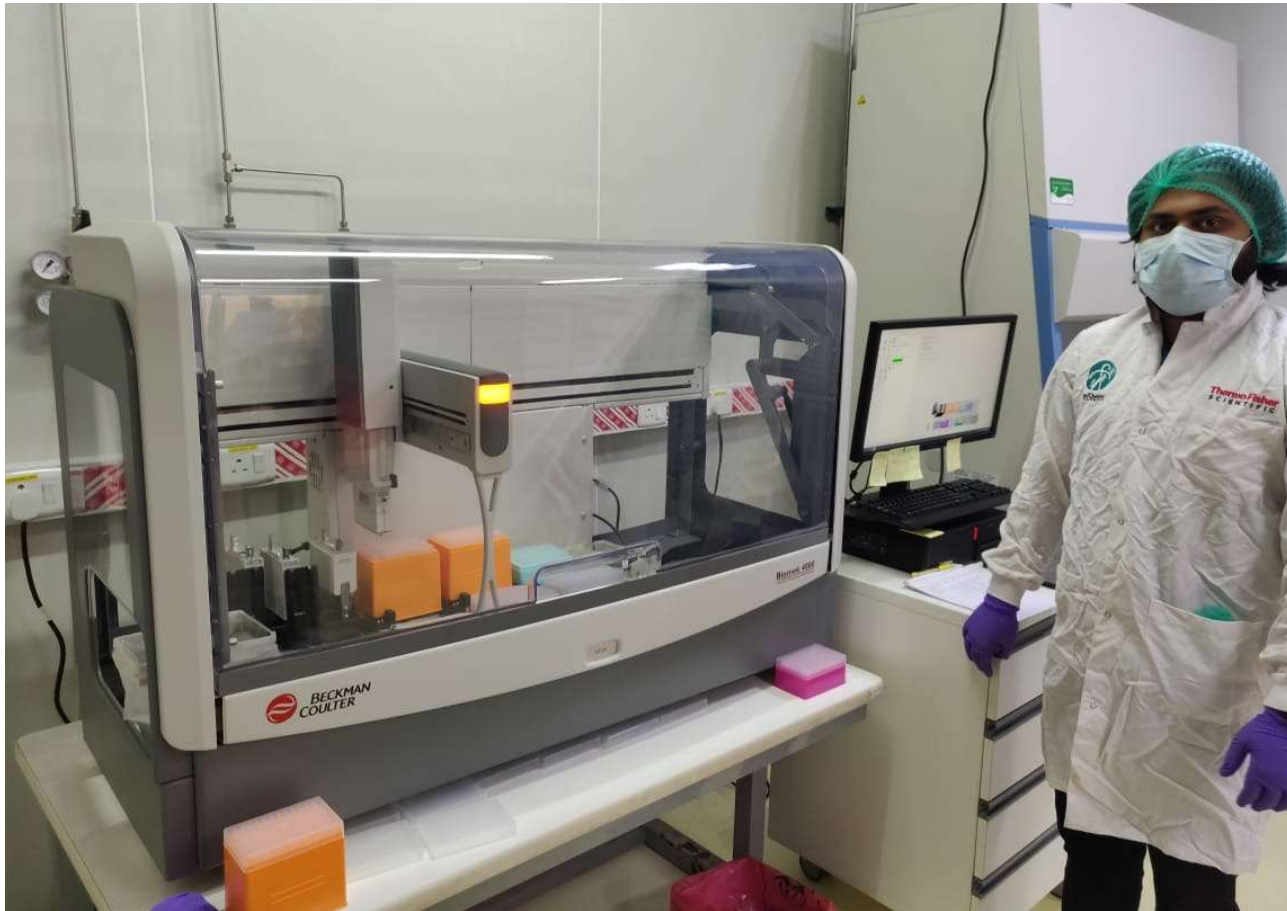


Boosting Testing

We have supplied 17 TrueNat™ machines across PHCs. Seen here the inauguration of a TrueNat™ machine at the West Zone PHC, Magadi Road along with our partners CFAR, Action Aid and Mercy Mission.



Boosting Testing



Seen here is a Liquid Handling System at the National Centre for Biological Sciences

5 Liquid Handling Systems (LHS) have been supplied to National Centre for Biological Sciences, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore Medical College and Research Institute, National Institute of Virology, and National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro-Sciences.

An LHS is programmable to automatically handle the flow of reagents at different stages of testing. Currently being used for automating the Ribonucleic acid extractions process. It doubles the labs capacity.



Training on Protocols

Working with our ground partners, and learning from their experiences, we have realized that community led activities are key to addressing the many issues caused by this pandemic.



Jalimohala Anganwadi centre and school in KR Market ward

Training on Protocols

Training Margaa's volunteers in Jayanagar



Community Mobilisation



By bringing together people in small groups comprising members from the community, self-help groups, and volunteers, community meetings have proven to be an effective setting to exchange ideas, provide information and dispel myths on COVID-19.

Community meeting – CFAR
Ahmad Nagar

Community Mobilisation



Above- Community meeting at Nagarbhavi

Left- Community meeting at Padarayanapura

Community Mobilisation



Action Aid - community meeting
- Anjanappa Garden

Augmenting Treatment

Anekal COVID-19 Ward

While a city like Bengaluru has better tertiary facilities than most other places, the large population and high spread of infection has required us to support ramping up such facilities quickly, in order to reduce mortality.



Augmenting Treatment



We have supported public hospitals such as Bowring and Lady Curzon Hospital and Anekal Taluka Hospital as well as private, but public-spirited hospitals like HBS, St. John's Medical College, Baptist Hospital, St. Martha's and Vimalalaya Hospital.



Augmenting Treatment

With the surge of infections in Bengaluru, as part of our integrated healthcare response, we worked with Enablers United to open a 55-bedded community COVID- 19 care centre in a hostel of the social welfare department at Jigani, Anekal Taluk in Bommanahalli zone. The centre is linked to the local PHC and a private hospital.

COVID-19 Care Centre, Jigani



Augmenting Treatment

We have supported teams of doctors, nurses and other skilled staff at hospitals like HBS, Anekal Taluk Hospital and Charaka Super Specialty (Broadway-Bowring) Hospital.

Seen here the Doctors For You team in action at Broadway (Charaka Speciality Hospital).



Augmenting Treatment

We supported HBS hospital to expand their capacity of oxygenated beds through the 48-bedded Varsity Hotel, located nearly 400 metres from the main hospital.



First Responders

Making health facilities more accessible through services such as helplines, field booths and ambulance services; better data management and analytics support to the departments for improved decision making.



First Responders

With our partner LabourNet, helpdesks have been set up across 9 hospitals to provide patients in distress with up to date information. The help desk staff is available 24*7.

The assistance includes organising testing, responding to patient requests for food and toiletries, to setting up video calls with families, counselling for patients, ambulance assistance, and SAST beds.

There is also a helpline number for any help required on real time bed availability.



Awareness & Outreach

We are fighting not only the disease and the ill effects on health but the corresponding stigma and the fear itself.

The communities that we work in are similar in some ways but diverse and unique in many others. Thus, we have tried to respond differently and as creatively as possible.



Awareness & Outreach

Sanjay Nagar



Wall paintings have been used extensively- they are eye-catching, increase awareness and help in beautifying the area.



Awareness & Outreach



Wall art by our frontline partner Sangama

Awareness & Outreach

Wall art by our frontline partner Janashakthi



Awareness & Outreach

In certain parts of Bengaluru, both fear and stigma are very high, so much so that people were not even ready to engage with volunteers from their own community. In order to draw people out and raise awareness, our partners decided to try something more dramatic and eye-catching.



Tableaus at
Byatarayanapura



Awareness & Outreach



The flip charts seen here were developed for our frontend volunteers - to anchor their own understanding as well as to act as a tool to help in starting conversations and enable a better engagement with the community.

Flipcharts also have an added advantage, they help in maintaining a standard quality, uniformity and consistency on messaging.

Volunteers from CFAR conveying important information on COVID-19 using flipcharts

Awareness & Outreach



Volunteers from CFAR conveying important information on the virus using flipcharts.

Awareness & Outreach

Volunteers hard at work making sure that helpline numbers are easily visible and accessible to the community.



Awareness & Outreach

Religious leaders and influencers play a very big role in getting the message across.

Seen here a few local leaders speaking to their members on safe COVID-19 practices.

Meeting at
JC Nagar Shaadi Mahal



Awareness & Outreach



Awareness & Outreach

With the help of BMTC the smiley campaign bus stickers were pasted on the backs of 500 buses in the Yelahanka Zone.

Seen below a bus on the roads in Yelahanka



Awareness & Outreach

Dhanyavadagalu Kits (Thank You kits) were given out as a token of our appreciation for all the hard work being done at the frontlines of the fight against the virus.



Volunteers

The spirit of volunteering seen in the COVID-19 response has been inspirational. People from all backgrounds- students, rickshaw drivers, teachers, community leaders have selflessly come forward. We now have around 1550 volunteers on the ground directly and through our partners, focused mostly on vulnerable communities.



Volunteers

"I volunteer as I am satisfied doing this work. I feel that the community gets some useful practical information. I feel happy that because of me, the community members learnt new information."

Volunteer from SAMA Foundation

Review meeting
with Gubbachi Volunteers



Survivor Stories

“Recovering from the disease and returning to normal life would not have been possible without the support of my family and community.”

COVID-19 survivor from KR Market zone retelling her experience



Resources

To read more about our response to the COVID-19 crisis – additional information can be found at <https://azimpremijifoundation.org/Covid-19>



Review meeting with
Reaching Hand
volunteers,
Doddabanhalli

Next Steps

This photo essay is an ongoing project. We will continue to update this as we continue to work. So evoke the shutterbug in you and send us photos that capture a moment, tell a story.

