

Suchana's COVID appeal

We have a special appeal at this very difficult time for Suchana staff, students and their families.
The appeal has two dimensions:

First, we are creating a **Medical Emergency Fund** for Suchana's staff and students. Our generous funder, Paul Hamlyn Foundation, will match any funds raised for this up to £2000, effectively doubling this fund. The fund will be used on an emergency basis in loans and grants for COVID treatment and recovery. Please give generously.

Any money remaining in this fund once the COVID crisis has passed will be used for education in a recovery drive for children who have completely lost at least a year of school.



Second, in a special request, we ask that **if you are able to donate in Indian Rupees from an Indian bank account**, please consider this option. This is because new rules on NGOs receiving money from abroad were made early this year requiring funds to be deposited via a Delhi State Bank account, which must be approved by the Home Ministry. Suchana has opened this account but it has not yet been approved so no funds can currently be sent. We are concerned that with the current medical crisis in India, this approval may be many months coming.

Donations in pounds or other currencies through 'Friends of Suchana' will be sent to India as soon as possible. Suchana will 'advance' as much as possible of these donations to start the fund from money already held in India.

COVID has been rampaging across India. With over 3,500 deaths per day at the time of writing, and with no sign of abating, almost every Indian knows personally someone who has died due to the virus. This wave has not just paralysed cities but has reached rural areas too. In Suchana's villages, multiple covid cases have been recorded for the first time. With local hospitals already being inundated, and covid tests and medical supplies being in short supply, it is critical that Suchana is able to provide support to the families it works with.

Local lockdowns across the country has again meant agricultural supply chains have been disrupted, with prices of essential food skyrocketing. Families in Suchana's outreach are struggling more than ever to make ends meet, and the impact this has on children is unmeasurable.

Depending on funds available due to the complications mentioned, Suchana aims to continue to provide educational support throughout this emergency, via localized teaching and online education, as well as stocking up on covid home-care supplies such as oximeters, vitamins and oxygen concentrators to be available for those most in need. We hope to keep you updated on progress in this field.

Visit **TO DONATE**
<https://suchana-community.org/donate/>
for donation options.

A reminder to carry out direct bank transfers from an Indian bank account if possible!
Scroll down the 'donate' page for how to donate in INR from an Indian bank account

SUCHANA THE UTTOR CHANDIPUR COMMUNITY SOCIETY

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SUCHANA'S NEWSLETTER ISSUE 24

After a slow year in COVID-19 lockdown, Suchana managed to re-open in October, and was running again at full speed, with the Pre-school, Multi-lingual Learning Group, Integrated Technology in Education, Mobile Library and Advocacy programmes active until April 2021. Suchana understands that the impacts of the pandemic mean their work is ever more crucial, and therefore took up a number of exciting new programmes and ideas to re-engage communities in culturally relevant learning during the open period.

Unfortunately however, a severe second wave of the virus starting in April 2021 has meant Suchana has again had to shut, as mentioned in the appeal above. Suchana is working on adapting methods to continue to support communities. This update contains better news from times prior to the April 2021 lockdown

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STUDENT STORIES

Sudip Kora



Sudip has been involved with Suchana since he first learned to walk, progressing through the Pre-School, Multi-lingual Learning Group and ITE. He now studies in class 10 and is still involved through the ITE, sports, activities and events. Sudip's parents are illiterate so he is already responsible for things above his age. He's great with children and hopes to study geography in the future!

COVID-19 has really impacted Sudip and his prospects. During the first lockdown, his parents were left without an income. Schools have also been shut for over a year; yet he has important class 10 exams approaching. Apart from private tuitions, Suchana is a major support system for Sudip.

Keya Sardar



Keya is 13 and has been involved in the ITE for 2 years. She loves to sing, especially Hindi Bollywood songs and Bengali

Rabindrasangeet, and hopes one day to become an English teacher. In Keya's village, girls get married very young. Just last week a girl only 3 years older than her got married.

Keya doesn't want to be a housewife and hopes that staying in education will lead her to a future different to that of her elder peer. During the COVID-19 lockdown, many girls dropped out of education permanently; in rural India, this almost always leads to early marriage.

The ITE project supports Keya by encouraging her to stay in school, and widens opportunities by providing essential technological skills and broadening career paths for her.

NEW PROJECTS

Adivasi youth career development

Suchana's first students are now about age 20. While many have been supported through school, and some through college, for most, transitioning from education to employment is challenging as opportunities for adivasi youth are often limited to manual labour in agriculture, construction and domestic service. With over 50% of India's population currently under 25, creating opportunities for young people is an important policy issue, and a number of initiatives set out to do so. But like for other types of opportunity, inequality is persistent and inclusion of disadvantaged groups is a challenge.

Suchana's new programme aims to support alumni through guidance in business plans, creating opportunities for internships and networking with local vocational training centres. Thanks to a one-year grant from the Blue Moon Trust, we have been able to start this work in April 2021, with the first step being to create a database of all alumni. The commitment already shown by those leading this program is inspiring. We hope this project is well received!

Partnership with Her Future Coalition

Her Future Coalition, a grant-making organisation with links in Kolkata, are now funding intensive involvement in one marginalized Santal village (Hedodanga). It will support children via provision of all of Suchana's existing programmes, involvement in events such as the annual function, and introduction of new key interventions such as support at the local primary school and cultural activities. The idea is to create an inclusive and educational environment in the village through regular engagement; key to supporting children through formal education and widening opportunities.



Advocacy work

Over the past few years, Suchana has increased its outreach through putting energy towards empowering other organisations and individuals to make a difference. This has been conducted through teacher trainings; where local non-Adivasi government teachers were briefed in language use with Adivasi students, in use of Suchana's teaching materials and the benefits of first-language learning. Much training has also been conducted with NGOs, schools and individuals from Adivasi villages in use of the Storyweaver platform in view. This work has been further extended for three years through funding from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation. The aim is to contribute to establishing first language education as a right for Adivasi children.





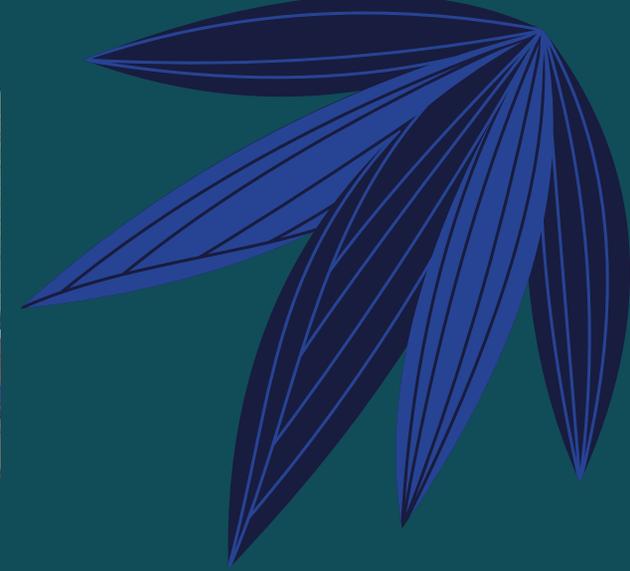
A Kora girl using the mobile library



Tug of War in the February Sports Day



An ITE class



SUCHANA'S ONLINE PRESENCE

Suchana has revamped its online presence, with its website, youtube channel and facebook pages updated. Keep an eye on these for some interesting content created recently, and for more updates to come in the future!

Visit Suchana's shiny new website at www.suchana-community.org

Follow Suchana's lively Facebook page at '[Suchana Community](#)' and its foreign branch '[Friends of Suchana](#)'

Watch videos made by students on Suchana's YouTube channel titled '[Suchana - the Uttor Chandipur Community Society](#)'



An ELG class in Centre 2 - Uttor Sehala



THANKS TO

We are very grateful to all the Suchana staff who work so hard to actualize Suchana's ideas and goals. Many thanks also goes out to members of 'Friends of Suchana' for their support and fundraising efforts, as well as Jeanne Openshaw and Isabel Milward, Liane Blades, C and J Kantharia for their cake sale and all other individuals for donations. Thanks especially to the Mere Group fundraising and Anna Binnie-Dawson's quiz in 2020, and to the Physics Factory. A huge thanks goes out to our monthly donors - you know who you are. This regular income is very important to us.

Gratitude to Richard Kuper and the Blue Moon Trust, Her Future Coalition, Neil Fraser and the Edinburgh Rotary Club as new funders, to Maura Hurley for connecting Suchana with Her Future Coalition, and much appreciation to Megan Reynolds for joining the Friends of Suchana Trustees.

Thanks to Ishani Milward-Bose for writing this newsletter, and to Akash Milward-Bose and Christian for Suchana's new website. Of course, many thanks to Kirsty Milward for her constant efforts and support that keeps Suchana ticking.