Quarterly Bulletin September 2020

WORK4 PROGRESS
of "la Caixa"
Innovation for promoting jobs

Adaption in crisis

Peer 2 Peer Networks

Community Resilience

Digital Connectivity

Reflective Practice

JOBS WE WANT

Entrepreneurship for Resilience

Development Alternatives

"la Caixa" Foundation

The Work 4 Progress (W4P) programme of "la Caixa" Foundation accelerates the creation of meaningful and dignified employment through platforms for innovation, action and continuous learning. In India, W4P provides enterprise development opportunities for youth and women in two regions – Bundelkhand and Eastern Uttar Pradesh. W4P adopts a social innovation methodology through which it listens to the community through dialogue, finds answers through co-creation, and then prototypes solutions and shares learning to eventually create impact at scale.

DIALOGUE

Listen to Multi-Stakeholder Perspectives

CO-CREATE

Develop Relevant Solutions Collaboratively

PROTOTYPE

Demonstrate Sustainability of Solutions

ACCELERATE

Mainstream Learning for Impact at Scale

W4P innovates and demonstrates systemic solutions to create a culture of entrepreneurship through the following interconnected objectives:

- **Nurture constructive communities** who respond positively to shifts in the new social system and build a resilient economy with quality jobs and social well- being
- **Unleash entrepreneurial energies** of individuals by removing social, intergenerational and gender barriers to build a culture of entrepreneurship
- **Empower small businesses through a robust ecosystem** and enable them to become catalysts for job creation
- **Mainstream enabling mechanisms** for entrepreneurship led job creation through a coalition of micro movements

IN THIS ISSUE

1927+
Jobs
Created

883+
Enterprises
Supported

80
Program
Villages

50+
Active
Partnerships

Written By: Kanika Verma

COVID-19 is a crisis that defies all rules. It has affected us in unimaginable ways, with repercussions that will last for many decades. The pandemic has brought the fragility of livelihood security for millions of Indians into sharp focus. Hundreds of thousands of migrant workers are caught in "no man's land" and many more are stuck in cities, without an income and unable to make their way home.

Our response to the alarming rise in loss of livelihood security needs to include strategies that look at challenges from a systems lens and reorient long term development trajectories. Understood till now to be informal or insignificant, self-employment and entrepreneurship might soon become the norm. The added complexity of reverse migration indicates that our response calls for innovative approaches to enterprise development in rural India.

Driven by social innovation, our work aims to create robust entrepreneurship eco-systems in Uttar Pradesh. It has charted a roadmap for 're-imagining the future' on the strength of three principles:

- Belief in the power of communities to respond in times of crisis and to create systemic shifts.
- Potential of innovative solutions and collective action to initiate ground-up action that can influence policies at the meso and macro levels.
- Recognition of people led micro movements as drivers of change that represents and is relevant to local contexts.

The crisis is underlining the need to restructure the way we work and re-create an economic order that is equitable as well as much more resilient against catastrophes of the future. This crisis will come to an end. As we begin to rebuild lives, lessons learnt during its reign should remind us of the mistakes we might be tempted to make again.

This issue of our bulletin highlights the role of community led institutions in coming up with timely and relevant need-based solutions and value of digital platforms in maintaining information flows and unearthing resources. Each article has been inspired by stories of resilience from the ground which continue to provide us with narratives of "people led action". These narratives uncover ways in which local leaders, entrepreneurs and community members are stepping up for the jobs 'we' make.

LISTENING DURING LOCKDOWN

Written By: Upma Singh

We believe in listening before assuming and apply the principles of ethnography: empathy and immersion, to stay connected with the communities.

The crisis has highlighted how listening is important now more than ever. To understand the emerging challenges and opportunities of our communities, we moved to "listening again" and "listening with empathy". We applied the key principles of virtual ethnography – being patient while listening and maintaining continuous dialogue to digital modes of communication including video calls, online training sessions, virtual meetings etc.

We implemented simple tools such as centralised interview recording sheet and chat groups with communities. Despite being limited to virtual connections, "listening again" has given insights into how our entrepreneurs and the entrepreneurial ecosystem is adapting to the crisis. Listening has also enabled us to make the program strategy more responsive to disruptions by rooting our work with our community.

We believe in the power of human connections, and these have taken stronger forms through listening. Following are our findings based on conversations with 165 respondents including entrepreneur, partners and service providers across 80 villages.

57%
Need information on enterprise logistics and legalities

₹
75% need easy access to finance and relaxation schemes

95%
Enterprises are providing essential services

65% need market linkages

65% have better access to digital solutions

63% facing challenges in enterprise operations

W4P aims to scale up evidence and learning on entrepreneurship, system change and social innovation. It adds value to the existing pool of resources in the field by including perspectives of communities and micro-entrepreneurs in the mainstream. #JobsWeMake movement was launched on Instagram, Twitter and Medium in April' 2020 and since then has reached to over 50,000 individuals.

" After the lockdown was announced, Mangal installed his computer system at home and started working from home. His home-based kiosk continues to provide ration cards for accessing relief packages, to members of his community who had migrated to different parts of the country and were forced to return to their villages. "

Mangal Singh Dohre
Information Kiosk Entrepreneur

Read Mangal's story as featured on Indian Development Review

" In less than 2 days of the declaration of the nation-wide lockdown, Tauheed approached the district authorities and got permission to distribute food, grocery and live meals . Since then, he has distributed live meals to over 200 residents of villages near Mirzapur and has also been working with the Pradhan (leader of the local government) of village Akori and Work 4 Progress entrepreneurs to make sanitizers and masks accessible. "

Tauheed Khan
W4P Field Team Member

VIRTUAL PLATFORMS FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION

Written By: Shivankar Mohan

W4P regional entrepreneurship coalition is a multi-stakeholder learning and action platform for co-creating solutions and facilitating convergent action for entrepreneurship led job creation. The platform includes micro-entrepreneurs and enterprise support service providers from government agencies, civil society organizations, financial institutions, training and academic institutes. Since the nation-wide lockdown was announced in March, the coalition platforms have been virtually meeting every month with focus on responding to immediate needs of the entrepreneurs and rural communities.

Needs and Opportunities	Challenges
• One of the most pressing needs has become that of information. Through the coalition, members have been able to easily exchange information and resources • Entrepreneurs have also been sharing emerging opportunities. During a coalition, an entrepreneur shared how they had started to making and selling face masks during the lockdown. Other entrepreneurs were also inspired to do the same	• In spite of many agencies promoting entrepreneurship and job creation, their work has rarely translated into meaningful impact mainly because they work in silos with little communications between them • Representation of the different stakeholders is also skewed with migrant labourers being left out of employment creation activities

Coalitions in practice

+ Converging resources to provide relief packs to entrepreneurs and rural communities
+ Building an information data base on migrant laborers to link them with employment opportunities
+ Making changes to products and services to match the needs of microenterprises. For example – HDFC microfinance is planning on changing terms and members are working on linking services with digital platforms like udyaME
+ Co-developing the platform's plan and objectives with members to adapt to the pandemic
+ Civil Society Organisations recognising the coalitions as a potential platform for their work
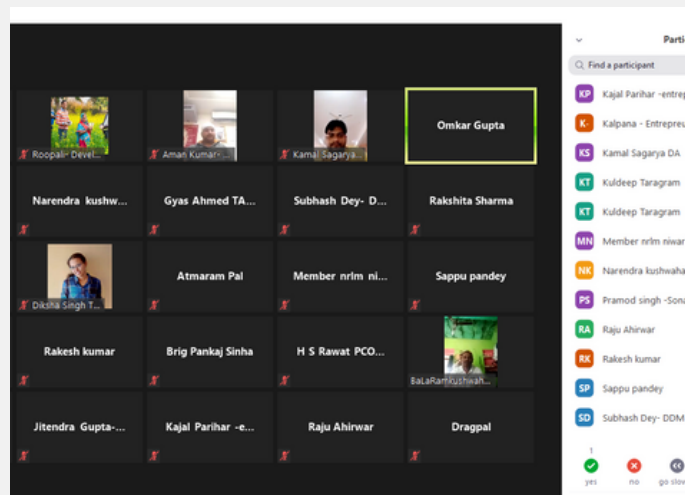
" Our entrepreneurs are now fearless about opening an enterprise, but the need now is to help them restart their businesses in the COVID19 times. "
- Mukesh, leading member of Mirapur coalition

PROTOTYPING FOR THE FUTURE

Written By: Saubhagya Raizada

Work 4 Progress (W4P) prototypes have been designed to adapt to changing factors in the local ecosystem. Beyond deep listening to the dynamic needs of local communities, re-designing and restructuring our prototypes was critical during the pandemic. We witnessed the effortless agility of our prototypes during the lockdown: systemic prototypes such as coalitions and information kiosks went digital to respond to immediate needs in real-time, while the enterprise prototypes such as e-rickshaw and grocery stores provided door-step service delivery.

During the lockdown, entrepreneurs adapted to manufacturing critical items required in the local economies like face masks and supplied them to our coalition members, including non-profits and government agencies. This is not just an example of their resilience but also reflective of the efforts we have made to strengthen our prototypes and build networks between them and entrepreneurs to invigorate innovation in the ecosystem. All these efforts on ground are being further improved by internal learning and knowledge building sessions.

Our prototypes demonstrated the following shifts to address local opportunities to make the local ecosystem more resilient:

Information Kiosks

The kiosk network is acting as a one stop solution for essential services like filing insurances, registration for social security schemes, supporting migrants with documentation etc.

Micro Credit Facility (MCF)

Following Reserve Bank of India's regulations, the MCF deferred loan collection for 3 months taking cognizance of the cash crunch entrepreneurs were facing. We are also negotiating deferred loan payments with other financial institutions such as HDFC Microfinance and UNIBASE.

"An entrepreneur of hope, Gulshan Kumar, believes that his enterprise can draw links for lost rural voices to reach the decision makers"

E-rickshaw

The e-rickshaws enterprises have played a vital role in procuring essential goods and providing transport for patients, while following all safety guidelines and protocols of the administration.

"Despite active cases in her region, every morning, Bhagwani Devi takes out her e-rickshaw to provide transport services to villagers travelling to the local health centre. Police officers too are able to administer the region effectively through her e-rickshaw. "

Bhagwani Devi
E-rickshaw Entrepreneur

Read Bhagwani's story as featured on The Stories of Change

"The women-led federation groups are playing a critical role in escaping poverty and has shown the power of self-help and solidarity. By allowing the relaxation in payment of loan installments and easy access to loans for new entrepreneurs the facility has supported enterprise set-up of over 30 entrepreneurs."

Jaya Devi
General Store Owner

ADAPTIVE LEARNING AND EVALUATION SYSTEM

Written By: Stuti Sareen

W4P India's adaptive learning system works to reiterate social innovation and ground-up action for enterprise development and job creation in rural India. It is based on techniques of dialogue, analysis and reflection, and is working towards the objectives of:

+ Building a robust learning system inclusive of system-wide perspectives, diverse community voices and interconnecting processes and functions
For responding to new challenges to rural entrepreneurship because of the crisis, we are worked on understanding the perspectives of microentrepreneurs, communities and service providers. These are being recorded through simple tools like a centralised interview recording sheet and findings are being incorporated in the design of solutions and processes.

+ Integrating learning with design and operations to activate feedback loops for informed decision making and adaptive management
The design of our existing solutions (as elaborated in our prototyping work) to respond to the immediate needs and opportunities. They are also being re-designed to respond to shocks in the short to medium term.

+ Enabling evidence-based knowledge-building to deepen impact and for acceleration
W4P adds value to the existing pool of resources in the field by including perspectives of communities and micro-entrepreneurs in the mainstream. During the pandemic, based on our listening sessions we identified stories of resilience on ground, that have become part of our #JobsWeMake campaign.

" The moment this dance began and brought the community of Poha Khas together. We think this symbolizes harmony, power of human connections and improvement – things we want to work on with our systems. "

Read this article to learn more about the system's integrated functions
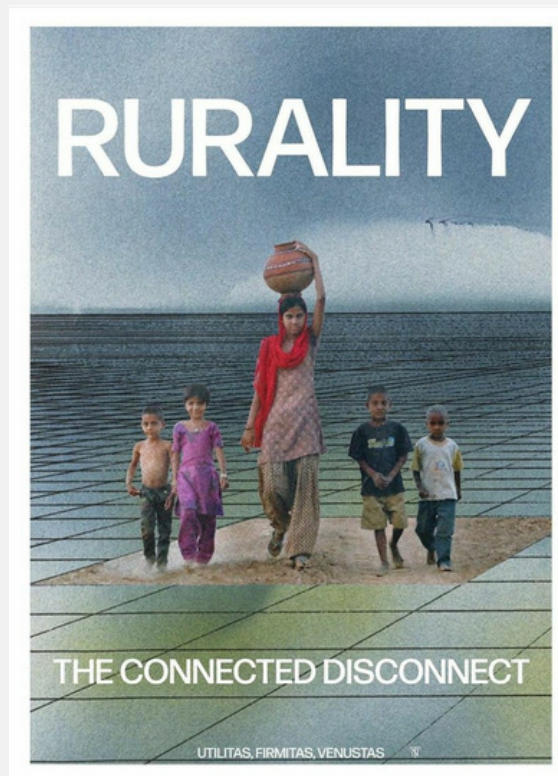
+ Read this <u>article</u> featured by the **Site Magazine** to know more about how W4P India prototypes have continued to adapt to the changing contexts and challenges

+ Read this <u>article</u> featured by **LSE International Development** about perspective-building on social innovation's principles of unlearning, re-learning and shared learning

+ Read this <u>article</u> by Ariadna Bardolet and Marta Solsona of "la Caixa" foundation featured in the **Development Alternatives Newsletter** on how philanthropic approaches are adapting to the crisis by innovating approaches and practices with evidence from W4P India

+ Read this <u>article</u> featured by **ILO's Decent Jobs for Youth** and **EMES Junior Experts' Blog** to know how social innovation through the power of listening can channelise the voices of the youth into solidarity based movements for entrepreneurship and social change

+ Read this <u>article</u> featured by **Vaani** to hear the voices of migrant labourers captured during the nation-wide lockdown

+ Watch this <u>stakeholder webinar</u> by **Transform Rural India Foundation** and **The Nudge Foundation** to know about W4P India's principles of collaboration that are creating a growing network for creating jobs in the global South

HIGHLIGHTS

Action Aid and Transforming Rural India Foundation join the W4P India platform

EMPOWERING YOUTH AND WOMEN

- **Listening exercise conducted with over 100 youth entrepreneurs** to map **needs, opportunities** and **barriers** to entrepreneurship during the lockdown
- Technology Challenge partners, **Janastu** and **Medha Learning Foundation**, conducted **virtual dialogue sessions** with **60+ young girls and women** from Eastern Uttar Pradesh
- **Kajal Parihar, Suman Dev, Balram Kushwaha, Abhineet Parmar and Jitendra Ahirwar** emerge as winners of the **Kaun Banega Business Leader 2.0 competition**

JOINT MODELS AND SERVICES FOR ENTREPRENEURS

- **Webinar Pi**, a **dialogue tool co-created with Technology Challenge partners** for conducting virtual safe spaces
- **Regional Entrepreneurship Coalition** goes virtual, **12 virtual meetings** conducted with **70 stakeholders** from **four districts**
- **Community Chat Groups** connected over **70 entrepreneurs** for **information sharing** and building **learning networks**
- **Virtual training** on development of marketing collaterals conducted with W4P **Information kiosks**
- **3000** users registered on **udyaME** - a virtual platform for rural micro entrepreneurs

KNOWLEDGE TRANSFERENCE FOR ACCELERATION

- **#JobsWeMake** reaches over **50000 individuals** since launch in **April 2020**
- **W4P lessons and perspectives published** by LSE, Site Magazine, VAANI Newsletter, EMES Junior Expert's Blog, ILO's Decent Jobs for Youth and India Development Review
- Participated in **stakeholders webinar** on **"Collaborate to create rural jobs"** organised by **Transform Rural India Foundation** and **The Nudge Foundation**

INDIA

In India, W4P enables enterprise development opportunities for youth and women in two regions – Bundelkhand and Eastern Uttar Pradesh.

Prototypes Tested: 55

PERU

In Peru, W4P co-develops initiatives that create quality jobs for youth and women in indigenous communities of Quispicanchi and Condorcanqui.

Prototypes Tested: 20

MOZAMBIQUE

In Mozambique, W4P enables decent employment opportunities for vulnerable groups of youth and women in Cabo Delgado Province.

Prototypes Tested: 12