SUMMARY

Sewa International, a Hindu faith-based nonprofit in the USA has served in over 25 disaster recovery situations in the USA\(^1\) and abroad\(^2\). During this stressful time of COVID-19 crisis, Sewa has created a Sewa Sankalpa campaign to bring together Dharma and Sewa (service) organizations in the USA to commit to a Sewa Sankalpa or Pledge for Service to care for your community members by providing necessary non-Medical COVID-19 support. In return, Sewa International pledges to work with your organization to build capacity working shoulder-to-shoulder for you to be able to be effective in providing this service.

1. BACKGROUND: WHY THIS INITIATIVE?

COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted our lives in unprecedented ways. The situation is dynamic. While long term consequences on societies, nations, and economies are sure to lead us to a new normal, in the short-term we are experiencing great disruption.

Community organizations at the forefront of serving in this ‘war’ would be best served to follow these principles:

- **Sanyam or Self-restraint**: To contain and defeat this menace individually and collectively, we have to be in disciplined isolation, observe the rules, and, to keep ourselves in good physical and emotional health. This requires a great deal of self-restraint (‘sanyam’).

- **Sahakar or Cooperation**: In these challenging times, it is the duty of all community organizations to encourage its members to confront these challenges by pooling resources and creating an internal support network. Organizations can do this by actively fostering cooperation (‘sahakar’) amongst its members and committing them to solidarity.

- **Sahayog or Collaboration**: All of us are feeling the impact of this ubiquitous pandemic. A number of organizations are working tirelessly to face these challenges. By creating a framework of collaboration (‘sahayog’) organizations can scale up effectiveness by sharing best practices and learning from each other. Ultimately, this will result in a more robust support system increasing the reach and quality of service to our community.

2. WHY SEWA SANKALPA, WHAT IS IT?

Sewa International is reaching out to all Dharma and Sewa (service) community organizations in the US to pool ideas, collaborate and build confidence in our community, for which, we have created the Sewa Sankalpa campaign.

‘Sewa Sankalpa’ is a pledge for service that your community organization will undertake to provide support to your community (see Box). Each community organization would release this ‘Sewa Sankalpa’ on its own and these organizations would be listed together on Sewa International website.

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\(^1\) California Camp Fire (2018), Hurricane Harvey (2017) to Hurricane Katrina (2006)

\(^2\) Caribbean, Colombia, India, Iraq, Mozambique, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka
Sewa Sankalpa  
(*Pledge for Service*)

Community Outreach Initiative

**A. WHAT DO WE MEAN BY ‘RELEASEING’ THE ‘SEWA SANKALPA’?**

Each organization would sign this ‘Sewa Sankalpa’ and publishes as it deems appropriate on its own social media, website etc. or may decide to send to its members through email.

**B. HOW MANY ORGANIZATIONS ARE EXPECTED TO SIGN UP THE ‘SEWA SANKALPA’?**

Sewa is reaching out to more than 1,000 organizations across 50+ cities in the US.

**3. SEWA’S OFFER TO COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS IN RETURN**

Sewa International will assist interested community organizations build capacity for Non-Medical COVID-19 support setup in the following areas:

- **Communication Channels:** To reach out to your members through multiple channels  
  - Phone, email, social media, and your website (customizable templates available)
- **Helpline (local/national):** Setup local helpline for your organization. Alternately, you can have your members use Sewa International’s Helpline numbers.
- **Case Management Services:** Supporting families in distress requiring complex care solutions.
- **Direct Service Areas:** Explore and decide areas that your organization can and be willing be offer to your members:
  - **Webinars**
    - How to conduct informational webinars of community interest by experts.
  - **Elderly Assistance**
    - Finding help for the elderly people for home delivery or other needs
  - **International Students**
    - Creating support system by providing visa information, board and lodge, etc.
  - **Local Resources**
    - Compiling and providing information on local resources
      - Local grocery stores providing home delivery, list of local professionals (Physicians, Attorneys, etc.), etc.

Let us take a ‘Sankalpa’ together to serve our community effectively.

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3 Mental & Physical Health, Parenting, Immigration, Humor, Small Business help, CARES Act, etc.