

EVALUATION REPORT CHANGEMAKERS UNITED



1. About Changemakers United

Changemakers United is a collective effort to support social innovators at the forefront of the COVID-19 crisis. In Europe, the project was conducted between April – September 2020 and it continues in Africa, Latin America, and South Asia in the fall of 2020 and spring of 2021.

Ashoka is sourcing, disseminating, supporting, connecting, and scaling solutions of innovative social entrepreneurs to the challenges COVID-19 presents to the world.

We do so by leveraging Ashoka’s global network of social innovators, as well as the partners networks, workforce, and communities they are part of.

This effort is part of broader global initiatives to support social entrepreneurs as first responders to the COVID-19 crisis¹ and as innovators for the challenges experienced by societies shaped by the pandemic.

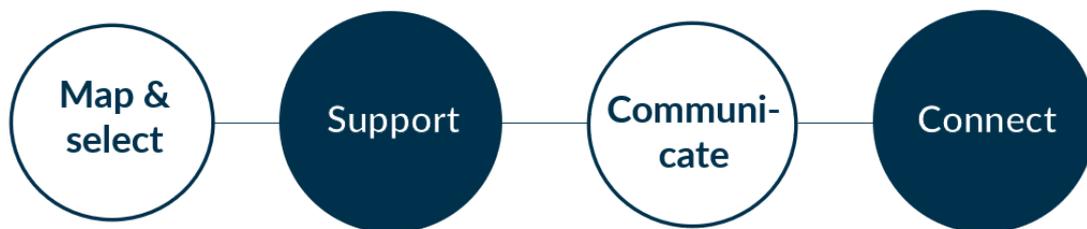
Changemakers United Europe consisted of four main phases:

1. Mapping solutions of social entrepreneurs to the COVID-19 pandemic and selecting them to the program.

¹ Schwab, H., Wells, D., Gips, D. and Billimoria, J. (2020). *Social entrepreneurs as first-responders to the COVID-19 crisis. This is why they need support*. World Economic Forum. (Online) available at: <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/09/social-entrepreneurs-are-first-responders-to-the-covid-19-crisis/>

2. Supporting the development of these solutions through pro-bono expertise and mentoring from partners in the Ashoka network.
3. Communicating about the solutions of social entrepreneurs with the purpose of gaining visibility and scaling them.
4. Connecting participants in the program with other potential partners and innovators around the world.

The program



2. Social entrepreneurs and their solutions to the COVID-19 pandemic

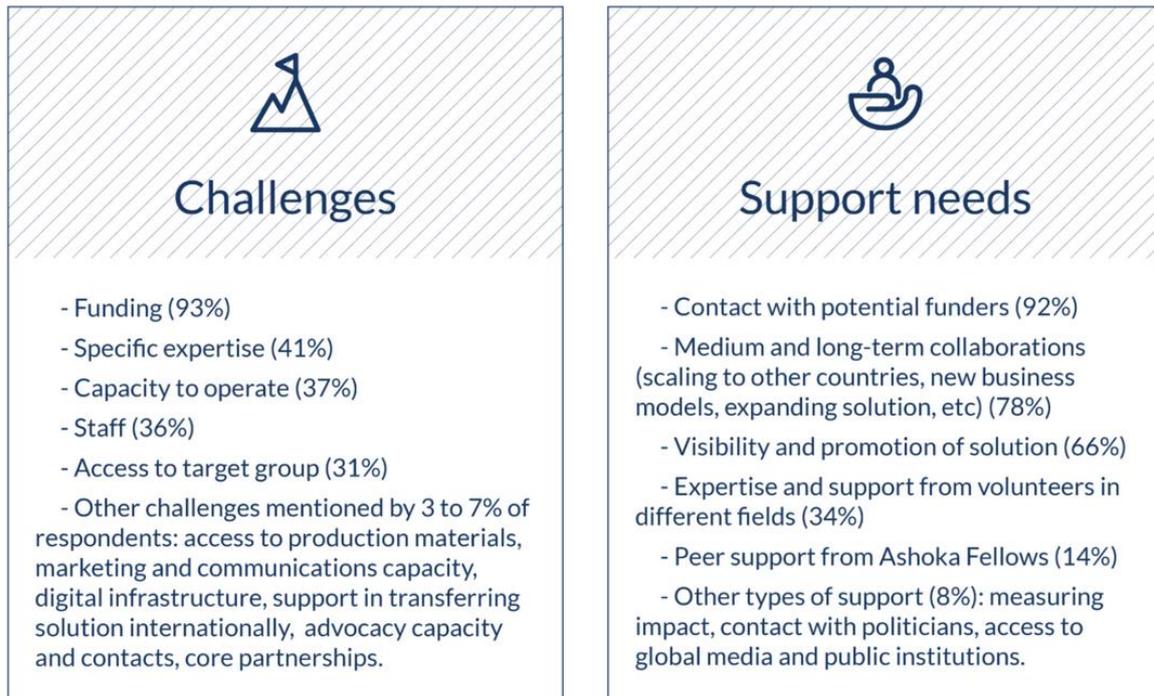
At the beginning of the Changemakers United program, Ashoka conducted a needs assessment among Fellows developing direct solutions for the COVID-19 pandemic.

Out of the 130 European Fellows identified to develop direct solutions to the pandemic, 59 took part in a survey that depicted the situation of Fellows in Europe. The 59 social entrepreneurs who responded to the needs assessment were active in the following fields:



Source: Needs Assessment Changemakers United, N=59

The needs assessment focused on the challenges experienced by social entrepreneurs during this time and the main areas where they needed support in order to develop and scale their solutions. The main points are depicted in the illustration below:



Source: Needs Assessment Changemakers United, N=59

These challenges and needs were at the basis of the matching process during Changemakers United. Throughout the program, 20 Ashoka Fellows from 15 European countries worked with 25 mentors and 121 pro-bono experts on developing their solutions. They covered topics ranging from marketing and communications to business planning, fundraising, digital and legal expertise.²

² For a more detailed overview of the work areas of each Ashoka Fellow, please consult the individual profiles of the social entrepreneurs at the end of the report.

Support process

<p>20 FELLOWS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15 countries 5 sectors 	<p>4 MARKETPLACES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marketing & Communications Business planning & Fundraising Digital Legal
<p>25 LEAD MENTORS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zalando Employees Ashoka Support Network Members BMW Foundation Responsible Leaders 	<p>121 PRO-BONO EXPERTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15 Pro-bono company partners engaged

3. The Changemakers United Summit

The Changemakers United Summit served as the kick-off to the support process for the 20 Ashoka Fellows taking part in the project. The Summit focused on providing the solutions of Fellows with visibility and on connecting them with potential partners, funders, and other interested stakeholders from around the world.

The summit gathered over 1.500 participants from around the world in May 2020.

The Online Summit

Results

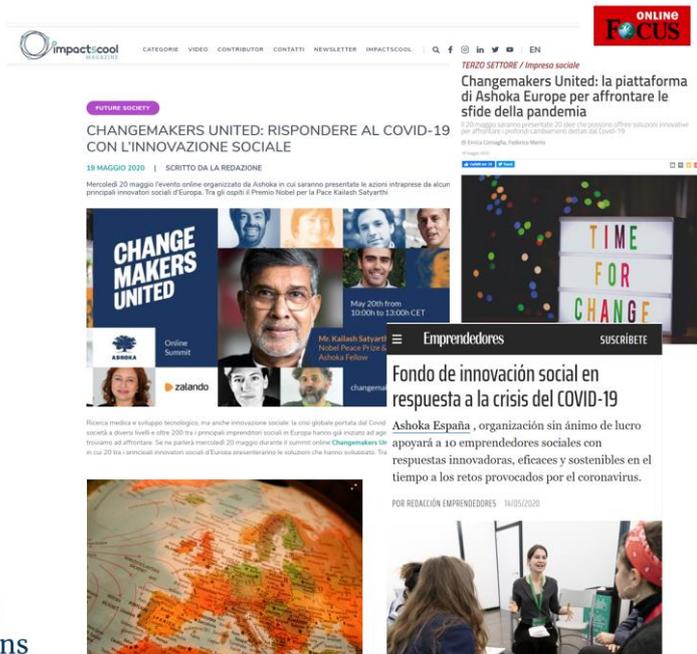
Summit metrics

- 2769 registrations & 1500 show up (54% turnout rate)
- 28 commitment cards from supporters
- 12% engagement rate
- 30 media publications across Europe - amplifying the impact of Changemakers United & "Everyone a changemaker" (more to come...)

1.2K
Viral Reach

+500
LinkedIn
Followers

62K
Twitter
Impressions



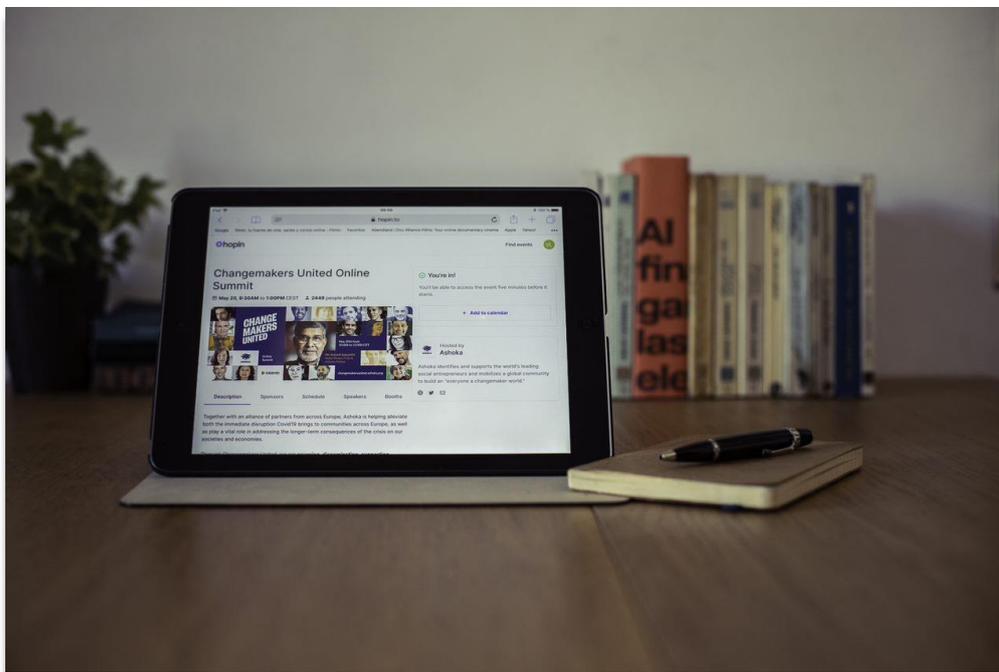
4. Outcomes of Changemakers United and the solutions of Ashoka Fellows

The project supported 20 Ashoka Fellows who developed solutions to the COVID-19 crisis in 5 main fields:

- Providing direct healthcare services and products
- Protecting the most vulnerable groups
- Education models and tools for children and youth
- Delivering reliable and accessible information
- Solutions for the political and economic effects of the pandemic

The 20 social entrepreneurs were involved to different degrees in the program and not all took part in the project components offered (meetings, webinars, etc.). Due to this, the following evaluation of the program is based on the survey and interview responses of the Ashoka Fellows most closely engaged in Changemakers United.

This evaluation is based on survey data from 12 Ashoka Fellows, as well as more detailed interviews conducted with 17 of the Ashoka Fellows in the project.³



³ For more details on methodology please contact the Ashoka Changemakers United Team or Alexandra Ioan - aioan@ashoka.org

Development of Ashoka Fellows' Solutions during Changemakers United

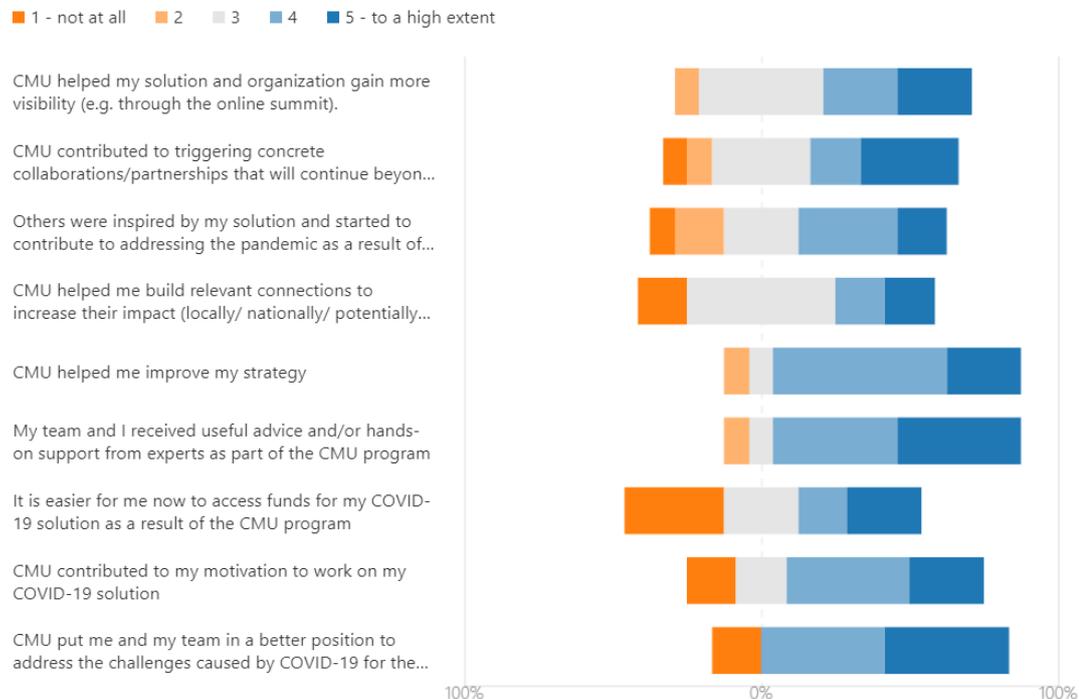
- **More than 419 million people reached by Ashoka Fellows** through their COVID-19 solutions (direct and indirect beneficiaries)
- **Ashoka Fellows have scaled or are in the process of scaling their solutions to 35 countries worldwide** (Belgium, Denmark, Bulgaria, Moldova, Canada, Sweden, Italy, Spain, Hungary, Germany, Israel, Azerbaijan, Madagascar, Italy, Poland, Hungary, Tanzania, Mexico, Netherlands, Peru, Romania, Colombia, Argentina, Guatemala, the Caribbean, Ireland, Austria, etc.)
- **All Ashoka Fellows adapted their services and products to the COVID-19 situation. 9 Ashoka Fellows developed completely new services and products throughout the program to address the pandemic.**
- Although Ashoka Fellows **lost funding due to the pandemic**, they have also **established new services and products and new fundraising leads** for these during this time.
- Although some Ashoka Fellows **had to reduce team sizes during this time**, many also need to **hire additional staff for the implementation and scaling of new services and products** developed during the pandemic.

From the Ashoka Fellows

“The most important help of Changemakers United was the network of peers, the mental support and the connections with other organizations where collaborations could emerge”.

Effects of Changemakers United on the work of Ashoka Fellows

We asked the Ashoka Fellows about the extent to which Changemakers United helped them in different areas of their work.



Source: Evaluation survey Changemakers United, N=12

The areas where social entrepreneurs felt most supported by Changemakers United are:

- Strategy improvement – 83,4% of Fellow respondents;
- Advice and support from experts – 83,4% of Fellow respondents;
- Better position to address challenges of their target group caused by COVID-19 – 83,4% of Fellow respondents;
- Contribution to their motivation to work on COVID-19 solution - 66,7% of Fellow respondents.

The areas highlighted as needing improvement in Changemakers United are:

- Accessing funding for the COVID-19 solution – 58,3% of Fellow respondents consider this has been insufficient or have a neutral opinion on this;
- Contribution to building relevant connections to increase impact – 50% of Fellows respondents are neutral on this issue and 16,7% consider this has been insufficient.

The opinions among Ashoka Fellows are equally split (50%-50%) on whether the program helped increase visibility, inspired others to contribute to responding to the

pandemic and whether it contributed to concrete partnerships and collaborations that will continue beyond the program.

From the Ashoka Fellows

“What I appreciate most is the great variety of points of view the experts bring to our project”

From the Ashoka Fellows

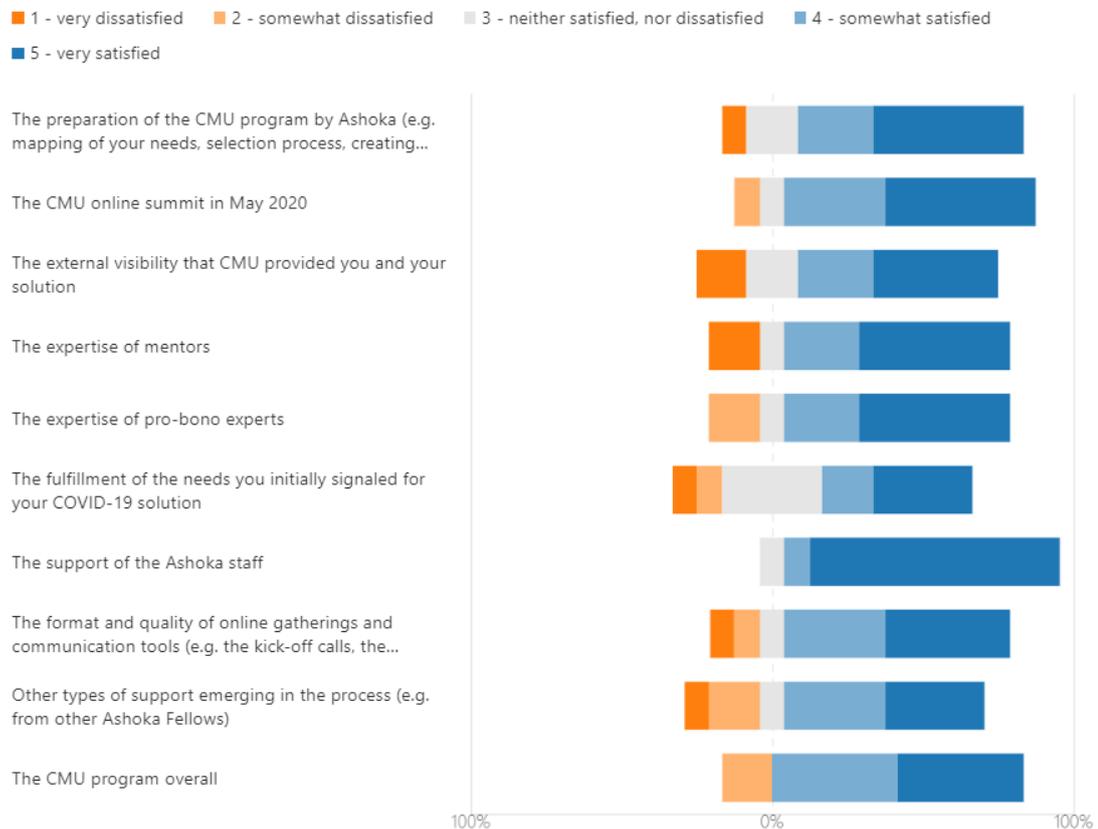
“My feeling is that making the most of the experience is very dependent on the stage your project is in. For some of us, where project development was in the initial phase and coupled to external factors, it was encouraging and discouraging at the same time. It's like watching what would be possible and then realizing that material conditions are not ready yet to arrive to that potential state.”

From the Ashoka Fellows

“If it wasn't for the Changemakers United, I don't think I would have dared to take this step of international scaling. (...) I never thought about bringing my service to the private sector and to families. This was enlightening for me because I hadn't thought about how the systems outside of Scandinavia could work differently.”

Satisfaction levels of Ashoka Fellows with Changemakers United

Ashoka Fellows had an overall high degree of satisfaction with Changemakers United. Most Ashoka Fellows indicated high levels of satisfaction with most of the indicators measured.



Source: Evaluation survey Changemakers United, N=12

High levels of satisfaction stand out in the following areas:

- 91,6% of responding Fellows are satisfied with the support provided by the Ashoka staff.
- 83,4% of responding Fellows are satisfied with the quality of the Changemakers United Summit in May.
- 83,4% of responding Fellows are satisfied with the Changemakers United program overall.
- 75% of responding Fellows are satisfied with the expertise of the mentors and the pro-bono experts.
- 75% of responding Fellows are satisfied with the quality of online gatherings and communication tools.
- 75% of responding Fellows are satisfied with the preparation of the Changemakers United program by Ashoka.
- 66,6% of responding Fellows are satisfied with the visibility that Changemakers United provided them with.

- 66,6% of responding Fellows are satisfied with other types of support that emerged throughout the program (e.g. connection with other Ashoka Fellows)

The only indicator where Fellows' opinions were split is the one related to their needs fulfillment: 50% of Fellows are satisfied with the fulfillment of the needs signaled at the moment the program started, 16,3% are not satisfied and 33,3% are neutral on this matter. These results are connected to the variety of needs of Ashoka Fellows that could not simultaneously be addressed to the same extent within the timeframe of the project (for example, fundraising). For more details, please see the "Interpretation of results" box below.

Interpretation of results

It is important to stress that the experiences of the individual Ashoka Fellows have been very different throughout Changemakers United. This was due to their own engagement and time resources for the program, as well as due to different degrees of compatibility in the matchings, the availability of mentors and pro-bono experts, and the expectations of all participants. The level of development of their solution probably also played a role in the way in which the pro-bono expertise was offered and used and to what extent it was helpful.

It is therefore difficult to generalize positive or critical opinions across Ashoka Fellows as part of this evaluation. The purpose of Changemakers United was not to provide all social entrepreneurs with all options for support available and possible, but rather to offer them the chance to find the most appropriate forms of support for their organization and solution at the time.

From the Ashoka Fellows

"We are a small team and for us it was amazing to feel such support during these times. The experts gave us space to breathe."

From the Ashoka Fellows

"Collaboration needs three things: time, time, and time. It is not something that comes up from nowhere. It needs a mutual understanding between the organizations which have already met before and look at each other's work over time to get confidence. During uncertainty, it is harder than anything to catch the possibility of collaboration."

From the Ashoka Fellows

“Even just to be selected in this program for me meant that someone thinks my project is valuable. It was very motivating.”

The results of the evaluation survey also reflect the feedback gathered from the Fellows through the 17 qualitative interviews. You can find a more detailed overview of the results of the interviews in the section “*Individual overview of the progress of Ashoka Fellows*” at the end of this report.

5. Main learnings from Changemakers United

Based on the analysis of both the survey responses and the interviews with the social entrepreneurs we can extract some main learnings from the Changemakers United program. These points can serve as orientation for the design, planning, and implementation of future support programs for social entrepreneurs.

OVERALL TAKE-AWAYS

- There was **variation in the involvement** both of Ashoka Fellows and of pro-bono experts in the program
- **Experiences in the program were very specific** to the projects and the Fellow
- **Most work streams are still ongoing** and will require a longer time to fully develop or be completed
- The pandemic raised **issues for social entrepreneurs (decrease in revenue and team sizes, loss of access to target groups)**, but it also opened opportunities for them to develop new activities and services that reshape their organization and funding models

WORKED WELL

- Changemakers United worked as a great **support network** during confusing times
- **In general, the pro-bono expertise, mentoring, and coaching** were useful for the Ashoka Fellows
- The process helped Ashoka Fellows **define strategies and objectives, prioritize, and communicate easier to externals**
- **Zalando mentors** were involved and active overall
- **Half of the Ashoka Fellows** benefited from the **visibility that Changemakers United provided**

CAN BE IMPROVED

- The **initial needs assessment** can also evaluate the effect of COVID-19 (or future crises) on Fellows' organizations too, not just on their beneficiaries and solutions. This can help mitigate some potential negative developments that Fellows might not be aware of at the beginning of the crisis.
- Better **expectation management of all stakeholders** at the beginning of the program: briefings for pro-bono advisors and mentors with clear expectations for their involvement, briefings for the social entrepreneurs regarding the realistic potential outcomes of the project. This might increase the level of commitment and clarity around priorities, deadlines, etc.
- The **selection of experts and the matching process** can be improved to ensure even better compatibility.
- More **awareness around the direct need for funding** of social entrepreneurs and developing more concrete fundraising opportunities.
- **Plan more time** for this type of project, as it is difficult to build meaningful collaboration during such a short period of time.

6. Future needs of Ashoka Fellows⁴ and outlook

The social entrepreneurs continue developing their programs and solutions and they also need support from now on. The main needs they signaled for the next stages of development are:

- funding
- fundraising support and leads
- more networking and visibility (further contacts and connecting with people for partnerships, fundraising, staffing, potential clients, etc.)
- legitimizing their solutions
- dealing with challenges of their own organizations
- partners for scaling and replication
- expertise on analytics, strategy, marketing, quality insurance of scaled projects, legal services, accounting, finance.

If you wish to engage further with the social entrepreneurs and support them in any of these areas, please contact the Ashoka Changemakers United Team at any time. Tackling the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic has just begun and we need strong collective efforts to navigate and shape the societies of the future.

⁴ This is a cumulative overview of the needs that Ashoka Fellows signaled from now on for developing their solutions. For individual needs and details regarding a particular Fellow, please contact the Ashoka Changemakers United team.



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