



PRESS RELEASE March 16th, 2020

H&M Foundation commits USD 500,000 to first-of-its-kind COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund

Stockholm, March 16th, 2020 — A first-of-its-kind [COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund](#) is initiated to raise money to support the work to prevent, detect, and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. The aim is to ensure all countries are prepared, especially those with the weakest health systems. The UN Foundation, at the request of World Health Organization (WHO), has created the fund which already has some major early supporters lined up including Facebook and Google. Today, the non-profit [H&M Foundation](#) commits USD 500,000 to the fund's lifesaving work.

The donation made by the H&M Foundation will support WHO's immediate global efforts to track and understand the spread of the virus, to ensure patients get the care they need, frontline workers get essential supplies and information, and to accelerate efforts to develop vaccines, tests, and treatments.

"Diseases don't respect borders, and I am so grateful to H&M Foundation for recognizing that this truly global problem needs a truly global solution with everyone doing their part," said Elizabeth Cousens, President and CEO of the UN Foundation. "Their contribution to this historic fund will support the World Health Organization's lifesaving work to help all countries to prevent, detect, and respond to COVID-19, especially where needs are greatest."

The COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund is currently the only way for individual donors and other charitable givers to contribute to WHO's global response efforts.

"The growing COVID-19 pandemic affects us all and the World Health Organization is doing an extremely important job of leading and managing this global effort. We hope that more organisations and individuals want to join and help, as donations to the COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund are essential to meet funding needs in this fast-moving situation," said Karl-Johan Persson, board member of H&M Foundation.

As the COVID-19 pandemic evolves, countries will have to prepare for and respond to this global outbreak, and consequently the funding needed is expected to increase.

"We are all experiencing an extraordinary situation which requires as many as possible to get involved to enable response efforts. The H&M Foundation's contribution will be used to protect vulnerable patients and health workers in the front line through the establishment of intensive care units and access to protective equipment. We encourage everyone that want to help to get involved," said Diana Amini, Global Manager, H&M Foundation.

More information about COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund, or how to support go to: www.COVID19ResponseFund.org.

For more information or comments, please contact:

Diana Amini, Global Manager, H&M Foundation

Mobile: +46 72 980 48 02

Email: Diana.amini@hmfoundation.com

Hmfoundation.com

NOTES TO EDITORS

- The COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund, initiated March 13th, was created by the UN Foundation and the Swiss Philanthropy Foundation, together with the World Health Organization (WHO).
- The first iteration of the Strategic Preparedness Response Plan by the World Health Organization outlines a funding need of at least US\$675 million through the end of April 2020. An update to this plan is anticipated by the end of March, and expected to outline a need for greater resources, especially for country response, and research and development:
<https://www.who.int/publications-detail/strategic-preparedness-and-response-plan-for-the-new-coronavirus>
- Apart from giving online at www.COVID19ResponseFund.org, the UN Foundation can also receive donations via check or wire from around the world by contacting COVID19Fund@unfoundation.org.
- More detailed information about the COVID-19 Response Fund can be found in their [FAQ](https://unfoundation.org/what-we-do/issues/global-health/covid-19-response-fund-faq/):
<https://unfoundation.org/what-we-do/issues/global-health/covid-19-response-fund-faq/>
- Social Media: #COVID19Fund, @unfoundation, @WHO.

Short facts H&M Foundation

- Through partnerships with organisations around the globe, the non-profit H&M Foundation aims to act as a catalyst for change and accelerate the progress needed to reach the UN Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. Since 2013, its privately funded by the Stefan Persson family, founders and main owners of H & M Hennes & Mauritz AB.
- In addition to drive change within its focus areas Education, Water, Equality and Planet, the H&M Foundation can also provide emergency relief to affected and vulnerable communities in large scale disasters. Since 2013, the H&M Foundation has donated 3.3 million USD in emergency relief:
<https://hmfoundation.com/emergency-relief/>.
- Since 2013, 7.7 million people have been directly reached through the H&M Foundation's initiatives within Education, Water, Equality, Planet as well as emergency relief, and 98 million USD has been granted in total.
- The Annual Report – A Catalyst for Change 2019, covers the work of H&M Foundation from January 1 to December 31, 2019:
https://hmfoundation.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Annual_Report_2019_spread.pdf
- H&M Foundation has an ongoing partnership with UN Foundation focusing on advancing the progress of the UN Sustainable Development Goals through women's empowerment advocacy and supporting social entrepreneurship.

H&M Foundation

The H&M Foundation is a non-profit global foundation headquartered in Stockholm, Sweden. Its mission is to drive long lasting, positive change and improve living conditions by investing in people, communities and innovative ideas. Through partnerships with organisations around the globe, the H&M Foundation aims to act as a catalyst for change and accelerate the progress needed to reach the UN Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. It focuses on four areas; Education, Water, Equality and Planet and can also provide emergency relief. The H&M Foundation is privately funded by the Stefan Persson family, founders and main owners of H & M Hennes & Mauritz AB. Since 2013, the family has donated 1.5 billion Swedish krona (\$200 million/€163 million) to the H&M Foundation. www.hmfoundation.com, www.unfounded.ltd. Follow @hmfoundation on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and LinkedIn.