



en.v, a Kuwaiti non-profit organisation Strategy Overview: Understanding the Impact of COVID-19 Case Study Summary

In the past 12 years, Kuwait-based non-profit organisation, en.v, has demonstrated a robust and collaborative effort to address the challenges faced by a range of diverse communities in order to better equip them for operational resilience. en.v brings changemakers together to address community challenges in three key areas in particular: Community Building, Educational Reform, and Migrant Workers' Rights. Operating on the principles of equity, collaboration, responsiveness, and participation, en.v aims to effectively bring about social change by building resilient communities.

COVID-19: Short-term Challenges, Existing Capabilities, and Response:

- There was an initial pause in the planning of events, community workshops, educational sessions, and courses as response to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- An eventual shift towards online activities demanded more resources in order to keep audience members engaged. Traditional audiences were split into smaller focus groups and engaged for longer periods of time, requiring the allocation of more resources and time than originally projected.
- While the shift to virtual events allowed en.v to reach communities they would not normally have access to due to factors such as distance, it also raised new concerns regarding their audience's accessibility to the internet and a safe space in which to attend events.
- In terms of existing capabilities, en.v's team shifted to work remotely so that their workflow remained uninterrupted.



"As a results-focused organisation, shifting to virtual events during the pandemic was not simply a tick-box exercise, but rather about achieving the intended result and impact - whether that was through community building or knowledge-sharing."

- Elisa Franceschinis, Managing Director,
en.v



Shift in focus of programmes and activities:

- Creation of virtual rooms to bring together the CEOs of large private companies, health professionals and others, to address concerns that were reported on by representatives of migrant workers, including issues with transportation and food in communities that were most hard-hit during national lockdowns.
- Conducting workshops for local CEOs and migrant-worker leaders to address issues which were not paid heed to prior to the pandemic; including access to internet connectivity, sharing rooms with large numbers of people, etc.
- Franceschinis pointed to a more generic and systemic challenge with donor caps, with restricted funding allocated to indirect costs such as staff salaries and organisational costs. During the pandemic, direct costs – such as venue bookings, caterings, etc. – were indeed reduced. However, conducting activities online demand more internal resources, and Franceschinis invites donor organisations to start rethinking their resource allocation along these parameters.

Effect on long-term strategy:

- en.v will continue to operate on a hybrid model; working remotely and meeting in-person only as and when required, to assist with team growth and effective management.
- en.v will also direct a renewed focus on building strategic international connections to effectively work on their focus areas, which are even more relevant following the onset of the pandemic.

CSR and Sustainability advice for other organisations working during times of change:

- Innovation and collaboration must go hand-in-hand to achieve the objectives of being responsible and inclusive during challenging circumstances for an organisation to continue to operate effectively.
- Make sure your organisation's work is responsive to the actual needs of your community and builds on their existing assets, in an effort to not create any additional requirements.
- As everything is in flux, dedicate time to rethinking strategy and piloting different models to learn how to best optimise impact.
- Maintain open communication channels with partners and donors about changes being made to the organisation.
- Practice compassion both with the communities you serve and also with your internal team.

To learn more, visit the Pearl Initiative's Centre for Philanthropic Governance

<http://circle.pearlinitiative.org>