

# TOGETHER AGAINST COVID-19

Solvay Solidarity Fund  
Impact progress report JANUARY 2021



# Foreword from the Committee

*The Solvay Solidarity Fund (SSF) aims to foster solidarity between Solvay's managers, employees, shareholders and partners towards the Group's employees, their loved ones and local communities experiencing hardship related to the global COVID-19 crisis.*



**Christian Jourquin**  
SSF Chairman

Organizations need to have a guiding purpose to drive forward their businesses and serve their communities. Solvay's initiative, largely endorsed by its shareholders, showed responsible capitalism during these tough times and inspired other companies to implement similar initiatives.

This report chronicles the 2020 journey of the Solvay Solidarity Fund as it is important for us to inform its contributors. Our Committee makes every effort to ensure that all allocated resources are used in the most meaningful manner possible.

**The Fund is at the beginning of its journey, we will make sure to keep you regularly informed of the concrete interventions carried out through these progress reports.**



**Ilham Kadri**  
Solvay CEO  
& SSF Committee  
Member

The generosity of donations enabled us to alleviate the impact of the pandemic for more than 6,000 persons around the world already. I'm extremely proud of the commitment of our shareholders, our Board of Directors, our managers and our employees!

Over the past few months, we've seen an escalating number of requests and the beginning of 2021 confirms this trend. Whilst the Fund was set up as a crisis intervention mechanism, the effects of the pandemic will be long-lasting and the economy will take its time to rise back. The strategic relevance of the Fund remains undisputable.

**This Fund embodies what we are at Solvay, taking care of one another, alleviating the burden on our employees' shoulders, to enable them to focus on the essential and to give them reasons to be proud of belonging to this ONE community.**



**Peter Piot**  
Honorary  
President

We have been living with the pandemic for about close to a year now, it has already caused an awful amount of human suffering and economic damages around the world.

Showing solidarity towards people affected by this crisis is more important now than ever to overcome the unprecedented challenges we're facing and the ones ahead. The initiative Solvay launched is already making a difference for direct or indirect victims of the virus among Solvay's employees and communities.

**I am honored to offer counsel to the Fund as it seeks to expand its support in the months and years to come.**

*"Solvay shows with this solidarity fund that we are one Solvay. We stay together in good and bad times. This makes us unique. I'm proud to work for this company."*

EUROPEAN WORKS COUNCIL

*"This is a coherent and socially responsible approach, given rising social pressures in Europe as well as increasing concerns over corporate liquidity."*

DEUTSCHE BANK



**Luc Tayart de Borms**  
Managing Director  
King Baudouin  
Foundation

The King Baudouin Foundation is extremely pleased to make its entire international network available to the Solvay Solidarity Fund, facilitating its full and efficient deployment.

**We also guarantee the impartiality of its decisions.**

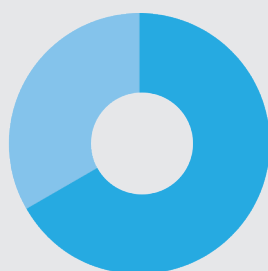


**Nicolas Boël**  
Chairman of  
Solvay Board of  
Directors

*I would like to express my deep gratitude for the decisive contribution of our donors to this pioneering initiative, who allowed the Solvay Solidarity Fund to become a reality. This mobilization is unprecedented and demonstrates a strong attachment to our Group, in these exceptionally tough collective and individual circumstances.*

## Total amount

AS OF JANUARY 2021



**15 million €**  
donations

● €12 MILLION > SHAREHOLDERS

● €3 MILLION > SOLVAY  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS, SENIOR  
MANAGEMENT & EMPLOYEES

## Principles

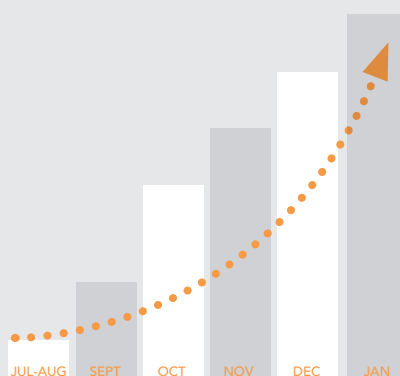
OF THE SOLVAY SOLIDARITY FUND

Since its creation in the spring of 2020, the **Solvay Solidarity Fund** enables Group employees to submit applications for financial assistance and/or days off at any time. In concrete terms, the Fund offers continuous support and covers:

- **Assistance to seriously affected employees** and their families, who find themselves in great difficulty or major distress related to health, their children's education, unemployment, and the limitation or disappearance of social and/or health coverage ;
- **Support for the health and social organizations** that take care of these people ;

## Evolution of applications

JULY 2020 - JANUARY 2021



To a larger extent, the Fund's purpose is to offer **support for research, health and social organizations involved in the fight against COVID-19**, focused on both its sanitary and economical impacts on Solvay employees and associated communities. The Fund Management Committee will decide, monitor and adapt the course of action throughout the journey to ensure meaningful impact in line with the Fund's solidarity intent.

# Governance

The Solvay Solidarity Fund is administered by the King Baudouin Foundation (KBF), managed on a daily basis by an Evaluation Committee and overseen by a Management Committee.

The accounting of the Fund's activities is regularly monitored by the Management Committee, and is subject to an annual independent audit and regular reporting on the use of the funds and impact reached.

## Management Committee's role

The Management Committee is composed of four unremunerated members, with equal representation from the KBF, Solvay, an independent third party and an honorary member. It orients actions and validates the allocation of donations every 2 to 3 weeks. Upon the Committee's decision, the King Baudouin Foundation informs applicants accordingly within 30 days and proceeds with payment within 45 days, if granted.

### MEMBERS

- **Luc Tayart de Borms**, KBF Managing Director
- **Christian Jourquin**, Chairman
- **Ilham Kadri**, Solvay CEO
- **Peter Piot**, Honorary President

## Evaluation Committee's role

The Management Committee delegates the day-to-day responsibility for collecting and analysing applications to an Evaluation Committee, made up of Solvay representatives from different countries and continents, and a representative of the KBF.

Applications are received on an ongoing basis and are usually evaluated every 2 weeks. For critical and urgent requests, cases are examined and processed on an accelerated basis. The Evaluation Committee consolidates each request and gives initial guidance, before the KBF representative delivers the applications to the Management Committee. Final decisions are validated solely by the Management Committee.

*"Deciding who can be granted support can be difficult, we are talking about human lives and some cases are heartbreaking, as you can imagine. We have defined a set of criteria to objectify our decision-making process. First, the hardship must be correlated directly or indirectly to the COVID-19 crisis, be it related to health, education, childcare, or the family primary needs. Secondly, there must be no other safety net, meaning that the hardship wouldn't be hedged otherwise by the Group's or the Country's social coverage. Thirdly, we look at the economical loss: was it preexisting or is it proportionately overwhelming in regards to the regular household incomes? Are there several difficulties encountered, adding to the severity of the situation endured? Through these lenses, we ensure maximum objectivity, to serve the purpose of the Fund."*

Christian Jourquin

Management Committee meetings  
**2/month**

Average granted amount  
**~€3,500**

Days off granted  
**312**  
**~40%** of donations

Spent amount  
**€1,700,000**  
**~12%** of donations

## Evaluated cases ~340

"Thanks so much for helping me through this crisis, it really means a lot to me. Thanks again!"

### Geographical distribution



1,600 families  
~6,200 people

### Nature of need



MEDICAL  
NEEDS



SAFEGUARDING  
HOUSING



CHILD  
SUPPORT



TUITION &  
EDUCATION



DAILY  
SUBSISTENCE



TIME TO CARE FOR  
A LOVED ONE

Safeguarding education is at the heart of the Fund's preoccupations. For instance in the US, where employees are strongly impacted, an educational association will help organize the distribution of funding to guarantee the educational path of the applicants' children.



**Days off** are granted to employees who need to support ailing or distressed relatives, young children or dependants for whom schools, daycares and specialized centers are closed or unavailable. Applicants also receive solidarity days off to compensate for having fully used their holiday quota, they wouldn't have been able to take the necessary time off to cover family needs or rest otherwise.

**Financial assistance** is granted to employees facing accumulated or proportionally significant income losses in their household, to those no longer able to pay for basic needs, to others facing burdensome medical bills, as well as to some families whose children lost their own jobs and rely on their parents. In addition, substantial assistance is put in place to guarantee the educational path of their children if they have started higher or professional studies.

"This project is dear to my heart, as a Solvay employee of course. Before Summer, the formal framework was set and the call for funding launched, in July we started receiving the first applications and by August the Fund had established its robust financial foothold to get into action. The journey has been emotional too in capturing the needs of our colleagues and their magnitude, suggesting appropriate support, while ensuring equal treatment and alignment with the Fund's intent. The Fund brought essential relief to many families facing hardship and it has been a life changer in some unbearable situations. To me, this embodies what makes Solvay stand out."



Olivia De Wit, Solvay SSF Leader





# The Fund and local communities

*"When the Mayor of Devnya came to me with the request to renovate a section of the hospital for COVID patients, I directly forwarded it to the Solvay Solidarity Fund.*

*The approval from the SSF Committee was received almost instantaneously."*

**Spiros Nomikos, Solvay Bulgaria Country Manager**

The Solvay Solidarity Fund, donated €100,000 for the opening of a COVID section which allows for:

- Remuneration of **18 medical staff** for a minimum period of 3 months
- Investment in **specialized medical equipment** – an X-ray machine, Oxygen supply devices, etc.
- Repair and **refurbishing hospital rooms** and other premises.

The project was launched in less than a month of hard work, allowing the first patients in by the beginning of December.



The Region of Varna, in Bulgaria, was severely hit by the second pandemic wave. **The situation required an urgent need to open additional sections for COVID patients.**

The region made an urgent appeal and Devnya hospital turned out as one of the options but... it needed total renovation. The Group was called upon to provide support - being present since 1997 in the Region through its soda ash plant - and this is where the Solidarity Fund came into play.

*"For the time being, 60 people have been admitted in this section. 50 of them are already healed and discharged. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the contributors of the Solvay Solidarity Fund and the local authorities who helped a lot in restoring and in making it happen."*

**Dr. Yordan Ivanov, Head of the COVID Section**



**€100,000**  
to Devnya community

*"My family and I are very thankful for your support during these very challenging times!"*

## €100,000 to Guar farmers in India

Bio-based guar seeds offer eco-friendly hair care solutions found in today's shampoos, conditioners and repair treatments produced by premium FMCG\* companies Solvay partners with.

*The Solvay Solidarity Fund is dedicating €100,000 to help address Indian guar farmers' urgent economic and sanitary needs due to the crisis. Guar farmers, who play a crucial role in Solvay's value chain, saw a drop in their income because of severe restrictions of movement.*

### Why is the Solvay Solidarity Fund helping guar farmers?

As a consequence of the COVID-19, farmers could not complement their income from guar due to severe restriction of movements and could not afford sanitary protective equipment.

In addition, they suffered from reduced guar yield due to poor monsoon. When looking at their impact on Solvay businesses and their role in the value chain, we see this community as an extension of our workforce.

### How will it help them?

With the support of the SSF, we help around 5,000 farmers, beyond their urgent needs, by helping them to become more resilient in the future.

The donation will pay for organic agricultural inputs, such as guar seeds, and provide more sanitary protective equipment such as masks, sanitizers, gloves and soaps. In addition, it will cover the costs of constructing more rainwater storage wetlands to collect and store scarce water supplies throughout the year. This is a game changer for the farmers as they are working in a semi-desert region. Trees with 12 different types of fruit will also be planted in more villages, which will provide another source of nutritious food.

Finally, the donation will be applied to a menstrual awareness campaign, which has already trained more than 2,000 women and 1,500 young girls on menstrual hygiene and how to create their own cloth pads. Some women have begun making and selling cloth pads and their entrepreneurship will be supported through this funding.

\* Fast Moving Consumer Goods companies like Henkel & L'OREAL



*Indian guar farmers are considered an important part of the Group's extended human capital and we want to support them during this challenging period. This donation will provide supplies to meet their immediate needs while also helping them - and us - become more resilient in the future.*



Interview with  
**Anne-Charlotte Butrot**  
Sustainability Manager

## €20 to 5,000 Guar farmers

## HOW TO APPLY?



## HOW TO DONATE?



**CONTACT** [solidarity.fund@solvay.com](mailto:solidarity.fund@solvay.com)

**WEBSITE** [solvay.com/en/solvay-solidarity-fund](http://solvay.com/en/solvay-solidarity-fund)



Progress beyond

