

STEP 1: FINDING THE KIND OF NGO THAT WE WANT

In addition to focusing on **parts of India that are not in focus right now (and you're familiar with)**, try looking for NGOs that are specifically **working for underserved populations**. So, for example, an NGO that works with pregnant women in a village.

Places not in focus would include North East Indian states, central Indian states, Jammu and Kashmir, rural areas almost everywhere and also South Indian states. Haryana & Maharashtra would usually not fit this category.

Underserved populations would include but not be limited to women and children, refugees and migrants, old people, LGBTQ community, Dalit community, sex workers, people with disabilities, political prisoners and tribal people. Families of such populations could also be included in the relief efforts.

Make sure that the NGO is 'apolitical and 'a-religious' in the sense that they can organise around a religion but their aim should be to save lives/help people instead of pursuing religious/political goals.

After you have a short list (2-3) of the kind of NGOs that we are looking for, we will do an internal verification process to make sure that there is no misuse of funds happening through the name of an NGO. Here, the information can come from their website but also after establishing contact with them on call and requesting information from them (it's best to do so).

Basically, you might not find a lot of information about their current COVID efforts. Try to evaluate how genuine they are and find out more by getting in touch with them. Here is some of the specific information you can look for/ask for.

STEP 2: INTERNAL VERIFICATION PROCESS

When you're asking for the information here from them, don't make it seem like you doubt them. Make it seem like this is to satisfy the donors of their genuineness.

Time of operation: The NGO should have been working at least for 5 years or so by now.

Who is their founder: Try looking up information about the founder of the NGO, and do a basic background search about them individually too.

Who do they work for: Sometimes there are organisations that claim they are serving the most marginalised but in fact they are not. Try to understand their criteria for selection of beneficiaries.

What did they do in the past pandemic: NGOs were less overwhelmed in the last pandemic and have had a chance to update their websites/social media handles by now. Check those to see how their work was.

Evidence of work: Do they have pictures and/or videos of their general projects on their website? Anything on their social media handles?

Awards and newspaper coverage: Have they been given any awards for their work? Can you find any newspaper reports about them?

Past pandemic efforts: NGOs were less overwhelmed in the last pandemic, look for records of their efforts from then (if the same is not available for now on their website and then ask them for details about current covid relief projects).

Beneficiary voices: Usually, having beneficiary voices on their website is a good sign. Do they have quotes/video testimonials from them? When you discuss the project with them we will ask them to put in touch with one or two beneficiaries so we can collect anecdotes from them for social media anyway. See if they are ready to do so.

How was the money used? Do they have past fundraisers? Or ongoing donations? Look for records of past financial statements or something similar to see how they used donations. Ask them where you can find that.

Partner organisations: Usually having partner organisations is a good sign! You could also look into their partner organisations to see how they look.

Finally, what are their current COVID relief strategies and initiatives? (get an idea about all of them) Where are they working, what are they doing, for which people, since how long, why is their strategy what it is, and so on. Does it seem a) practical b) necessary c) genuine?

In the end, Trust your gut feeling! You'll know after talking to them and researching about them for a while if they are genuine or not. Only if you feel sure you should move ahead. **If something feels wrong and you can't put your finger on it, it's still best to move on.**