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## **HSBC India pledges support to Mumbai's *Dabbawalas* – commits INR 15 crore for Covid relief**

HSBC India today announced that it is pledging financial assistance to the tune of INR 15 crore to support *dabbawalas* in Mumbai. This support will be provided in association with United Way Mumbai and aimed at providing relief to *dabbawalas* who have been significantly impacted due to the pandemic and subsequent lockdowns.

This donation will be utilized for a range of interventions to address the loss of income and livelihood of Mumbai's renowned *dabbawalas*, broadly covering:

- Food security – Rations and hygiene supplies to *dabbawalas* and their families
- Life insurance to *dabbawalas*
- Education support – Learning and educational enablers for children / grandchildren of *dabbawalas*
- Livelihood support – Bicycles to resume their services once lockdown restrictions are lifted

As part of the support and relief packages, each *dabbawala* will be provided ration and hygiene material supplies for three months. Financial protection in the form of life insurance cover will be provided through tie-ups with insurance providers. Additionally, educational tabs and access to digital resources will be provided to school-aged children/grandchildren of *dabbawalas* whose education has been impacted due to a lack of smartphones at home, to facilitate online learning. With schools likely to continue classes virtually for few more months, this support will be crucial in bridging the learning gap. Lastly, the *dabbawalas* will also be provided cycles, their primary mode of transport, to resume their services once the lockdown restrictions are lifted.

Commenting on this initiative, **Hitendra Dave, Interim CEO, HSBC India** said, "The *dabbawalas* have defined the grit and spirit of the city of Mumbai. An integral part of the city's workforce and community, they have been hit hard by the pandemic with loss of livelihood. Our support to the *dabbawalas* is in line with our endeavour of supporting the communities where we operate. We are working with United Way Mumbai to reach out and extend help to the *dabbawalas*. We hope that this financial assistance will aid their resilience during these challenging times."

The pandemic brought the operations of the *dabbawalas* who deliver tiffins to almost two lakh people in Mumbai to a sudden halt. With the lockdown ensuring a move towards work-from-home, these *dabbawalas* lost their source of livelihood, with many returning to their villages and unable to return since. Currently, a few *dabbawalas* are working to bring in food to essential service workers. However, many others continue to struggle to make ends meet for their families.

**Ulhas Muke, President, Nutan Mumbai Tiffin Box Suppliers Charity Trust**, said, “The *Dabbawala* service has never been shut in the past 130 years. But since March 2020 it has come to a total standstill. With no earnings over the past 14 months *dabbawalas* are in financial crisis and it has been difficult for them to feed their families. Many of them had to return to their villages as survival in Mumbai is tough. Many have taken up temporary livelihoods such as selling vegetables and working as drivers. HSBC India’s initiative will help the families cope with these very difficult times. The mobile tabs will help our children study individually as most of them are studying in groups on one smartphone for the past one year. The bicycles will be important to resume our duties when restrictions are lifted and life returns to normalcy. *Dabbawalas* are ready to work but the repair cost for the bicycle is very high and unaffordable. Lastly, the insurance will help provide the much needed safety cover to us and our families.”

#### **About HSBC:**

##### **HSBC Bank India**

The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited in India offers a full range of banking and financial services through 26 branches across 14 cities. HSBC is one of India's leading financial services groups, with over 39,000 employees in its banking, investment banking and capital markets, asset management, software development and global resourcing operations in the country. It is a leading custodian in India. The Bank is at the forefront in arranging deals for Indian companies investing overseas and foreign investments into the country.

##### **HSBC Holdings plc**

HSBC Holdings plc, the parent company of HSBC, is headquartered in London. HSBC serves customers worldwide from offices in 64 countries and territories in its geographical regions: Europe, Asia, North America, Latin America, and Middle East and North Africa. With assets of \$2,959bn at 31 March 2021, HSBC is one of the world’s largest banking and financial services organisations.

#### **About United Way Mumbai:**

United Way Mumbai is a part of the 130 years old United Way movement engaged in nearly 1800 communities, spanning 41 countries across the world. Our mission is to improve lives by mobilizing the caring power of communities to advance the common good. We work closely with a network of 400+ NGOs and a large number of corporates for their CSR programmes, workplace giving campaigns and other events. Our flagship programmes have been largely in the areas of civic awareness, health, safety and greening. In addition to this, we have designed and facilitated large scale interventions in the areas of education, nutrition and sanitation in urban and rural communities.

Read more about United Way Mumbai and our environmental initiatives at [www.unitedwaymumbai.org](http://www.unitedwaymumbai.org).

#### **Media enquiries to:**

Aman Ullah +91 22 2268 1046

[aman.ullah@hsbc.co.in](mailto:aman.ullah@hsbc.co.in)

Kunal Pradhan +91 22 22681 287

[kunal.pradhan@hsbc.co.in](mailto:kunal.pradhan@hsbc.co.in)