



# 02 COVID-19

**18** Going beyond the call of duty

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# Going beyond the call of duty

As a global company with operations in more than 100 countries, we recognize that ABB has an important role to play in tackling the COVID-19 crisis around the world



## Safeguarding our people

When the pandemic broke out, our first priority was to safeguard the health and safety of all stakeholders, and above all our employees. We continuously monitored the evolving situation around COVID-19 and took all necessary precautions in line with local government and WHO (World Health Organization) guidelines to protect our people.

These measures included restricting access to ABB premises, promoting physical distancing, restricting travel, and promoting good personal hygiene practices. Wherever possible, we made appropriate arrangements for employees to work from home.

From the start of the outbreak, our leaders and teams went beyond the call of duty to safeguard the health of our people and communities and to maintain business continuity in challenging circumstances. In our factories, we spared no effort to ensure that our people were safe and protected from the risk of infection.

ABB also stepped up its response to help employees and their families who were impacted by the crisis, as well as to support relief efforts in the world's most vulnerable



communities. To this end, the ABB Board of Directors, the CEO and many other senior managers decided to voluntarily take a 10 percent reduction of their compensation. The donated funds have been used to help ABB employees whose jobs and livelihoods were impacted by the crisis.

## **Keeping critical infrastructure up and running**

While our top priorities during 2020 were health and safety, we also did everything in our power to support our customers, partners and suppliers.

ABB serves society by supplying and maintaining critical infrastructure for many essential goods and services. During the pandemic, we worked with our customers and partners to maintain power supplies and services deemed critical by local governments. Our teams across the globe also helped our customers and partners leverage our existing digital services to keep critical services running safely; at the same time, we found new ways to connect with each other and our stakeholders virtually.

To support our customers further, we decided to make some of our software services available for free to ensure uninterrupted power for critical healthcare applications and to strengthen the management of commercial and industrial facilities. We also found new ways to drive efficiency for our customers and partners. We successfully introduced virtual and remote Factory Acceptance Testing (FAT) across many of our divisions. FAT now serves a vital role in our delivery process, which, in most cases, had previously required a physical visit by the customer to our factories.

## **Answering the call for our technologies**

In 2020, we worked with governments to assess where ABB could use its technology and expertise to support the manufacture of critical equipment, such as ventilators and masks, as well as to support other aspects of the pandemic response.

In New York City, we partnered with long-time customer Boyce Technologies to rapidly retool and upgrade their production line for the manufacture of emergency “bridge” ventilators. We are currently working with Boyce to equip an automated production line for the manufacture of N95 masks. In Singapore, we supplied four IRB 910 SCARA robots, including simulation and programming support, to help enhance the nation’s COVID-19 testing capabilities. And in the laboratory of Sweden’s Karolinska University Hospital, one of ABB’s collaborative robots is now helping technicians process the millions of medical samples that are handled there every year.



## Providing aid where it is most needed

As well as protecting our people and supporting our customers, we helped efforts to limit the spread and impact of COVID-19 in communities around the world. Among our many initiatives, we used our global resources to procure and deliver hundreds of thousands of masks and respirators to hospitals and frontline workers in China and Italy, among other countries.

We also launched a Group-wide, global effort to support communities that are most vulnerable to COVID-19. ABB made an initial contribution of CHF 1 million to the COVID-19 prevention and support effort of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). Additionally, ABB employees from 72 countries made contributions to the initiative, which were matched by the company on a one-to-one basis. Altogether, ABB donated CHF 2 million to the ICRC.

More than 90 percent of donations made to the ICRC are used directly for its work in the field. The money raised by ABB is being used to provide infrastructure for healthcare centers, sanitation infrastructure and crucial goods such as soap and masks in countries such as Nigeria and South Sudan.

In December 2020, we also made a donation of CHF 1 million to the World Childhood Foundation (Childhood). This will go towards helping vulnerable children worldwide, whose lives have been made even more difficult by the pandemic, which has placed many of them at greater risk of abuse, exploitation and neglect. Childhood is a global children's rights organization, founded by Queen Silvia of Sweden. It promotes better living conditions for vulnerable and exploited children all over the world, focusing primarily on preventing violence and sexual abuse directed at children.

Finally, at the local level, our employees made many valuable contributions to help their communities manage this crisis. It is not possible to cover everything that our people did over the course of 2020, but the following examples illustrate the nature of their contributions:

- In Italy, employees donated the value of some of their working hours to support the Abita la Cura ("Live the Recovery") initiative. All told, 1,069 of our people donated over 6,600 working hours to help stem the tide of the pandemic. ABB matched their contributions in cash, resulting in donations of more than €300,000.
- In the U.S., employees donated to local food banks across the country, with ABB matching their donations.
- In China, our teams helped with COVID-19-related infrastructure, such as hospitals, in Hubei province.