



Benares School Fund Foundation

THE NETHERLANDS

FOREWORD BY OUR NEW CHAIRMAN

For the first time after a period of three years, we were able to return to India. We found the schools in full operation, after being closed for a long time due to Covid-19.

Just like in the Netherlands, in India the corona period felt far behind us. We stood as usual close together during festive gatherings. We celebrated Diwali in a packed room with teachers and students. The children made rangolis (mandalas of colored sand) on the floor and decorated the space with candles in clay candleholders. Classes are filling up again, although not all students have returned to school yet. The schools have been closed for a long time; for the children it was a loss not to be able to go to school every day. Some students and teachers have died and there are losses to be mourned in the families of the children.

The past few years have also been a period of adapting to changing circumstances and of making new plans. For example, Jeevan School was looking for solutions to give the hostel children a home and to adapt to a lower financial budget. During this period, NGO Muheem started several small pre-schools in villages outside Varanasi. And the first work begun for the construction of the new Asha Deep School on the outskirts of the city. The commitment of the school directors and teachers is enormous, this surprised us again this time. The directors know how to keep the schools running, make plans and raise funds with undiminished energy.

When visiting the schools again after several years, we look at them with a fresh perspective. It is now very common for children to go to school, education is also seen by the parents as a step



Son Jelle joined Alet on her visit to India

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Alet, left with Marien and right with Conny in the streets of Varanasi

towards a better life. At least in the cities. This is different in the villages, where communities often live isolated and many children do not yet go to school. There, good and appropriate education is not self-evident either. Precisely the children who grow up in poverty and who are deprived in many aspects, need education with a focus on a good learning climate in which there is also room for personal development. This is what BSF stands for and wants to contribute to.

Last September, Marien resigned from his position as president of BSF. He has been president from the very beginning. He fulfilled this task with great commitment, always keeping a clear direction. With enthusiasm and passion he has inspired others to support the projects in India. As the board, we are grateful and proud of what Marien has contributed to the Benares School Fund Foundation. Marien will stay involved in the board as treasurer and will continue to regularly visit the projects in India.

I will take on the task of chairman in the coming years. With pleasure I will continue the foundation's set course.

Alet Meurs, *chairman BSF* / March 2023





ASHA DEEP SCHOOL

- > up to and including class 8
- > 139 students
- + 53 students further education class 9 - 12
- > BSF contribution 16% of total budget of € 80,000
- > support since 2012
- > www.asha-deep.com



August 2023, after the summer break, director Connie Rao's new school building, just outside Varanasi, will be in full operation. Connie chose this place deliberately: education is more needed here.

The contours of the building are becoming increasingly sharp: the semicircular construction, the open courtyard, the unusual windows, some round, most long and narrow. It will certainly not be a standard building. The villagers are delighted!

Connie proudly announced that all the money for the construction has been collected. A means of transport can also be purchased to take the teachers to school and back home again. The last threshold for the teachers to come along (it's far; how do I get there?) has been overcome.

It was an honor for BSF that, thanks to a bequest, we were able to make the first major contribution to the new building. As an accomplished fundraiser, Connie completed the rest.



We are very curious about the start. We admire Connie Rao for daring to move to a new place. There the school can grow to twelve classes. Given the quality of the current school, we expect nothing but further success.

Surprisingly her latest newsletter informed us that she wants to build a *community center* on the school grounds. A wonderful initiative! It gives Connie the chance to firmly establish the school in its new surroundings, and to provide maximum benefit to the local residents.



We spoke to some former students, nice, open young people. They are very appreciative to Connie Rao, still coming back regularly to chat with her or ask for advice. Not only is the education at the school of a high standard, there is also room for sports, music and handicrafts. The students think back fondly on their years at Asha Deep School.



First trimester exams took place at the end of September. After corona, Connie wanted to see serious progress. To make cheating more difficult, she shuffled the classes; no student sat next to a classmate. <





'WE FEEL VERY LUCKY TO HAVE HIM WITH US!'

'Him' refers to Andrew, an American volunteer. He earned his bachelor's degree in cellular and molecular biology before coming to Varanasi.

Now he is studying for his master's degree in social work at Benares Hindu University. He applied for a volunteer visa to work at ADS for six years. That visa has been granted.



Connie: 'We are very excited to have a trained social worker at our school! Teachers will recommend needy students to him. Then, Andrew will try to identify underlying problems whether they be academic, emotional, or social, and will create a plan to help the student cope with whatever situation he/she is facing. This may mean extra academic help, counseling, or going to homes to try to work with parents. We feel very lucky to have him with us!'



I was amazed to see the confidence on the face of Jamuna at the right. Now in 8th class, she has a right to face the world like this. She's one of my top students and is working hard to create a good future for herself. It's astonishing to see this strength in a fatherless girl who lives in a one-room hut. I'm sure she's heard in a thousand ways that someone like her can never amount to anything. She's determined to prove them wrong.'

(Connie in one of her newsletters)

DIVYA JYOTI

For years, the Benares School Fund Foundation has been receiving money to forward to Divya Jyoti.

With this financial support, the organization for the disabled in Varanasi is doing its wonderful work. Care for the disabled is not a given in India. Divya Jyoti deserves full credit. <



ASTHA FOUNDATION

This five-class rural school outside Varanasi (80 students) is run on a minimal budget by the married couple Babulal and Soma Maurya, both polio patients.



Marlen, pictured right, with Soma and Babulal Maurya

Their school is open to students with disabilities. On the recommendation of one of our school directors, we went there to take a look. We spoke to two knowledgeable and passionate people, and were immediately convinced. BSF decided to lend this nice little school a hand. <





ASHRAY SCHOOL

- > up to grade 8
- > 95 students
- > BSF contribution 30% of budget of € 35,000
- > support since 2006
- > www.ashray.org

Manager Rakesh Saraogi made a huge effort during our recent visit; we were welcomed with cake, dances and performances.

The students of the eight-class school are, as everywhere, cheerful, fond of wild games, and proud of their school. They wear colorful shirts with Ashray's name on them, even when they go into the park; that happens every Saturday.

For some time now, the students have been getting lunch at school. That was decided unanimously by the board and teachers. Food has become very expensive and almost unaffordable for the poorest of the poor.

On Independence Day, the mayor of Varanasi visited several schools, including Ashray School. Big surprise that day was also the arrival of Shachi Prakash, the former director of the NGO. She is still very interested in the ups and downs of the school.

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY MANDATORY IN INDIA

The Corporate Social Responsibility Act has been in effect in India since 2014. This includes the obligation that large companies donate two percent of their average net profits of the past three years to charities. Many consultants put NGOs in touch with such companies, but under the table demand up to seventy percent of the sponsorship money back for their consultancy. Thus, this excellent arrangement has also fallen victim to corruption.

Rakesh has good contacts: in late August, the mayor visited the neighborhood again, this time after the annual flood. She walked around with Rakesh, talked to residents and visited students' homes.



Rakesh and the mayor during the flood

Ashray School is one of the few schools that did not closed down during corona. That was against the rules, so the children came to school in their regular clothes. But not all children came; many parents were careful and didn't take the risk. The number of students grew slightly after corona; many toddlers joined.



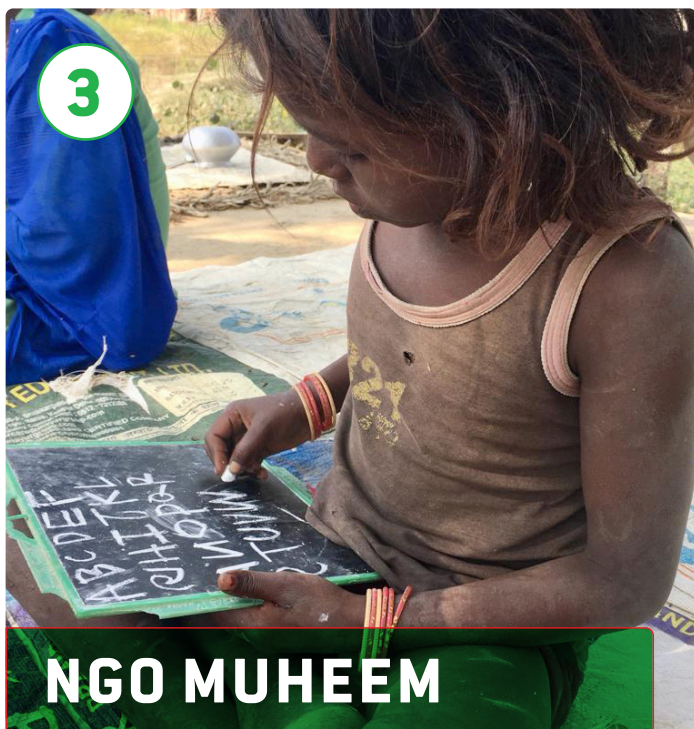
Nevertheless, our impression of the Ashray School is not entirely positive. The teacher team is highly motivated, but limited in quality. None of the teachers speak English well, essential for education in India. *Attendance* in the upper grades still needs considerable attention. The distribution over two far apart locations is expensive and inefficient. Not all the earmarked money is used as agreed upon. BSF is under constant pressure to send more money.

Of course we had conversations about money. We would like to see the school being less dependent on us as sponsor. But how do you find good sponsors in India who are not corrupt? We have heard from various parties about the enormous corruption, also in sponsorship by large companies. In that respect, we understand Rakesh: in BSF he has had a loyal and generous sponsor for years.

Rakesh wants to expand his new building with some larger classrooms, needed to be officially registered as a school. That costs a lot of money. BSF pays for two classrooms, more is financially not feasible. Rakesh has quite a job to do to finance this project. <



3



NGO MUHEEM

- > preparatory kindergarten classes
- > 150 students
- > BSF contribution 50% of budget of € 6,000
- > support since 2020
- > www.muheem.org

In 2019 we met Swati Singh. She and her husband Ramji had just founded the NGO Muheem.

Swati made a deep impression with her drive and vision. Muheem focuses on *empowering* women and young girls and increasing gender equality. Swati also developed *life skills* programs for young people, she herself taught classes at the Asha Deep School.

In recent years she started small basic schools in the most backward villages in the Varanasi area. She calls them 'Pathshala', which simply means 'school'. The goal is to prepare children for *government schools*. Why government schools? Swati is very driven to demand the best education in those schools, also for the poorest. She wants to set up a whole network of these Pathshala's in order to gain national political influence.

We went to the villages for a day. We found extreme poverty. The inhabitants belong to the lowest classes among the Dalits. Alcoholism is widespread.



There are now six schools. The classes and lessons are impressive in their simplicity; the children sit on the floor on a rug, work with slates and chalk and with simple materials such as earth and water to make clay with. Two children arrived too late: they still had to take a shower. This is mandatory before they can enter the classroom. They can use a government toilet block. That surprised us with all the poverty.



The little ones learn the basics: the alphabet and counting to 100. This turned out to go better when they were physically active: while hula hooping and jumping rope, they rumble the alphabet and count to 100.

Our foundation started by making one Pathshala possible (€ 1000 per year), soon followed by a second and a third, also a library. We have a lot of confidence in Muheem, which is why we have taken on the organization as a permanent project.



Muheem also tackles alcoholism among parents through the schools. By teaching the children about it and using graffiti on the walls. With the formation of women's collectives, which are stronger than one woman alone. And by approaching government and village representatives. Muheem does a lot of research and experiments with different methods. 'Sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't' says Swati realistically.

Swati does pioneering work; that appeals to us. <



4



LITTLE STARS SCHOOL

- > up to grade 12
- > 850 students
- > BSF contribution 34% of the budget of €70,000
- > support since 2005
- > www.littlestarsschool.org

It was a joy to see director and good friend Asha Pandey back after three years of corona. True, we had regular email and WhatsApp contact, but that could hardly replace direct contact. Even though our last visit was long ago, it felt so familiar again.

A lot has happened in those corona years: the school buildings have been painted, all sorts of things have been repaired, old school desks have been replaced. Teachers were retrained, and online education was provided - something no one had experience with. That demanded a lot of teachers' improvisational skills, and students' self-reliance.

The number of students is somewhat lower now (850 instead of 900) - children sometimes left during corona for their parents' villages. There life was cheaper there and food was widely available.

Not all students are back yet. Still, we see full classes with attentive and diligent students, passionate teachers, colorful posters on the walls, interaction between students and teachers, discipline. There are new teachers, young and enthusiastic, clearly inspiring their students.

Who also hasn't returned yet, is Asha's anchor Pierre Satijn, who always takes all the work around renovation and maintenance of the buildings off her hands.

Asha has had tough years. She takes full care of 25 hostel girls - try keeping those active in corona time! She organized extra classes,

including dance class, yoga and free expression. All festivals could be celebrated; after all, the group formed one bubble! The girls have a wonderful mother in Asha.

There were also sad moments: some teachers and parents died of corona.

These were quiet years: all the volunteers left - Asha had quite a few volunteers. They taught, played sports with the children and took care of Asha's administration. The last one she missed the most. Suddenly she had to work at the computer herself. She found that difficult. The bright youngsters from Princeton University (USA) did not return after corona. She now hopes for remote computer support.

Most of the children had fallen significantly behind due to the long lockdowns. Whether the level of the students has been restored is still hard to say. You can not - as the Indian government did - let all children pass twice without exams and not face the developmental consequences.



But Asha wouldn't be Asha if she didn't make every effort to get her school back to its pre-corona quality level as soon as possible. We spoke often, usually at her dining table, enjoying a delicious lunch and the company of her adorable, cheerful granddaughter Shreya. <

During our presence (October 2022) two remarkable events took place.

Smile Foundation

Asha's application for a school meal project at Smile Foundation in Delhi had been granted shortly beforehand: for one hundred days she was allowed to provide lunch to her nearly 900 students. That was a huge logistical puzzle. Asha's head was spinning!

Luzac College

A cooperation project with Luzac College in the Netherlands (through sponsor Globewise), in which children in the Netherlands and in India presented themselves, their environment and their country to each other in different ways. To get to know peers on the other side of the world and their lives. Would they have the same future plans and dreams?





IN MY FATHER'S FOOTSTEPS'

Asha Pandey talks about her childhood and the start of Little Stars School

Marien van Staalén

Asha and I meet in the conservatory where she always serves her delicious lunches. The space lies between her office and her bedroom; Asha's life is intertwined with the school. The floor is littered with children's toys. I ask Asha about the influence her father had on her.

"I was born in a village not far from Varanasi. When I was little, we moved to a big house in the city. My father led a very simple life, but was a great thinker. My mother, who had never gone to school, kept busy with the girls, with me, my sisters, nieces and friends.

My father took the boys to the flat roof of our house. There he taught them, talked to them. Later more boys from the village joined. On rainy days, the whole group moved to his study, he helped the boys with their school work and the boys helped each other. Several of them went to BHU, the university here in town, after my father's classes.

My father was a guru, a kind of saint. His younger brother, my uncle, took that over, he has an ashram here on the Ganges and also works in Europe and America. My father had two white shirts and two white pants. Every evening my mother washed his shirt and trousers, so he always wore spotless clothes.

We lived very simply, my father was not rich, but there was love in abundance. He was full of energy, he kept the family together, he thought that was very important. In 1990 he passed away. We miss him very much. Sometimes, when I have problems, he talks to me in my head and I feel: my guru is there, he will help me.

After his cremation, we, the children, said: 'We must plant a tree for him.' We did so, in the garden of a temple, and once a year the whole family gathers there to pay tribute and thank him for his love, which still connects us.

From childhood I saw my father surrounded by children, and I wanted the same later. A friend of my father was the Dutch Father Francis Baartmans. He visited us very often, Francis and I have known each other personally since 1985. After my studies I myself started teaching, first at other schools. Francis gave me a bicycle, so I could become a teacher at his Deva Public School. A few years later I started my own school - on the roof of our house, in the shade, just like my father. I got extra energy from that. In the beginning I did everything: I rang the bell, cleaned the toilets and taught, and I felt my father's inspiration.



I rented a school building and slowly the school began to grow. In 2004, Francis introduced Conny to me; the school then had about 150 students. Benares School Fund Foundation went to support Little Stars School - you have always been a great sponsor.

This old building lacked space and had no playground. I heard there was building land for sale nearby. One day in 2008 Conny emailed me that a donation for new construction had come in. I replied: 'Please, hold that donation. At the moment, new construction involves too much work.' Then Conny said: 'Through my daughter Lenneke, I know a retired Dutch teacher who really likes to come to Varanasi for Indian classical music. He can manage the construction for you.'



And that's how Pierre came to Little Stars School. He did a fantastic job, there is a great new building for which we are very grateful." <





- > up to grade 8
- > 200 students
- > BSF contribution 30% of budget of € 50,000
- > support since 2008
- > www.jeevansiksha.org

We were curious - even a little worried - how Jeevan was doing. How would Sheelu continue on his own? Would he have a viable financial plan? Would the school be viable?

After the departure of principal Kati, of founders and teachers Jess and Dan, and of the major sponsor, those questions were self-evident.

Our impression of Jeevan under the leadership of Sheelu is definitely outstanding. How he manages it with little money we don't know. But the team, all but two, and the students have remained, and the atmosphere is just as good as before - or perhaps better, with more freedom and self-responsibility for teachers and students.



Sheelu directs everything with natural authority. When he speaks (without amplification) it is silent and people listen. An extraordinary man; this is evident again in these difficult circumstances.

Finances are another story. Not all the plans Sheelu presents are equally feasible. In any case, all together it does not yield the annual amount that the school needs. Sheelu's main intervention has been to cut salaries and delay their

payment, sometimes for months. The teachers are very willing and determined to keep the school afloat; but how long will they last? It already happened that a teacher could not go to school because she had no money to buy gasoline for her scooter ...

We think along with Sheelu. BSF has more than doubled its support, but that won't save Jeevan School. Giving more money makes Jeevan too dependent on us. We don't think this is desirable.



Jeevan is an eight-class school. For further education, students used to go to another school. This year there were seventeen, but there was no money. The Benares School Fund Foundation secured those extra years of education (grade 9 through 12) for these students.



We experienced another *mass feeding*. Sheelu managed to organize this annual event despite lack of money: a hot meal for the parents, children and neighbours of the school. Many of the students come from the nearby slums on the Ganges, the shacks of poles with a plastic covering. This is exactly the target group for which our foundation was established in 2003.

With its quality education and dedication to the poorest of the poor, Jeevan deserves to overcome this crisis. <



- > up to and including class 10
- > 65 students
- > BSF contribution 14% of budget of € 55,000
- > support since 2011
- > www.vatsalya.org

Vatsalya's vision still stands after twenty years. It started with the Udayan campus for orphans and street children.

A holistic approach, focusing on cognitive, emotional as well as physical development, was central. The children of those days have grown up: wonderful people, some of whom now teach at the school or hold other staff positions within the NGO.

With meditation, yoga, sports and vocational training, Vatsalya's school had to be more than an ordinary school. There are more than enough ordinary schools, according to Jaimala Gupta.



In 2015 the government changed the rules about orphans and street children, and Vatsalya had to stop sheltering them. Since then the organisation has struggled to find a good use for the campus' many facilities.

The focus was no longer on residential care, but on education; the campus remained largely unused.

Shortly before corona, the school was converted into a seven-to-seven school: in those twelve hours the children not only received education, but also lots of sports, homework assistance and meals. Kitchen and dining room were used again and the little ones took an afternoon nap in the former residential units. The campus was buzzing with life again.

However, the implementation of the new structure did not take off well, and not just because of corona. Forty percent of the parents proved dissatisfied, particularly wanting their daughters home

earlier. And the program, with all the meals, was expensive for the NGO, while fewer funds came in during corona.

After *seven-to-seven*, did a new direction need to be taken? Together with Jaimala, Hitesh and their son Kartikey, the school's current manager, we discussed this during our visit - including the current low student numbers.



Engineer Kartikey has introduced solar energy, a nature-friendly water supply and reuse of materials. It makes the campus a textbook example of sustainability.

Two years ago, a beautiful and unique *science center* was built next to the school. With all its practice materials, it offers its own students and schools in the surrounding area a very successful science programme, including astronomy.

We agree that this center is a *unique selling point*, along with the vocational training courses, provided these are better structured and officially certified.

By 2024, the government will make *vocational training* compulsory for all schools. For twenty years, Vatsalya has been far ahead of its time with its vision for this. Let's now wait and see if the school seizes its opportunities!

Latest news

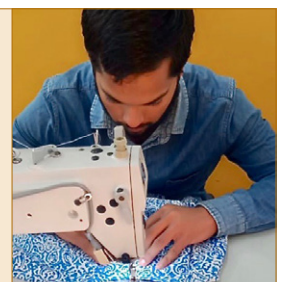
Kartikey submitted his dream, an astronomy project, to the Human Capability Foundation (*Dream the impossible Dream Project*). After thorough screening it has been selected for funding. The project will run for three years. Commenting by WhatsApp, Kartikey talks about the background of his dream: not only his own passion for astronomy, but above all the interest of many, not least the schoolchildren. STEM education at the school (*Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics*) will definitely gain significance as a result. Vatsalya hopes for the arrival of students with special interest in astronomy.

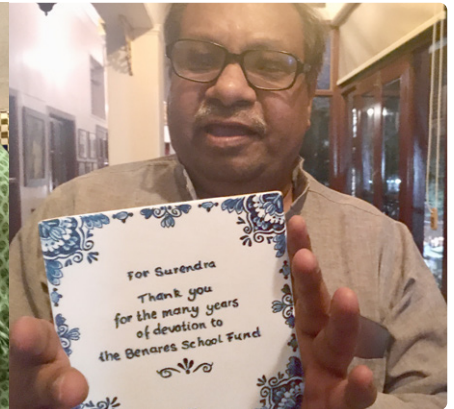
Kartikey plans to shape its basic programme into six-month courses, not only on the campus but also, with mobile equipment, outside it.

We hope the school will benefit from this wonderful project, and wish Kartikey every success. <

SUMIR

Sumir, the last of Udayan's original street and orphaned children, takes his sewing exam here. With his shirt, he achieved the highest mark. He is well prepared for life outside Udayan!





INDIVIDUALLY SPONSORED STUDENTS

- > up to class 12, 28 students
- > contribution BSF 100%
- > support since 2005

SURENDRA

For sixteen years, Surendra Srivastava has been our mainstay in running the Individual Program. We couldn't have wished for a better manager.

Of the group he guided for many years, the last two students, Shubham and Vaishnavi, will be taking their final exams in April. The program is coming to a close.

Individual sponsoring is still possible. For some time now, the poorest students of our own schools have been sponsored individually by Dutch sponsors. You can see them here on this page. The schools themselves send a report and a photo of those children every year. Thus they gradually took over Surendra's work.

Last November we said goodbye to Surendra with heavy hearts. Surendra, thank you so much! <



Akriti, class 7



Aman, class 11



Amrish, class 12



Anuradha, class 6



Anuradha, class 11



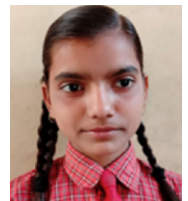
Ganesh, class 8



Jitendra, class 1



Kushboo, class 7



Muskan, class 5



Muskan, class 7



Nancy, class 11



Neelu, class 8



Om Prakash, cl. 12



Pari, class 11



Puja, class 4



Rahul, class 12



Ritika, class 4



Sagar, class 12



Sakshi, class 3



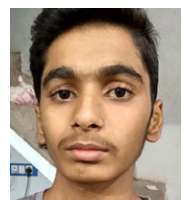
Shalini, class 12



Shashwat, nursery



Shiv, class 12



Shubham, cl. 12



Tarana, class 5



Vaishnavi, cl. 12



Vikash, class 10



Shivangi, 2nd year nurse training



Vidhi, 2nd year nurse training





MARIEN VAN STAALEN LOOKS BACK AND FORWARD

“My board members gave me a fantastic present: a giant collage with more than a hundred photos from my twenty years as president.

Wonderful to look at, but this gift is also symbolic of my richest experience within the foundation: the intensive contact with great people: teachers, students, parents, principals, donors. The foundation has given me back much more than I invested in it.

Benares School Fund Foundation is involved in development aid, and that expression says exactly what it means: we have to help people develop. In a vertical society like India's, where the top party wants to maintain the status quo, that's not easy. We know that education offers development, even if it does not yet guarantee a better life. I asked Poonam, one of our first students, what her education had meant, and she replied: 'Other used to decide for us, now we can make our own wrong decisions...'

Since 2002, the right to free education has been enshrined in the Indian Constitution. Such education is provided by government schools. The quality of those schools is exemplarily bad, due to corruption, casteism and disinterest. Sometimes I wonder why the people in the Netherlands who support us are more concerned about the fate of poor Indian children than many Indians themselves. That is why I am so pleased with the work of Swati Singh: she addresses the teachers of the government schools about their attitudes.

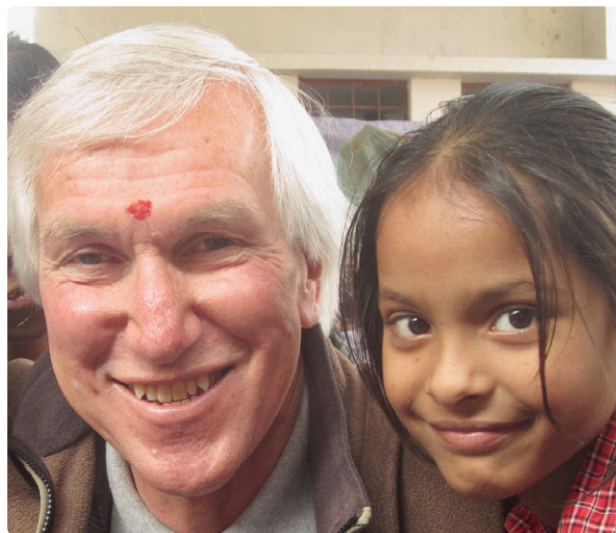
BSF has no influence on Indian politics, and schools like Little Stars School and Asha Deep concentrate on their own work. They do that wonderfully, and we are happy to help them, because they contribute directly to our goal of education for the poorest of the poor. But Muheem, Swati Singh's NGO, focuses on the wrongdoing that our schools are meant to compensate for: the corruption and mismanagement in government schools. I find that very important.

Twenty years of Benares School Fund Foundation, that's also twenty years of adventures and experiences in the fairy tale book called India - with beautiful and sometimes not so beautiful stories... The huge wedding celebrations with insane carnival parades, where we meet our school-girls in high heels, make-up and dressed like adult princesses.... The terrible traffic, with a permanent concert of horns and motorcycles, with traffic jams and gigantic air pollution... The warm, languid silence on the banks of the Ganges, when you walk away from the hustle and bustle of Assi Ghat... The delicious food, the T-shirt weather... The smells, the colours....

We ask from our students and their parents something in return: commitment and motivation. With the children this is not a problem, they love going to school. But what if the parents don't have their lives in order? What if alcohol is at the top of their priority list, and only then food, and at the very bottom their children's education? In those situations, nothing remains of our condition of commitment.

And it is precisely then that our schools must focus on those children, and we must help them do so, because the children are the direct victims of the parents' negligence. Students in our schools have died because the parents literally did not look after them when they were laying seriously sick in a corner. I find it difficult to hold the right line then for our foundation.

Support doesn't last forever, nothing is for eternity, including BSF. But after twenty years of presidency, I do want to mention the toughness of the matter. In 2010 I spoke to the president of the Varanasi-South Rotary Club, and I asked him what he thought of my prediction that our work would be unnecessary in ten years. He burst out laughing - and he was right.



Our first major sponsor reached out to us with two points of concern: quality and continuity. And his advice in this regard was: *stick to the plan*. A foundation like BSF must take action when schools are not performing well, or have a too narrow financial base. But supporting excellent schools that do exactly what our foundation was created for is perfectly legitimate, even for a longer period of time.

> continue reading on the next page



One tremendous development that has resulted from this continuity is the high percentage of children, especially girls, who attend school now.

Through our annual visits to India, we have been able to keep our finger on the pulse of our projects without our interest being felt as interference. In mutual trust, BSF gives support, and the school principals deal with it, in their own way and style.

In twenty years, we have seen the situation in India tilt slightly. The women from the slum used to come to our hotel regularly to discuss their difficulties with us - the manager had rugs laid out on the marble floor for them to sit on.

That doesn't happen anymore.

The abject poverty may have decreased somewhat, but unfortunately other problems, alcoholism, drugs, have taken its place.



In the Netherlands, we have tried to keep a strong connection with our donors and sponsors through personal contacts and through our newsletters and bulletins. We informed you as well and honestly as possible, we organised concerts and held lectures. From many responses we have been able to see that our work was appreciated. Your support has been a lasting incentive all these years.

All this is a source of great gratitude.

I have experienced twenty years of BSF as one big celebration. It was a tremendous honour to be chairman of the board for so long - a board that includes a rich array of personalities, each one with its own indispensability. I have been able to lean heavily on an outstanding secretary.

My successor, Alet, will do things differently, but at least as well.

I wish her every success!" <



GLOBEWISE

For five years, the Dutch NGO Globewise has supported us with a substantial amount.

Their contribution was for a pay rise at Little Stars School.

In our commitment to quality improvement, it was the best investment.

We thank the Globewise board very much for their support and pleasant cooperation.



HOW CAN YOU HELP OUR FOUNDATION

As a school sponsor

For €23/month (or €275/year) you can provide education, books, a uniform, homework aid and tutoring for one child. If you like, you will receive a photo and progress report of the sponsored student every year. You will find more options for regular support on our website www.benaresschool.nl/donations.

As a (permanent) donor

All donations, whether one-off or a fixed amount per year, will benefit the children and their education; it will be spent on extra educational materials, salaries and yearly teacher training.

Your donations are tax deductible

Benares Schoolfund Foundation has been classified by the Inland Revenue as an Institution Aiming for General Welfare (Algemeen Nut Beogende Instelling / ANBI). Donations are tax-deductible beyond a certain threshold. Donations by a written agreement with our foundation have no threshold and are fully deductible.

See www.belastingdienst.nl under Periodieke giften. The secretariat can provide the necessary papers (license for donation).

New sponsors are kindly requested to give their address to our secretariat (secretary@benaresschool.nl), so we can enter them in our records.

Rabobank IBAN: **NL97 RABO 0194 3913 53**
BIC: RABONL2U

Benares School Fund is an ANBI foundation



FINANCIAL REPORT 2022

> in euro's

IN

Regular contributors/school sponsors	36,777,44
Other donations	29,973,80
Contributions funds/foundations	41,500,00
Sold Jalila books	220,00
Interest	0,44

108,471,68

Added to the earmarked reserve - 14,000,00

TOTAL INCOME 94,471,68

OUT

Little Stars School	27,000,00
General donation	25,000,00
Extra donation AKBHHH	2,000,00

Asha Deep School	24,950,28
General donation	10,517,00
Additional private donation	10,000,00
From library fund	200,00
Earmarked gifts from UK	2,483,28
Extra donation Merlet College	1,750,00

Vatsalya School 7,500,00

Ashray School 4,250,00
Paid in advance in 2021: 6,250,00

Individual programme	2,450,00
General donation	1,800,00
Farewell bonus Surendra	650,00

Jeevan School	18,100,00
General donation	13,000,00
For further education 14 students	1,400,00
Private gift for 3 students	1,200,00
Earmarked gift from France	2,500,00

NGO Muheem 3,000,00

Focus on Education (nurse training Shivangi (Sarnath)) 1,300,00

Divya Jyoti (earmarked donation) 5,500,00

Astha School Madhopur 1,000,00

Expenses foundation	2,680,02
Bank costs	247,76
Varia	88,57
Newsletter incl. porto	637,59
New website & management*	1,706,10

97,730,30

Taken from the earmarked reserve - 5,120,00

TOTAL OUT 92,610,30

(*one time higher due to new website)

Result financial year 2022 + 1,861,38

This amount has been added to the general reserve.



Overhead costs 2022: 2,7%

BUDGET 2023

> in euro's

IN

Regular contributors	28,500,00
Other donations	15,690,00
Contributions funds / foundations	30,500,00
From earmarked reserve	8,810,00

TOTAL INCOME 83,500,00

OUT

Little Stars School	24,000,00
General donation	14,000,00
Extra support poorest students (20 of whom individually sponsored)	10,000,00

Asha Deep School	9,500,00
General donation	7,500,00
Extra gift for grade 9-12	2,000,00

Vatsalya School 7,500,00

Ashray School 10,500,00

Jeevan School	16,500,00
General donation	13,000,00
Extra gift for grade 9-12	2,000,00
Extra gift for 2 rikshaws (income generating)	1,500,00

NGO Muheem 3,000,00

Focus on Education (nurse training Shivangi) 1,500,00

Divya Jyoti (earmarked donation) 5,500,00

Astha School Madhopur 2,500,00

2 Individual students (through NGO Seva Sangam) 500,00

Expenses foundation 2,500,00

TOTAL OUT 83,500,00

Balance per 31-12-2022

Current account: 18,824,10. Saving account: 165,424,80,
50,000 of which is fixed reserve and 76,228,99 is earmarked reserve.
Remaining balance: 39,195,81

Information about our fixed reserve

In order to guarantee the continuity of our work our foundation has long been striving to have a higher fixed reserve. Our main aim is to improve quality. That is why we pledge financial support to our projects for more than one year. A sudden decrease in donations and yearly fluctuating revenues would make this risky and that's why we need a substantial fixed reserve. We have definitely increased this to the desired 50,000.

Explanation extra income/expenses

- For the continuity of education we had to send extra money to the Jeevan School.
- From time to time BSF transfers money for people who cannot remit money to India themselves (± €10,000).
- We have received a big private donation (€20,000).

Earmarked reserve

In 2022 14,000 euros have been added and 5,120 have been taken.
On balance €8,880 have been added to the earmarked reserve.

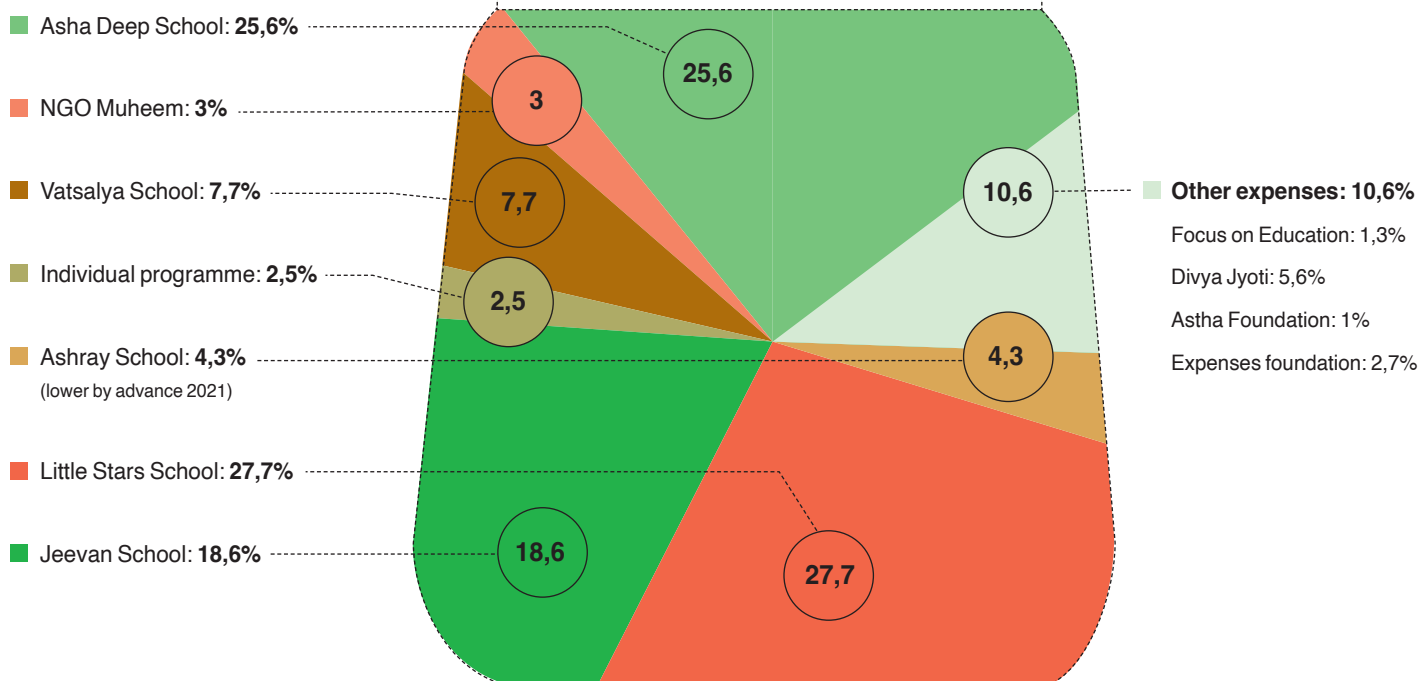
For years BSF has been able to count on a loyal group of regular donors, some 80 in total. They form the basis of the foundation's stability.
We are very grateful to them for that.



Logo: © Hein de Kort/Comichouse.nl • Design: Karin van Duijnhoven/koduijn.nl

EXPENSES BSF SPREAD OVER THE PROJECTS

Fixed expenses: 89,4%



BENARES SCHOOLFUND FOUNDATION

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Rabobank IBAN: NL97 RABO 0194 3913 53, BIC RABONL2U

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Board: Jantine Unger, Alet Meurs (chairman), Maurien Wetselaar, Conny van Staalén-van Leeuwen (secretary), Karin van Duijnhoven, Theo van Pinxteren, Nienke de Graaf, Jacques Baartmans en Marien van Staalén (treasurer)