



The Blue House

Annual Report 2023

Written by founder & director Jaira Sona Chin



2023 highlights

- 49 children enrolled in school
- 7 local youth employees from the camp
- 4 young women employed in the new women employment project
- 5 bathrooms built
- New local manager recruited
- School attendance rates increased
- New partner shops
- 23 volunteers in The Blue House
- 312 meals served



Financials

Income and expenses

The income and expenses of The Blue House Project are divided into one-time, monthly and yearly donations. The total income of 2023 was €34.750,62.

Our income mainly relies on individual funding. These donors are mostly reached through social media (instagram mostly), the website and email marketing.



The goal of 2023 was to increase the structural monthly income, to improve our financial sustainability.

The average structural monthly income in 2023 was €600. Compared to 2022, our monthly budget has decreased. Possible explanations are the end of the COVID pandemic and a decrease in donations to most NGOs and charitable organizations worldwide.

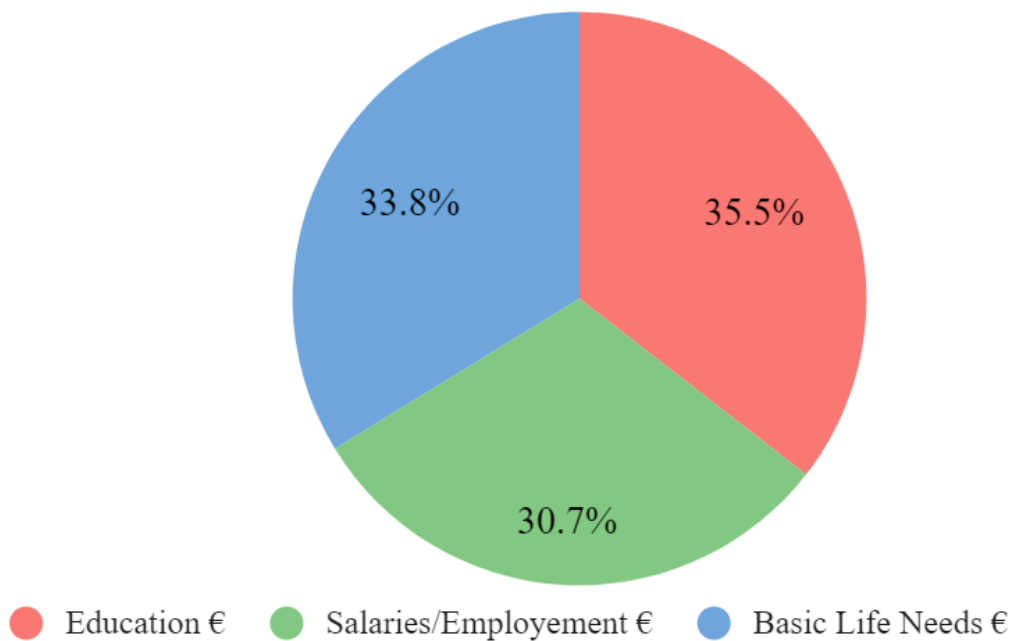
The fixed monthly expenses are €470; salaries of the local team and food for the daily lunch program.

	January - February	March - May	June - August	September - October	November - December	2023
Total	4018	2500	1814	4152	6186	18670

Monthly expenses	euro
lunch	120
salaries	350

Above you can see the monthly income spread out across 2023. This income came from particular donations and Bright Funds. Below you can see the investments per project.

Investement per Activities/Projects 2023



Projects in 2023

Education

Most of our income is invested into the education project. The education project can be divided into two project lines: mainstream education in the Atharv Public School and the after school program in The Blue House.

In 2023, €4769,22 has been invested in the education project. This is 35,5%; the highest percentage of project investments. The education investments consist of school fees we pay to the local Atharv Public School, uniforms, schoolbooks, school shoes, school bags and stationary.

Atharv Public School

We enroll students in our local partner school in Pushkar. The costs to send one child to school for a year are €130 per child, which includes school fee, uniforms and school books. Besides this, we buy school shoes, school bags, school sweaters and Diwali gifts for our students every year. Education expenses also cover the purchase of notebooks and stationary, which is needed on a bi-monthly basis.

The Blue House

Education related expenses are also used for the education project in The Blue House. The students come here after school for tuition classes, extracurricular activities and food. In November 2023, we hired a new teacher and manager: Laxmi Parashar.

Employment

€2993 was invested in the employment project. This entails the monthly salaries that are paid to the local team. The local team consists of one female teacher, two male cooks and a tuktuk driver.

In 2023, The Blue House Project had seven employees. Their salaries are conform local market salaries. Because our monthly budget decreased this year, we had to lower the



size of our local team. In the beginning of 2023, we had a team of six people working in The Blue House. A tuktuk driver, two teachers and three young adults who were responsible for the school feeding program.

During the summer of 2023, we closed The Blue House center for two months during the school holidays. During this time, the goal was to restructure the project. A new local manager was recruited, because this role was previously filled by the founder who lives in Amsterdam. There was a crucial need to hire an experienced local manager, preferably feminine. Since we re-opened The Blue House in the last quarter of 2023, we have a newly structured team consisting of four local team members:

- Laxmi Parashar: our local manager and teacher who started in November 2023. She tutors the students after school in The Blue House and manages the after school program. She is in contact with the local school and families. She also organizes extracurricular activities, such as art, sports, dance, music and playing.
- Vikram Bhat: the brother and cousin of most of our students and has been part of the project since day one. He makes lunch, cleans and take care of the students and The Blue House.
- Deelip Bhat: the tuktuk driver and father of our two youngest students. His siblings also go to our school and work in the project.
- Sunil Bhat: our product manager, who manages the orders and the women employment project.

The only paid employees of The Blue House Project consists of local youths from the camp in Pushkar. The project emphasizes a local youth-led and community driven approach. The salaries of our four team members are financed by the monthly income.





Basic Life Needs

€3751 was invested in basic life needs. This entails the school feeding program (daily lunch for all students in The Blue House), supporting families with housing (building a boundary, bathroom, watertank) and electricity and gas in The Blue House.

The basic life needs expenses cover the school feeding program in The Blue House and the support in raising family living standards. The school feeding program feeds all our students after school, in the form of daily lunch in The Blue House. The lunch is made by the young adults belonging to the same camp as the students.

In 2023, we discontinued the monthly food support program, because the founder conducted research in relation to school feeding and school attendance rates. The rationale behind this choice is that the purpose behind this program was better served through the school feeding program in The Blue House after school.

Besides this school feeding program, basic life needs cover the support of housing for families in the camp and investment in the project center The Blue House. During the monsoon season (summer) and winter, we distributed jackets to all children and their families. In 2023, we also built four bathrooms for the four families who live in the Blue Houses we built in the desert camp.

New projects in 2023

Our largest investment this year has been the construction of the women center. We built an extra room on the property of The Blue House that now serves as a women center. In this center, we offer skills trainings to young women from the camp.

Another large investment was used to build bathrooms for families in the camp. One bathroom costed €500 and we were able to build three.



In 2023, we supported our first family outside of India. The founder met a family in Busua, Ghana, who live in absolute poverty. The family lacked income, employment and lived in a simple cottage lacking basic facilities. We supported this family by buying fish smoking gear. This helped the family to gain income and become more self sufficient. This pilot is part of a bigger plan to start a second Blue House Project in Ghana. You can read more about this in the policy plan 2024.



In 2023, we finished our new playground/sportsfield next to The Blue House. This new playground is a great addition to our project and the kids play and sport here everyday. We also offer yoga classes and other sports classes here.



Partnerships

An exciting new partnership in 2023 was Bright Funds. Bright Funds is a payroll donation platform. An employee from tech company ASML visited The Blue House in 2018 and introduced The Blue House Project to Bright Funds. Employees of ASML can now donate to The BHP and their donation is doubled by ASML. This new partnership significantly boosted our structural income.

We also collaborated with ESADE business school in Barcelona. ESADE is a private business school in Barcelona, Spain. ESADE proposed a collaboration with The BHP and their bachelor course *Resolution Methods for complex problems - application to the NGO sector*. I gave a presentation to the class about the main challenges that The BHP faces.



We hosted a few volunteers in The Blue House in 2023 and one of them was Manon who works at Chanel in Paris. She made a beautiful short documentary about The Blue House Project together with L401 Paris and Colorfilms Archives. The video is visible on all our social media platforms and the website.



Evaluation

2023 marked the seven year anniversary of The Blue House Project! Overall, 2023 was one of the best years of The Blue House Project. We focussed more on quality over quantity in terms of the amount of students. We also included more extracurricular activities in the project, such as sports and art. We also started a promising new women project and built a new women center. This center is used to provide skills trainings and employment opportunities for women of the community.

And, we supported the first family outside of India. This marks the beginning of the expansion of The Blue House Project, starting in Ghana.

We also finalized the construction and development of the new playground/sports field. This playground is used very well and the students of The Blue House play sports, like football, volleyball, yoga and badminton and games here everyday. There are not a lot of playgrounds and sports fields in Pushkar, so this new project is a great addition to the project. In rural India, schools focus on mainstream education and lack extracurricular activities that are equally as important to the development of children.

In 2023, the structure and team work of the local team improved. We hired a new teacher, who is a great addition to the after school program in The Blue House: Vijay madam. Vijay madam puts a lot of energy and effort towards a different approach to education than is used in the local schools. This approach is showing improvement in the level of knowledge of the students. Besides, Vijay madam includes playing games and sports in the daily program in The Blue House, which is equally as important for the children's development. Since the new teacher started working in The Blue House Project, the school attendance rates significantly increased. The low attendance rates were the main challenge up to this year.



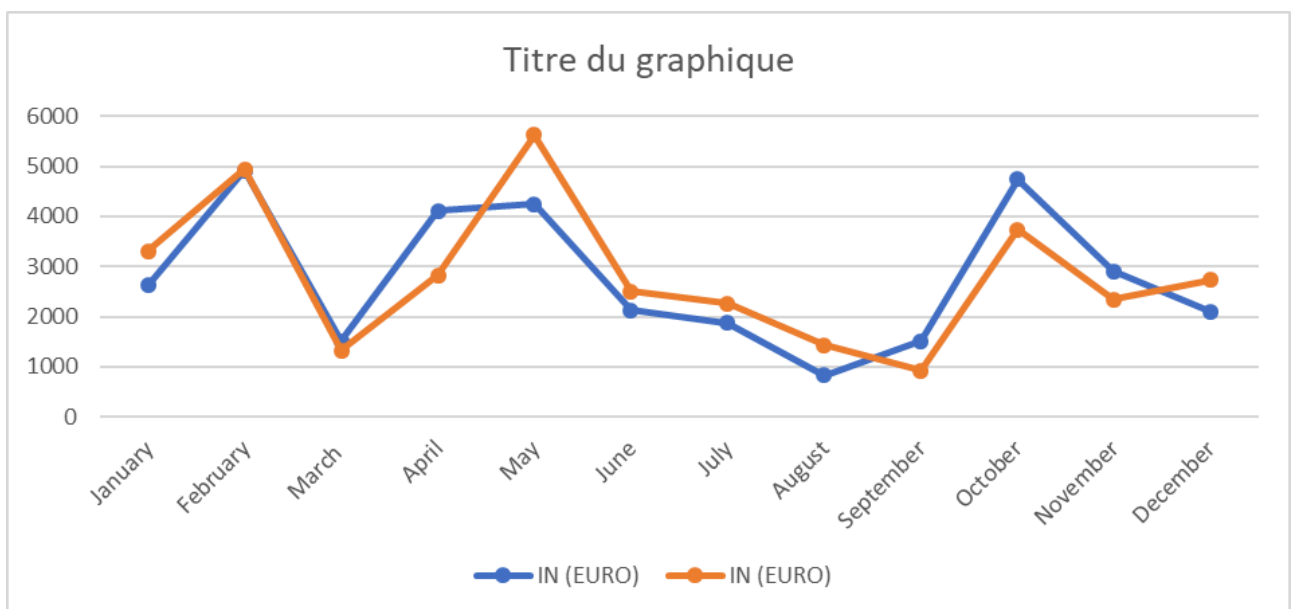
The new partnerships brought us a lot of extra visibility and donations compared to other years. And all of our structural donors continued to support us in 2023, which is a positive sign.

A challenge that remains is to prevent school drop out rates. When students are between 16-18, it is hard to keep them in school because of child marriage and child labor. Another challenge is working with volunteers. To help the project grow, it would be good to have a remote team of volunteers helping with fundraising, administration and other tasks. For eight years, the founder and director Jaira Sona has been doing all of this by herself. The project is local led and community driven and the local team has been doing great on the ground. However, there is also a lot of work on the management side. Working with volunteers has been proven to be difficult, because of the lack of commitment.



2023 Expenses Report

The graph 1 below shows the monthly trend of expenses during 2023.



Graph 1: Trend of the monthly expenses of the Project in 2023

Author: The Blue House Project, 2023

Source: Data of the Project, 2023

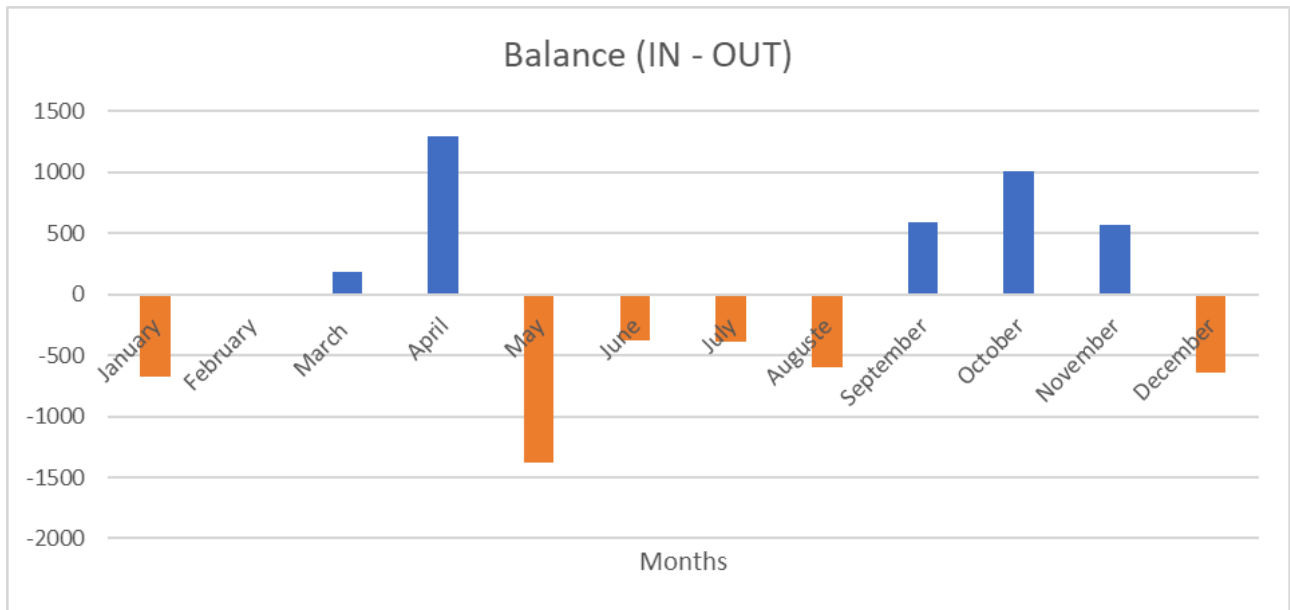
AS it can be observed, the graph 1 shows that the trend of budget and expenditure was not relatively stable throughout 2023.

At the starting point, in January, The Blue House Project spent more than the available budget. In February, there has been an increase in the amount raised, from 2625 Euro in January to 4922 Euro in February, and similar trends for the expenditure (from 3302 Euro in January to 4941 Euro in February). On the other hand, the month of March recorded a huge decline in terms of budget and expenditure. On the other hand, in May the graph shows that the project spent more compared to its budget in May 2023. Specifically, the gap between the available income and the expenditure is one of the highest in 2023. While this can be explained by the implementation of different activities, especially the implementation of the 2023 proposal focusing on child sponsorships program, it at the same time emphasizes the need for increasing the budget.

Furthermore, from June to September, there has been a decrease in the budget and expenditure with a slight increase in the budget in September, this can be explained by the fact that no major activity was implemented during that period. Additionally, there have not been fund-raising awareness activity to increase the existing budget. In October there has been a huge increase in the budget and expenditure.

In terms of budget, February and October recorded the highest amount in terms of budget (4922 and 4738 Euro respectively). The interesting aspect for these months is that expenditures were proportional to the income and therefore no negative balance was recorded.

As shown by the graph 2 below, the gap between the budget and expenditure has not been stable in 2023. There has even been a negative trend pointing out that the project spent more than its budget. These negative gaps are observed in January, May, June, July, August and December.



Graph 2: Trend of monthly balance of the Project in 2023

Author: *The Blue House Project, 2023*

Source: *Data of the Project, 2023*

In short, last year showed negative gaps, and therefore highlighted the need for financial resources for implementation of activities. Therefore, there is a need for designing appropriate policies for raising funds in order to meet targeted objectives for 2024.

There is a need for more stable and structural income to increase our monthly base. In 2024, we want to collaborate with more fundraising organizations, volunteers, fundraising campaigns and companies.

