



Policy Plan 2023

Written by founder & director Jaira Sona Chin



The Blue House

Board and internal organisation

Board

Director and founder: Jaira Sona Chin

Co-founder: Angelie Oemrawsingh

Paid employees

Local team: Vikram Nat, Javari Nat

Local driver: Deelip Nat

Local teacher: Suman Harijan



Existing Projects

Education

The Blue House Project supports underprivileged families in Pushkar, Rajasthan. In 2022, we enrolled 48 children in the local Atharv Public School. All these children belong to the SC-ST, the lowest castes of the Indian caste system. Their families suffer from social exclusion and intergenerational poverty. They lack the capabilities to fulfil their basic life needs, such as food, shelter, clothing, income and education. The Blue House Project supports the families of 48 children to fulfil their basic life needs.

Education is the main focus of the BHP, because it is an important tool in fighting intergenerational poverty and social exclusion. It enables people to fulfil their innate potentials and climb up the social ladder. The 48 children are enrolled in the local school we partnered up with: The Atharv Public School (APS). APS is a private/public school managed by a local couple. The Blue House Project funds the school fee, uniforms and schoolbooks of 48 students. The students go to school six days a week.



After school, the students come to the project center The Blue House for tuition classes and lunch. They also play sports and games. Lunch is made and served by local employees who belong to the same SC-ST castes.

Basic Life Needs

The students eat daily lunch in The Blue House. We built 5 houses for former homeless families. The houses are all blue and built in the desert. We distributed other basic needs, such as clothing, fleece blankets in the winter and waterproof tents during monsoon season. We also support the families in the provision of health care. Additionally, the community is supported through employment and income.



Employment

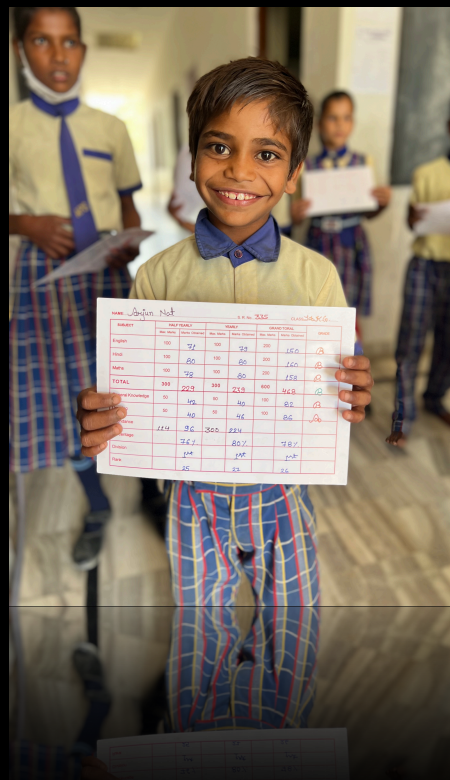
Lunch is made and served by three local employees who belong to the same SC-ST castes. The students are driven to school in a tuktuk, driven by a local employee from the same camp.



Evaluation 2022

2022 marks the six year anniversary of The Blue House Project!

In 2021, the education project suffered due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Luckily, 2022 got us back to normal. We enrolled 15 new children in school and supported a total of 48 students and their families. A continuing problem is the low school attendance rates. Since the summer and new school year, the school attendance rates have increased. This is possibly due to the fact that the pandemic is over, children were less forced to work and increasingly more parents began to understand the benefits to education. Also, a few students were de-enrolled and the motivated students remained.



Until the second half of 2022, we used the monthly food support program to support the families in fulfilling their basic life needs. In addition, the program served as an incentive for parents to send their children to school. I graduated from my master's at the United Nations University in the summer of 2022 and wrote my thesis about the effect of school feeding on school attendance rates. The field work, observations, data collection, survey interviews and experience motivated me to stop the monthly food support program. The rational behind this decision was that distributing monthly food packages did not form a solution to solve the underlying obstacle that families on the ground face; absolute poverty and the lack of income. The lack of the capability to buy food is not a primary problem and the focus is now shifted to education and employment primarily. The new generation is the main target group and the low school attendance rates are

not solved by handing out free food transfers. Another motivation to this decision was the decrease of monthly income.

In 2022, the first students of The Blue House graduated from middle school. Four of our students are now enrolled in high school.

Another accomplishment of 2022 was that we bought new property next to The Blue House. This land is 150 m² and now owned by The Blue House Project. Thanks to fundraising efforts of Knappe Koppen, we were able to buy this land. The goal is to use this land as a playground / sports field for our students.

In 2022 we were also blessed with fruitful new partnerships, with Connect Aid, Stichting Boet and Knappe Koppen. We also started an international volunteer team, consisting of a projects team, marketing and communications team, and finance and fundraising team. Twenty young people from all over the world joined the team and we have biweekly online meetings.

New Projects

The new volunteer team will work on a new Health Care project. The team has started to do research. We will focus more on health care in 2023, because it is one of the causes that the target group is in absolute intergenerational poverty.



A new proposal for 2023 is to discontinue the child sponsorships program. After analyzing the annual report of 2022, I came to the conclusion that a disproportionate amount of funds is allocated to education. Education will continue to be our main priority, but most of our funds is paid to the local APS school. Even though school attendance rates are increasing, not enough families prioritize education. It happens a lot that attendance rates are too low and drop out rates are high. Most of the reasons for this have to do with child rights violations, such as child labor and child marriage. To combat this, we will do more research and partner up with child rights organizations. This is a long term goal though and for the short term, an alternative is to partner up with a public government school that is free. In government schools, we only pay school books and uniforms, and no school fees. Research shows that the quality of education is lower, but a new high quality English medium government school opened up in Pushkar.

Another goal of 2023 is to get the team work started. The volunteer team has been established, but the team work is not effective yet. There is a need to narrow the team down to motivated volunteers who are willing to invest time and effort. Up to this point, I have managed the project individually for six years. Having a volunteer team, besides the local paid team, is necessary to make the project grow, sustainable and self sufficient in the long term.



We will also structure and define the local team work. The local employees are not suited yet to manage the project without constant interference from me. Now that I work full time, I am able to travel to India twice a year instead of four times. Therefore, we need a local manager that is educated and speaks English. The goal is to become more bottom up instead of top down, with most of the initiative coming from the local community itself. In the longterm, the goal is that the project becomes more independent, self sufficient and sustainable with minimal foreign intervention.

In addition, the new playground that we purchased will be designed in 2023. The land is now empty and we will furnish it with sport facilities and a play ground. In addition, we can grow our own vegetables on this new property.



Another new project is the sewing machine project. We want to empower more women by opening a new project center with sewing machines and workshops. The first workshops will be aimed at using the sewing machine. The goal is to sell more products so that we can employ more women. Besides skills training, we also want to educate young women, teach English and literacy and organise focus group trainings around child marriages, abuse, human rights and reproductive health.



From January 2023 onwards, we will also commence new partnerships with local NGOs. One of these NGOs is FXB India. We can learn more from local organizations that are working towards the same goals and we will organise more meetings with them.

Finally, an overall goal for 2023 is to increase our monthly budget. Structural donations help is to continue the project and pay for core funding (salaries, food, tuition).