

# Annual Report 2020-21



## Better Education Lifestyle And Environment Foundation

The objective of this report is to share a summary of organization's journey over the Financial Year (FY) 2020-21. The present status of key programs and future plans are also mentioned in the report.

[www.beliefforchange.org](http://www.beliefforchange.org) | [connect.belief@gmail.com](mailto:connect.belief@gmail.com)

## Contents

<b>1. Executive Summary</b> .....	1
<b>A. Approach:</b> .....	1
<b>B. Location:</b> .....	1
<b>C. Current Project:</b> .....	1
<b>2. Detailed Report for Financial Year 2020-21</b> .....	2
<b>A. Operational</b> .....	2
<b>B. Educational</b> .....	4
<b>C. Organizational</b> .....	6
<b>i. Legal Status:</b> .....	6
<b>ii. Organizational Structure and Culture:</b> .....	6
<b>iii. Capacity Enhancement:</b> .....	8
<b>iv. Governance:</b> .....	9
<b>v. Financial Overview:</b> .....	9
<b>vi. Other Partnerships</b> .....	10
<b>vii. Communications/Outreach</b> .....	10
<b>3. Plans for next 1-3 years</b> .....	10
<b>4. Nature of Support</b> .....	12

## Better Education Lifestyle and Environment Foundation

### Annual Report 2020-21

#### 1. Executive Summary

Better Education Lifestyle and Environment Foundation (BELIEF) is a not-for-profit organization started by few professionals who passionately want to bring social change.

**Vision:** A society where each individual is leading an environmentally appropriate, dignified and healthy life.

**Mission:** Addressing the issues in Education, Health and Environment by creating replicable models of sustainable development through providing services and capacity building of stakeholders involved.

#### A. Approach:

We believe in a sustainable change through strengthening the system. We understand that the process of bringing such change is slow and it has to be exerted at multiple levels. For us, the institutionalization of change is very important. However, as mentioned above, this institutionalization has to happen in an organized manner. We believe that the issues in education, health, and the environment can be solved by partnering with the government machinery and capacity building of the stakeholders involved.

For example, in the case of early childhood education (ECE), we believe that everyone, from Child Development Project Officer (CDPO) to parents, should have a basic orientation of ECE. Unless the whole machinery has a shared understanding of what ECE means, it is almost impossible to implement a quality ECE program at the system level.

#### B. Location:

We are located in the Hadapsar area of Pune city. In 2019-20 we worked with the 4 Anganwadis in Bheemnagar of Ghorpadi bit. As you enter the Bheem Nagar Vasti, you see tiny houses, with a washing area almost on the road, a small bathroom just next to the door and a room or two inside. Every house in the Vasti carries a story. Some migrated during the drought, some came in search of a job, some are staying in the Vasti from the generations.

In 2020-21 we started working with 20 more Anganwadis from Hadapsar which are nearer to Bheemnagar. The mode of intervention is 'Online / through the digital medium'. All these Anganwadis, being situated in urban slums, face similar issues like inadequate space, inappropriate training of teachers, parents' ignorance towards ECE, the competition with private English medium pre-schools, etc.

#### C. Current Project:

From April 2020 we changed our mode of intervention from offline to online. It is very difficult to conduct online sessions with pre-school children, adding to that, exposing children to screen time



attracts contradictory opinions from pediatricians and development experts. As per American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) guidelines, children below the age of two years should not have any screen exposure, and screen time of  $\geq 1$  hour per day is considered excessive among children aged 2-5 years.<sup>1</sup> Also, children were not having dedicated phones. Internet connectivity was also an issue. Considering all these factors, we decided to work with parents. This ‘Parents as Teachers’ program is named as *घरोघरी बालविकास (gharoghari baalvikaas)*.

Meanwhile, when the COVID-19 situation came under control, we surveyed Bheemnagar and explored the possibility and need for physical intervention with children. Parents in unison demanded physical intervention. We initiated the preparatory work for starting an ECE center in the same locality. The center was planned to have active engagement with children, parents and Anganwadi workers. Unfortunately, we had to postpone the physical intervention and go back to the online mode as the second wave of COVID 19 has hit the city.

As planned, we have replicated the Parents as Teachers program in 20 more Anganwadis.

#### D. Plan for next 1 -3 years:

For the next three years, we will be focussing on

- Parents as Teachers program (Mainly during COVID )
- Strengthening of ECE in Anganwadis
- Development of Educational Resources

The detailed plan will be discussed in the later section.

## 2. Detailed Report for Financial Year 2020-21

### A. Operational

- i. List and briefly describe all key programs/initiatives run by your organization.

SL No	Name of Program	Description of Program	Primary Funder
1	Parent as teacher	Objectives: To enable parents to conduct ECE activities at home using readily available materials.	Magarpatta Township Development & Construction Company, SUMATI trust
2	Capacity building of Anganwadi teachers	Objectives: Training and handholding of Anganwadi teachers about the Akar curriculum  The initial meetings were held. We have started working	SUMATI trust

<sup>1</sup> Kaur, N., Gupta, M., Malhi, P., & Grover, S. (2019). Screen time in under-five children. *Indian Pediatrics*, 56(9), 773–788.

		with parents through online mode. Anganwadi teachers are also part of this group.	
3	Content development in Mathematics	Objectives: Creating the practice question bank for all areas of Mathematics for grades 1 to 5.	Motivation for Excellence
4.	Content development in Mathematics	Objectives: Creating sample assessment battery for grades 1 to 10 (Mathematics) which will be used by SCERT for a statewide pilot project.	Leadership for Equity

- ii. Has your overall operational/intervention model changed over the last year? If yes, how and why?

Yes, we have changed the overall operational model due to the pandemic. When we think of ECE, there is no option for physical intervention. But as COVID 19 restricted us, we have to stop ourselves from conducting sessions with children. We also had to limit our community visits, interactions and meetings with parents and Anganwadi workers. But then we started reaching out through smartphones, started delivering the content with simple instructions for parents, started regular phone calls to parents to get feedback and to resolve their queries too. We are also reaching out to Anganwadi teachers through personal meetings and WhatsApp communications.

- iii. Please complete the following outreach summary table to indicate the number of learning centres, schools, teachers, students and other key stakeholders that you worked with last year. Please also explain the reasons behind significant changes in numbers, if any.

Outreach Summary	#	Remarks (Mention frequency/mode/nature of engagement where applicable. e.g. daily through WhatsApp; once a quarter through Zoom; weekly face-to-face interactions etc.)
Anganwadi teachers and supervisor Engagement		
Nature of engagement		1) Orientation Meeting - 1 2) WhatsApp messages including text and audio recordings of activities Frequency: Daily (excluding Saturday and Sunday) 3) Communication through phone: Frequency: Once a month
Number of Anganwadi workers (teachers) engaged	27	
Number of ICDS supervisor	1	



Parents Engagement		
Nature of engagement		WhatsApp messages including text and audio recordings of activities  Frequency: Daily (excluding Saturday and Sunday)
Number of community centres engaged	21	
Number of parents engaged	180	
Number of students receiving input	180	

#### 4) Educational

- i. Have the founders and/or the leadership team (program management level) engaged directly with students, content/curriculum, teachers, and other key stakeholders in this period? If yes, please describe this engagement.

We are a team of four members - Atul Gaikwad (Founder), Mukta Navrekar (Founder), Archana Kulkarni (academic consultant) and Vrushali (coordinator). We all were actively involved in the process of operationalizing the community resource center in Bheem Nagar but unfortunately, we could not start the center due to COVID 19. So far now, our engagement with different stakeholders is as mentioned below:

1. **Working with children through parents:** Atul and Mukta are involved in the planning of content which is being disseminated through parents' WhatsApp group. We also analyze the feedback and queries received from parents and do alterations in the content accordingly.
2. **Working with parents:** We are now in the process of developing a module/handbook for parents which will enable them to teach their children at home. We are identifying some representatives from Bheem Nagar who will after training, facilitate the 'Parent as Teacher' program on the field with the least contact.
3. **Working with Anganwadi teachers:** We have received permission from CDPO (Child Development Project Officer) to work with 20 Anganwadis along with the training of the Anganwadi workers. We had conducted meetings with ICDS Supervisor and Anganwadi teachers to explain our program and to understand their needs. We have brought all Anganwadi teachers into one WhatsApp group and coordinate with them as and when required. Most of the communication is done through phone calls.
4. **Content Development:** Mukta engaged with the funding agency and handled the management of two small projects focussing on the development of practice questions for Mathematics. Atul along with Archana developed the practice questions for Mathematics. Mukta also looked after the graphical design of the content.

All our team was involved in the production of the digital content which feeds into the parent's groups.



5. **Online session:** Atul conducted some online reading sessions with children and parents. But the digital divide is so bad that seamless connectivity was not established.

- ii. Provide details of training courses/workshops attended by core team members, and any other steps taken to enhance the core educational expertise within the team (e.g. visiting any other resource organization, inviting resource persons to your location for staff training etc.) Also, mention any trainings/support that your organization may have provided to other NGOs (if not covered in 2. a) above).

SL No.	Name of training course and organization providing the training	Details including: purpose/objectives, who were the facilitators, # of days, location, key learnings, impact on your work.	Which team members attended?
1	LEAD (Leadership Exploration and Development online Masterclass) Organized by: Azim Premji University.	Being the founder we are in a leadership position in the organization. Unfortunately, we are not trained in this domain. This workshop helped us get a glimpse of what leadership means.	Atul Gaikwad, Mukta Navrekar
2	Introduction to Libraries Organized By: Bookworm, Goa	This is an introductory course on Libraries. Atul attended the first workshop of the course physically, now according to the suggestions by Bookworm, he is being enrolled in the Library Educators course.	Atul Gaikwad
3	Introductory session with Swadhar: Organized By: BELIEF	An online presentation and discussion session was organized by BELIEF to understand Swadhar work.	Atul Gaikwad, Mukta Navrekar, Archana Kulkarni, Vrushali Talpe, Sulabha Subramaniyam, Ashwin Bhondave
4	New Education Policy Study Group Organized By: Kishor Darak	This was an informal study group in which video lectures on various aspects of New Education Policy were arranged.	Atul Gaikwad, Mukta Navrekar

- iii. For the key capacity building engagements this year, please share aspects of learning that have had a significant impact on your work.



LEAD Course:

- We could delegate a few important tasks to the coordinator. This made us free from those responsibilities and could focus on other areas of work.
- We put more effort into the training of personnel rather than changing the personnel or shuffling the responsibilities.

Introduction to Libraries:

- We felt that rather than having an integrated library program we can have a dedicated library program. We do not have any difference of opinion about the role of libraries in society. However, the society about which we mention in our vision statement needs open spaces like libraries. We are discussing and evolving the idea of the Library program offered through BELIEF.

- iv. What are the domains/areas/processes, in which your organization's capacity could be further improved or strengthened? What sort of training would be helpful?
- How to improve the visibility of the organization?
  - Inputs on Human Resource Management and Development
  - Inputs on monitoring and evaluation of the program

## 5) Organizational

### i. Legal Status:

- Kindly share the **current status** of your organization with respect to legal compliances (for instance, organization's registration, 12A, 80G, FCRA registration and other relevant registrations/certifications).
  - Registration has already been done.
  - 12A and 18G certificates have been approved.
  - FCRA yet to be applied as we haven't completed 3 years

Ashwin Bhondave, one of the BELIEF's founder members has now become a member of the board of directors. Ashwin is an IT Engineer who has been raised in a socially sensitive residential school run by his parents found his purpose of life in the field of Education and hence did his M.A. (Elementary Education) from Tata Institute of Social Science, Mumbai. He has experience in the development sector for more than 10 years. Currently, Ashwin is the Trustee and program manager at Sonadara Gurukulam, Beed. He is also associated with the Vowels Of People Association (VOPA) as a teacher training facilitator.

### ii. Organizational Structure and Culture:

- Provide the profile of the leadership team, including program management level (background, their current roles and responsibilities, how long they have been with the organization etc.) and any significant changes in the last year.

a. **Mukta Navrekar**





Postgraduate in Rural Development and Graduate in Sociology. Having more than 6 years of experience in various development sector organizations includes 2 years of freelance experience in mass communication. (All India Radio). Have the expertise in training, communication, management, public relations and team building. Working with BELIEF from 2018.

**Role in the organization:**

- Director (working full time for BELIEF)
- Managing the current project in ECE.
- Public relations and liaison with the government and funders
- Fundraising and management
- Future planning
- Capacity building of the team
- Proposal writing and project planning

**b. Atul Gaikwad**

M.A. (Elementary Education) from Tata Institute of Social Science, Mumbai. B.E (IT) GEC Aurangabad and Having experience in the development sector for more than 8 years. Language pedagogy expert, currently working with BELIEF. He loves working with children and training teachers. Previously worked as a Senior Academic Officer in Quality Education Support Trust (QUEST) for 5 ½ years on different projects of quality education with government schools and Ashram Schools where he designed and managed various projects and conducted several teacher trainings. He had also worked as an associate software developer in SEARCH, Gadchiroli. Working with BELIEF from 2018.

**Role in the organization:**

- Manager - Academics
- Training and onsite support to the field coordinators
- Planning and designing the projects
- Proposal writing
- Admin and accounts (When and if required)

**c. Archana Kulkarni**

M.BA Finance but a hard-core teacher trainer. She loves working with children. Has 17 years of experience in the field of quality education. Previously worked as a Senior Manager - Academics in Quality Education Support Trust (QUEST) for 12 years. She has also worked in some educational films. She is a co-author of 'Maze Ganit' (My math) a series of books on mathematics for elementary education. working with BELIEF from 2019.

**Role in the organization:**

- Training and onsite support of the field coordinators
- Monitoring and evaluation



- Giving critical inputs in overall project implementation

**d. Vrushali Talape (coordinator)**

MSW (Savitribai Phule Pune University Pune), B.H.S.C (Human Development) (SNDT, Pune). Worked as a Facilitator at Gram-Mangal, a renowned institute in ECE. She had also worked with the girls in the observation home and differently-abled children. She is working with BELIEF since 2020.

**Role in the organization:**

- Producing the digital content for the Parents as Teachers program
  - Management of the Parents as Teachers program
  - Liaison with the ICDS officials, Anganwadi teachers and parents
  - Report writing
  - Assist in project planning
  - Conduct field visits, surveys
- Does your organization have an identified second-line of management, if yes, please provide details (include name, profile, how long they have been with the organization, primary role, area of work etc.).

We are already operating with fewer human resources and hence could not identify the second-line leadership yet.

- Describe efforts taken to develop a shared vision and positive culture in the organization.  
The core team shares a common vision and for this, we regularly meet on virtual platforms. Everyone from the core team is involved while taking important decisions. Mukta and Atul do continuous dialogue on two levels; with the core team and with the program team about our vision, current projects, experiences from the field and planning. In addition to that, we also arrange open discussions in which the core team and program team participate together, share experiences and thoughts. We intentionally organize discussions on our vision and mission during Monthly review meetings of the project implementation team.
- Mention any attrition and growth in the core team (i.e. how many people/at what position have left and how many new team members have joined?).  
We have a core team of 6 members right from the formation. No one in the core team has left the organization. We are experiencing more involvement of the core team members in the planning and giving critical reviews and strengthening recruitment procedure, fundraising etc.

**iii. Capacity Enhancement:**

Describe systems and structures for systematic capacity building of the team. E.g. is there a formal training needs' assessment conducted? If yes, how is it done? What kind of processes does the team follow to share learnings (from regular field-work as well as other capacity building engagements)?



We developed a formal system of appraisal this year through which we also assess the need for capacity building and work on it. We observed that the changed mode of working needs different types of skills and mental strength too. We increased the frequency of sharing planning, feedback and also started using the Telegram application more efficiently for sharing the experiences from the field.

**iv. Governance:**

Please mention the governance structures, processes and practices that you have at your organization. For instance, is there an advisory/governance board (or, if the organization is new, do the founding team members have regular mentors); were Annual Reports published in the last three years (Please provide a web-links, if yes); do you have the standard organizational policies in place (such as say for Human Resource Management). Please provide your response in terms of:

We don't have a separate advisory board. But we have prepared (and frequently update) a list of people from development sectors, potential funders and government officials. We regularly reach them through BELIEF Diary (A one-pager to share the key updates and experiences). Some of them do give critical feedback as well. We publish a quarterly progress report and submit it to the financial partners, ICDS officers and the district collector.

**Policies:**

We have developed the policies for Human resource management, collaboration (for funding, tying up, events partnership and technical partnership), recruitment of staff and finance. We are in the process of changing the recruitment criteria as in post-COVID time, a newly imposed work culture needs a different type of skill set.

**v. Financial Overview:**

Please share your annual budget for last 3-years; list of funding partners and their contribution; funding strategy you have followed and how it has evolved; availability of audited financial reports.

Financial Year	Total Income	Major Funders
2019-20	19,58,000	Magarpatta, Township Development and Construction Company, Sumati Trust, Personal Donations
2020-21	23,07,000	Magarpatta, Township Development and Construction Company, Sumati Trust, SHEEL COMMODITIES P LTD, Estate of M. J. Kasthuri, Personal Donations

This year we have been actively involved in relief operations and raised a good amount of funds for the same. For this we have spread the information in our circle and received the response. Apart from that we shared the work of the organization with some potential funders, out of which some supported us.

Link for our audit reports: Our Audit reports are available on [this page](#).



#### vi. Other Partnerships

not covered in earlier sections (i.e. non-funded, such as for knowledge sharing, program implementation etc.): with other civil society organizations; engagement with government departments or officials (BEO/DEO/CRP/BRP/SIs etc.). Please also briefly explain the nature of engagement, i.e. if you've held regular meetings with them, what was it for, how was it useful etc.

We supported Motivation for Excellence (The Nalanda Project) and Leadership for equity for developing question banks for Mathematics.

#### vii. Communications/Outreach

- Describe any outreach events organized, other than for stakeholders you regularly work with; As it was a need of an hour due to the nationwide lockdown from March 2020, we initiated a campaign 'BELIEF for Relief' through which we provided dry ration to the different parts of Maharashtra including Bheemnagar and food packets, water, medicines, sanitary napkins and masks to the migrants. BELIEF raised the fund from individual donors for this campaign. We also received support from TINI (The India Nutrition Institute by Tata trust) and FES (Foundation for Ecological Security). This year we published a calendar featuring the young changemakers working in education, health, environment and social justice. This calendar is being appreciated by many of the buyers and financial supporters.
- Provide details of your organization's website and social-media presence (including links to your website, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram etc.)

Website: [beliefforchange.org](http://beliefforchange.org)

### 3. Plans for next 1-3 years

Please provide a high-level summary of your plans for the next 1-3 years and a detailed plan for FY 2021-22; addressing the educational, organizational and operational aspects of your work.

Considering the restrictions imposed due to COVID 19 will continue at least for the next 1 year, we are planning to take our activities under three objectives - continuing the current programs along with the required value addition, development of educational resources (digital & physical), bringing sustainability to the organization.

The overall plan for the next three years is mentioned in the below table.

Activities Continued (with required value addition)	Development of Educational Resources	Sustainability
Parents as Teachers program for 20 Anganwadis	Stories and read-aloud sessions in audio and/or video format	Need-based online trainings of Anganwadi workers
Revisiting the content and arranging it as per the new	Print ready handouts of activity plans for parents	Replicating the ECE program



understanding of users		in rural area with contextual alterations
For Bheem Nagar: Hand Holding of parents through local community worker/s who will also work with students in small groups.	Bank of ECE activities classified as per the development domains which can be easily incorporated in any ECE training program.	
	Foundational skill package for Literacy and Mathematics	

### The detailed plan for 2021-22

<b>Educational</b>	<b>Organizational</b>	<b>Operational</b>
Enroll for Library Educator Course (Atul)	Develop a sustainability plan for the organization	Develop Educational Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Audio / Video stories</li> <li>- Posters</li> <li>- Handouts</li> <li>- Activity plans</li> </ul>
Enroll for Post graduate program in development management Course (Mukta)	Apply for FCRA	Evolve a hybrid model of intervention for Parents as Teachers program where online mode and in-person support from local community worker will be provided. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Appointment for local community worker</li> <li>- Training</li> <li>- Piloting the intervention</li> <li>- Review and scaling up for the community</li> <li>- Replicating the program in other communities</li> </ul>
	Meet funding agencies for raising funds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- List of potential donors / funding agencies / CSRs</li> <li>- Write proposals</li> <li>- Pitching the idea</li> <li>- Follow Up</li> </ul>	

Needless to say that the above mentioned plan is subject to change based on the availability of funds and Covid 19 situation in Maharashtra.



#### 4. Nature of Support

Describe the nature of future support you would like to request from Wipro, apart from funding.

We are happy to be part of Wipro Community and appreciate the support Wipro is providing to us.

