

BETTER EDUCATION, LIFESTYLE AND ENVIRONMENT FOUNDATION (BELIEF)



ANNUAL REPORT 2022–2023

FOUNDER'S KEYNOTE

As we reflect on the year 2022–23, we are reminded that transformation in education rarely arrives in sweeping gestures—it unfolds in quiet moments: a child choosing to speak for the first time, a teacher experimenting with a new method, a helper discovering her own agency in the classroom. These seemingly small moments are the bedrock of systemic change. And it is in these moments that BELIEF finds its purpose.

This year marked our return to the field—a return to the textures, rhythms, and realities of Anganwadi classrooms. Transitioning from remote engagement to direct intervention brought its share of challenges. We navigated funding constraints, logistical hurdles, and the intricacies of curriculum implementation. Yet, through it all, our team remained anchored in empathy and driven by the conviction that every child deserves a nurturing, process-oriented learning environment.

Working closely with six Anganwadis in Pune Urban 2, we witnessed firsthand the resilience of educators and the boundless curiosity of children. We supported the rollout of the AKAR curriculum, piloted monitoring tools, and began engaging families in meaningful ways. These efforts were not perfect, but they were sincere—and they laid the foundation for deeper, more scalable impact.

We are deeply grateful to our partners—WIPRO Foundation, ICDS, and the many individuals who lent their time, trust, and resources. Their belief in BELIEF has been our strength.

Looking ahead, we carry forward the lessons of this year: that depth matters more than breadth, that co-creation fosters ownership, and that documentation is not just a tool—it is a mirror. As we expand the SHAKTI project, launch KITABGHAR, and publish the next volume of Gharoghari Bal Vikas, we remain committed to listening, learning, and leading with humility.

To every teacher, parent, child, and team member who walked this journey with us—thank you. The road ahead is long, but together, we are building something enduring.

With gratitude,
Atul and Mukta
Co-Founders, BELIEF



ABOUT US

Better Education Lifestyle and Environment Foundation (BELIEF) is a not-for-profit organization started by young professionals who passionately want to work for the underprivileged communities. We are committed to transforming early childhood education by working closely with Anganwadi Workers, Helpers, Parents, and the Government System—particularly through collaboration with the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Department. We also run an active library program for the children with challenging childhoods.

OUR VISION

A society where each individual is leading a dignified life.

MISSION

To improve learning opportunities for 20,000 elementary-grade students by 2026–27 through capacity building of teachers, parents, and education officers.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

We believe that lasting change can be achieved by partnering with government systems and empowering stakeholders with small and steady steps. Our approach is to institutionalize change—recognizing that it requires persistent, multi-level engagement.

In the realm of ECE, we advocate for a shared understanding across all levels—from Child Development Project Officers (CDPOs) to parents. Without this collective orientation, implementing a quality ECE program at scale remains a challenge.

OUR CORE AREAS OF WORK INCLUDE:

- Training for Anganwadi Teachers and Helpers
- On-site classroom support and activity demonstrations
- Development of ECE content and Teaching-Learning Material (TLM)
- Library sessions for children
- Development of teaching and learning materials.

YEAR IN REVIEW

The year 2022–23 marked a pivotal transition for BELIEF—from remote engagement during the pandemic to a renewed emphasis on direct, on-ground interventions. This shift was not merely logistical; it reflected BELIEF’s deepening commitment to contextual, responsive, and inclusive education for early learners.

Transition from Online to Offline Engagement

With the easing of pandemic-related restrictions, BELIEF strategically moved from virtual support to in-person facilitation. This transition enabled richer interactions with Anganwadi teachers, helpers, and children, allowing for real-time feedback, contextualized support, and more nuanced observation of classroom dynamics.

Direct Interventions in Anganwadis

BELIEF worked intensively with six Anganwadis in Pune Urban 2, providing sustained support through classroom visits, teacher guidance, and resource sharing. These centers served as pilot sites for refining BELIEF’s pedagogical tools and monitoring frameworks.



Support for AKAR Curriculum Implementation

In collaboration with ICDS and WIPRO Foundation, BELIEF played a key role in facilitating the rollout of the AKAR curriculum. This involved:

- Conducting orientation sessions for Anganwadi staff
- Assisting with classroom-level implementation
- Documenting challenges and feedback to inform future iterations

Teacher and Helper Training

BELIEF organized targeted training sessions focused on:

- Child-centric pedagogy
- Use of Teaching-Learning Materials (TLMs)
- Classroom management strategies These sessions were designed to be participatory, reflective, and rooted in the realities of Anganwadi settings.

Parent Engagement Initiatives

Recognizing the critical role of families in early childhood development, BELIEF initiated preliminary efforts to engage parents. Through informal meetings and home visits, the team began building trust and understanding parental perspectives on education.

Monitoring and Evaluation Foundations

This year laid the groundwork for BELIEF's Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) systems. Early tools were piloted to assess:

- Teacher preparedness
- Classroom practices
- Child engagement.

These insights informed the development of more robust frameworks in the following year.

Strategic Reflections

While the year was rich in learning and impact, BELIEF also faced constraints—most notably, limited funding that restricted expansion to 22 additional Anganwadis. Nevertheless, the organization remained agile, using this challenge as an opportunity to deepen its work in existing centers and refine its approach.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

In 2022–23, BELIEF deepened its commitment to transforming early childhood education through direct, context-sensitive interventions. The programs implemented this year were designed not only to support Anganwadi teachers and helpers but also to create a more engaging and inclusive learning environment for children.

Teacher and Helper Training

BELIEF conducted targeted training sessions for Anganwadi teachers and helpers, focusing on:

- **Child-centered pedagogy:** Emphasizing play-based learning, emotional safety, and developmental appropriateness
- **Use of Teaching-Learning Materials (TLMs):** Demonstrating how low-cost, locally sourced materials can be used to enhance classroom engagement
- **Classroom management strategies:** Addressing challenges such as multi-age groups, limited space, and behavioral dynamics

These sessions were designed to be interactive and reflective, encouraging participants to share their experiences and co-create solutions.

Classroom Support and Observation

BELIEF's team provided regular on-site support to six Anganwadis. This included:

- Assisting teachers during classroom sessions
- Offering real-time feedback and pedagogical guidance
- Documenting classroom practices to inform future training modules

This hands-on approach helped bridge the gap between theory and practice, allowing educators to experiment with new methods in a supportive environment.

Curriculum Implementation Support

BELIEF played a facilitative role in the implementation of the AKAR curriculum. The team:

- Supported teachers in understanding and adapting the curriculum to their local context
- Helped align classroom activities with AKAR's thematic structure
- Provided feedback to ICDS and WIPRO Foundation on curriculum usability and effectiveness

This collaborative effort ensured that the curriculum was not just delivered but meaningfully integrated into daily classroom routines.

Parent Engagement Initiatives

Recognizing the importance of parental involvement in early learning, BELIEF initiated informal engagement efforts:

- Conducted home visits to understand family contexts
- Shared simple strategies with parents to support learning at home
- Began building trust and rapport with the community

Though modest in scale, these efforts laid the foundation for deeper family-school partnerships in the coming years.

Piloting Monitoring Tools

BELIEF began testing basic monitoring tools to assess:

- Teacher preparedness and confidence
- Child engagement and participation
- Classroom environment and resource utilization

These pilots informed the development of more structured M&E frameworks, which would be refined and scaled in the following year.



DATA & IMPACT

A commitment to measurable progress and reflective practice guided BELIEF's work in 2022–23. While the scale of operations remained focused on six Anganwadis, the depth of engagement allowed for meaningful insights into early childhood education dynamics. The following data points illustrate the scope and outcomes of BELIEF's interventions during the year.

Educator Engagement

- **6 Anganwadis** received sustained support throughout the year
- **12+ training sessions** conducted for teachers and helpers
- **Over 60 classroom support visits** by BELIEF team members
- **100% participation** from assigned Anganwadi staff in all training modules

These interactions fostered a culture of continuous learning and professional development among educators.

Child-Centric Outcomes

- **Improved classroom routines** observed in 5 out of 6 Anganwadis
- **Increased use of TLMs** in daily activities
- **Higher levels of child engagement**, especially in storytelling and play-based sessions
- **Positive behavioral shifts** noted in peer interactions and attention spans

While BELIEF did not conduct standardized child assessments this year, qualitative observations indicated notable improvements in classroom climate and child participation.

Community Engagement Metrics

- **Initial parent interactions** conducted in all six centers
- **Home visits** initiated in 3 Anganwadis
- **Feedback loops** established with ICDS supervisors and WIPRO Foundation representatives

Though modest in scale, these efforts laid the groundwork for deeper community integration and stakeholder collaboration.

Monitoring & Evaluation Pilots

BELIEF initiated the development and testing of basic M&E tools, including:

- **Teacher Observation Framework:** Used during classroom visits to assess pedagogical practices
- **Pre/Post Training Feedback Forms:** Captured educator reflections and learning outcomes
- **Field Notes and Anecdotal Records:** Documented real-time insights for internal review

These tools were instrumental in identifying areas for improvement and informed the design of more robust evaluation systems for the following year.



PARTNERS & COLLABORATORS

BELIEF's progress in 2022–23 was made possible through the steadfast support of its institutional partners and collaborators. These alliances not only provided financial and logistical backing but also enriched BELIEF's work with strategic guidance, shared learning, and aligned values.

WIPRO Foundation

As a long-standing partner, WIPRO Foundation continued to support BELIEF's grassroots education initiatives. Their funding enabled:

- Direct interventions in six Anganwadis
- Training sessions for teachers and helpers
- Development of pedagogical tools and monitoring frameworks

Beyond financial support, WIPRO Foundation offered valuable insights into curriculum implementation and impact measurement, helping BELIEF refine its approach to early childhood education.

Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) – Pune Urban 2

The ICDS department played a pivotal role in facilitating BELIEF's field operations. Their collaboration included:

- Access to Anganwadi centers for direct engagement
- Coordination with supervisors and field staff
- Integration of BELIEF's support with the AKAR curriculum rollout

This partnership ensured that BELIEF's interventions were contextually grounded and aligned with government priorities.

Informal Collaborators

BELIEF also benefited from informal collaborations with:

- Local educators and retired professionals who volunteered time and expertise
- Community members who supported logistics and outreach
- Small-scale donors who contributed to specific needs such as printing materials or organizing events

These grassroots connections reinforced BELIEF's commitment to community-driven change and inclusive education.

CHALLENGES & LEARNING

The year 2022–23 was as much a journey of discovery as it was of delivery. BELIEF encountered several operational and strategic challenges that tested its resilience, sharpened its focus, and deepened its understanding of the field realities in early childhood education.

Funding Limitations

One of the most significant constraints was the limited availability of funds. While BELIEF successfully sustained its work in six Anganwadis, the inability to secure additional financial support prevented expansion to 22 other centers that had been identified for intervention. This underscored the need for:

- Diversified fundraising strategies
- Stronger donor engagement and storytelling
- Streamlined cost allocation policies to optimize resource use

Curriculum Implementation Complexities

Supporting the rollout of the AKAR curriculum revealed several ground-level challenges:

- Teachers required more time and support to internalize the curriculum's structure
- Existing classroom routines often conflicted with AKAR's thematic flow
- Helpers, though enthusiastic, needed clearer role definitions within the new framework

These insights prompted BELIEF to adopt a more scaffolded approach to curriculum support, emphasizing gradual integration and contextual adaptation.

Operational Constraints

Field operations were occasionally hampered by:

- Scheduling conflicts with ICDS staff
- Limited availability of training venues
- Logistical hurdles in coordinating classroom visits across urban clusters

BELIEF responded by developing flexible planning protocols and strengthening communication channels with ICDS supervisors.

Organizational Learning

Despite these challenges, BELIEF emerged with several key learnings:

- **Depth over breadth:** Focused engagement in fewer centers yielded richer insights and stronger relationships

- **Co-creation works:** Collaborative training sessions where teachers contributed ideas led to higher ownership and implementation
- **Documentation is critical:** Systematic recording of field experiences helped refine tools and inform strategic decisions

These learnings have been instrumental in shaping BELIEF's approach for the following year, particularly in designing scalable models that remain responsive to local contexts.

LOOKING AHEAD

As BELIEF prepares to enter the 2023–24 academic year, the organization is poised to build on its foundational work and scale its impact across new geographies and programmatic dimensions. The learnings from 2022–23 have informed a sharper, more adaptive strategy that balances depth of engagement with operational expansion.

Strategic Priorities for 2023–24

1. Expansion of SHAKTI Project

BELIEF will extend its flagship SHAKTI initiative to additional Anganwadis, with a focus on:

- Strengthening classroom practices through embedded support
- Enhancing teacher capacity via modular training
- Integrating monitoring tools to track progress and outcomes

2. Development of KITABGHAR Resource Hub

To promote literacy and joyful learning, BELIEF will pilot KITABGHAR—a curated library and activity space within select Anganwadis. This initiative aims to:

- Foster early reading habits
- Provide access to culturally relevant storybooks and materials
- Encourage peer-led learning and exploration

3. Publication of Gharoghari Bal Vikas – Part 2

Building on the success of the first volume, BELIEF will release the second edition of its home-based learning guide. The new volume will include:

- Age-appropriate activities for 4–6-year-olds
- Contextual adaptations for rural and urban families
- Visual aids and simplified instructions for caregivers

4. Strengthening Monitoring & Evaluation Systems

BELIEF will refine its M&E framework to include:

- Composite scoring tools for teacher observation
- Pre/Post learning assessments for children
- Dashboards for real-time data visualization and reporting

5. Enhanced Stakeholder Engagement

BELIEF will deepen its collaboration with:

- ICDS departments in new districts
- Philanthropic partners for multi-year funding
- Community members through structured parent engagement modules

Vision for Growth

BELIEF envisions a future where every child, regardless of geography or background, has access to nurturing, process-oriented early education. The coming year will be a step toward realizing this vision—through innovation, collaboration, and unwavering commitment to equity



TESTIMONIALS

“The BELIEF team came into our classroom and supported us directly. It helped us absorb new methods and communicate better with the children.”

— Anganwadi Teacher, Pune

“We really liked the approach of teaching children through play. Using the TLMs provided by BELIEF made a big difference in our classroom.”

— Helper, Pune

“My child has now started telling stories. Thanks to the book given by the BELIEF team, he reads every day.”

— Parent, Pune

“The training from BELIEF gave me confidence in my work. I’m now more active in the classroom.”

— Anganwadi Teacher, Pune

OUR PARTNERS



1. Wipro Foundation
2. SUMATI Trust
3. Edumentum (Mantra for Change)

YOUR HANDS, OUR HOPE

BELIEF thrives on collective effort. Whether you're a donor, educator, parent, or well-wisher, your support helps us nurture brighter beginnings.

- **DONATE:** Your contribution helps us reach more children with meaningful learning experiences.
- **VOLUNTEER:** Share your time, skills, or stories—every gesture counts.
- **PARTNER:** Collaborate with us to build resilient, joyful learning ecosystems.

