

White Lotus Charitable Trust 2022-23 Annual Report



Potential is everywhere, whether rich or poor, opportunity is all that stands between these children and a better life. **White Lotus Trust** is dedicated to providing education and training, reducing inequality and cycles of poverty.

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION DASHBOARD METRICS - PAN INDIA PROJECTS LOTUS EDUCATION HUB, DELHI	6
Career Counseling:	
Library and study room:	
Discussion Club and Quiz Contest:	
Performance Monitoring:	
EDUCATION QUALITY ADDITION PROJECT (EQU+)	10
Project Timeline	
Events and activities:	
Baseline and Progress assessment:	
Analysis of baseline and progress assessment:	
BLOSSOM BUS - HARYANA, RAJASTHAN & TAMIL NADU	14
Blossom Bus - Driving Social Change Through Access to Education	
Haryana and Rajasthan	
Exemplary Attendance Rates:	
Mentors on the Buses:	
Babita and Amita - Bus mentors from Bhanguri Village	
Blossom Bus, Tamilnadu	
KAPADIA WLT TERTIARY SCHOLARSHIP PROJECT	20
Summary of Scholars – 2022	
Details of the scholars' progress	
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM AT JHARKHAND	23
LOTUS PEDALS, JHARKHAND	24
WHITE LOTUS FUNDED GIRL'S FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT	25
YOUNG WOMEN'S SKILL TRAINING FOR EMPLOYMENT PROJECT	
Skills training for Employment Project (STEP) wind-up report 2023	
ASHA - VILLAGE BASED WOMEN AND CHILDREN'S HEALTH PROJEC	CT 29
Table of ASHA Program Impact Metrics	
ASHA ICDS Program – Overview for 2022	



Pic 1: "Empowered young women in remote Jharkhand attend daily computer classes on bicycles provided by the WLT's Lotus Pedals Program."

INTRODUCTION

Dear donors, friends and White Lotus Charitable Trust community,

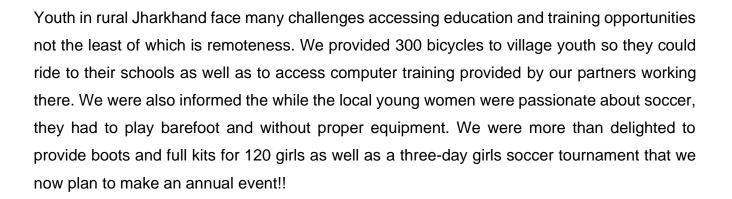
It's a pleasure and delight to report that in 2022 White Lotus projects again provided opportunities for empowerment and a better life through its many and multifaceted education, training and care projects, while serving some 20,387 individuals, almost all of them at risk girls and women. It's important to remember that every one of the lives White Lotus Trust touches is an individual from undeserved communities, most often living in remote areas where women and girls especially have to struggle against gender inequalities that unfairly make their lives an uphill battle.

White Lotus Trust programs attend to multiple and cross cutting aspects of vulnerabilities in all their complexities and which is crucial to complete and successful outcomes whether providing afterschool education to bridge learning gaps for elementary school age children, buses and bikes to overcome remoteness, scholarships and training opportunities to bring youth closer to their dream of entering a reliable profession. Each of these interventions and altogether, ultimately lead to lives lived more independently, with dignity and on their own terms.

Over the years we identified a tremendous knowledge gap with respect to knowledge of and choices of higher education and career paths among youth in many of our programs. This is not any wonder as scant attention has been given to preparing our youth for further education and career pathways. Career Counselling is extremely limited for low-income sectors as evidenced by the literature of the UCLA extension program¹ and which states there are less than 300 counselors available in 150,000 schools across India!

In response to this crying need we completed refurbishment of a former gym property at Rohini to initiate the White Lotus Education HUB as part of our programming wide approach to developing a stronger focus on preparing and informing youth with respect to further education and career options. The HUB provides an open space for regular Career Counseling classes, a library, study cum training rooms and an office for managing all our projects in NW Delhi.

¹ UCLA - University of California, Los Angeles



We take this opportunity to offer our profound thanks to our donors, supporters and tireless volunteers and field workers for their extraordinary contribution and for making all that we have done this year possible. Please read on.

With very best wishes from the entire team at White Lotus Trust!!

DASHBOARD METRICS – PAN INDIA PROJECTS

PROJECT	DIRECT IMPACT	GEOGRAPHIES
ASHA – Rural women & children's health project	18,829	Kaman Block, Bharatpur District (Rajasthan)
BLOSSOM BUS – Access to education	696	Palwal District (Haryana), Mewat of Rajasthan, Vellore District (Tamil Nadu)
EQU+ - access to education after school	345	North West Delhi - Slum and Low-income communities
Skills Training for Employment	138	North West Delhi, Low Income Communities
Tertiary Scholars	79	Delhi, Haryana, Jharkhand, Tamil Nadu
Lotus Pedals - access to education- transport	300	Hazaribagh area (Jharkhand)
TOTAL	20,387	

LOTUS EDUCATION HUB, DELHI



Pic 2: Career Counseling session with Head Counselor Rakesh Singh (center) in the Hub's library and counseling room.

Career Counseling:

Recognising a tremendous gap in vocational orientation services for youth in our programs and across India in general, in 2022 we initiated a career counselling programme at Delhi to assist students in identifying courses of education and career paths suitable to their particular strengths, preferences and capabilities. During the year we provided multiple sessions of career counselling on a daily basis to more than 35 students, helping them identify their strengths and interests so they are better prepared to choose the right career path, achieve their goals and succeed in their chosen careers.

Library and study room:

We established a library where students can access a wide range of books including otherwise expensive competitive examination text books, free of cost. The library also has books on various subjects, including science, history, literature, and philosophy. Students can borrow books and take them home or use the reading room to study peacefully. The library is equipped

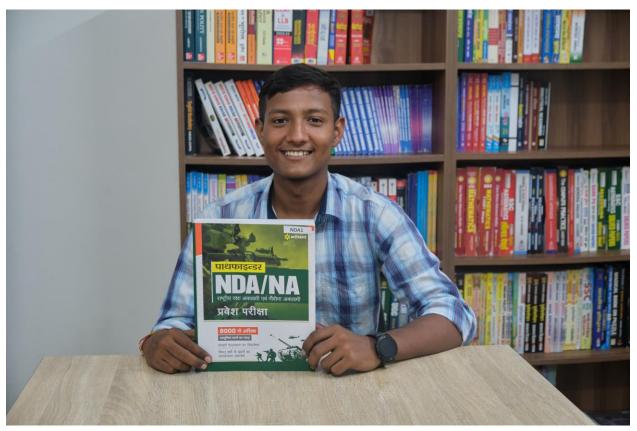
with Wi-Fi connection and a well-organized reading room. In addition, we set up a study room to provide a peaceful environment for students to study. The study room is equipped with private study booths and other necessary amenities to create a conducive environment for learning. This initiative has been particularly beneficial for students who come from overcrowded homes and have difficulty finding a quiet place to study. During this introductory phase of the project, we have had 15 students seriously studying for competitive examinations in our library under our guidance on a daily basis while others attend the library and study room on a drop-in basis.

Discussion Club and Quiz Contest:

We have also initiated a discussion club where students can participate in group discussions and debates. The club is led by our team members, and we personally oversee the performance of the students. Our aim is to provide a platform where students can express their ideas and thoughts freely. We believe that this club will help students to develop their communication skills and enhance their confidence. We have also started a weekly quiz contest to test the knowledge of our students. The contest is recorded on video so we can analyse the performance of the students. Our objective is to encourage students to participate in quizzes and increase their general knowledge and help students to prepare for competitive exams.

Performance Monitoring:

Student performance is monitored through multiple channels. We have created a Telegram channel where we post multiple choice questions to test the students' knowledge and understanding. We have also conducted regular tests and quizzes to assess their progress. We have identified a few students who have shown exceptional performance and provided them with personalized guidance and support.



Pic 3: A student preparing for the NDA/NA exam in the Hub Library.

EDUCATION QUALITY ADDITION PROJECT (EQU+)



Pic 4: EQU+ program benefactor, Mujin Sunim, captured enjoying a great time with EQU+ students in Rohini!

During the course of the year the EQU+ project has been running smoothly, providing quality education to a total of 281 children at 12 centers from low-income families in Rohini and Bawana New Delhi.

Project Timeline

The project timeline shows that although the new session typically begins in April, classes at schools do not commence in full swing until July due to various reasons. Final enrollment is completed at the beginning of July, with students who had previously returned to their villages rejoining classes. However, studies have demonstrated a significant setback in the learning process of students across both private and government schools in the previous year due to Covid-19.

Events and activities:

In India, the academic year spans from April to March, and during this timeline, we implemented various methods to enhance the teaching and learning process for better outcomes. Throughout the year, there are four major national holidays and numerous festive days where schools often give a day off. On these special occasions, we engage our students through drama, play, poetry, and dance, providing them with a detailed understanding of the event.



Pic 5: EQU+ students celebrate Independence Day with our Executive Program manager

Here are some of the activities we undertook:

- At the beginning of the year, we conducted a baseline assessment of each child, and by the end of February, (school years ends 31st March) we performed a final assessment to gauge their progress and identify areas that need more work.
- Monthly parent-teacher meetings were held to ensure parental involvement and explain the importance of education. The teachers maintain a record of every meeting conducted and attended by the parents throughout the year.
- We provided teacher workshops conducted by our career counselor, project manager, and supervisor, training them in various teaching methods like role play.
- In June 2022, we organized a successful summer camp from 11th to 15th June in Rohini and Bawana for students in grades 4 to 8, aged 9 to 14. Our teachers and supervisor collectively designed the program, which included poster making, sandwich making, dance, and a science exhibition using waste material.
- On 15th August, we celebrated Independence Day, where children eagerly participated in the flag hoisting ceremony, and students from every center performed at our main center in Rohini and Bawana.
- For Diwali, our grade 4 students painted Diya and created decorations, and sweets were distributed to all students and teachers.
- On 14th November, we celebrated Children's Day, organizing games, and giving prizes to the winners.
- Saturdays were the most exciting day of the week for our students, where we engaged them with craftwork, storytelling, singing, dancing, indoor games, and added hula-hoops, skipping ropes, and puzzle games to our indoor gaming items.

12

Baseline and Progress assessment:

Baseline Assessment

Grade	No of students	100-80%	80-60%	60-40%	40-20%	20-0%
TOTAL	235	41	61	79	24	32

Progress Assessment

Grade	No of students	100-80%	80-60%	60-40%	40-20%	20-0%
TOTAL	235	59	112	58	6	1

Analysis of baseline and progress assessment:

- Every year beginning of the new session in April conduct a baseline assessment for every child studying at our centres and for every new enrolment till July. The progress is assessed in every two months.
- Comparing the two the students have shown significant progress in their studies. The table shows almost 100% increase in 80-60 percentile block moving up from 0-20 & 20-40 percentile block.
- Improved academic outcomes will mean a great deal to these children and their parents as they graduate into the next grade closer to or even above the class levels they are supposed to have achieved.

BLOSSOM BUS - HARYANA, RAJASTHAN & TAMIL NADU

The project at Haryana/Rajasthan served 589 girls, 7 routes, 24 villages, 2 - 10 km's from home to school, Classes 6-12.

Nissan India Motors (NIMPL) is supporting 200 girls and children including 100 girls in grades 9-12 at Hathin Girls Senior secondary school and 100 students at Garden Of Peace elementary school in Classes LKG to 6.

METRIC	NUMBER
Number of children served	698
Number passed 10 and 12 board	137
exams	
Number of villages in coverage area	39



Blossom Bus – Driving Social Change Through Access to Education

Lotus Outreach, Girl's Blossom Bus project, was initiated in 2010 as a response to the lack of affordable transport options for rural girls contributing to high drop-out rates and low high school enrolments. At that time, in one of the six blocks of Mewat at Haryana, only one girl in an entire block of 100 schools made it to grade nine.

Over the course of 2022-23 the program provided 696 scholars transport to schools and colleges across three states of Haryana, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu. 596 of them are north Indian girls while 100 are an even mix of elementary school children at Tamil Nadu. It's notable that a high percentage of BB riders have been graduating high school every year with excellent marks and 40 of them, the maximum number we've been able to transport, go on to college. While families have been letting their girls attend college due to having safe transport, they've been far less inclined to send them away from home, such that it rarely happened. Now however a significant % of parents are opening up to the idea of sending their girls to study in the hostels of educational institutions, even beyond their concerns about the safety of girls and the risk of losing face over their girl child's behavior though it may be due as much to family economics as anything else.

Haryana and Rajasthan

While 78 Blossom Bus students completed year 12 in the previous academic year, in the 2022-23, 43% of 596 secondary school Blossom Bus riders at Haryana, studied in grades 9-12!! This is a very unique and extraordinary outcome with respect to access to higher education for girls from low-income groups in village India and that continues to be an area of social development in need of urgent attention.

School	Grade-10	Grade-12
Hathin	76%	81%
Aherwan	100%	100%
Solara	65%	90%
Rajasthan	100%	100%

Table 1: Year 10 and 12 board results at Haryana and Rajasthan

The Year 10 and 12 board results for Blossom Bus girls are outstanding. Grades 10 and 12 at Aherwan and Rajasthan had a 100% pass rate!! 81% at Hathin and 90% at Solara Girls Senior Secondary School.

Exemplary Attendance Rates:

Without transport and living far from secondary and high schools, almost 60% of girls in the remote areas we work in drop out between year eight and nine so it gives us great pleasure to report a verified average attendance of more than 90% across a sample of 103 secondary school Blossom Bus riders in the period!

Mentors on the Buses:

Every Bus across our Haryana sector, former Blossom Bus riders ride daily with the students taking attendance and mentors and which are former Blossom Bus riders employed to ride on all our bus services on a daily basis to encourage and inspire our young scholars to better understand the value of education, to stay in school longer and reach for their dreams in terms of further education and career path development. See the full story of Blossom Bus mentors Babita and Anita below in this report :)



Babita and Amita – Bus mentors from Bhanguri Village

Babita and Amita are two sisters from Bhanguri village in Palwal district of Haryana, who live with their parents and four other siblings. Babita is 25-year-old and has completed her master's degree in 2021. Her younger sister, Amita, 23, is following in her footsteps and is currently studying the first-year of her Master's degree. Both sisters share a common goal and which is to become trained teachers. Their father met with an accident few years back and the sisters were forced to look for work to make ends meet. They are determined to make a better life for themselves and their family, but circumstances had not been in their favour. But despite their struggles, they remain optimistic.

Their opportunity came when Balbir, the bus contractor, offered them positions as lady attendants on the Blossom Bus service. Back in 2013, when Babita was in 10th grade and Amita was in 8th grade, they began availing the Blossom Bus service that took them to Aherwan school. Hence, the sisters were one of the oldest riders on the bus. Balbir stated "Babita and Amita were in need of work and I couldn't think of anyone better for the positions as these girls have been one of our oldest bus riders". They were thrilled to take up the job, as it not only provided them with a stable income but also gave them the chance to mentor and guide the young girls on the bus. When Babita was asked about how she convinced her father to let her work, her response was too the point. It wasn't really a choice as Babita and her sister Amita had no other option but to work and provide for their family as they were the eldest siblings. But even then, Babita's father was initially hesitant but he finally reluctantly agreed to the idea.

For Babita and Amita, their work was not just about taking attendance rather more about being a role model for other girls in their community. They were determined to show that every girl has the right to receive an education and live her dream, no matter what the circumstances. Despite the challenges they faced, including not being allowed to carry a phone due to societal restrictions, they remained committed to their work and to each other. They would often discuss careers, family issues, and other topics with the girls on the bus, encouraging them to make the right choices and follow their dreams. The hard work and dedication of Amita and Babita did not go unnoticed. Many girls who recently passed out of college were inspired by their example and started asking for jobs in the organization.

Babita and Amita's story is a testament to the strength and resilience of women who face adversity but refuse to give up on their dreams. As such they are ideal role models for BB girls and their community showing that with hard work, determination, and a positive attitude, anything is possible!!

Blossom Bus, Tamilnadu



Pic 8: Nissan provides transport for 100+ children on Blossom Bus at Garden of Peace school at Tamil Nadu.

As well as for100 students at Haryana, Tamil Nadu, Nissan India Motors Pty Ltd (NIMPL) also provides transport for a further 100 students attending Garden Of Peace school in the District of Vellore. The children at GOP are from families of daily wagers and small holder farmers in village areas around the tiny village of Kaniyambadi where the school is located.s Without daily transport provided by Nissan Blossom Bus, these elementary school-age children would not otherwise be able to attend on a regular basis. Their mostly illiterate, low income parents simply don't have time or money to ensure their children are able to keep up with children from more well to do families. During the past several months, apart from the free daily bus services, there have been some excellent additions to the program at Tamil Nadu by way of regular weekend excursions (books down Saturday) to the Vellore museum, library and nearby historical monuments, aimed to expand the children's general knowledge and which the children really love!

KAPADIA WLT TERTIARY SCHOLARSHIP PROJECT



Pic 9: Five KEF recipients at Jharkhand: Babita, Suman, Rakhi, Sapna and Roji are pictured here with their parents and the larger community.

Summary of Scholars – 2022

At the beginning of the new academic year we refreshed our partnership and enrolled 37 new scholars in batch 2021, adding to 27 students from batch 2020 and 8 students from 2019 for an overall and impressive total of 72 students for 2021-2022.

With respect to the various colleges our scholars are studying at. Several enrolled into regular programs while most of the batch elected to attend through Schools of Open Learning at either Indira Gandhi National Open University or Delhi University (SOL) and that are the only major open learning platforms in Delhi.

This year a total of 23 students successfully graduated from Kapadia scholarship program and continue on their career pathways!!

Details of the scholars' progress

- Indira Gandhi National Open University: Most of the IGNOU students have received latest results but a few are still waiting.
- Delhi University (School of Open Learning): Most of them have their results and enrolled in their next level program.
- Batch 2020 Blossom Bus Girls: Eleven out of twelve Palwal Girls sat their final exams in July this year except Neha who was ill during her exam. Out of the 11 girls, 3 failed in a couple of subjects and will re-sit their failed subjects in the coming year. Blossom bus girls (how many) have graduated their bachelor's program and have been replaced by the incoming batch.
- Batch 2021 Blossom bus girls: Four out of five are in their 3 year and will be completing their bachelor program next year. Aarti and her sister Khushbu both were married this year. Khushbu gave her exam as promised so did Aarti. Aarti is now in her 2nd year of bachelor program and Khushbu failed in a couple of subjects. She plans to re-sit to complete her program.
- Batch 2019; Last eight students from our first batch have graduated and moving upwards in life.
- **Tenzin Pema the nursing student;** sat her 2nd year exams in November. Her results will be declared by mid-December. Tenzin will start her final year from January first week.
- **Arzoo** is now pursuing her level-4 in Korean Language at the same time on her internship at the Korean cultural center, Delhi. Arzoo is hoping to find work after completing her internship.
- Zafrin who dropped out earlier last year has now completed her bachelor degree. (did she remain in the program even though dropped out, details?
- Abhishek Verma and Aakash Kumar Sahu are discontinued from the scholarship program due to lack of performance.
- Savita was enrolled in the scholarship program in 2021 batch. The support was offered towards her master program but later in the year she decided to take Nursing as a career and enrolled for Diploma in Nursing and midwifery. Savita plans to attend her 1st year exams in May 2023 and requested to support her

towards her nursing program which has a guaranteed job outcome.

We decided to raise her scholarship maximum to Rs.20,000/- as she is one of our dedicated volunteers, focused towards her career. She lost her father some years ago and has no other means to support her education.

- Jharkhand: Most of these students are tribal girls living in remote areas. They travel 15 km and more each way to college daily. We expect to get information with respect to the progress of these students by the end of December.
- **Tamil Nadu:** Once again, we are waiting for updates from all our students from Tamil Nadu. Language is a major drawback working with them. They are equally needy of the scholarship support if not more.



Pic 10: Nadhiya, a Kapadia tertiary scholarship student, deep in her studies

Nadhiya is a Kapadia tertiary scholarship recipient currently majoring in Botany at Government Thirumagal Mill's College, Vellore and told us. "I have three siblings and I am the first in my family to attend college and they are incredibly proud of this fact. Two of my sisters only completed elementary school and were forced to abandon school after our mom passed away due to illness."

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM AT JHARKHAND



Our plans to provide access to higher education for female youth at Jharkhand moved into high gear in 2022 with the provision of 200 bicycles to female youth living in villages some 4 to 10kms away from schools, provision of girl's-soccer facilities and equipment and a new computer training centre established with funding arranged for our trusted local partners at Jharkhand, Nayer Sawera Vikas Kendra. Our focus over the coming years will be on empowering more than 1000 female youth at Jharkhand to realise their considerable potential through education and career path development leading to employment. 750 young women completed a basic three-month course on computing in 2022-23!!



Pic 11: Young girls participating in computer classes during 2022-23.

LOTUS PEDALS, JHARKHAND

Youth in rural Jharkhand face many challenges accessing education and training opportunities not the least of which is remoteness. In 2022 and in furtherance of our strategy to enable and



Pic 12: In the Gumla District, a beneficiary of our Lotus Pedal program proudly poses with her mother, the bicycle visible in the background.

empower female youth, we focused our Lotus Pedals project on Jharkhand and provided 300 bicycles to youth there to enable them to ride to schools and various institutes of higher education that are accessible to them. There are around 1,000 youth from 10 villages in our target area and which span two panchayats, Pauta and Gurhet and

from 4 to 10km from Baharonpur village where we're developing a training centre to serve their educational needs. We've now provided some 448 bikes to youth in the Hazaribag area of Jharkhand and plan to raise enough to provide 300 bikes to girls at high risk in Gumla District in 2023.



Pic 13: A group of girls from Jharkhand proudly showcasing their new bicycles received through our Lotus Pedal program.

WHITE LOTUS FUNDED GIRL'S FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT

We visited communities and female youth in the Baharonpur village area of Jharkhand in July 2022 to meet recipients of bicycles we'd provided. Their passion about football convinced us to agree to support provision of uniforms, boots, socks and shin guards for 120 girls representing ten teams and provision for a three-day Girl's football tournament with



professional umpires and officials and all the bells and whistles required to make it a nice carnival atmosphere.

Sports are also very tremendously important for the

overall development of our children and the female youth of Jharkand are passionate about soccer and hockey. Even so, they lack even the most fundamental sports equipment and infrastructure. Our hearts went out to the girls when we saw them kicking the hard-ball in bare feet and in 2022, we provided football uniforms including socks and boots for 120 girls representing 10 teams coming from 10 villages feeding into our computer training centre.

Once uniformed and booted and suited we supported their attendance for a three-day, girl'ssoccer knockout tournament, including pay for officials and umpires from Jharkand soccer federation and a sound system for a lively commentary to whip up the 100 strong crowd!



Pic 14: Jharkhand girls proudly wearing the football uniforms we donated as they prepare for a girls' soccer knockout tournament.



YOUNG WOMEN'S - SKILL TRAINING FOR EMPLOYMENT PROJECT AT DELHI (STEP)



Pic 16: STEP graduates with their mentor and executive project manager and developer, Sabrina Fawcett

Skills training for Employment Project (STEP) wind-up report 2023

Another year ended and with your support we were able to train one hundred and thirty-eight young Indian women and girls in two batches. We ran three centres for the first batch and two centres for the second, in accord with the proposal for 2022-23. The Skills Project started its new batch on April 1, 2022, with a focus on providing tailoring training to young girls and women from underprivileged backgrounds. The project aimed to equip these individuals with valuable skills that would help them establish their own home business or secure employment in the garment industry if possible. The project was implemented over a 12-month period. The training

curriculum was delivered by an experienced tailor and educator and included basic and advanced tailoring techniques and financial literacy. Students were provided with sewing machines, fabric, and other necessary tools and also received instruction in how to care for and repair their sewing machines.

Overall, we can say the project was successful in achieving its primary objective of economic empowerment. Many of the participants reported that they were able to start their own tailoring businesses from home and there was a noticeable increase in self-confidence among participants. Their knew found knowledge and interaction with a social environment outside their homes left them feeling more independent, while having saleable skills made them feel more capable of supporting their families.

We also recognise the contribution of our key trainer Aarti, whose commitment and capability has always been a powerful source of inspiration for her students and which has again ensured high quality outcomes during this year's batches. Aarti now plans to open her own training facility and start her own clothing line while employing some of the best students she's educated through the STEP training program. After the second wave of the pandemic and by April 2022, life normalized and many young girls from these low income communities returned to school. Further and due mainly to government funding for skills training, there was a steady increase in tailoring skills training centres in our target areas. Subsequently, we ran three centres with full enrolment for the first batch but could only find enough students of the caliber required to fill two classes in the second half of the year. Our emphasis was therefore on running two quality centres rather than filling a third for the sake of it.

ASHA - VILLAGE BASED WOMEN AND CHILDREN'S HEALTH PROJECT

Table of ASHA Program Impact Metrics

ACTIVITY	NUMBE	R
No. of villages served	30	
No. of Anganwadi served	30	
No. of Children served at Anganwadi	1200	
No. of community meetings	128	
No. of women served at community meetings	2176	
No of growth monitoring sessions	105	
No of participants at growth monitoring sessions	2220	
Hand Wash Days in schools	36	
No. of children served by hand-wash days	7699	
No. of girls adolescent youth meetings	109	
No attending girls youth meetings	1895	
No of sanitary pads supplied	2400	
No. of ANM meetings with pregnant and lactating mothers	53	
No. of pregnant and lactating mothers attending ANM meets	896	
No. of supervisor meetings	12	
No. attending supervisor meetings	467	
No. of pregnant and lactating mothers attended	163	
No. of Anganwadi Nutrition Days	92	
No. attending Anganwadi Nutrition Days	2113	
Total population served directly	18,829	

ASHA ICDS Program – Overview for 2022



Pic 17: Children and mothers ready to enjoy a nutritious meal on nutrition day at organized by WLT at a village Anganwadi

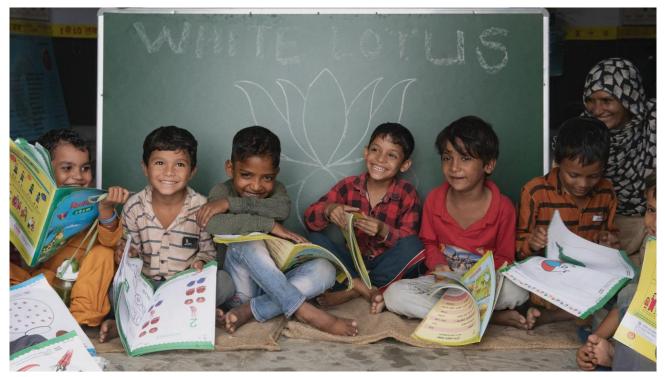
2022 was by far the most active year of this social program since its inception in 2017-18. Almost 19,000 women and children in the Kama block of the District of Bharatpur were served by a program that seeks to deepen and augment the impact of the Indian governments Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) program. This year we tightened the work area to thirty villages in two clusters of Anganwadi plus several villages of a third cluster on demand. Over the course of the year the program conducted a huge number of activities and meetings with women and children including meetings with all women, with prenatal and lactating mothers and with mothers and their children to measure for stunting and malnutrition.

Supervisors continued to train Anganwadi workers to apply and document the progress of children's growth under supervision of White Lotus. Monthly nutrition days reinforced education on better nutrition practices among the community. Inoculations were provided to women and children as well as iron tablets for women and adolescents to treat anemia which is endemic in

this area. White Lotus Trust adolescent groups give voice and liberation to female youth in Rural Rajasthan.



Pic 18: Seven youth groups were added in 2022 giving us a total of 28 Youth Groups and a membership of 503 female youth



Pic 19: Children attending the monthly nutrition day now observed diligently among White Lotus partner Anganwadi



Pic 20: White Lotus Trust programs have been serving women and children in India for more than 25 years.



white lotus CHARITABLE TRUST