

## COVID-19 December 2021 Report

### LEARN FOR LIFE EMPOWERMENT PROJECT

This Report is meant to be an update of the last one from 2 months ago, as we feel sharing some important news regarding the work of Learn for Life Empowerment Project (LFL) India.

#### Statistical Overview

The following number of beneficiaries has been reached in each field

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>ECD and Schooling – The Badi Asha School</b>						
Pre-school (for children 4-6 years old)	31	36	34	35	16 **	10***
Primary school (for children 6-14 years old)	89	99	102	98	93	92
Secondary school (for children 14-16 years old)				12	27	42
Post-primary support (for alumni)	3	31	22	25	25	25
	<b>123</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>169</b>
<b>Vocational training for young adults</b>						
Tailoring	8	10	16	15	11	12
Bakery	8	15	17	20	17	19
Cooking classes					7	7
Office work, administration training					4	4
	<b>16</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>Practical training to students and community members*</b>						
Computer	20	26	27	59	61	-****
Stitching	8	8	13	7	8	-****
	<b>28</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>69</b>	-
<b>Total number of beneficiaries</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>269</b>	<b>211</b>

*\*Stopped in March 2020 due to Lockdown \*\*stopped new admission due to COVID19*

*\*\*\* restarted with playgroup at park \*\*\*\*going to restart in 2022*

#### BADI ASHA SCHOOL

The first highlight is the inauguration of the new Badi Asha School, which has finally been shifted to the new building. This extra space allows us to be in compliance with the new COVID rules and at the same time, it allows all the students to physically attend their classes: in relocating the classrooms here, we are able to provide our students with bigger and better-ventilated classrooms as well as an improved teaching environment. They are now divided into more classrooms in smaller groups and following a turns system: class 1 to 5 attend in the morning and class 6 to 8 attend afternoon lessons.



The Project Directors, Nicole Seregni and Michael Schmid, have managed to reach Varanasi where they spent the entire month in order to re-organise the school in the new building, assess the work in progress and bring LFL outreach further. During their staying, a meeting with all the *Alumni* students of Badi Asha School was organised in order to get back in touch with everyone after almost 2 years of global pandemic. Most of them are carrying on their studies with the support of LFL whereas others chose to interrupt their studies and chose to work instead. To the latter group LFL offered to provide them with Stitching and Bakery Vocational Training, while receiving a monthly allowance in order to economically sustain themselves and their family. Many of them accepted the offer and 3 girls have already started the Bakery training a few days ago.

Two new teachers have been hired recently and one of them is one of our *Alumni* students: her name is Kashifa and she is doing a great job already.

Nicole Seregni had the chance to implement the teachers' training with the support of a psychiatrist who will carry it on in Miss Seregni's absence, who will keep monitoring the progresses of the teachers' training from afar through regular online meetings.

Another psychiatrist has too brought his contribution by offering counselling to some of our students with difficult situations and he will follow up their treatment.

More School related highlights:

- A new Gender Related Issue Program has been designed in collaboration with Asian Bridge.

- A teachers' workshop about first aid, especially for children related emergencies, was implemented with the support of a French nurse.
- LFL is now in the process of applying for NIOS from class 6 to 10
- An event for sensibilisation about autism and other disabilities was organised by the Association Taro Ke Bacche and we attended with the kids of class 6, 7, 8.
- A day out to Kiran village (in the countryside surrounding Varanasi) was organised with the teachers. Kiran is a specialised Centre for the cure and support of people with disabilities and children affected by Polio. A long-time supporter of LFL and in fact our Master Baker and other staff in Varanasi were previous beneficiaries of them.



### **Bakery Vocational Training**

#### **Varanasi**

Our collaboration with Rama Krishna Mission (RKM) goes on also on other fronts: The bakery in Varanasi keeps up the production of food for their distribution to malnourished women and children in Varanasi and surrounding areas, as well as the rural Telemedicine Project and online classes for which they were granted funds by the German Embassy. LFL has helped as a coordinator between the Embassy and RKM. Online classes by RKM on communicative English language and Science are being followed by our class-8 students on a weekly basis.

Since a few weeks, in Varanasi we started taking part to the Surya Hotel Sunday Market every Sunday. Here our shop girls sell both our bakery products and the LFL garments produced in the tailoring atelier.

About our Vocational Training Project, an important highlight is that we are now focused on fulfilling the requirements to be registered in India as an official Vocational Training Centre in Varanasi as well as in Delhi.

### **Delhi**

In Delhi, we have welcomed 3 new trainees who joined our Bakery Vocational Training. Moreover, we are in the process of reopening our Delhi Restaurant as a Vocational Training Centre in order to welcome more new trainees, especially girls who, after getting out of the shelter homes (having come of age), have lost their jobs due to the pandemic.

As every year, in the month of December we organize our Christmas Campaign: The profits from the Delhi Bakery sales of our Christmas cookies are utilized to purchase blankets and winter cloths to be donated to the families of our students as well as to homeless people and people in the slums of Varanasi.

This year the campaign is going well and, as of now, we plan to distribute around 1000 blankets in Varanasi.



The Christmas season is as busy a period as usual for our Bakery: once every two weeks we have a stall at the German Embassy where we sell our products to the Embassy staff, and every weekend we take part to the Sunder Nursery Market alongside (mostly) organic farmers and other small Delhi vendors. We started again our cooperation with the Nuernberger Messe and the Indo-German Chamber of Commerce, for whom we provided staff and catering at the Trade Fair in Delhi ("Bio Fach") as well as we managed the catering service also for the 14<sup>th</sup> International Railway Equipment Exhibition (IREE 2021).

### **Tailoring Project**

Currently LFL is in the process of obtaining the Fair-Trade Certificate as this will increase our products' outreach, allowing us to become a potential supplier to European Fair-Trade vendors. Moreover, LFL is finally acknowledged in India as a Licensed Handicraft Producer and as a Registered Exporter and we are now waiting to be recognized by the EU institutions as well.

We have recently restructured the Online Shop with several new products which can be availed in exchange of a donation from the visitors. You can have a look following this link (<https://learnforlifeshop.com/>).



The cooking classes keep going on in our Restaurant building and our Tailoring atelier will be shifted in the old school building along with the Bakery which will be expanded within the old building which now has a lot of extra space to re-organize Bakery and storage room

### **Looking forwards**

Doctors and scientists agree on predicting that a new COVID wave is near in India, therefore LFL needs to be ready. For this reason, we decided to soon close the shop and restaurant where we use to keep the cooking classes. The shop' sales are just a fraction of what used to be and to keep it open is no more sustainable. International Tourism in India will be near to zero for one more year, at the very least, and that is why we have to decrease our cost without compromising on the quality of the service we provide to our beneficiaries, especially the school students. For this reason, we are now in the process to reach out for funds and support.

Now, more than before we would like to thank you for your support to our Project!