



ANNUAL REPORT

2018-19



Varitra
FOUNDATION
CULTIVATING SUSTAINABLE COLLABORATIONS

THE PROGRESS: A SNAPSHOT

- Conceptualization of project started in September 2017
- Field analysis was done through visiting 25 government schools of Gharaunda block, Karnal in December 2017
- Varitra Foundation was formally registered on 17th January 2018
- Project officially launched from the government school in village Hasanpur February 2018 onwards.
- The month of March saw the expansion of the project to Garhi Khajur school
- The project was scaled up to 4 schools by the month of April covering Hasanpur, Garhi Khajur, Faizalipur Majra and Premnagar.
- Sadarpur and Tatarpur schools were added to the list in the month of May 2018. Orientation day was organized for Varitra's new programme team.
- An 11 day staff training programme was organized by Varitra Foundation. A total of 15 field team members and 8 programme team members attended the training programme. Six organizations were invited as resource partners to train Varitra staff on various components of education.
- Varitra team unveiled its first school (Garhi Khajur) on 16th July 2018 post infrastructural transformation and Learning Enhancement Centre set-up.
- Learning Enhancement Centres (LECs) functional in five schools Hasanpur, Garhi Khajur, Prem Nagar, Faizalipur Majra and Sadarpur
- Team Pravah, working on youth leadership visited Varitra's field intervention in the month of August. Monyati Initiatives, also visited the libraries set up Varitra in Government Middle School Khora Kheri.
- By September end, Varitra LEC further commenced in 3 more villages- Khora Kheri, Pingli and Gudha. An orientation cum training session for organized for the new SMs and Core team.
- Varitra organized a Book Donation drive in November end. The donation drive received positive response from the city of Karnal. We received more than 4000 books from the donation drive.
- We celebrated National Girl Child Day in January in GSSS, Garhi Khajur. Varitra was fortunate to collaborate with WIPRO Foundation from January, 2019

ABOUT VARITRA

Varitra Foundation is a platform for initiating social change through meaningful collaborations to make way for sustainable difference in the lives of people.

At Varitra Foundation, we strive to implement relevant developmental initiatives through partnerships with other development organizations for a large scale social and financial impact.

Our goal is to maximize the reach of people to their basic rights.

A youth-led platform to facilitate collaborations in the field of development to create meaningful and sustainable difference





NOTE

This report is annual report of Varitra Foundation (2018-19). Varitra Foundation started its main activities in February 2018 and has reached 15 government schools under its SEARCH project in its first year.

This report traces the progress of Varitra in the first year of project operations.

Overview

Goal: To build a community-anchored, sustainable and collaborative education system which is deeply committed in enhancing quality learning in government schools.

Objectives:

- To build the capacities of the people to take ownership of the government school(s) in their community.
- To create a quality learning space in a school for the holistic development of children and adolescents.
- To build partnerships with NGOs/CSR for filling in the gaps by providing technical support to government schools.

Target:

Year 1: 15 government schools in Karnal District

About the project

Varitra Foundation aims to transform 15 government schools in year one of its intervention. The start point in any village or school is through setting up a Learning Enhancement Centre (LEC). LEC is an after school remedial class to improve the learning levels of children. Varitra identifies and recruits two to three people (preferably women) called Shikshan Mittras (SM) from the village itself to run LEC. One programme team member provides support to Shikshan Mittras (SMs). LEC is being run in the government school or in village *choupal*. LEC is an indirect way to support the teachers as improved learning levels of children help the teachers to teach in classrooms.

Once LEC is functional, Varitra team prepares a School Transformation Plan for the respective school in consultation with the Principal, teachers and panchayat members. Based on the need of the school, Varitra focuses on infrastructural changes into the school. Developing school building as a learning aid through *BaLA* painting, library set up, playground set up, etc. are some of the infrastructure-strengthening activities undertaken by Varitra in the government schools. In some of the schools, Varitra is also provides extra teacher to the school.

School Selection Process:

The main criterion behind selecting a school is the outlook and approach of the school principals and teachers towards the program. The major key factors for selecting any school are as follows:

1. Positive approach of the principal and school teachers in the respective government schools
2. Attitude of the Panchayat members towards their local government school
3. Discussion and planning with various government officers
4. Scope of participation and willingness from the village community towards the programme and the government school

At the beginning of the project, 25 schools were visited by the core team to determine the selection of the target schools. Varitra focused on working with positive stakeholders (whether principal/teachers or Panchayat members) who were keen to bring meaningful change in their schools.

Six schools were selected in the first phase (February 2018) while another six schools have been selected in the second phase (July 2018). Remaining schools for Year 1 were selected in the third phase (November 2018).

Our Programmes

Build A Library

A brief overlook of the progress in the library set up by Varitra's Project Implementation Team.

Library forms an essential component of Varitra's Strengthening Quality Education Access to Rural Children of Haryana (SEARCH Project). With the major focus of Varitra to provide quality education access to children, building quality libraries is a step forward towards the same. In the present context especially, children enrolled in the Government schools have access to only books that are part of the syllabus. The whole concept of 'library' is majorly lacking in most Government Schools. It is hence important to setup up creative spaces within the school through out of the syllabus books for the children. These spaces will not just help in improving learning levels of young students but will also be managed by students and inculcate reading habits among children.

Over the course of time Varitra has provided internal training through Karnal Bal E Government Library for its project team. Varitra partnered with Eklavya Foundation, Pratham Books, AILSG, Karnal Coffee Group for access of books for the libraries. On an interesting note, team Varitra also conducted a 'Book Donation Drive' in Karnal city from

25th of November to 2nd December, 2018. The books received from the donation drive which was more than 600 books will go towards setting colorful libraries in the rural Government Schools in Karnal District.

Name of the School	Status of Library	No of Books in Inventory	Is there Library Management Committee?	Are Library Sessions Held?
GGSSS, Gharaunda	Functioning from 5 th December, 2018	830	Yes	Yes
GMS, Pingli	Functioning from 21 st November, 2018	559	Yes	Yes (Weekly Basis)
GPS, Gudha	Functioning from 26 th November, 2018	579	Yes	Yes
GMS, Khora Kheri	Functioning from 24 th November, 2018	560	Yes	
GPS, Hasanpur	Functioning from 15 th October, 2018	124	Yes	Yes (Books Issued on weekly basis)
GPS, Faizalipur Majra	Functioning From 4 th December, 2018	124	Yes	Yes (Book not issued)
GPS, Barsat	Library to be setup soon			

GPS, Tatarpur	Functioning from 10 th October, 2018	100	Yes	Book sessions on a weekly basis
GSSS, Garhi Khajur	Functioning from 28 th October, 2018	150	No	
GPS, Premnagar	Yet to operational			
GPS, Sadarpur	Functioning from 20 th January, 2018	70	No	
GPS, Dabarki Khurd	Toy Library has been set up		No	
GMS, Dabarki Kala	Yet to be operational		No	

Infrastructure/BaLA Paintings

A little glance of the progress in the BaLA by Varitra's Project Implementation Team. BaLA forms as essential part of Varitra's Strengthening Quality Education Access to Rural Children Of Haryana (Project SEARCH) .With the major focus of Varitra to provide Quality Education access to children ,Building as a Learning Aid (BaLA) is a step forward towards the same . As the children interact with classmates, teachers , books and other aspects in the similar ways the School Building also have a deep connection with the children .The concept of BaLA is majorly lacking in most Govt. School . In School, school building is damaged and not in good

condition. BaLA Paintings will not just help in improving learning level of students but will also be helped by students and improving the visual learning among children.

Govt. Primary School Tatarpur :

Varitra's SEARCH Project has been operational in Tatarpur since the last eleven months. Project Implementation Team had started intervention in Tatarpur Govt. Primary School by Learning Enhancement Centre(LEC). Along with this the Book library has been established in School. BaLA Painting has also been conducted in the school. The school have been made colourful by vegetables name, fruits name and other colourful painting.

Govt. Primary School Faizalipur Majra :

Similarly, Like Tatarpur Project SEARCH was operational in Faizalipur Majra April 2018. As a first step to intervention Learning Enhancement Centre (LEC) started from April 2018 . Along with running of LEC team Varitra also coordinated with the local Village Administration for infrastructure. As a part of School Transformation, Varitra conducted BaLA Painting in school. After BaLA , colourful Painting has become more attractive . And children learn more by playing with painting colours

Govt. Middle School Khora Kheri :

The intervention of Project SEARCH in Govt. Middle School Khora Kheri dates back to the month of August 2018. As a first step of intervention Learning Enhancement Centre (LEC) started from September 2018 . Along with running of LEC ,team Varitra also coordinated within the Local Administration in infrastructural improvement in the school . As a part of School Transformation, Varitra conducted BaLA Painting in school, with school students participating in painting their school walls . The children have got opportunity in school so that they can learn by looking at it. Teachers are regularly taking the help of BaLA to teach children.

Govt. Middle School Sadarpur :

In Govt. Middle School Sadarpur ,School intervention has been started on June 2018 By Varitra . Toy library has been established on June 2018. Along with the library, Primary Section has been decorated with BaLA Painting . BaLA was first started from this school . Various types of cartoons, birds name and colourful pencils have been painted in school by BaLA the primary Section is even more attractive . The students learn the things by peer group activities .

Govt. Senior Secondary School, Garhi Khajur :

The intervention of Project SEARCH in Govt. Senior Secondary School Garhi Khajur from the month of March 2018. Garhi Khajur has upgraded from Middle to Senior Secondary by the Govt. Garhi Khajur School is located among most backward villages of Karnal District and therefore plays an important role towards empowerment of these villages. As a part of school transformation Varitra undertook BaLA Painting in School. MNREGA has also developed a garden in this school campus. After completing the BaLA , the school had an inauguration programme was conducted by Varitra . Now, the school is a colourful space where the children learn more to see the colourful shapes and painting.

Pre Transformation (situations of schools)	Post Transformation (situations of schools)
Unattractive building	• BaLA • Flex
Lack of teacher	• Teacher facilitator
Lack of infrastructure facilities.	• Book library • Toy library • Playground • Sports material
Lack of opportunities for students	• Events organize • Library/Students committees. • Navodaya preparation
Learning level of students	• LEC
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Community Engagement

Introduction

In January 2019 Varitra completed its year first. In first year team Varitra has worked on different aspects like schools, children, parents, community. Our community played an important role in first year journey.

What is community?

For Varitra community is- school, teachers, children, parents, sarpanch, panch members, Anganwadi workers, SHG group members, SMs villagers etc. All the related parties of school and village make a community for Varitra. Varitra officially started work in February 2018. Hasanpur was our very first village where Varitra started its work. In this village Varitra team spent considerable time on village mobilization and outreach. The team conducted door-to-door survey, met with community members, village meetings etc. Within village meetings people usually spoke about on facilities provided by Government schools. The bigger challenge in Hasanpur village was based convincing people about government school's quality education process. School teachers like Shri Bhagwan Ji from Hasanpur GPS have always supported Varitra in reaching out to the community and develop trust in the community.

In this way, Varitra started its project SEARCH in 6 villages of Gharaunda block, Karnal. Varitra team did field visit. After the launch of GSSS, Garhi khajur, visibility of Varitra had increased and Sarpanches from other villages invited team Varitra in their villages. Varitra's project today touches 15 villages and schools across District Karnal in its first year.

Challenges - Every village had different issues and challenges -

- ✧ Issue which commonly came was identifying some positive persons in village who could come forward to support his/her village and its welfare.
- ✧ In some places panchayat was positive toward Varitra and its Project but Panchayat members had their own set of reservations and apprehensions.
- ✧ Unawareness and unwillingness of villagers was also a challenging part in the community.
- ✧ In most of the villages School Management Committee (SMC) was inactive and not part of decision making process at all around the school.
- ✧ Alcoholism is bigger and common issue in all community and villages. Due to this factor environment in children's homes are disturbing and often play the role of domestic violence
- ✧ In a few villages children and youth owing to lack of space for play and other things in their schools and community. Because of lack of sports area youth of villages use the school space
- ✧ Certain villages have combined panchayat
- ✧ Low motivation of parents who are not ready to send their children in government schools.

Efforts- It was necessary to reach every person in the community because if you are working in village or with community then community outreach is most important key.

- ✧ Varitra selected two or three persons from villages who can become change makers for their community.
- ✧ To address unawareness and unwillingness of villagers Varitra team met with people, attended and conducted village meetings, awareness rally, convinced people toward education.
- ✧ Varitra sent play equipment in village for children. Worked on developing playground and libraries for children with MNREGA in the Government Schools.

Other efforts

- ✧ Varitra started meeting with people in villages
- ✧ Attending and conducting village meetings
- ✧ Door to door outreach

- ✧ Awareness rally
- ✧ Identifying and selecting volunteers in villages
- ✧ Organizing events in schools & LECs and inviting people and parents from community.
- ✧ Started PTMs in schools and interacting parents
- ✧ Children were encouraged and guided on performing street plays
- ✧ Started attending SHG meeting
- ✧ Introducing other NGOs to village

Impact

In first year community accepted Varitra and its team. Community gave us support. And some places started showing results.

- ✧ After starting LEC in village students regularity issue got decrease.
- ✧ Learning level of children started improve and school teachers were happy about it.
- ✧ Before Varitra involvement of community toward school was very low but after Varitra it started improving.
- ✧ SMC members and parents started taking interest in schools.
- ✧ After development of garden and parks children now children have playing area. So that children can play and run. It will help in holistic growth of children.

Learning Enhancement Centre (LEC)

Varitra LEC is a safe learning space for children which aims to strengthen their understanding of necessary basic concepts of Math and Hindi according to their age. It focusses on the child's learning according to his/her pace. Each LEC engages children from all classes from the local government school. The LECs are run within the school or in the *community Chaupal* depending on space, permission and convenience of the children. Each LEC is run and managed by one to two Shikshan Mittra. Varitra LECs also encourages both self-learning and peer learning with the Shikshan Mittra acting as effective facilitators.

- Our LECs operate for six days a week, where every SM operates the LEC for 3 hours
- Once a week, Varitra organizes an activity day called 'Fun Friday' where the SMs engage children in indoor and outdoor activities related to sports, reading, art & craft, rhymes and language-building.

- Currently, Varitra is empowering 24 youth change makers, 22 of whom are women. Over the last one year, Varitra has built a volunteer community of 40 rural youth.

Name of Village LEC	Children Enrolled in LEC
Hasanpur	30
Faizalipur Majra	32
Garhi Khajur	80
Premnagar	125
Sadarpur	42
Tatarpur	35
Gudha	60
Pingli	45
Khora Kheri	35
Dabarki Khurd	18
Dabarki Kala	55
Barsat	48
Total Children Impacted	605



Capacity Development and Trainings

Since the very beginning, Varitra as an organization has kept a clear focus on capacity development in order to grow as an organisation, the leadership key is passed on to the team to take it forward in the future. Varitra stresses on capacity building and leadership development within its core team members and ground team. This is evident through its orientation training, monthly training, weekly team meeting and quarterly review meets. Varitra stresses on internal capacity-building and enhancement of the core team. The core team has always been encouraged by the founders to attend capacity-building & exposure-building opportunities held in within Delhi NCR and nationally.

The SM training is based on the following themes:

Content knowledge and effective activity-based pedagogy

Making and using simple, low cost teaching-learning materials

Curriculum training - Literacy learning and Mathematics

Discussions on the affective aspects of teaching and learning, including equity in the classroom, teacher attitudes and motivation

LEC management, Session Planning, Evaluation of pupil achievement, Documentation



Partners

AIILSG: is an organization based out of Pune, Maharashtra. AIILSG has provided capacity development support to Varitra. In 2018-19, thematic areas like community involvement, learning classes and play based teaching learning methods were major focus.

Changelooms (Pravah): Pravah is based out of Delhi and focuses on youth leadership development through the country. Varitra's founders Ayesha Kalyan and Baljeet Yadav were selected as Changelooms Fellows. Both of them were provided capacity development on youth engagement and leadership.

Amit Lahiri (Jindal Global University, Sonapat): Varitra Foundation partnered with JGU, Sonapat as knowledge partners. Students from Jindal Global University conducted their rural field work in the associated villages of Varitra.

Monyati Initiatives: Partnered with Varitra to create functioning and accessible libraries in five associated Government Schools of Varitra.

Ashtam Neelkanth (8th Dimension Consultancy): Mr Ashtam has provided need based capacity building support to Varitra on thematic areas like Storytelling, teaching learning practices etc.

Wipro Foundation (WATIS Network): Wipro Foundation partnered with Varitra in January, 2019 through the Seed Fellowship programme. Wipro has been instrumental in providing education based capacity building programme for Varitra core team.

Karnal District Administration (Government of Haryana): Varitra has been fortunate enough to partner with District Administration of Karnal to improve quality education access of Government Schools in Karnal district (Haryana).

Bal E- Public Library, Karnal (Government Library): Varitra partnered with Bal- E Library based out of Karnal to gain expertise and insights on library management and book keeping tools.



Stories from the Field...

1. School Transformation Story: GPS Faizalipur Majra

*When Varitra first intervened in Faizalipur Majra Government Primary School in Gharaunda block of Karnal, it was surprised to see state of the school. The two primary school teachers were de-motivated with the prevailing order of things, and their only belief was ‘**Sarkari School ka kuch nahi ho sakta**’ (Nothing can happen in govt. schools). However, the team of Varitra with its vision knew change would happen only it was a matter of time. From February onwards, the team was rigorously involved in first understanding the village community through a door to door survey. Varitra also conducted a village community meeting first time in the month of April, a first milestone for Varitra where it gathered the village members in the school premises. It was also a first time visit to the Government School for many people from the village exposed to the ground realities of the school. Varitra soon started off its Learning Enhancement Centre in the school premise as post school session.*

With Varitra’s involvement in Faizalipur Majra, a sweeping change of mindset was gradually taking place among the School teachers and village community. The same negativity of the teachers which Varitra was greeted with transformed into a concerted team effort to improve learning levels of the students in the school. Regularity among school children which was never worked upon became a priority for the teachers and Varitra’s team. The school teachers confident of improving the school infrastructure were ready to approach the Government, Village Community, Organization, individuals etc. to pool in resource for school infrastructure development.

With a joint effort and repeated follow-ups, the Village Panchayat members and the Sarpanch committed to spend a sum of One lakh towards the school’s needs like:

- Whitewash and Painting
- Interlocking and water outlets
- Water Tank
- Bathroom Fittings

Over the course of the meetings where all the Panchayat Members led by Sarpanch, SMC members, SHG members, School Teachers and Varitra team were present, The Demand Resolution (Application) was signed by the panchayat members. With the Sarpanch agreeing to start the work in school by the end of this week.



*It was also decided to celebrate the transformation of the school through a small celebration on 15th of August, 2018. In the end Deepak ji (Primary School Teacher) was filled with optimism about the change and encapsulated saying ‘**Ab toh humara school bhi chamkega**’ (Even our school will shine).*

2. Tales from the library in GPS, Hasanpur

Akanshi of GPS, Hasanpur loves to read books. However, she would often get back to saying that her school has very few books and that too she gets a chance after two weeks to read one. Hasanpur GPS operated from a small three room building with a total of 47 children. The school did not have the space to operate a functional library or have any access to books. It was children like Akanshi, who would motivate us not just to create libraries but also make them functional. In the month of January, 2019 Varitra team created a library corner with 50 books. The books carefully crafted to the learning competencies of the primary standard. Today Akanshi is one of the happiest faces in her school. She loves the fact that she can choose the book she likes. The picture and the stories motivates her to strike conversations with other children in her class on the last story she has read.

