



VEERNI
EMPOWERING GIRLS



ANNUAL REPORT
YEAR 2022-2023

Annual Report 2022•2023

Veerni Project

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Veerni Project is pleased to present the Annual Report for the fiscal year 2022-2023. This report highlights the organization's accomplishments, and future goals. Through our focused efforts in education, health, and community engagement, we have made significant strides in empowering girls and young women in rural areas. The support of our dedicated team, generous donors, and strong partnerships has been crucial in our journey towards gender equality and social change.

INTRODUCTION

The Veerni Project is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting the rights and well-being of girls and young women in rural communities. We work tirelessly to break the cycle of gender inequality, child marriage, and lack of education by providing comprehensive support, empowerment programs, and access to essential services. Our vision is to create a society where every girl can realize her full potential and lead a life of dignity and independence.

MISSION STATEMENT

Empowering Girls: Igniting the Flame of Strength and Courage: In Hindi, "Veerni" symbolizes a woman of remarkable fortitude and bravery. Our mission embarks on a transformative journey to educate and empower the vibrant young girls residing in these scattered villages of the Thar Desert and in the outskirts of Jodhpur, enabling them to embrace lives filled with vitality and fulfillment, free from social and economic discrimination.

The Veerni Project provides a safe and nurturing environment welcoming 110 extraordinary girls into two boarding facilities (both the Veerni Institute and Veerni Balika), where they can thrive in their pursuit of secondary education. As we strive to fulfill the United Nations' sustainable goal of universal secondary education by 2030, we acknowledge the challenging path that lies before us, yet remain resolute in our commitment to conquer this remarkable milestone.

The Veerni girls come from diverse and rural communities located in the Thar Desert. Education stands as the bedrock upon which their empowerment flourishes, granting them the ability to forge their own destinies and make life choices that resonate with their dreams. Education, in its essence, is the catalyst that propels all forms of empowerment, igniting a spark of change that permeates through every aspect of their lives.

VISION

Veerni envisions a world where all girls, regardless of class, caste, and economic status, can exercise their basic human rights and make independent life choices. It is our belief that true democracy depends on the full participation of empowered women within their communities and that education is the most effective instrument to secure this end.

ACHIEVEMENTS



Inspiring Change, Empowering Futures.

In the heart of Veerni, remarkable achievements have taken place, leaving an indelible impact on the lives of countless girls and their communities. Here are some highlights from this year.

1. **Community Role Models:** Veerni girls have become powerful inspirations, serving as role models for other girls. Their stories and successes break away from oppressive cultural traditions, encouraging more girls to pursue education and dream big.
2. **Growing Student Body:** Our institution currently nurtures 112 exceptional girls. This growth is a testament to the trust and belief placed in our transformative mission.
3. **Soaring Demand:** The Veerni Project has experienced an overwhelming surge in applications, with over 450 aspiring girls competing for just 14 available spots in 2023. This high demand speaks volumes about the impact Veerni has made and the confidence its mission inspires.
4. **Academic Excellence:** Veerni stands tall in fostering academic brilliance. Through our girls' dedication and the nurturing environment we provide, they have achieved outstanding academic results. This success equips them with the knowledge and skills to unlock their true potential.
5. **Empowering Higher Education:** Since 2005, a remarkable total of 182 Veerni girls have graduated from the Veerni Institute, and an equal number have been trained in the field of IT. Additionally, 135 girls have successfully pursued higher education, opening doors to limitless opportunities and igniting transformative change within their communities.
6. **Enhancing Education:** Strategic partnerships with high quality secondary schools like the Modern Senior Secondary School and the Saviour Senior Secondary School have strengthened the Veerni girls' education. By providing access to excellent premises and improving attendance rates, we are ensuring that Veerni girls receive the best educational opportunities.
7. **Holistic Health and Wellness:** At Veerni, we understand that true empowerment encompasses holistic well•being. Our comprehensive approach includes individual health plans, regular doctor visits, resident nurses, vaccinations, nutrition plans, and hygiene instruction.
8. **Health:** Veerni has introduced the vital HPV vaccine as well as equipping the girls with knowledge and protection to lead healthy lives. Veerni has become the sole institute in the entire city of Jodhpur providing the HPV vaccination, even before its inclusion in the National Immunization Program in India. This groundbreaking effort has significantly contributed to the girls' protection against preventable diseases.
9. **Local awareness raising:** Collaborating with communities to raise awareness about gender equality and the importance of education. Such as?
10. **Vocational Training:** Organizing vocational training workshops to enhance employability and income•generation opportunities for young women.
11. **Advocacy:** Lobbying for policy changes and community engagement to address child marriage and gender•based violence.

These achievements stand as a testimony to the dedication of our generous, long•term supporters and committed staff. Together, we are forging a brighter future where education and empowerment intertwine, paving a path of endless possibilities for every girl at Veerni.

A MILESTONE ACHIEVEMENT



Land Purchase for Veerni Institute:

In response to the growing demand for safe accommodation for Veerni students, Veerni has taken a significant step towards addressing this pressing need with the purchase of land for the Veerni Institute. The scarcity of secure and reasonably priced housing for girls has persisted as a longstanding issue, and Veerni is committed to tackling it head-on. Over the past 10 to 11 months, the Veerni team has tirelessly pursued the dream of acquiring land for the institute, exploring numerous properties in the process.



During a visit to Jodhpur, Mrs. Jacqueline de Chollet, alongside other esteemed board members of the Global Foundation for Humanity and Fondation Veerni, personally inspected potential properties for the Veerni Institute. It is with great pleasure that we announce the realization of our dreams in February 2023, as the Veerni team selected a suitable piece of land to bring the Veerni Institute to life.

Situated in a safe and easily accessible area, the chosen land is conveniently close to our existing educational institutions and close to a bus route. A mere 15–20-minute drive from our current location, the land spans an impressive area of 7,587 square meters. This size allows us to accommodate the Veerni building along with essential facilities like classrooms, a garden, sports grounds, parking, and a recreation area.

During their visit to the Veerni Project, Mrs. Jacqueline de Chollet and other esteemed members of the Global Foundation of Humanity had the opportunity to personally witness the land's potential. Their endorsement further solidified our decision, leading to the successful purchase of the land. This achievement marks a significant milestone for the Veerni Project, enabling us to plan and implement long-term programs by constructing a purpose-built facility on the acquired land.

With the purchase of this land, Veerni has taken a crucial stride towards fulfilling our mission of providing safe and long-term accommodations for the girls. The establishment of the Veerni Institute will serve as a beacon of hope, empowering young women through education and enabling them to break barriers and reach their full potential.

We are immensely grateful to the board members of the Global Foundation for Humanity, USA and Fondation Veerni, Switzerland, for their invaluable support throughout our journey. It is their unwavering commitment and unwavering belief in our cause that has transformed our dream into a tangible reality. Their steadfast dedication has played a pivotal role in our success, and we extend our heartfelt appreciation for their support.

PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES



Annual Staff Meeting for the Academic Year Ahead

On July 1st, 2022, the Veerni staff gathered for the annual staff meeting, led by the Director of the project, Mr. Mahendra Sharma. The meeting served as a platform for strategic planning and preparations for the upcoming academic year. In attendance were dedicated individuals including Mrs. Vimlesh Sharma, Ms. Saroj Kanwar, Ms. Neelam Kanwar, Ms. Geeta Devi, Mr. Mahender Singh, as well as the diligent team of catering staff, drivers, and cleaners.

The meeting encompassed crucial discussions aimed at ensuring a successful academic year ahead. Several key points were addressed, including:•

- Welcoming new girls and parents, ensuring a smooth transition for them into the Veerni family.
- Developing a comprehensive yearly plan for the Veerni Institute, outlining the goals and milestones to be achieved.
- Efficient distribution and diligent monitoring of stationery and hygiene kits, guaranteeing every girl's access to essential resources.
- Crafting a well-structured daily time-table, optimizing the learning experience and providing a structured routine for the girls.
- Strengthening coordination with schools, fostering effective collaboration to support the Veerni girls' educational journey.
- Prioritizing health activities for the girls, ensuring their physical and emotional well-being through engaging initiatives.
- Crafting a nutritious and balanced daily food menu, promoting their overall health and vitality.

Mr. Mahendra Sharma emphasized the significance of a holistic approach to development for the Veerni girls during this academic session. He called upon the entire staff to work as a unified team, each contributing their unique talents and efforts to empower the Veerni girls. The Director encouraged the staff members to dedicate themselves to the current academic year, with a shared goal of fostering outstanding academic results for the girls. Expressing gratitude, Mr. Sharma extended his heartfelt appreciation to all the staff members for their unwavering commitment and dedication, particularly during the challenging times of the Covid-19 pandemic.



New Appointments:

- Project Manager: We are thrilled to announce the promotion of Mrs. Vimlesh Sharma to the position of Project Manager. With over 17 years of dedicated service to the Veerni Project, Mrs. Sharma's promotion exemplifies the organization's commitment to recognizing and nurturing talent from within. Her in-depth understanding of the project, combined with her popularity and respect among the Veerni girls, parents, and staff members, make her an invaluable asset to the team. Mrs. Sharma's unwavering dedication and hard work have played a pivotal role in the success of the Veerni Project, and we are confident that her enthusiasm will inspire and uplift others within the organization. Her appointment brings a renewed sense of optimism, as we anticipate positive changes under her leadership.
- Sports Teacher: We are delighted to welcome Mr. Maan Singh, a highly qualified physical education teacher, who joined the Veerni Project in September. Mr. Singh's expertise will contribute to the comprehensive development of the Veerni girls as he imparts his knowledge and trains them in various sports and games. With his guidance, we are excited to witness the girls' growth and achievements in the realm of physical education.

These new appointments reflect our commitment to continuous improvement and the holistic development of the Veerni girls. We are confident that Mrs. Sharma and Mr. Singh will play instrumental roles in shaping a brighter future for the girls, fostering their potential, and empowering them to reach new heights.



Education Program:

Our education and empowerment programs focus on providing quality education, and life skills training to Veerni girls. We offer academic support, career counseling, and mentorship programs to enable girls to pursue higher education and professional aspirations.

The educational journey at Veerni spanning from the 6th to the 12th grades, includes girls from diverse castes and social groups, representing numerous villages in the region surround Jodhpur.

Providing a solid foundation for their educational pursuits, the Veerni girls attend two exceptional schools, Modern Senior Secondary School and The Saviour's Academy Secondary School.

At The Saviour's Academy Secondary School, girls attend classes and have teachers coming from the school to teach additional lessons at the Institute. For girls in classes 9 to 12, they attend Modern Senior Secondary School on a daily basis. The school provides convenient round•trip transportation with two buses dedicated to Veerni students, ensuring their safe and timely arrival. Both institutions have displayed an unwavering commitment to supporting the girls, even providing transportation services to the facilities.



New Girls' Admission at Veerni Institute: In the academic year 2022•2023, Veerni Institute received over 450 applications for just 14 vacant seats, showcasing the recognition of its invaluable opportunity. Three entrance tests were conducted to assess academic potential, followed by interviews to evaluate candidates and their parents' commitment.

From the interviews, 14 girls were granted admission. Selection is made on a case•by•case basis. This process exemplifies Veerni's commitment to empowering girls through education and shaping bright futures.

Veerni Girls

Joining the Institute: Veerni Institute commenced a new academic session on July 1st with great enthusiasm and careful planning. The dedicated staff returned early to ensure a smooth transition for the girls. A phased approach was implemented to invite the girls, with classes 6 to 8 joining on June 26th and 27th, followed by classes 9 to 12 on June 29th and 30th. This allowed for personalized attention and maintained a safe environment.

Health check•ups were conducted for each girl, prioritizing their well•being. COVID•19 testing was carried out when necessary, ensuring the safety of all students and staff.

Upon arrival, girls received hand sanitizers and new water bottles, promoting good hygiene practices and a healthy atmosphere.

On July 1st, all 110 girls embarked on their educational journey at Veerni Institute and Veerni Balika, filled with excitement and promise. The institute's commitment to holistic development, meticulous planning, and precautionary measures set the stage for a successful academic session.

With the arrival of the Veerni girls, a new chapter begins—a chapter of empowerment, growth, and endless opportunities. Veerni Institute remains dedicated to providing quality education and holistic care, shaping a brighter future for the girls and their communities.

New Class Added at Veerni Institute: In response to over 450 applications for just 14 seats, Veerni conducted entrance tests for admission. Encountering families affected by the pandemic, Veerni expanded its age range and admitted girls from class 3, in addition to the usual classes 6 to 12. This decision addresses the exceptional circumstances and provides educational opportunities to those in need.



A New Initiative - English Medium Education for the Veerni Girls:

Responding to the aspirations of the Veerni girls and their parents, the Veerni team introduced an exciting new initiative this academic year. Building upon the success of Veerni's first ever summer school program, there was a growing demand for English classes. In response, Veerni took the progressive step of offering English Medium education to the students in classes 6 to 8. This initiative not only elevates the standard of education but also fosters healthy competition within the Veerni Institute, directly benefiting the girls. Veerni partnered with The Saviour's Academy Secondary School, an esteemed English medium school, and enrolled girls from classes 6 to 8. The positive feedback from both the girls and their parents reflects their happiness and appreciation for this new initiative.



Digital Literacy:

Computer Classes: Computer classes are now an integral part of the curriculum at the Veerni Institute and Veerni Balika. Veerni girls receive basic training on computer components and essential skills such as typing and MS Office applications. Led by Mr. Shiv Prakash Hatila, a qualified computer teacher, these daily one-hour classes provide a supportive learning environment.



Extra Tuition Classes:

At Veerni Institute and Veerni Balika, we go the extra mile to ensure our girls excel in their studies. To provide them with additional support, we organize special tuition classes within the institute. During these sessions, our dedicated Veerni teachers offer personalized assistance, addressing any challenges the girls may face in their schoolwork. These classes serve as a valuable platform for our girls to receive guidance, clarification, and solutions to their educational queries. We believe that with the right guidance, every girl can unlock her full potential and thrive academically.

Online Tuition Classes: Keeping pace with the ever-evolving digital landscape, the Veerni Institute is equipped with state-of-the-art smart classroom. Here, our girls have access to online lectures and educational resources, further augmenting their learning journey. Through these virtual tuition classes, our girls benefit from expert instruction and interactive learning experiences, enhancing their understanding of various subjects. The online platform not only facilitates flexible learning but also promotes technological literacy, empowering our girls with the skills they need to thrive in the digital age. We are proud to provide our girls with cutting-edge educational opportunities that broaden their horizons and ignite their passion for knowledge.



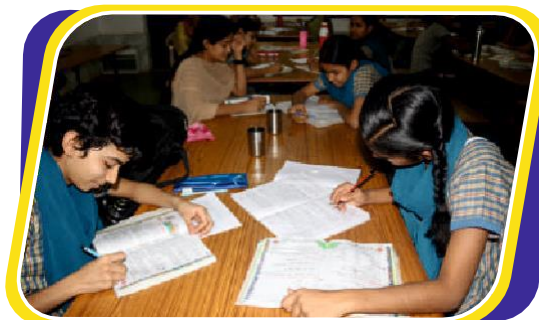
Study Hours and Parents Meeting:

At VEERNI, we ensure that the girls receive the best possible environment for their academic and personal growth. In the report below, we showcase how the study periods and parent•teacher meetings (PTMs) were conducted at the institute during this year.

1. Study Periods at Veerni Institute and Veerni Balika:

We understand the importance of self•study for the academic progress of the students. Therefore, we have designated specific study periods for different classes at the both the centres.

- Classes III to VIII have study periods from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm and then from 8:00 pm to 10:00 pm.
- Classes IX and XI have study periods from 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm and then from 8:00 pm to 10:00 pm.
- Classes X and XII have study periods from 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm, followed by an extra hour from 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm, and then from 8:00 pm to 11:00 pm.
- We have also arranged for extra classes on Sundays for these classes. These study periods are strictly observed, and students are expected to utilize this time for self•study.



Parents Meetings at Veerni Institute and Veerni Balika:

Parents meetings are crucial for effective communication between parents and Veerni's administration. These meetings provide an opportunity for parents to get an update on their child's academic progress and to discuss any concerns they may have with the Veerni staff and the administrative staff of the Veerni Institute. The following parents meetings were conducted during the year: •

S. No.	For Classes	Month/Date
1	Classes 8 th and 9 th	April 10 th , 2022
2	Classes 3 rd and 7 th	May 01 st , 2022
3	Classes 8 th and 12 th	May 29 th , 2022
4	Classes 3 rd and 8 th	September 4 th , 2022
5	Classes 9 th and 12 th	September 11 th , 2022
6	Classes 3 rd and 8 th	October 02 nd , 2022
7	Classes 9 th and 12 th	October 09 th , 2022
8	Classes 3 rd and 8 th	November 06 th , 2022
9	Classes 9 th and 12 th	November 13 th , 2022
10	Classes 3 rd and 8 th	December 04 th , 2022
11	Classes 9 th and 12 th	December 11 th , 2022
12	Classes 3 rd and 8 th	February 05 th , 2023
13	Classes 9 th and 12 th	February 12 th , 2023
14	Classes 8 th and 12 th	March 05 th , 2023



The study periods and parent•teacher meetings conducted at the Veerni Institute and Veerni Balika were effective in ensuring the academic progress of the Veerni girls. The study periods provided students with the necessary time for self•study. Parents meetings take place every Sunday and ensure effective communication between parents and Veerni.

Distribution of Essential Items to Veerni Girls:

The Veerni Project is dedicated to providing essential support to the Veerni girls, ensuring they have access to necessary resources for their education and well•being. The distribution of various items has been a significant part of this support system:

School Kits: Upon their arrival, the Veerni girls receive school kits comprising books, school bags, notebooks, stationery, and subject•wise study material. These kits equip them with the essential tools they need to pursue their education effectively.

Hygiene Kits: The Veerni Project prioritizes the girls' hygiene and well•being by distributing monthly hygiene kits to all 112 Veerni girls. These kits contain hand sanitizers, sanitary napkins, washable masks, bathing and laundry soaps, toothpaste and brush, shampoo, and body lotion. This ensures that the girls have access to vital hygiene resources, promoting their overall health and comfort.

Feminine Hygiene Products: The girls are provided with sanitary napkins, and appropriate arrangements are made in their rooms to ensure convenience and accessibility to these essential items.

New Uniforms Distribution: On October 19th, new uniforms were distributed to the girls, coinciding with their Diwali celebrations. The girls expressed their joy and gratitude upon receiving these new uniforms. Additionally, on February 3rd, 2023, new high•quality uniforms were distributed to establish a standardized dress code for the Veerni girls. The uniforms, consisting of a Salwar, kurta, and waistcoat, were thoughtfully designed for both comfort and identification purposes, contributing to discipline and security within the institute.



The Veerni Cabinet

In August 2022, Veerni introduced the Veerni girls' cabinet, embodying the essence of democracy in action. Eleven exceptional girls were chosen by their peers to serve as cabinet ministers. This unique initiative fosters a sense of responsibility, cooperation, and leadership among the girls. Each member of the Veerni Cabinet has the opportunity to experience the role of a minister, actively participating in decision-making processes and contributing to the development of our community. Through the Veerni Cabinet, we empower our girls to embrace leadership roles, nurturing their potential to become influential agents of change.

Regular Parent•Child Communication at Veerni

Regular communication between parents and their children at Veerni Institute and Veerni Balika is prioritized to strengthen their bond and provide emotional support. Every 15 days, parents are encouraged to stay connected with their children through phone calls, video chats, or other means. This ensures that parents are informed about their child's well-being, daily activities, and any challenges they may be facing, promoting a sense of connection and support.

SPORTS ACTIVITIES



Sports at Veerni Institute are more than just physical activities • they are a catalyst for growth, teamwork, and self-discovery. We firmly believe in the transformative power of sports, and our girls are encouraged to actively participate, embracing the exhilaration that comes with competition and camaraderie.

Within our vibrant community, spirited matches are a regular occurrence, igniting an atmosphere of enthusiasm and sporting prowess. Our girls are divided into four dynamic groups • Alfa, Bravo, Delta, and Charlie • forming the foundation of our thrilling sporting events. Each group represents a reservoir of talent, sparking a fire of determination within every participant.

Dressed in their vibrant tracksuits, our girls exude energy and take immense pride in their sports activities. The anticipation builds as they eagerly await the start of each event, their hearts racing in sync with their unwavering enthusiasm. Guiding their journey is our highly skilled and qualified physical education teacher, Mr. Maan Singh. With his expertise, our girls receive comprehensive instruction and mentorship, ensuring they develop not only their physical abilities but also invaluable life skills.

Kho•Kho, Kabaddi, handball, and table tennis are among the sports that our girls wholeheartedly embrace. Beyond physical fitness, these games foster teamwork, discipline, and strategic thinking. At the crack of dawn, our Veerni girls assemble on the grounds, ready to unleash their potential and leave an indelible mark on the field.

Frequent matches between the houses amplify the thrill of competition, pushing our girls to exceed their limits and reach new heights. The courage and determination displayed by our athletes are truly awe•inspiring. In recognition of their skill, perseverance, and dedication, regular prizes are awarded, celebrating their accomplishments and fueling their pursuit of greatness.

Through sports, Veerni Institute empowers Veerni girls, equipping them not only with physical prowess but also with invaluable life lessons. The bonds forged on the field extend far beyond the realm of sports • they cultivate friendships, foster leadership qualities, and instill a sense of sportsmanship that permeates all aspects of their lives.

At Veerni, we celebrate the unwavering spirit of our girls as they embrace the world of sports, cherishing every step of their journey. Their passion, commitment, and teamwork epitomize the essence of true athletes, igniting a flame of sporting excellence that shines brightly within each one of them.



EVENTS AND CELEBRATIONS AT VEERNI INSTITUTE

Various events and celebrations were organized at Veerni Institute to raise awareness and promote a sense of community among the girls. These events served as an effective means of communication and engagement for the Veerni girls. Here are some of the key celebrations:•

- 1. Mother's Day Celebration:** On May 7, 2022, Veerni Institute celebrated Mother's Day to honor the special bond between mothers and their children. The students prepared handmade cards expressing their feelings and gratitude towards their mothers, creating a heartwarming atmosphere.
- 2. Earth Day Celebration:** An event was organized to educate the girls about the importance of saving the Earth. The students participated in various activities, including chart displays, speeches, dances, and a skit, which enhanced their understanding of environmental conservation.
- 3. New Girls Welcome Party:** A ceremony was held to welcome the new girls to Veerni Institute. The senior girls warmly greeted the newcomers with garlands and traditional marks on their foreheads. The event featured group dances, self•introductions, and a speech about the institute's daily routine.
- 4. Independence Day Celebration:** On August 15, 2022, Veerni Institute celebrated India's 75th Independence Day. A flag hoisting ceremony was conducted, followed by speeches emphasizing girls' participation in nation•building and the importance of cleanliness. The students saluted the flag and sang the national anthem.
- 5. Teachers' Day Celebration:** On September 5, 2022, Veerni Institute celebrated Teachers' Day by organizing a cultural program with dances, songs, and plays performed by the students. Prizes were awarded to students who excelled academically, and the entire staff enjoyed the event.
- 6. Thanks Party:** Newly enrolled girls organized a "Thanks Party" on September 20, 2022, to express their gratitude to the senior girls. Cultural dances and songs were performed to celebrate the successful adjustment of the new girls to Veerni Institute.
- 7. Dussehra and Diwali Festival Celebrations:** Dussehra, symbolizing the victory of good over evil, and Diwali, the festival of lights, were celebrated with enthusiasm. The girls actively participated in the festivities, decorating the institute and enjoying the spirit of the festivals.



8. **Sports Competition:** A sports competition was held on November 27, 2022, where all the girls participated in various games. Winners were awarded prizes, and special guests were invited to witness the event.



9. **Makar Sankranti Celebration:** As part of the Makar Sankranti festivities on January 14th, 2023, the girls received a traditional Indian sweet called "laddoo" made from sesame. This sweet treat was provided to the girls every morning during breakfast for an entire week, fostering a joyful and celebratory atmosphere while honoring the occasion.

10. **Republic Day Celebration:** The 74th Republic Day was celebrated with flag hoisting, national anthem, PT sessions, speeches, and a live telecast of the official Republic Day celebration from Delhi. The notice board was also decorated with patriotic messages and images.



11. **Weekend Activities and Birthday Celebrations:** The girls enjoyed their weekends by engaging in home theater, listening to music, and dancing. They also celebrated each other's birthdays, strengthening their bonds of friendship.



12. **The annual group photo session** captured precious memories at Veerni Institute on February 4th, 2023. The girls dressed elegantly and posed happily, creating a lasting memento of their bond.



13. **Farewell party**, hosted by Class XI on February 28th, 2023, was filled with laughter and cherished moments. Activities, games, and Neetu Rathore being crowned Miss VEERNI 2023 added to the joy. Delicious treats were enjoyed, and the event concluded with a group dance. Goodbyes led to new beginnings and cherished memories.



Competitions for Veerni Girls:

To alleviate the pressure of exams and foster holistic development, Veerni Institute and Balika Centre organized various engaging activities for the girls. These activities aimed to provide a break from academic stress and encourage overall growth. Here are the details of the competitions conducted:•

- **Drawing Competition:** Held on October 10th, 2022, this competition allowed the girls to showcase their artistic skills and creativity through drawing.
- **Writing and Extempore Competition:** On October 16th, 2022, a writing and extempore competition took place, providing an opportunity for the girls to express their thoughts and ideas through written and spoken words.
- **Mehndi (Henna) Competition:** Celebrated on October 20th, 2022, this competition allowed the girls to showcase their talent in applying beautiful Mehndi designs.



Regional Festivals and Events:

Veerni girls actively participated in various regional festivals and events, which added cultural richness and joy to their lives. Here are the details of these celebrations:•

S. No.	Name of regional festival / event	Month/Date
01.	Kajari Teej (regional festival)	August 14 th , 2022
02.	Ubchhat (regional festival)	August 18 th , 2022
03.	Ganesh Chaturti (festival)	August 31 st , 2022
04.	Song and dance Competition	September 18 th , 2022
05.	Birthday celebrations of the girls	Every month
06.	Afternoon movie	Every Sunday

These events and activities played a significant role in the holistic development and well•being of the Veerni girls, promoting awareness, cultural understanding, and a sense of unity among them.



Motivational Boost for Veerni Girls

- **Exam Anxiety Session:** On December 4th, a special session titled "How to cope with exam anxiety" was organized for the Veerni girls as they prepared for their upcoming half-yearly examinations. Ms. Dudhia conducted the session, providing valuable insights and techniques to manage exam-related stress.
- **Inspiring Video:** On January 27th, 2023, all the girls preparing for board exams had the privilege of watching a motivational video featuring Ms. Sheela Dahima, a young and accomplished administrative officer. Ms. Dahima shared her experiences and insights on discovering one's talents and leveraging them to boost confidence. Her inspiring words left a lasting impact on the girls, motivating them to tap into their own potential.

Veerni believes in nurturing the holistic development of the girls. Through these motivational lectures, videos, and special activities, we aim to inspire and raise their spirits, providing them with the motivation and confidence needed to excel in their academic pursuits and beyond.

Academic Excellence

Results for the Academic Year 2022•2023

We are thrilled to announce the outstanding results achieved by Veerni girls in the academic year 2022•2023. Across all classes, from 3, and 6 to 12, our students have demonstrated remarkable performance, with a 100% passing rate. Each of the 110 girls successfully cleared their examinations with commendable marks.

Year after year, Veerni students have consistently excelled in important milestones such as the Board Exams for classes 8, 10, and 12. These exceptional exam results exemplify the incredible potential of Veerni girls when provided with the right support and nurturing environment. It is a testament to the transformative impact of the Veerni Institute, which has played a pivotal role in motivating and empowering girls to embrace education. The detailed results are as follows:•

1. Class 3: 100% pass rate with notable achievements in various subjects.
2. Class 6: 100% pass rate with notable achievements in various subjects
3. Class 7: 100% pass rate, showcasing remarkable progress and dedication.
4. Class 8: Exceptional performance in the Board Exams, with all students achieving excellent results and paving the way for future success.
5. Class 9: A strong foundation laid by our students, evident in their outstanding performance across subjects.
6. Class 10: Extraordinary results in the Board Exams, demonstrating the academic prowess and determination of our girls.
7. Class 11: A promising year marked by remarkable achievements and a passion for learning.
8. Class 12: The pinnacle of success, with all students achieving exceptional results in the Board Exams, opening doors to higher education and bright futures.

Class•wise results of Veerni Institute and Veerni Balika: The results for Veerni Institute and Veerni Balika for the academic year 2022•2023 are as follows: •

The Veerni Institute

Class Details	Total Number of Girls appeared	Result	
		First division	Second division
Class 3 rd	4	4	••
Class 6 th	14	14	••
Class 7 th	12	12	••
Class 8 th	10	10	••
Class 9 th	14	11	3
Class 10 th	14	7	7
Class 11 th (Arts)	6	4	2
Class 11 th (Science)	4	4	••
Class 12 th (Arts)	9	9	••
Class 12 th (Science)	3	3	••
Total Girls	90	78	12

The Veerni Balika Program

Class Details	Total Number of Girls appeared	Result	
		First division	Second division
Class 9 th	7	7	••
Class 10 th	7	6	1
Class 11 th (Arts)	4	3	1
Class 11 th (Science)	1	1	••
Class 12 th (Science)	1	1	••
Total Girls	20	18	2

These impressive academic results are a testament to the collective efforts of our dedicated educators, supportive staff, and the unwavering determination of our girls. We extend our heartfelt congratulations to each student for their hard work and accomplishments.

The Veerni Project remains committed to nurturing academic excellence, empowering girls, and breaking barriers. These remarkable results serve as a reminder of the transformative power of education and inspire us to continue our mission of providing equal opportunities for all. Together, we are shaping a future where every girl can thrive and achieve her dreams.

Excursions:

Veerni girls embarked on inspiring excursions that nurtured their thirst for knowledge, cultural enrichment, and spiritual awakening. These transformative experiences opened new doors and created memories.

The journey commenced with an educational visit to the prestigious Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)•Jodhpur on September 25th. The girls explored cutting•edge advancements at the Centre for Sustainable Drinking Water and the Phygital Craft Museum and Craft Exhibition. The grandeur of the IIT campus and the captivating display of Indian art left them awe-inspired, fostering scientific awareness and nurturing their creativity.



Continuing their educational exploration, the girls embarked on a historic tour of Haldighati and Chittorgarh from October 17th to 18th, 2022. Immersed in tales of valor and resilience, they gained a deeper understanding of their heritage and the tapestry of history that shaped their identity.



Nurturing their spiritual growth, regular temple visits provided solace and inspiration. These sacred spaces fostered a connection to their roots, encouraging gratitude and moments of reflection.

These excursions have become cherished chapters in the Veerni girls' journey of growth and empowerment. As they venture beyond their everyday lives, their perspectives expand, and their dreams soar. The Veerni Project remains committed to unlocking a world of possibilities and nurturing the holistic development of every girl.

With each excursion, Veerni girls create stories of resilience, curiosity, and dreams. Let us continue nurturing their thirst for knowledge, igniting their passions, and empowering them to shape their destinies. The journey has just begun, and the possibilities are limitless.

Community Engagement and Girls Home Visit:

At Veerni, we understand the importance of staying connected with the enrolled girls and their families. Our dedicated staff regularly visits the homes of the girls to maintain a strong bond and ensure their well•being. Additionally, we also extend our visits to the Veerni promoters in previously adopted villages, fostering engagement with the community and emphasizing the significance of girls' education.

During one such visit, our team encountered a special case involving Soniya, a graduate from the Class of 2022, who expressed her desire to pursue higher education. However, her father had concerns about her safety, which prevented her from attending college. Mrs. Vimlesh, a representative from Veerni, took the initiative to address this situation. On August 19th, 2022, Mrs. Vimlesh visited Mortuka village, where she met Soniya and her father. She empathetically communicated with Soniya's father, highlighting the value of education and the positive impact it could have on Soniya's future. Through heartfelt conversations and genuine support, Mrs. Vimlesh successfully convinced him to allow Soniya to enroll in Kamala Nehru College for a Bachelor of Arts degree.

Soniya expressed her gratitude to Veerni for the unwavering support and assistance provided in her educational journey. This inspiring story exemplifies our commitment to empowering girls and overcoming barriers to education. By actively engaging with families and communities, we strive to create an environment where every girl can pursue her dreams and achieve her full potential.



Health Care Programs

At Veerni Institute, we prioritize the health and wellbeing of our students above all else. To ensure their physical and emotional welfare, we have implemented a healthcare system led by qualified professionals, offering comprehensive medical services.

- **Dedicated Medical Team:** Our institute boasts a team of skilled healthcare professionals, including Dr. Deora, an experienced physician, and Nurse Vimlesh. They provide regular healthcare services to our students, ensuring personalized and attentive care. Additionally, we are fortunate to have the support of volunteer nurse Syiona, who further enhances our healthcare provisions.
- **Round•the•Clock Assistance:** Nurse Vimlesh is available on•site every day to provide immediate health services and address any concerns or issues. Dr. Deora conducts check•ups and follow•up care visits every Friday. We also have a well•stocked first aid box and trained Veerni Matrons for handling emergencies. Quick transportation to the hospital is facilitated by a staff member residing on the premises with access to a car. Our strong connections with hospitals, facilitated by volunteer nurse Siyona, further strengthens our healthcare network.
- **Holistic Healthcare Initiatives:** Proactive healthcare measures are emphasized at Veerni Institute. We conduct regular health camps and initial screenings upon the girls' arrival. Preventive care is prioritized, with essential vaccinations, including DPT, MMR, Hepatitis•B, and HPV immunizations for cervical cancer prevention. Nutrition supplements are provided to support overall health, and regular distribution of sanitary napkins ensures menstrual hygiene.

These comprehensive healthcare initiatives exemplify our dedication to creating a nurturing environment where their physical, emotional, and medical needs are met with utmost care and attention.



Health Care Programs

The following health activities conducted during the year: •

Scheduled Health Camps: Veerni conducted the following health camps to provide comprehensive medical care:

S. No.	Date
01.	July 14 th , 2022
02.	July 15 th , 2022
03.	July 16 th , 2022
04.	July 17 th , 2022
05.	July 24 th , 2022
06.	October 14 th , 2022



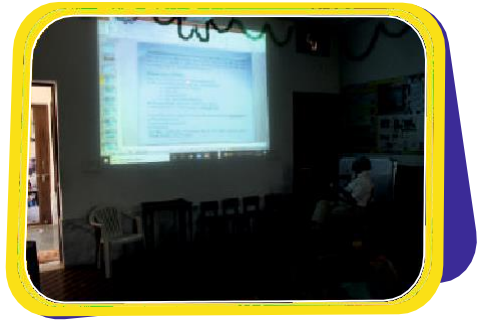
Health camps were organized at Veerni Institute. During these camps, all the girls received vaccinations for Tetanus and Typhoid, ensuring their protection against these diseases.

Informative Lectures on Health

At Veerni Institute and Balika Centre, we prioritize the health education of our girls. Regular health education lectures are conducted to equip them with vital knowledge on various health topics. Dr. Deora and Mrs. Vimlesh Sharma, experts in their respective fields, deliver these engaging lectures.

- **Wide-ranging Topics:** The lectures cover a diverse range of subjects, including eye problems, seasonal diseases, proper usage of sanitary napkins, skin diseases, maintaining a healthy diet, and other essential health topics. Furthermore, the speakers also address significant diseases such as Dengue, Covid, and Swine flu, shedding light on their signs, symptoms, prevention, and treatment.
- **Emphasizing Hygiene:** On October 8th, Mrs. Vimlesh Sharma emphasized the importance of hygiene to the Veerni girls. She highlighted how poor hygiene practices can lead to various diseases. The girls were encouraged to prioritize cleanliness by maintaining clean uniforms, tidy rooms, and personal hygiene, including the proper use of sanitary pads during menstruation. By promoting hygiene, the lecture aimed to foster good health and overall well-being.
- **Special Session on Menstrual Hygiene:** A special health session was conducted on January 24th, 2023, specifically for girls who recently started menstruating. Recognizing the significance of this milestone, the session focused on educating them about proper menstrual hygiene practices and the correct use of sanitary napkins. This initiative aimed to ensure the girls' comfort and well-being during their menstrual cycles.

At Veerni Institute, we believe that knowledge is power. Through these informative health education lectures, we empower our girls with essential health information, enabling them to make informed decisions and lead healthy lives.



Healthy Food at Veerni

At Veerni Institute, we partner with a dedicated caterer to serve hygienic nutritious meals to our girls.

- Each day begins with a **balanced breakfast** accompanied by **fortified milk**, empowering our girls for the day ahead. The breakfast spread caters to diverse tastes and dietary preferences.
- For sustained energy, our girls receive specially prepared **school tiffins** filled with wholesome snacks. Lunch is a balanced meal curated to delight their palates and support their academic pursuits.
- **Fresh fruits** provide a refreshing afternoon break, infusing their bodies with essential vitamins. Dinner is thoughtfully designed to cater to individual preferences and dietary needs.
- We go beyond meals, providing **night snacks and celebrating birthdays** with sweet treats. When parents visit, we offer hospitality with tea and biscuits, fostering a sense of warmth and community.



At Veerni Institute, we believe that nourishing their bodies fuels their dreams. Through nutritious food, we empower their minds and spirits to reach new heights. Veerni celebrates health and happiness.

Guests at the Veerni Project

The Veerni Project was honored to receive a series of special visitors during the quarter, bringing fresh energy and support to the cause. Following is the detail of visitors visited the Veerni project during the year: •



Ms. Sophie Fauchier and Ms. Jacqueline de Chollet's Visit in October 2022. The Veerni Project had the privilege of welcoming two valued guests: Ms. Sophie Fauchier, a board member of Fondation Veerni•Switzerland, and Ms. Jacqueline de Chollet, the visionary

founder of the Veerni Project. After a two•year gap, their return was eagerly anticipated. The Veerni girls prepared a grand welcome, showcasing their talents and gratitude for these influential figures.



Ms. Jasmine Schmid's Volunteer Journey: November 7th, 2022 marked the arrival of Ms. Jasmine Schmid, a dedicated volunteer who joined the Veerni Project. With a passion for making a difference, she graciously devoted four days to working with the Veerni girls. Ms. Schmid's presence and commitment left a positive impact on the project and its young beneficiaries.



Mr. Ramesh and Mrs. Suba Parmar's heartwarming visit from New Jersey, USA, on December 12th, 2022. Mrs. Suba Parmar, a valued board member of the Global Foundation for Humanity and Mr. Parmar, brought along Ms. Annu Lyer to share in the experience. Eager to witness the Veerni Project's activities firsthand, they immersed themselves in the institute and Veerni Balika's vibrant atmosphere.



Volunteer's Visit

Ms. Carol D. Hanley, a dedicated volunteer from the USA, conducted a special science class for the Veerni girls on May 15th, 2022. With a decade of experience in science outreach in India and Nepal, Ms. Carol has been instrumental in promoting conceptual learning among students through the creation of low•cost educational kits.



These kits are designed to engage students in hands•on activities and experiments related to various science concepts. Ms. Carol conducts workshops using these materials to familiarize both students and teachers with their usage. Her kits cover a wide range of topics, including forces and motion, circuits, ecosystems, solar system, and more. Through her previous collaborations with teachers and students in Kolkata, Jaipur, and Kathmandu, Ms. Carol has demonstrated her commitment to fostering a love for science in young minds.



With nearly 40 years of experience as a science educator, Ms. Carol's expertise and dedication are evident. She has taught high school biology and chemistry, contributed to the Kentucky Department of Education, and has been associated with the University of Kentucky since 2001. Her contributions to the field have been recognized through accolades such as the Kentucky Science Teachers Association Distinguished Educator of the Year Award and the United Way of the Bluegrass Excellence in Education Award.

To organize the science class at the Veerni Institute, Ms. Carol reached out to the Director of the Veerni Project. On May 15th, she visited the Veerni Project and conducted engaging lessons on motion and forces, surface tension of liquids, and ecology. The Veerni girls thoroughly enjoyed this unique learning experience, which offered a refreshing break from their regular school curriculum.



Impressed by the Veerni Project's mission and impact, Ms. Carol expressed her desire to return each year to continue supporting the girls' education. Her dedication and passion for science education have undoubtedly left a lasting impression on the young minds at Veerni.

The Veerni Project is immensely grateful for volunteers like Ms. Carol D. Hanley, whose contributions inspire and empower the girls, opening doors to a brighter future. Through their selfless efforts, volunteers play a vital role in shaping the lives of these young girls, instilling a love for learning and paving the way for their success.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Summer School Program

The Veerni Project organized a transformative summer school program, designed to empower and equip 50 Veerni girls from classes 8 to 12. Held from May 11th to June 15th, the program offered a diverse range of classes and activities.

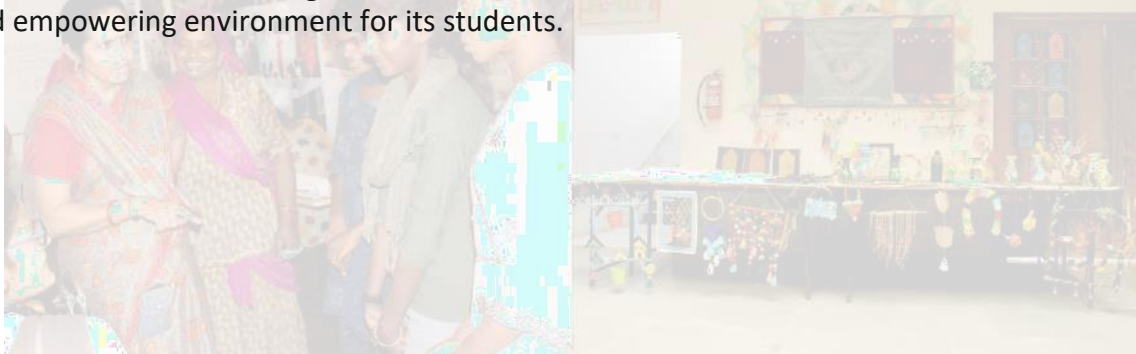
The summer school curriculum comprised various enriching classes, including personality development and English and math, basic computer skills, yoga, sewing, arts and crafts, beautician training skills, and self-care and informative lectures on healthcare. Through these comprehensive sessions, the girls had the opportunity to hone their skills, broaden their knowledge, and explore new interests.

The program concluded with a memorable closing ceremony on June 15th. During this event, Mahendra Sharma, Director of Veerni Sansthan, presented certificates to all the participating girls, recognizing their dedication and achievements throughout the summer school program.

The impact of the summer program was evident as the girls expressed their gratitude and shared their experiences. Sunder, a Class 12 student, highlighted the valuable skills and lessons gained during the camp, emphasizing the significance of teamwork and personal development. Versa, another Class 12 student, emphasized the importance of regularly organizing personality development classes, as they contribute to confidence building, improved communication skills, and overall personality enhancement.

The beautician and selfcare classes left a lasting impact on Priyanka, a senior student, as she acquired valuable beauty skills that enabled her to provide services to the girls and women in her village, generating additional income. Priyanka expressed her heartfelt appreciation to the Veerni Project for organizing such beneficial classes that empower village girls.

The summer school program served as a platform for personal growth, skill development, and empowerment for the Veerni girls. It exemplified the Veerni Project's commitment to providing holistic education and equipping these young individuals with the tools and knowledge necessary for their future success. Through such initiatives, Veerni Institute continues to create a transformative and empowering environment for its students.



An Unforgettable Journey: Fundraising for Veerni at the Annual Venice Marathon

It was a crisp Sunday morning, the 23rd of October, when something extraordinary unfolded amidst the vibrant energy of the annual Venice Marathon. Board members Ms. Sita Schutt and Ms. Sophie Fauchier, fueled by their passion for the Veerni Project, orchestrated a remarkable fundraiser that left an indelible mark on the hearts of all involved.

Ms. Sita, along with her dedicated team at Prospero World, who have wholeheartedly embraced Veerni in the UK, worked tirelessly to bring the digital fundraiser to life. Meanwhile, Sophie masterfully orchestrated the seamless execution of the event on the enchanting streets of Venice. Adding an artistic touch to the occasion, Josephine Fauchier generously lent her talent, designing a stunning banner and logo that captured the essence of the cause.

As the sun began its ascent, a wave of excitement surged through the air. Fifty passionate individuals, including Mrs. Jacqueline possibly the oldest participant in the race, answered the call, signing up for the exhilarating 10K run.

With each stride, participants not only pushed their physical limits but also exemplified the spirit of compassion and unity. They were not just running for themselves but for the Veerni Project, channeling their energy and determination towards empowering the girls. Every step taken became a symbol of transformation and hope.

TEAMS Paratha Panthers



Poppadom Chicks

Chilli Samosas



Naan Boys & Dosa Kids

Along the route, the streets echoed with cheers and encouragement, as supporters lined the course, witnessing the incredible display of resilience and commitment. The sight of runners wearing the Veerni logo proudly displayed on their jerseys served as a testament to the power of collective action and the unwavering belief in the potential of every girl.

The fundraiser during the Venice Marathon proved to be an awe-inspiring experience, one that will be etched in the memories of all those involved. It was a testament to the incredible impact that can be achieved when individuals unite for a common cause. The funds raised through this momentous event will propel the Veerni Project's mission forward, ensuring that even more girls can access education, empowerment, and a brighter future.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Ms. Sita Schutt, Ms. Sophie Fauchier, Ms. Josephine, and every participant who contributed their time, energy, and resources to make this event a resounding success.

Your unwavering dedication and unwavering support have uplifted the Veerni girls, providing them with opportunities that will shape their lives for years to come.

FUTURE PLANS

A Permanent Home for the Veerni Project

Veerni's dedication to empowering young girls through education has led us to an exciting new chapter: establishing a permanent home that embodies our commitment and ensures long-term stability. We are thrilled to announce that Veerni has acquired a piece of land for the Veerni Institute, marking a significant milestone in our future plans.

Our vision for the new home goes beyond classrooms; it encompasses a comprehensive array of facilities. From offices to a health center, computer labs to arts and crafts center, sports center to library, dining halls to well-equipped kitchens, every aspect has been meticulously designed to provide a nurturing and empowering environment. The inclusion of dormitories will create a safe and supportive space for our students, fostering their growth and well-being.

The Veerni goal is to nurture a total of 150 students, an increase from the current 110, enabling it to transform more lives and empower future generations. In addition, we will extend our reach through technology-driven community programs and health initiatives. Remedial classes will be offered to support local school dropouts, and a Skill Development/Enhancement center will cater to students in grades 10 to 12, equipping them with essential soft skills and life skills. A sports academy will also be established within the new Veerni Institute, promoting holistic development and excellence.

Establishing our own educational institute will not only ensure the delivery of quality and standardized education but also amplify our impact. This significant milestone will serve as a catalyst for the local economy, creating employment opportunities for the parents of our beneficiaries who have demonstrated unwavering loyalty to Veerni. By fostering growth and prosperity within the community, we aim to create a positive ripple effect that benefits everyone.

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW



We are grateful for the generous support of our donors and partners. The financial report for the fiscal year 2022-2023 is available upon request. The funds received have been utilized efficiently and transparently to achieve our organizational goals and empower girls and young women.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



We would like to sincerely thank our donors: Debbie Schneider, Shirley Johnson-Lans, Bill MacArthur, Puneet Batra and Nandita Shangari, InMaat Foundation, Ramesh and Suba Parmar, Garima Maheshwari, Sara and Andy Barnes, Jaelyn Eberle and David Taylor, Katrina Cary, Girls Learn International, Deeya Sharma and the We Care Club at Skyline High School, Marianne McKim, Farah Thandi, Natasha Thandi, Paige and Kevin Kelly, Jim Hinman, Srivats Madhavan, and to all our donors through PayPal, Network for Good and The American Online Giving Foundation, Benevity's foundation partner.

Special thanks to all the board members of the Global Foundation for Humanity for their support, work and contributions.

And also, our heartfelt thanks to the Veerni Sansthan team in Jodhpur headed by Mr. Mahendra Sharma, and all our students.



As we conclude the Veerni Project's Annual Report for 2022•2023, it is with great pride and unwavering commitment that we reflect on our efforts to empower girls and young women from the villages of the Thar Desert. Together, we have made significant strides toward creating a more equitable and just society, where every girl has the opportunity to thrive and fulfill her potential.

First and foremost, we extend a special thank you to Mrs. Jacqueline de Chollet, the Founder of the Veerni Project, her visionary leadership and passionate dedication have laid the foundation for our work, inspiring us to push boundaries and make a lasting impact in the lives of girls.

We also want to thank the Board Members of Global Foundation for Humanity USA, and Fondation Veerni Switzerland. We also express our deep gratitude to Mrs. Sophie Fauchier for her regular visits to the project and her immense love and support for the Veerni girls. Her compassion and personal involvement have touched the lives of our students, providing them with the encouragement and support they need to flourish.

Throughout the year, our dedicated team, supporters, and partners have worked tirelessly to provide quality education, a nurturing environment, and comprehensive support to our students. The results speak for themselves, as we witnessed remarkable achievements and positive transformation in the lives of the girls we serve.

Beyond academic excellence, we have expanded our programs and initiatives to empower our students with essential life skills, digital literacy, and access to healthcare. By addressing the multifaceted needs of our girls, we are equipping them with the tools and resources they need to navigate the challenges they may face and seize opportunities for growth.

None of this would have been possible without the invaluable support of our donors, who have embraced our mission and contributed generously to our cause. Your beliefs in the power of education and your commitment to empowering girls have been the driving force behind our accomplishments. Together, we have made a lasting impact on the lives of these young girls, their families, and the communities they belong to.

We are filled with anticipation and excitement for the journey that lies before us. We recognize that there is still much work to be done to ensure every girl has equal opportunities and access to education. With your continued support, we are confident in our ability to overcome challenges and make a profound difference in the lives of even more girls.

In conclusion, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who has contributed to the success of the Veerni Project in the past year. Your unwavering dedication, belief, and partnership have been instrumental in our progress. Together, we are building a brighter future, where the potential of every girl can be realized, and the barriers that hinder her growth can be overcome.

As we embark on the journey ahead, we eagerly seek your continued support, collaboration, and involvement. Together, let us empower girls, uplift communities, and create a world where every girl has the opportunity to thrive and shape her own destiny.

Message from Veerni Founder: Jacqueline de Chollet

June 2023

"But the eyes are blind,

One must look with the heart", Antoine de Saint-Exupery, The Little Prince

The Veerni Project is thirty years old today. We are living in a transformed world. The exchange of ideas, culture and knowledge between people and nations is remarkable: the global connectivity that we experience is one that would have been hard to predict at the time when I was growing up, just after the second world war. These connections exist even for those living in the most remote regions of the world including the Thar Desert in India where the Veerni project is based.

In 1993 Veerni started out as a modest, village-based project caring for women and children's health in a deeply patriarchal society. Today Veerni champions the education of girls supporting them to finish secondary school (the 4th UN Sustainable Development Goal). This change is due to the encouragement of their mothers. However, recently their fathers, have come to value the impact of education on their daughters, something previously unheard of in rural Rajasthan. Achieving gender equality fulfills the 5th UN Sustainable Goal.

Context

In India today the 850 million people under the age of thirty-five have the potential to significantly impact the welfare and economy of their country of 1.4 billion. India's population has now surpassed China's and is becoming the most populated country in the world. With this growth comes the potential for geopolitical, economic and cultural power.

Poverty in India:

Indians remain poor by global standards. A part of the population is left behind and has little hope of coming out of poverty. Free market economics have resulted, according to Oxfam, in 1% of the population owning more than 40% of the wealth of the country where as 50% of the population, some 700 million people, own 3% of the wealth. India is a country of the very poor.

One third of children are suffering from malnutrition. There are no means to be unemployed; as a result, the bottom half is in danger of staying at the lowest of the human condition. Escaping poverty can only be through education.

Women in India and economic progress:

India's potential is vast, and its economy is the fifth largest in the world. However less than half of the population contributes to the country's economy. Critically, only one in five women are in the formal work force, that is 20%, the lowest anywhere in the world. In the informal workforce it is 30%. In China, in contrast, women's participation in the work force is more than 60%.

Will India become a super power?

Yes "made in India" is in full boom. The country exports some 750 billion dollars per year particularly in pharmaceuticals and software.

Another important factor is that India has a massive diaspora. Of some 13 million expats, including the offspring of Indians worldwide, the number reaches 32 million which is a considerable asset. In the UK and in the US where 6 million of Indian origin live, this diaspora occupies most often high social economic positions and are a powerful source of influence. The bosses of Microsoft, Google, IBM, FedEx, Starbucks, Barclays Bank, including the UK Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak.

The central question to ask is why are women in India still negatively valued?

The country has a long history of struggles against patriarchy. In addition, sexism, misogyny, are all implicated in India's familiar subjugation of women. In 2022 India ranked 135 out of 146 countries in the World Economic Global Forum Gender Gap Report. Importantly, female literacy rate stands at 66% against near 80% for men.

This hinders the aspirations of hundreds of millions of Indian young women as well as holding back the Indian economy.

In order for India's young population to reach its full potential, investments in education, health, nutrition and skills training for women is vitally important. The project has had a strong impact on the girls' lives, empowering them to break the cycle of discrimination and poverty.

Child Brides:

The practice remains a custom and it affects up to 40% of girls at the Veerni project, down from 60% a few years ago. Importantly, the number of child brides from the Veerni villages has seen a significant drop of the practice since the Project's presence in these villages compared with non Veerni ones. It is a key measure of the impact the project has had over the years.

India at a turning point:

There is now an opportunity for India to take advantage of its position and to really transform itself given its access to technology, capital and international markets. Women are a vital part of this development.

The Veerni Project:

A Drop in the Ocean• the importance of the Project

The girls that Veerni educates are but a drop in India's ocean. However, the positive transformation of attitudes to girls has come from the villagers themselves in response to a large part due to awareness• raising generated by Veerni.

Veerni: A Holistic Approach

Many of the girls from poor rural villages have faced neglect in their families because of villager's desire for boys. They are often not seen as a priority, rather as a burden, and as a result, often neglected by their families and the community. The demand for places at the institute increases yearly. This year some 450 for 14 vacancies. Veerni girls are often selected as a result of hardship cases, such as orphans, when the mother has died, particularly in cases of COVID deaths. Despite these circumstances, they come to the Veerni Institute with a strong desire to succeed and make a better life for themselves.

A life transformed: The seven years of education from class 6•12 are transformative for these girls as, not only they are getting an education, but are exposed to a variety of programs which widens their understanding of their country and the world. In addition to their attendance to top academic schools, the Veerni program encompasses courses in computer education, sports, sewing, dance, arts and crafts, public speaking while ensuring a high level of pastoral care and nutrition.

Additionally, ensuring the safety of the girls while in the Institute is paramount both for the project and for the parents.

Flourishing under Pressure:

The primary pressure the girls face is to succeed in their studies. Their ambition is fueled not just by desire to do well, but also because failure means the end of their dreams.

The testimony is the extremely high pass rates they achieve.

Despite this pressure, girls are thriving at the Veerni Institute. They have great achievements to their names, with many pursuing higher education and careers. The project has become a beacon of hope for girls in Rajasthan, providing them with the tools they need to succeed and make a better life for themselves and their future families. To summarize, the project has had a strong impact on the girls' lives, their future, empowering them to break the cycle of discrimination and poverty.

Veerni: A nourishing environment

The Veerni Institute provides these girls with a safe and nurturing environment where they can flourish under pressure. The girls know that if they do not succeed in their exams, their parents will remove them from the institute. This pressure is immense and is compounded by the fact that the girls have a weak educational foundation. Village schools in Rajasthan are often under•resourced, with only one teacher for all grades in a single room. As a result, the girls struggle to keep up with their studies and need additional support.

To help the girls succeed, the Veerni Institute takes a holistic approach to their development. The girls receive education, healthcare, and life skills training, preparing them for a brighter future. They are provided with individualized support and mentorship, ensuring that they have the resources they need to thrive. Additionally, the project works closely with the girls' families, educating them on the importance of girls' education and breaking down societal barriers. We call this a community outreach activity of the project.

Quote from a mother last November: *“Nobody was hearing her” she continues “but because of education, her voice will be heard - she will make positive changes in her community- an educated mother would raise their children in a better way.”*

Achievements to Date

Since the inception of the secondary school program in 2005, 185 girls have graduated, 135 went on to higher education and some 45 girls are in the job place with this increasing yearly.

The Future

A permanent home for Veerni is now a priority. Until now, the Institute has been housed in rented accommodations. A secure future can only be achieved through a permanent home. Land has been purchased this year, in a safe and convenient location with a supply of fresh water and proximity to public transport. The challenge ahead is constructing the building. Future outreach programs as a center of excellence will be housed in the new building as well and will enable the project to fully serve the communities in the area.

Message of thanks:

First, I wish to thank our generous donors who have made the work of Veerni possible throughout this long journey over these last 30 years. This was made possible by donations to the Global Foundation for Humanity USA, the Association du Projet Veerni in Switzerland in the past, and the Fondation Veerni since 2017. A special word of thanks to all members of the two foundation boards and the Association who have worked tirelessly to keep the Project funded and able to carry out its important mission. A very special appreciation to two board members of the Fondation Veerni who will be retiring at the end of this year. Pierre Henchoz who is responsible for the setting up Fondation Veerni and whose guidance over the years has been invaluable; to Francoise Zweifel whose contribution to the administration and finding support has been vital. For the commitment of Sophie Fauchier and Sita Schutt and all they do for the project and their love for Veerni; to Michael Marr for his wisdom over time. To the members of the US board who have given vital support over the years. And to Kathy Fico for running the Global Foundation for Humanity for 30 years and whose devotion to the work of Veerni has been invaluable. To Sheila Besson for her work on the Princeton Archives.

I thank the Veerni team over the years for their dedication to the values of the project and carrying out the mission with devotion including through the demanding COVID times in the face of daily adversity. Mahendra Sharma first joined the project in 2003 – a 20•year anniversary in 2023. He has provided outstanding leadership as Director over the years and we wish to express our profound appreciation. To Vimlesh Sharma who has been with Veerni since 2004, Mahinder Singh, and all the team including Siyona Rao, the Veerni volunteer nurse. And all the other members of the Veerni team who look after the girls' well•being, the matrons, catering staff, sports coach and security guards.

A very big THANK YOU to all for your contributions to the continued success of the Veerni Project

Listening is an art, and for most, being listened to is to be loved. Veerni listens.

Message from Director: Mr. Mahendra Sharma

It is with great pride and satisfaction that I present to you the annual report of The Veerni Project. Once again, we can celebrate a year of remarkable achievements and progress in our mission to empower girls and young women in rural areas, fostering gender equality and igniting social change.

In the realm of education, our dedicated team's tireless efforts have yielded exceptional results. Through our innovative programs and initiatives, we have nurtured an environment that recognizes the transformative power of education. As a testament to our endeavors, I am delighted to share that 110 girls have successfully cleared their examinations with commendable marks. This significant increase in access to quality education brings us one step closer to our vision of a society that values and supports the educational aspirations of all girls.

Health, being a critical aspect of well•being, has been at the forefront of our endeavors. Our unwavering commitment to addressing the unique challenges faced by girls has led us to provide comprehensive healthcare services at the Veerni Institute. By empowering them to make informed decisions about their well•being, we have not only improved their health outcomes but also fostered a sense of self•advocacy. Through these efforts, we are helping girls take control of their lives and ensuring that their voices are heard.

As we turn our attention towards the future, I am thrilled to announce our plans for the establishment of Veerni's permanent home—an innovative center that will serve as a beacon of hope and a catalyst for transformation. This visionary facility will consolidate our efforts, providing a holistic range of support services to empower girls and young women. It will serve as a haven, enabling them to break free from the constraints of poverty and discrimination. This momentous endeavor signifies our commitment to creating lasting change and building a society that cherishes and empowers its women.

None of our achievements would be possible without the continued support and collaboration of our invaluable stakeholders. Together, we possess the power to shape a future where every girl can flourish and make meaningful contributions to her community. I extend my heartfelt invitation to each and every one of you to join us on this transformative journey. Together, we can build a world that embraces gender equality and uplifts the lives of girls and young women.

At this moment, I express my deepest gratitude to our dedicated team, whose unwavering passion and commitment are the driving force behind our accomplishments. Their tireless efforts and unwavering dedication have made a tangible difference in the lives of countless girls and young women. I am immensely thankful to the board members of Fondation Veerni•Switzerland, Global Foundation for Humanity•USA and other generous donors, whose steadfast support has made our work possible. Your belief in our cause and your contributions have paved the way for transformative changes.

Lastly, I would like to extend a special thanks to Mrs. Jacqueline de Chollet, the visionary founder of the Veerni Project. Mrs. de Chollet's profound understanding of the challenges faced by girls and young women in rural areas, coupled with her unwavering passion, has been instrumental in our organization's success. Her commitment to creating a world where every girl has the opportunity to reach her full potential is truly inspiring.

Together, we have redefined what is possible. Together, we have made a lasting impact on the lives of girls and young women. And together, we will continue to strive for a society that values and empowers its women. With your support, we can unlock the unlimited potential that lies within each and every girl.

Warm Regards,

Mahendra Sharma

Video link

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rT1qnCwhPWk>

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