

SAATH SAATH FOUNDATION

"Turning vision into action — one year at a time."



Annual Report 2023

"At Saath Saath Foundation, every step forward is taken together — spreading hope, compassion, and opportunity where it matters most."



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Introduction

The year 2023 marked an important phase in our journey toward grassroots empowerment in Adivasi communities. Our focus remained on creating sustainable opportunities for women, strengthening rural education systems, and building strong village-level partnerships. Rather than imposing external models, we worked from within communities — identifying local leaders, training them, and supporting village-owned initiatives.

This year was defined by experimentation, learning, and laying foundations. While some initiatives faced challenges, they provided valuable insights that shaped stronger and more sustainable approaches. Our commitment continues to be long-term transformation through skill development, education support, and community trust.



Skill Development Initiatives

1. *Mograz Village Tailoring Pilot*



Our first attempt to establish a village-based tailoring center in Mograz Adivasi village was a bold experiment. A local woman with basic tailoring knowledge was appointed and trained by a master trainer. For over a month, the center showed strong enthusiasm and participation.

However, seasonal realities such as women needing to collect firewood affected attendance. This experience highlighted the importance of aligning livelihood programs with local seasonal cycles. While the pilot did not continue as planned, it shaped our future strategy: instead of expecting women to travel, we bring training directly into villages through decentralized leadership.



The Mograz pilot was not a failure — it was a foundation. It helped us understand the lived realities of the women we aim to support and reshaped our approach toward decentralized, flexible training models. The learnings from this initiative now guide our future work, ensuring that programs grow in partnership with communities rather than in isolation from them. Mograz remains an important starting point in our journey toward sustainable village-led empowerment.

2. Chaudharwadi Tailoring Initiative

In 2023, we launched a tailoring initiative in Chaudharwadi village with a young woman named Pooja, aiming to build local livelihood skills and encourage women-led leadership. The early stages of the program showed promise, with community interest and participation gradually building. The initiative created a safe learning space where women could gather, exchange knowledge, and explore new possibilities beyond traditional roles.



Although the tailoring center did not fully sustain operations due to logistical and participation challenges, the experience sparked a meaningful personal transformation for Pooja. Through her involvement in the program, she developed confidence, communication skills, and a deeper sense of responsibility toward her

community. Recognizing her potential, she later stepped into the role of a support teacher at the local ZP school, where she now contributes to children's learning and mentorship.



Her transition from trainee to educator reflects the ripple effect of empowerment initiatives. Skill programs do not only create income opportunities — they nurture leadership, confidence, and community engagement. Pooja's journey illustrates how exposure to training environments can unlock hidden capabilities and open unexpected pathways.

3. Bhaktachiwadi Vocational Center

A major achievement of the year was the inauguration of the first vocational tailoring center in Bhaktachiwadi Ashram School – the first such center within an Adivasi school in the Karjat region. This milestone marks an important shift toward integrating vocational learning directly into rural education systems.



The center allows girls to receive practical tailoring training alongside their formal schooling, helping them build real-world skills while continuing their academic journey. For many students, this is their first exposure to structured skill-based education, broadening their future livelihood possibilities.

By embedding vocational training within the school environment, the initiative promotes self-reliance, confidence, and the dignity of skilled work. The Bhaktachiwadi center serves as a model for how education and livelihood preparation can grow together to create long-term empowerment.

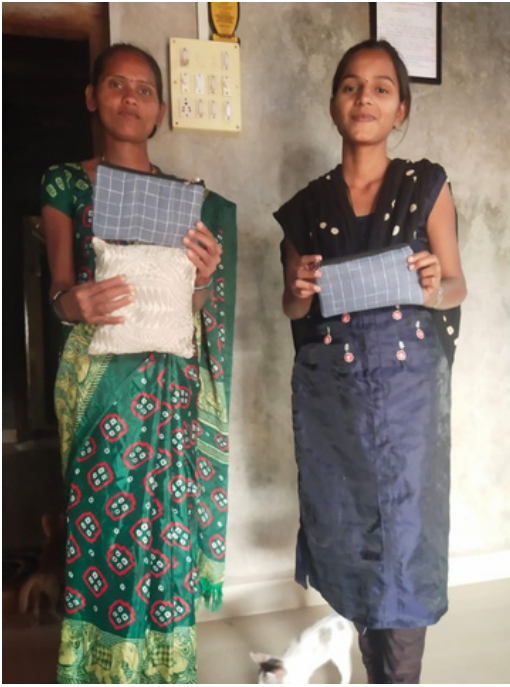
4. Train-the-Trainer Model



Recognizing barriers such as transport limitations, cultural norms, and time constraints, we implemented a “Train-the-Trainer” model. Instead of expecting women to travel to centralized centers, we identify motivated women within villages and train them to lead local programs.

Our Ambivali center became a training hub where trainers were mentored by master trainer Ms. Anjali Yadav. This decentralized approach increases accessibility, sustainability, and community ownership.

5. **First Production Outputs**



The creation of our first tailoring products marked both a symbolic and practical milestone in the journey of the training centers. For the first time, women were able to translate newly acquired skills into tangible products, turning learning into visible achievement. These early outputs represented more than finished garments — they reflected growing confidence, discipline, and belief in their own abilities.

Participants took pride in seeing their work completed and valued, strengthening motivation to continue developing their skills. The experience also introduced women to the idea of structured production and small-scale entrepreneurship, laying the foundation for women-led micro-livelihood pathways within their villages.

Income documentation is currently being compiled and will be included in future reports as we continue to track and strengthen the economic impact of the program.

Women Empowerment & Livelihoods

Women participating in tailoring programs began earning independently, contributing financially to their households and strengthening their decision-making power within their families. Even modest earnings carried significant weight — they validated women's skills, increased self-worth, and demonstrated that economic participation is possible within the village context.



Beyond income, the programs created safe collective spaces where women supported one another, shared experiences, and built a sense of solidarity. Regular interaction fostered peer encouragement and informal mentorship, helping participants overcome hesitation and social barriers. Many women reported

feeling more confident speaking in group settings and expressing their ideas.

As their confidence grew, several participants naturally stepped into informal leadership roles, motivating others to join and continue learning. These women became visible examples of change within their communities, showing that skill development can expand opportunities without requiring migration or disruption of family life.

Empowerment was therefore visible not only in financial contribution, but in voice, confidence, and community presence. The programs helped shift perceptions — both self-perception and community perception — about women's capabilities and roles in rural development.



Education Support Programs

- **Anandwadi ZP School Partnership**



We partnered with Anandwadi ZP School by sponsoring their Wi-Fi connection, enhancing digital access and educational resources. The school stands as a model rural institution – clean, vibrant, and nurtured by the dedication of teacher Mr. Bhagat. Supporting digital infrastructure strengthened classroom learning opportunities.

- **Laboratory Equipment Donation**

In collaboration with our NGO partner Path of Bliss, we donated laboratory equipment to Bhaktachiwadi school. A teacher had shared that Grade 12 science students were graduating without exposure to functional lab facilities. This donation transformed theoretical science learning into practical experience.



- **After-School Learning Support**



Building on community leadership in Chaudharwadi, we introduced an after-school learning support model. Educated local women guided children beyond school hours, reinforcing academic learning and mentorship.

- ***Malegaon Educational Donations***



Through our partnership with YVO, educational materials were distributed to Malegaon ZP School, strengthening access to essential learning resources for rural students. The donation included supplies that support everyday classroom needs, helping create a more encouraging and equipped learning environment.

For many students, such resources reduce barriers to participation and allow them to engage more confidently in school activities. Teachers also benefit from improved classroom tools, enabling smoother instruction and better student interaction.

Beyond the material value, the initiative reinforced a message of collective support — showing students that their education matters and that their community stands behind their growth. Small interventions like these play a meaningful role in improving morale, attendance, and motivation in rural schools.

Community Partnerships & Support

- ***Village Partnership in Mograz***



A key local family in Mograz village played an essential role in mobilizing participation and maintaining trust. Their support strengthened community engagement and ensured continuity of village initiatives.

- ***Organizational Collaborations***

Partnerships with Path of Bliss, MEE founded by Sreelata Menon, and Kitty with Purpose led by Minali Sinkar strengthened our ability to serve communities more effectively. These collaborations enabled resource sharing, program support, and knowledge exchange, allowing us to reach wider sections of rural populations. Working alongside like-minded organizations reinforced a shared vision of grassroots empowerment and ensured that initiatives were supported by collective expertise, trust, and long-term commitment to community development.



- ***Care & Compassion at the SSF Centre***



A stray cat gave birth to three healthy kittens at the SSF center, and the team chose to adopt and care for them. This moment reflected the values of compassion and responsibility that guide our work and brought warmth and joy to the center.

- ***Support Teacher Appointment – Malegaon ZP School***



SSF appointed Geeta as a support teacher at Malegaon ZP School to assist children with additional academic guidance. Her role has strengthened the learning environment and provided consistent mentorship to students.

- ***Nutrition Support by Ms. Gauri Joshi***



Food was distributed to village children by our ardent supporter, Ms. Gauri Joshi, on the occasion of her father's death anniversary. This act transformed personal remembrance into collective nourishment and celebration.

2023 Highlights

Village tailoring pilot launched in Mograz

Tailoring initiative introduced in Chaudharwadi

First vocational tailoring center opened in an Adivasi school

Rollout of Train-the-Trainer women leadership model

Women begin earning through tailoring livelihoods

Educational and laboratory support to rural schools

Appointment of local support teachers in village schools

Strengthened community and NGO partnerships

Acknowledgements

We extend our deepest gratitude to everyone who contributed to the meaningful journey of Saath Saath Foundation throughout 2023. This year has been a testament to the power of collective effort, compassion, and shared purpose. Every milestone we achieved reflects the dedication of individuals and communities who believe in creating sustainable and positive change.

We sincerely thank our volunteers, whose time, energy, and commitment form the backbone of our work. Their selfless service and passion continue to transform lives at the grassroots level. We are equally grateful to our donors and supporters for their trust and generosity, which enabled us to expand our initiatives and reach more communities in need.

Our appreciation extends to our partner organizations and collaborators who strengthened our impact through knowledge sharing, cooperation, and mutual support. These partnerships have enriched our programs and helped us grow both in scale and effectiveness.

We also thank the communities we serve for welcoming us with openness and faith. Their resilience and participation inspire us daily and guide our mission forward. Finally, we acknowledge our core team for their relentless efforts, integrity, and belief in the vision of inclusive development.

Together, we celebrate the progress of 2023 and look forward to continuing this journey with renewed commitment, unity, and hope.

Road Ahead

As we step into the coming year, Saath Saath Foundation remains committed to deepening its impact and strengthening the communities we serve. Building on the learnings and momentum of 2023, we aim to expand our programs with greater focus on sustainability, skill development, and long-term empowerment.

Our roadmap includes widening our outreach to underserved areas, nurturing stronger community leadership, and fostering partnerships that amplify collective impact. We plan to invest in innovative approaches, capacity building, and volunteer engagement to ensure that our initiatives remain relevant, inclusive, and effective.

We also look forward to enhancing transparency, improving program delivery, and creating more opportunities for community participation. Every step ahead will be guided by our core belief in dignity, collaboration, and grassroots transformation.

With the continued support of our partners, donors, volunteers, and well-wishers, we move forward with optimism and determination — ready to turn challenges into opportunities and vision into action.

The road ahead for Saath Saath Foundation is one of hope and continued impact.