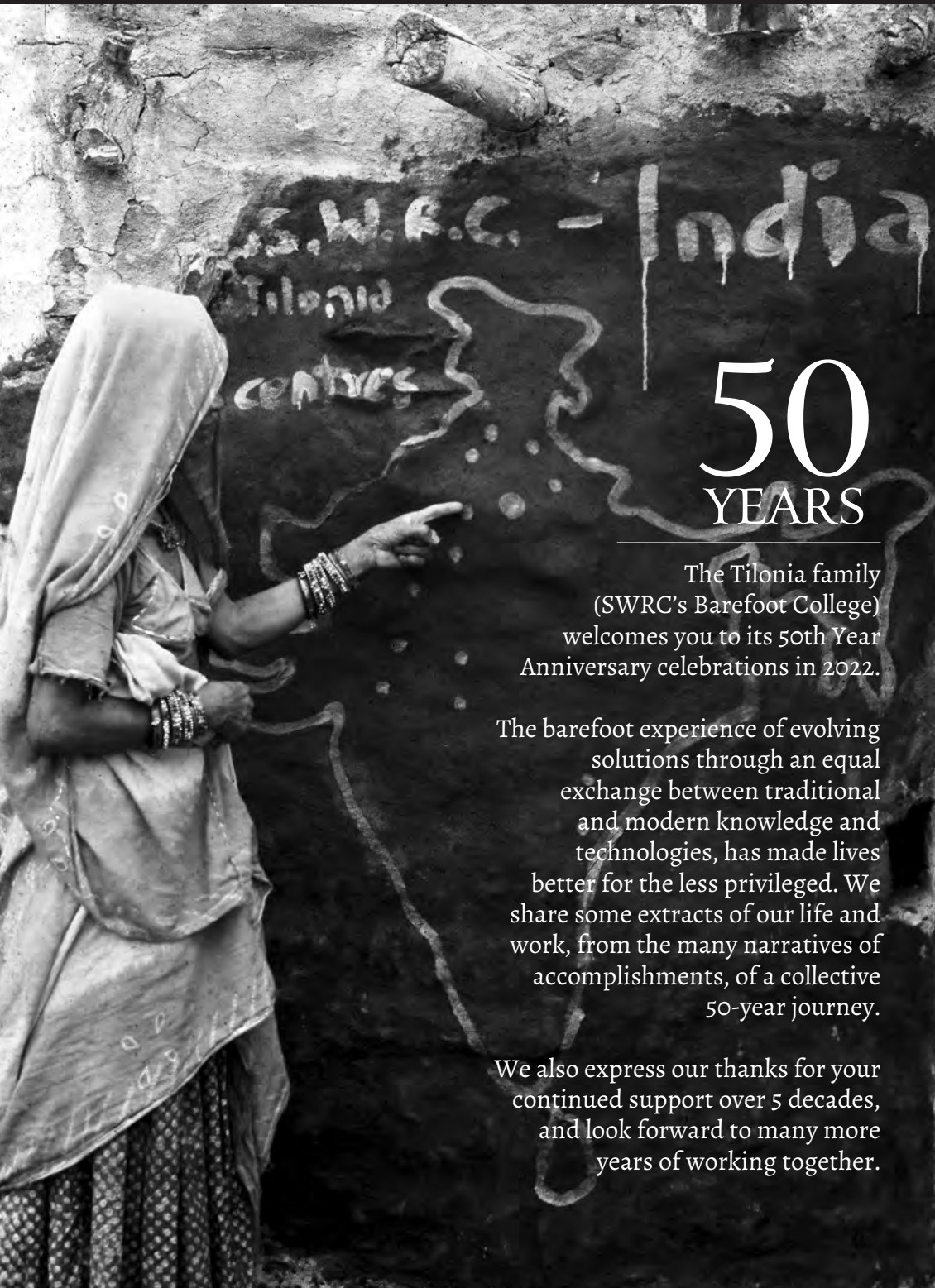


THE BAREFOOT COLLEGE TILONIA



50 YEARS

The Tilonia family
(SWRC's Barefoot College)
welcomes you to its 50th Year
Anniversary celebrations in 2022.

The barefoot experience of evolving solutions through an equal exchange between traditional and modern knowledge and technologies, has made lives better for the less privileged. We share some extracts of our life and work, from the many narratives of accomplishments, of a collective 50-year journey.

We also express our thanks for your continued support over 5 decades, and look forward to many more years of working together.



In 1967, a young man named Sanjit (Bunker) Roy, deeply moved by what he had witnessed during the Bihar Famine of 1966-67, left a possibly 'successful' career-track post a highly privileged education, and decided to walk the 'road not taken'.

This took him to Tilonia, a small village in Ajmer District, Rajasthan, in 1972. With his farmer friend Meghraj, he began with the simple task of drilling in open wells for water recharge, in one of India's most water-stressed regions. The project was located in a deserted government ware house and campus. The Barefoot journey had begun.

The Barefoot vision broadened and developed into an inclusive integrated developmental model of empowering people. Issues of villagers' access to potable water, proper nutrition, health, livelihood, education, empowering women, tied up with ideas of the right to live with self-respect and dignity.

This journey, which began with a young man's dream of fostering

change in rural India, drew many like-minded people together, and the Social Work and Research Centre (SWRC), now popularly known as the Barefoot College, registered formally in 1972. It became a training ground for legions of workers in the development sector.

'Barefoot Solutions' can be broadly categorized into thematic areas – solar and other renewable energy, water conservation, education, healthcare, rural handicrafts, people's action, communication techniques, empowerment of women, decentralized waste management and wasteland development.

The Barefoot College has strengthened the dignity and prosperity of rural people. By harnessing talented human capital and appropriate rural, traditional and renewable technologies, it has empowered rural communities to have more control over their lives.

Gandhian principles remain central to this mission.

Why Barefoot?

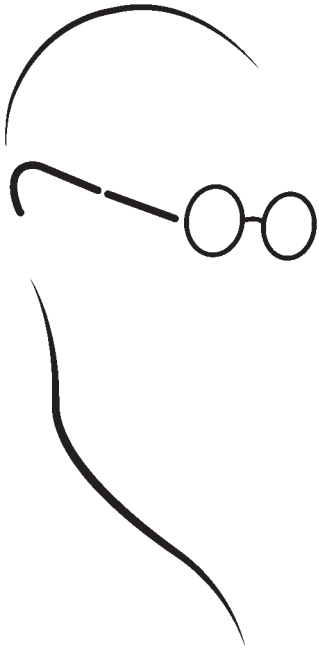
- Millions of under-privileged in India who pass on the knowledge, skills and wisdom of their forefathers, live and work barefoot. They sit and work on the floor.
- It is symbolic of the recognition, respect, and importance we give to the collective knowledge and skill that the rural communities have.
- By calling it 'barefoot' we wanted to give its application a unique category of its own, that is superior, sophisticated, and enduring.
- It is far more valuable than any paper qualification.



Why College?

Because it is a Centre of learning and unlearning with a difference:

- Where the teacher is the learner and the learner, the teacher;
- Where everyone is expected to keep an open mind, try new and crazy ideas, make mistakes and try again;
- Where knowledge and hands on experience take precedence over paper degrees;
- Where ineligibility for entry into lowest government jobs is a qualification;
- Where tremendous value is placed on the dignity of labour, of sharing and for those willing to work with their hands;
- Where there is no discrimination based on caste, religion, gender and ethnicity.
- Where no certificates, degrees or diplomas are given.



Gandhi and the Barefoot College

The lifestyle and work ethics of the Barefoot College has internalised Gandhian ideas that are still relevant and universal in the 21st century.

One of Gandhi's central beliefs was self-reliance, that the knowledge, skills and wisdom found in villages should be used for development before getting skills from outside. The Barefoot College has done this for the last 50 years. Only technology that can be understood and controlled by the community is widely applied and used in a sustainable way to improve the quality of life of the marginalised.

Gandhi believed that sophisticated appropriate technology should be used in rural India, but it should be in the hands and the control of the poor communities so that they are not

dependent or exploited as it leads to replacement. This is what the Barefoot College believes and practices. Thus the technology of solar appliances, handpumps, computers may be sophisticated but they meet this criteria.

Gandhi once said that there is a difference between Literacy and Education. Literacy is a skill. Education is what children receive from the family and the village environment. The night schools were started with this as the central belief. At the Barefoot College, everyone is considered an educational resource; the village elder, the crafts persons, postmaster, keeper of records, the policeman, the nurse, the traditional midwife and the extension worker serve as communicators of knowledge in the village.

Gandhi believed in the equality of women. The Barefoot College has continued to train village women in areas that traditionally men think is their monopoly.

Gandhi taught us how not to waste. The Barefoot College upcycles waste. Old tyres into swings for children; agricultural waste into handicraft; paper into glove puppets and teaching aids; scrap metal into geodesic domes (minimising wood as a building material), leaves and grass to produce bio-gas; waste cloth made into rag rugs and sold.

SOME SIGNIFICANT AREAS AFFECTED BY SWRC

Water Conservation and Accessibility

- From the early years of drilling in open wells, SWRC not only helped in accessing and conserving potable drinking water but also started challenging issues of untouchability and caste in the villages. It went on to install handpumps, and gradually, revived the traditional local wisdom of collecting groundwater in Tankas.



- This has resulted in approximately 70 billion litres of water being harvested through the creation of rainwater storage tanks, ponds and small dams, supplying safe and potable drinking water in 1650+ schools in hundreds of villages across 20 states in India.





Rural Health Care System

• In the early 70s, modern curative health was viewed with suspicion by rural populations. SWRC slowly made inroads by bringing in a social worker from TISS Bombay and a doctor to start a dialogue with people. The community mobilization for preventive health, with the help of trained barefoot health workers, laid the grounds for the extraordinary success of the innovative use of healthcare, and later, programmes to address problems of the rural poor.

- There is a health clinic on the premises, there are Barefoot dentists, pathologists, health workers and midwives from the communities assisting the rural population to access efficient medical care.
- 3,00,000+ patients have been treated in the last 50 years.
- Braving the risk of infection, the Barefoot medical team attended to a record number of patients in rural areas during COVID as well.





Education & Schooling

- SWRC/Barefoot College began with adult literacy classes, where majority attendees were very young children. This led to an examination of the schooling system, and the experiment with the Centre for Education and Technology (CET). The District handed over 3 schools for a duration of 3 years. Its success impacted government policy/

- The government adopted the learnings of the CET day schools into the “Shiksha Karmi Yojana”, starting single teacher schools in remote villages 1984.

- The success of the evening schools in attracting drop-outs laid the foundation of the SWRC night-schools.

- Teachers were recruited from the village. SWRC/Barefoot College has helped 90000+ working children attend 250 Night Schools in more than 10 states of India. In 50 years of doing so, three generations of young people have gone through the Barefoot learning experience.

- Shiksha Niketan, the day school run by SWRC since 1989, has been an important part of the rising aspirations of the young people in Tilonia and neighbouring villages. The alumni have gone to university and technical schools, leading to employment in the government and other sectors.

- The SWRC/Barefoot College has also run hundreds of pre-schools to inculcate the habit of school going amongst the children, and for supplementary nutrition, in 5 districts of Rajasthan. Over 300,000 children have attended these pre-schools.

- The Bridge school is a residential school run by SWRC/Barefoot College, for children of migrant families, or dropout children from vulnerable sections of the local communities, who never enrolled in formal school.



Livelihoods and Revival of Crafts and Skills of Rural Artisans

- From the early years of spinning the charkha , SWRC was interested in handicrafts and handloom. The Craft Section, provided a platform for the revival of rural crafts.

- Leather and tanning, women's handicrafts, block-printing and designing began in 1974. This long



and exciting journey still continues, providing livelihoods to thousands of crafts people, mostly from the Dalit community.

- The first Tilonia Bazaar was held in Triveni Kala Sangam in Delhi in 1975.

- The craft section of Barefoot College later took the shape of an artisan enterprise called Hatheli Sansthan. Working to improve villagers' livelihoods through entrepreneurial projects, Hatheli was registered as an independent non-profit society in 1992.

- It has worked with 25,000 artisans from 5 districts and 48+ villages of Rajasthan and continues to supplement income of crafts people across the state.





Women Empowerment

- Women's work started in 1973-74 with community workers going to the villages to start dialogues with women who were natural leaders in the community.
- Working with women led to strengthening the programmes of dais, and identifying women for crafts.
- The recognition of women contributors to the economy and their role as wage workers, led to forming women's groups in eleven villages in 1981-82.
- These groups mobilized against sati, rape and organized women to demand minimum wages, leading to a Supreme Court case (AIR 328, 1983 SCR (2) 271) which they won in 1983.
- SWRC/Barefoot College also trained rural women health workers, midwives, masons, hand pump mistris, fabricators, solar engineers, community radio jockeys, etc.



- The organisation has identified more than 7000 women with leadership qualities and empowered them with skills and in processes of democratic participation.

Solar Energy

Barefoot's most innovative and significant programmes have been in the field of Solar Energy.

- The first solar project was initiated in the Tilonia campus in 1996, with training local stakeholders on how to devise solar lamps. This was taken up by the locals with great enthusiasm and made the villagers self-sufficient in their energy requirements.
- The world-renowned "Solar Mamas Programme" of training illiterate and semi-literate women from non-electrified villages on design, fabrication, installation and repair of solar home-lighting systems started in 2000 supported by the European Union.
- This was followed by UNDP and Asian Development Bank helping

SWRC reach different countries by 2005.

- The Ministry of External Affairs empanelled The Barefoot College's Solar Mamas Training Programme under the ITEC Programme in 2008.
- Women selected from remote rural areas become "solar engineers" after a six-month training period in India. Upon their return to their respective villages in their own countries, they fabricate different components of a solar home-lighting system, assemble and install them, and ensure maintenance and repairs.
- A local solar committee ensures the long-term management of the electricity service. Solar knowledge is transferred to the community, for sustainable access to electricity with reasonable costs for villagers.





- The Barefoot College Tilonia has trained 1708 illiterate or semi-literate rural women from 96 countries and has electrified more than 75,000 households saving about 45 million litres of kerosene from polluting the environment.

- One of the greatest impacts of this programme has been the boosting of confidence of women from rural, marginalised backgrounds, who are now valued in their communities.

- It has shown that illiterate and semi-literate mamas and grandmothers can become change-makers in society.

- Solar Mamas have achieved international status where heads of states came to meet them, amongst whom are President Macron, former President Bill Clinton, the Indian Prime Minister, Chilean Prime Minister and President of Zanzibar.

- More than a million people across the world have light and energy through decentralised, clean solar electricity, replacing kerosene lamps and offsetting carbon emissions from thousands of households.





Using Traditional Media to Create Social Change

- Since 1980, a group of talented and gifted traditional and local communicators have organized performances, shared ideas, scripted street theatre and created songs. This has built bridges between rural talent and development needs.
- Puppets are Tilonia's ambassadors, locally, nationally and internationally. Glove puppets made of recycled paper, which are easy to use, have replaced the traditional string puppets.

- The transition from the traditional string-puppets to rod-puppets resulted in the making of Jokhim Chacha, the bard of Tilonia, its mascot and commentator.
- A rich repertoire of plays, skits, songs have addressed a range of issues like water conservation, education of the girl-child, land and ownership, environment, women's issues and caste taboos.
- The communicators have interacted with dignitaries like the Dalai Lama, and have participated in folk festivals in Norway and in England.
- In 40 years, 2000+ Barefoot Communicators have been trained to produce interactive puppet shows.
- Over 3,00,000 people have watched these performances in 3000 Indian villages since 1981, contributing to changing attitudes amongst the rural communities.



Environment

Since the mid 1970s, Barefoot College has been promoting plantations in wastelands, pastureland, government schools and nurseries across Rajasthan. The effect has been felt locally and large swathes of degraded land have been regenerated.

- The planting of trees in schools has served the dual purpose of greening the school, as well as educating young people about its importance.
- Through the interventions of the Plant Nursery Team, Barefoot currently manages more than 20,000 native trees and plants on its campus in Tilonia and nearby villages.
- In the village of Tikawada, 40,000 trees have been planted in the wasteland, and the community is involved in its upkeep.
- Individual homesteads have also started planting native trees and plants, appreciating the benefits that they see in their lives.

Decentralised Waste Management

Efficient and environmentally-safe disposal of waste is an Indian problem. In the absence of any formal waste management system in rural areas, waste is either dumped outside homes or burnt, degrading the air, water and soil quality of the villages.

- The Tilonia approach has been to proactively empower local communities, through painstaking education and awareness drives, and to lead by example to create low-cost, sustainable, solid waste management models.
- This led to community initiatives for waste management. Working with the triple pillars of water harvesting, greening the environment, and waste management, communities have realized the benefits of this coordinated action for themselves.
- Barefoot College, Tilonia has created Rajasthan's first zero waste and plastic free village: Chhota Narena. This program has been successfully scaled to 4 other villages and 1 panchayat.



AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

1. Jamnalal Bajaj Award for Science and Technology, 1985
2. Padma Shri, 1986
3. Save the Drylands Award controlling land degradation, UNEP, 1997-1998
4. Nuclear Free Award, Germany, 2000
5. AGFUND Prize for Voluntary Work, 2001
6. The Schwab Foundation for Outstanding Social Entrepreneurs, World Economic Forum, Geneva Switzerland September 2002
7. The Stockholm Challenge Award for Information Technology (Category Environment), Stockholm, Sweden, October 2002
8. Tech Museum for Innovation Benefiting Humanity, California, November 2002
9. St Andrews Prize for the Environment, Scotland, May 2003
10. The Ashden Award for Sustainable Energy, London, July 2003
11. Tyler Prize, California, USA, April 2004
12. The Skoll Foundation Award, 2005
13. US \$ 1 million ALCAN Award for Sustainability, 2006
14. The Sierra Club Green Energy Award, USA , June 2009

15. SUEZ Environment – Water for All Foundation – Paris, July 2009
16. Robert Hill Award for Promotion of Solar Energy: 24th European Photovoltaic Solar Energy Conference, September 2009
17. Conde Nast Environmental Award, Washington, November 2009
18. Asian Excellence Awards, London, November 2011, Social Entrepreneur of the Year
19. The Guardian in London on 5th January 2008 identified Bunker Roy as one of the 50 Environmentalists in the world who could save the planet
20. Identified by TIME magazine as one of the 100 most influential people in the world, April 2010
21. Green Fighters 100 Eco-Lifestyle Magazine, Japan, 2010
22. C.F. Andrews Distinguished Alumnus Award, St Stephens College, Delhi
23. Giraffe Heroes International Award, USA, 2011
24. Blue Planet Prize, Tokyo, Japan, November 2011
25. CNN IBN Real Heroes Lifetime Achievement Award, 2013
26. Clinton Global Citizen Award, New York, September 2013
27. TOI Social Impact Award, 2015
28. Social Entrepreneur of the Year, Business Standard, Mumbai, India, March 2017
29. Hon. Degree Bachelor of Law, Princeton University, June 2017 (First Indian to receive this award in 40 years)
30. ILEA Leadership Energy Award, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, November 2017
31. Earth Care Awards, 2018
32. TSS Social Enterprise Global Awards, Hyderabad, 2021
33. India Sanitation Coalition Award (FICCI) for Community led solid waste management system under best non-profit engagement model in sanitation (Rural) category 2021.
34. Woman Exemplar Program, Dhapu Kaki Health Category, CII Foundation, March 2021



THE DALAI LAMA

MESSAGE

I am very pleased that the Barefoot College in Tilonia, Rajasthan, is celebrating 50 years of service to needy people in rural areas and in the most critical area of education. I have always considered education to be of the utmost importance, for it is only through education that we can provide a level playing field for all, without distinguishing between the rich and the poor, men and women, easterners and westerners.

Eleven years ago I have had the opportunity to visit the college, which is located in a rural village in Rajasthan, and was encouraged to see that the college focuses on equality, self-reliance, and sustainability to encourage individuals to look to their existing traditions to find solutions to challenges they face. Rather than being focussed on external material development, the college provides an opportunity for individuals to go back to their roots and to free their minds. The values the college promotes, including the dignity of the individual, derive from ancient Indian traditions, which are unfortunately not much emphasized in the education system.

As in so many other countries, the gap between rich and poor is wide in India too. The college has addressed the root of the problem by offering education to those who lack the resources to attend “modern” schools. Educating as many children as possible is undoubtedly the way to build a healthy and prosperous society.

I am also glad that members of the college have been sharing their experiences, not only with fellow Indian brothers and sisters, but also with other underprivileged communities in Asia, Africa and the Americas. It serves as a beacon of inspiration to them all. I would like to congratulate Aruna and Bunker Roy for their far-sighted vision in establishing the Barefoot College and wish its continued success.

With my prayers and good wishes,

3 January 2022



CLARENCE HOUSE

23rd January, 2022

My dear Bunker,

Having discovered that this year is the 50th anniversary of your founding of the Barefoot College, I particularly wanted to send you my heartfelt congratulations and kindest possible wishes on celebrating such a special milestone.

I have such fond memories of meeting you all those years ago in India and of being inspired by the simple, appropriate solutions you were deploying in order to support rural communities, based on the teachings of the Mahatma. I have been a lifelong admirer of your noble efforts ever since, especially as I believe it is of crucial importance that we draw as much as possible on indigenous knowledge, practical skills and wisdom as we address some of the most fundamental challenges from climate change to biodiversity loss and poverty. I keep praying that many more people around the world will learn from, and adopt, the valuable lessons learnt from your many years of hard-won experience...

It seems far too long since I have seen you and I do so hope there will be a chance to do so before we get too old to remember who we are! In the meantime, I can only wish you and the Barefoot College, Tilonia, every possible continued success and many more years of service to the development needs of the Indian people, and indeed, of the world.

With my fondest regards,
as always -

Manny

3 January 2022

Mr Sanjit Bunker Roy
Founder and Director
Barefoot College
Village Tilonia
Via Madanganj, District Ajmer
Tilonia, Rajasthan 305816
India

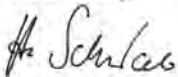
Dear Mr Roy,

Exactly 20 years ago, the Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship recognised Barefoot College for its pioneering work by nominating it Social Entrepreneur of the Year 2002.

The Barefoot College has pioneered in solving the basic problems of livelihood by acting in the true sense of systems leadership. It started with the simple idea of providing support for rural women and has taken the lead in providing all those supportive and integrated services which enable rural households to conduct a decent live through better education, health, water conservation, care for the environment.

Today the organisation is an outstanding role model in many countries for enhancing the potential of powerful self-development.

Yours sincerely,



Hilde Schwab
Co-Founder and Chair
Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship
World Economic Forum
www.weforum.org



CHIEF MINISTER
RAJASTHAN

Message

I am glad to know that the Barefoot College, Tilonia is organising a virtual Golden Jubilee event to mark the completion of 50 years of its establishment on February 5, 2022.

Since its inception, the Barefoot College Tilonia, a college exclusively for the poor people, is imparting rural traditional knowledge and skills to rural people to improve their life. Imparting education to small shopkeepers, daily wage labourers, housewives and rural women from poor agriculture communities is indeed a commendable task.

I hope that the Institute will continue to grow in strength and stature in the years ahead and will continue its mission of improving skills of marginalized rural people.

I am thankful for inviting me on this occasion and send my good wishes for the success of the event.

(Ashok Gehlot)

Bank Details for Donations using Indian Bank Account (Domestic Donations)

Name: Social Work and Research Centre

Account Number: 363802010005210

IFSC Code: UBIN0536385

Branch Name: Union Bank of India, Tilonia Branch

Bank Details for Donations from Abroad (Foreign Donations)

Name: Social Work and Research Centre

Account Number: 40168594652

IFSC Code: SBIN0000691

SWIFT Code: SBININBB104

Branch Name: State Bank of India, New Delhi

FCRA Cell, 4th Floor, State Bank of India,

New Delhi Main Branch, 11, Sansad Marg, New Delhi-110001

For donations through website, please visit

<https://barefootcollegetilonia.org/donate/>



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