

## A Roof for Education: Climate-friendly community school built under flyover without brick or mortar

**New Delhi, 4 March 2022:** SEEDS (Sustainable Ecological & Environmental Development Society) along with Swedish non-profit, **Better Shelter** has built a transitional structure for the Van Phool open air community school in Mayur Vihar, East Delhi that has been operating under a flyover without any roof or walls since 2020. The community school which caters to children of the Yamuna Khadar slum cluster has 200 active enrolled students. The structure has been built to promote a stable learning environment that protects students from extreme weather conditions such as heat, rain and cold as they return to classrooms.

Sharing his thoughts, Sumeet Agarwal, Architect and Senior Director at SEEDS says, *“SEEDS has been using local materials and skills to work at scale. Conforming to this practice we have used bamboo as a cladding material on the Better Shelter Structure frame for the community school to provide a covered learning space that previously lacked these facilities, causing the children to study in the open.”*

Van Phool community school also serves as a *balwadi* (creche) for children between the ages of 2 and 5, a non-formal education centre for school going students and school dropouts as well as a resource centre for the vocational training of the community. Keeping in mind the unauthorised nature of settlements in the area, a temporary structure was agreed upon utilising materials accessible from the local market. The framework for the school was the “Structure” by Better Shelter that employs the modular steel frame. Galvalume sheets were used for roofing, bamboo reed panels for walls and pinewood for doors and windows. The materials were chosen with the objective of generating a long-lasting, climate-adjusting, cost-effective, and simple-to-install structure.

*“This school will have an immense impact over the years to come, enabling a brighter future for so many children in this community. We are pleased to see the fantastic results of the adaptation realised by SEEDS: by applying expertise and experience the SEEDS team has transformed the Structure frame into a school where children can come every day to learn and play. Sadly, we see a growing need for temporary, transitional structures like these as climate change is expected to drive more people into displacement. Only through collaboration across sectors and disciplines will we be able to face the challenges to come,”* says Johan Karlsson, Managing Director, Better Shelter.

Yamuna Khadar in Mayur Vihar, Delhi, where migrant communities live in unauthorised clusters located at the floodplains of river Yamuna, has an approximate population of 10,000 comprising migrants from Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, and Bihar. Around 4000 children live in this area—70 per cent of them are enrolled in government schools, but only 40 per cent attend classes. There is a high percentage of school dropouts, due to the distance between the slum cluster and the location of the school, as well as the lack of access to adequate education in government schools. Van Phool community school managed by a local named Naresh Pal aims to bridge this gap. With approximately 20 lakh people living in 675 slum clusters across the national capital of Delhi, temporary shelters, with climate-friendly and readily available material which can be easily dismantled, transported and re-installed, are the need of the hour.

### **About SEEDS:**

SEEDS ([Sustainable Environment and Ecological Development Society](#)) is a not-for-profit organisation that enables community resilience through practical solutions in the areas of disaster readiness, response and rehabilitation. Since 1994, the organisation has worked extensively on every major disaster in the Indian subcontinent – grafting innovative technology on to traditional wisdom. It has reached out to families affected by disasters and climate stresses; strengthened and rebuilt schools and homes; and has invariably put its faith in skill-building, planning and communications to foster long-term resilience.

SEEDS is also India's first agency to be verified on the parameters of the global Core Humanitarian Standards (CHS) – an international certification system for quality and accountability in humanitarian response. SEEDS has been awarded with the most prestigious annual Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan 2021 by the Government of India acknowledging the invaluable contribution and selfless service rendered by individuals and organisations in India in the field of Disaster Management. SEEDS completed 28 years of outstanding service to humanity in January 2022 and is re-anchoring its approach to building resilience through innovation. It continues to empower the most vulnerable across Asia to build a better future.

### **About Better Shelter:**

Better Shelter is a humanitarian non-profit organisation based in Sweden. It started as a small social enterprise in 2010 with a big mission dedicated to sheltering displaced persons with safety, dignity and hope on their path towards a more stable life in a permanent home of their own.

While its work has grown in scale, Better Shelter's small team continues to offer support to its partners and deliver its shelters internationally from warehouses in Poland, Turkey and Panama. Since 2015, Better Shelter has delivered more than 70,000 shelters to emergency, crisis and development programs in over 70 countries.

Better Shelter has been able to impact the lives of hundreds of thousands of displaced persons through collaborations with humanitarian NGOs and INGOs, UN bodies, philanthropic foundations, academic institutions, including UNHCR, the IKEA Foundation, Aga Khan Agency for Habitat and the University of Baghdad.

For more information, visit [www.seedsindia.org](http://www.seedsindia.org)



### **For media connect**

#### **Brands2Life**

Sushmita Singh

9654432361

[sushmita@brands2life.in](mailto:sushmita@brands2life.in)

#### **SEEDS**

Kaushani Banerjee

+919769295022

[kaushani@seedsindia.org](mailto:kaushani@seedsindia.org)