

2023-2026

Bagh Mitra

Tiger Conservation Awareness Program

An CSR Initiative implemented by Tiger Watch



Picture: The quiet authority of the wild. © Dr Dharmendra Khandal



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Area We Work In
2. Building Conservation Awareness
3. Role of Supporters
4. Acknowledgement - Sundeep Bhutoria
5. Acknowledgement - Dieter & Liz Gutmann
6. Why Tiger Matters
7. Need For Conservation Education
8. About Tiger Watch
9. Program Objectives
10. Program Design
11. Implementation Framework
12. Delivery Mechanism
13. Components of the Program
14. Impact & Monitoring
15. Learning & Adaptation
16. Sustainability
17. Acknowledgements



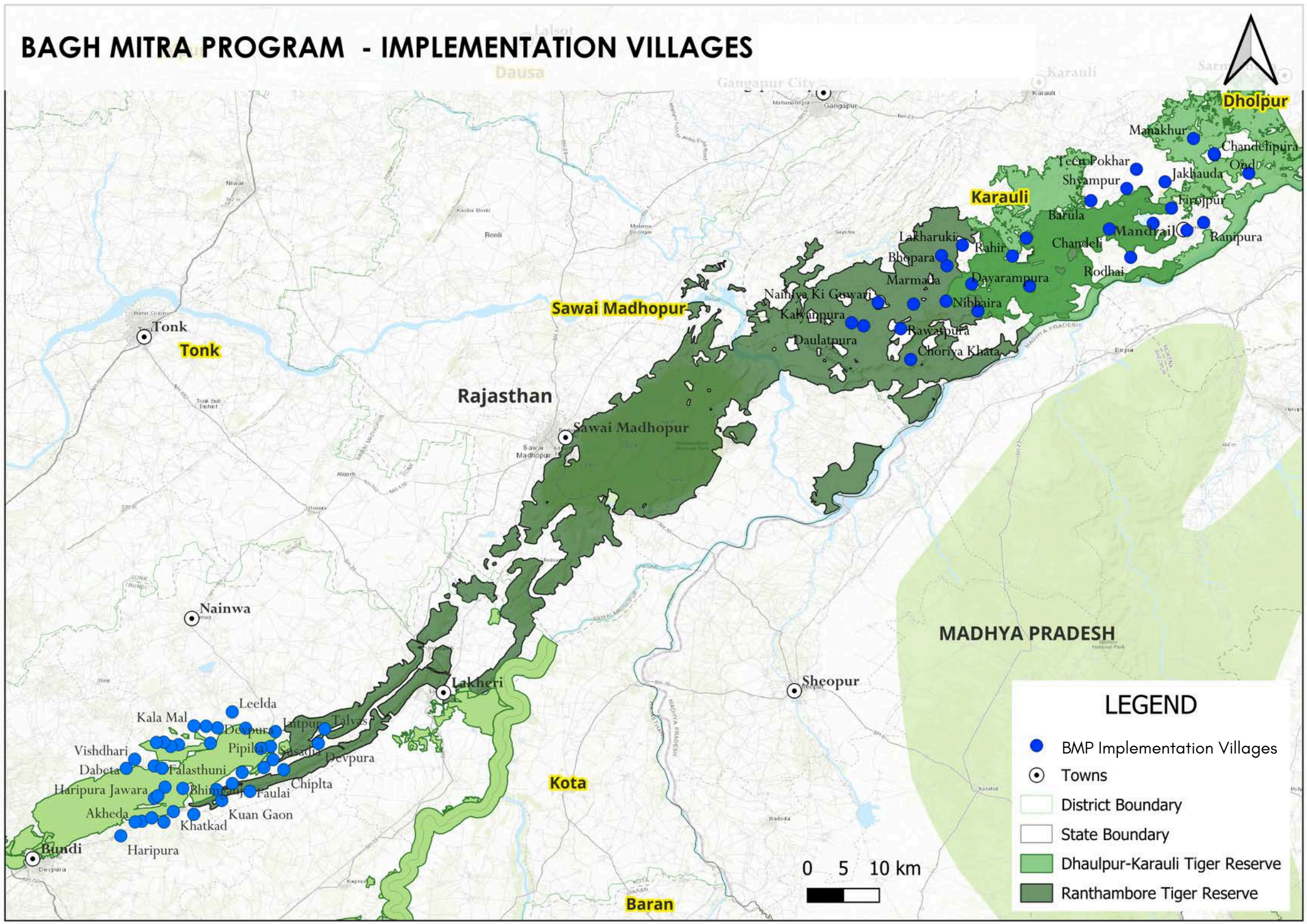


AREA WE WORK IN

Tiger Watch works in and around the Greater Ranthambhore ecosystem, covering three crucial tiger-bearing landscapes of Rajasthan, Ranthambhore, Ramgarh-Vishdhari, and Dholpur-Karauli Tiger Reserves. Together, these landscapes form an ecologically important network of forests, corridors, and buffer zones supporting tiger conservation in eastern Rajasthan and enabling connectivity with the Central Indian tiger landscape.

Within this broader landscape, the Bagh Mitra Program is implemented across three districts: Karauli, Bundi, and Sawai Madhopur, focusing on government schools located in forest-fringe villages. These districts are characterized by close human-forest linkages, where communities depend on surrounding forests for livelihoods, grazing, and cultural practices, while also experiencing frequent interactions with wildlife.

BAGH MITRA PROGRAM - IMPLEMENTATION VILLAGES





BUILDING CONSERVATION AWARENESS IN TIGER LANDSCAPES

A Three-Year School-Based Conservation Education Initiative in the Greater Ranthambhore Landscape

The Bagh Mitra Program (BMP) is a school-based conservation education initiative designed to foster environmental awareness, responsibility, and long-term stewardship for wildlife and forests among children living in forest-fringe landscapes. Implemented by Tiger Watch with the support of Petronet LNG Limited and Dieter & Liz Gutmann, the program has been operational for three consecutive years in selected villages of Sawai Madhopur, Karauli and Bundi districts in Rajasthan.

These districts form part of the ecologically sensitive Aravalli–Vindhyan tiger landscape, embedded within the greater Ranthambhore ecosystem. This landscape includes Kailadevi Wildlife Sanctuary to the north-east and Ramgarh Vishdhari Tiger Reserve to the south-west—both functioning as critical extensions of the central component, the Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve. Together, these areas provide essential ecological connectivity, linking the otherwise relatively isolated Ranthambhore tiger population tiger habitats in Madhya Pradesh.

In such a setting, interactions between people and wildlife are frequent and complex, and long-term conservation outcomes depend not only on protection and enforcement, but equally on community understanding, acceptance, and participation.

The Bagh Mitra Program responds to this need by engaging children as key stakeholders in conservation. Through structured, repeated, and locally relevant education delivered within government schools, the program builds ecological knowledge, nurtures positive attitudes toward wildlife, and promotes coexistence values from an early age.

Over the three-year period, BMP reached 135 government schools across 115 villages, directly engaging approximately 25,000 students. The program evolved from foundational awareness-building to deeper, community-embedded engagement through classroom learning, creative activities, experiential field exposure, and student-led initiatives. Its sustained presence has contributed to improved understanding of local biodiversity, reduced fear-based perceptions of wildlife, and the emergence of young conservation ambassadors within forest-edge communities.

This consolidated report presents an overview of the program’s rationale, design, implementation approach, scale, and impact over three years, and acknowledges the pivotal role played by Dieter &

Liz Gutmann, and Petronet LNG Limited in enabling sustained and meaningful conservation education across this critical tiger landscape.

**“When
children
understand
their forests,
coexistence
becomes
possible.”**



“Protecting
landscapes
begins with
investing in the
people who live
alongside them.”





ROLE OF OUR SUPPORTERS

Petronet LNG Limited & The Dieter & Liz Gutmann Tiger Conservation Program

Enabling Landscape-Scale Conservation Education in Tiger Country

The Bagh Mitra Tiger Conservation Awareness Program is supported by two key partners — Petronet LNG Limited and the Dieter & Liz Gutmann Tiger Conservation Program. Together, they provide the financial backing, governance structure, and long-term commitment necessary to sustain a landscape-scale conservation education initiative.

Petronet LNG Limited — Bundi & Karauli Districts

Petronet LNG Limited supported the implementation of a structured conservation education program in forest-fringe schools around Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve, Kailadevi Wildlife Sanctuary, and Ramgarh Vishdhari Tiger Reserve. This support, formalised through a Letter of Intent (January 2023), sanctioned ₹40.50 lakh for a three-year period.

The CSR partnership enabled deployment of trained educators, development of teaching materials, and regular school-based and community outreach activities, including competitions, trainings, rallies, and Bagh Melas.

The program emphasised continuity and quality over short-term outreach.

A milestone-based funding and reporting framework ensured accountability, with Tiger Watch responsible for implementation and Petronet LNG Limited providing oversight through structured monitoring and evaluation. Beyond funding, the partnership reflects a commitment to fostering informed attitudes toward wildlife and strengthening coexistence in tiger landscapes.

The Dieter & Liz Gutmann Tiger Conservation Program — Sawai Madhopur District

The Sawai Madhopur component of Bagh Mitra, covering 65 schools, is fully supported by the Dieter & Liz Gutmann Tiger Conservation Program. This partnership, rooted in nearly two decades of engagement since 2005, reflects a long-term commitment to tiger conservation and community engagement.

The program supports a dedicated team of educators, locally relevant teaching resources, and continuous engagement with forest-fringe communities. It also forms part of a broader conservation framework that includes anti-poaching efforts, community rehabilitation, and ecological research, making it a cornerstone of Tiger Watch's work in the Greater Ranthambhore landscape.

A Partnership Larger Than Its Parts

When viewed together, the support of Petronet LNG Limited and the Dieter & Liz Gutmann Tiger Conservation Program has enabled the Bagh Mitra

Program to achieve something genuinely rare in conservation education: sustained, simultaneous outreach across three districts of a critical tiger landscape — Karauli, Bundi, and Sawai Madhopur — over a continuous period of three years. This combined effort has reached over 135 government schools, engaged more than 25,000 students, and helped build a generation of young conservation ambassadors in the very communities whose understanding and goodwill will determine the long-term future of eastern Rajasthan's forests and their wildlife.

Tiger Watch remains deeply grateful to both partners for their trust, their vision, and their belief that lasting conservation is built not only through protection on the ground, but through the values we nurture in the people who call these landscapes home.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF SUPPORT & INSPIRATION

Sundeep Bhutoria

Sundeep Bhutoria is a committed social activist who has worked for over two and a half decades in the fields of social welfare, international cultural cooperation, and the promotion and preservation of Indian arts and heritage. His engagement across diverse social and cultural platforms reflects a deep belief in community participation, inclusive development, and the long-term value of nurturing social institutions.

Beyond formal roles and affiliations, Mr. Bhutoria has been a source of inspiration and encouragement for organisations working at the grassroots. His ability to connect conservation, culture, and community welfare has consistently reinforced the idea that meaningful social change emerges from patience, continuity, and genuine engagement with people.

For Tiger Watch and the Bagh Mitra Program, Mr. Bhutoria's support has gone beyond facilitation. His timely motivation, thoughtful guidance, and belief in community-led action have strengthened our resolve to work with children, teachers, and forest-edge communiti-

-es in some of Rajasthan's most challenging landscapes. His encouragement has helped reinforce the importance of conservation education as a preventive, long-term investment in coexistence.

This page is dedicated to acknowledging his role as an enabler and mentor, whose quiet yet impactful support has contributed to sustaining conservation education efforts in the Greater Ranthambhore landscape. We remain grateful for his continued encouragement and for the values he embodies—service, cultural rootedness, and commitment to the public good.

“Enduring conservation is built not only through projects, but through people who believe in the work and those who carry it forward.”



“Tiger numbers have reached record highs, with individuals now naturally expanding beyond Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve—a clear result of sustained conservation commitment.”



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF SUPPORT & INSPIRATION

Dieter & Liz Gutmann

Mr. Dieter Gutmann and Mrs. Liz Gutmann are among the most dedicated long-term supporters of tiger conservation in India. Their association with Ranthambhore and with Tiger Watch spans nearly two decades, beginning with a personal connection to the late Sh. Fateh Singh Rathore, whom they first met in 2005. That encounter planted the seed of what has grown into one of the most meaningful and sustained philanthropic commitments to wildlife conservation in the Greater Ranthambhore landscape.

Over the years, the Gutmanns have channelled their support towards Tiger Watch's most critical work: anti-poaching operations that have helped dismantle poaching networks in the region, rehabilitation and livelihood support for the Mogya traditional hunting community, and wildlife research that has produced over fifty pioneering studies on species including the caracal, gharial, and grey wolf.

Recognising that the long-term survival of tigers depends not only on protection but equally on community understanding and acceptance, the Gutmanns chose to formalise and expand their support through a comprehensive initiative — the Dieter & Liz Gutmann Tiger Conservation Program — which now serves as the backbone of Tiger Watch's integrated conservation model. This program brings together anti-poaching, ecological research, and conservation education under a single, landscape-wide umbrella.

Within this program, the Sawai Madhopur chapter of the Bagh Mitra Program holds a place of special importance. Covering 65 schools across villages on the periphery of Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve, it directly addresses the most urgent need: building conservation values among the generation of children who will inherit — and shape — the future of these forests. The Gutmanns' sustained financial commitment has enabled Tiger Watch to field a dedicated team of trained mobile educators, develop specialized teaching resources, and maintain year-round presence in forest-fringe schools — all without interruption across multiple academic years.

In March 2024, at the 12th Fateh Singh Rathore Memorial Lecture and Wildlife Conservation Awards, Mr. Dieter Gutmann was presented the Fateh Singh Rathore Services to Wildlife, People and Nature Award in recognition of his and Mrs. Gutmann's extraordinary contribution to conservation and community empowerment in and around Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve. Both were present on the occasion, and Mr. Gutmann addressed the gathering with a reflective account of their journey into big cat conservation — a journey that, in many ways, mirrors the journey of Ranthambhore's tigers themselves: from vulnerability to resurgence, sustained by belief and quiet, enduring commitment.

For Tiger Watch and the Bagh Mitra Program, the Gutmanns represent far more than financial support. Their faith in community-led, education-driven conservation has provided a moral foundation for this work — the conviction that investing in children and communities today is the most powerful thing one can do for the wild landscapes of tomorrow.



WHY SAVING THE TIGER MATTERS

Ecology, Water, and Human Well-Being

The question “*Why should we save the tiger?*” is often raised in regions where people live close to forests and experience direct costs of wildlife presence. Tigers are large carnivores, capable of causing human casualties and livestock losses, and their protection is frequently associated with restrictions on land use and development. From this perspective, tiger conservation can appear burdensome or even unjust. However, this view reflects a narrow understanding of conservation, rather than its ecological purpose.

The Tiger as an Indicator of Ecosystem Health

The tiger is not conserved in isolation. It functions as a key indicator species, representing the health of entire forest ecosystems. Forests that can support tigers must also support adequate prey populations, intact vegetation, water sources, and natural ecological processes. In this sense, monitoring tiger populations offers a reliable way to assess the overall condition of forests.

Project Tiger and related conservation efforts are therefore not merely about increasing tiger

numbers, but about protecting forests, biodiversity, and the life-support systems they provide. If the tiger survives, it is a strong indication that the forest ecosystem as a whole is functioning.

Forests, Water, and Climate Regulation

Protected forests play a critical role in sustaining water security, particularly in India’s hot and semi-arid regions. Forests regulate river flows, recharge groundwater, and maintain natural drainage systems. When forest catchments are fragmented or obstructed, rivers lose continuity and gradually dry up.

Forests also influence rainfall through transpiration and evaporation, releasing water vapour that contributes to cloud formation. Tree cover moderates temperature, slows wind movement, and creates conditions conducive to local precipitation. In addition, forests absorb atmospheric carbon dioxide, playing a vital role in climate regulation. The bulk of a tree’s mass comes not from soil, but from carbon drawn from the air—making forests one of the most effective natural carbon sinks.

The Ecological Role of the Tiger

As an apex predator, the tiger regulates herbivore populations by primarily removing old, weak, or sick individuals. This maintains

healthier prey populations and prevents overgrazing. Even unsuccessful hunts keep prey species alert and mobile, aiding seed dispersal and forest regeneration.

Over its lifetime, a tiger undertakes thousands of chases and hunts, creating continuous ecological pressure that keeps forest systems dynamic and resilient. Areas regularly used by tigers often become biodiversity hotspots, supporting rich plant and animal life.

Beyond Ecology: Water, Livelihoods, and Culture

In landscapes such as Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve, forests feed multiple dams and irrigation systems that sustain hundreds of villages and agricultural economies worth hundreds of crores of rupees annually. Across India’s tiger reserves, hundreds of rivers and streams originate from protected forests, supporting millions of people downstream.

While tourism is often highlighted, it represents only a minor fraction of the benefits derived from tiger landscapes. The true value of these forests lies in water security, climate stability, biodiversity, and cultural continuity. The tiger, deeply embedded in Indian cultural and spiritual traditions, symbolises these broader values.



A Moral and Practical Imperative

Ultimately, saving the tiger is synonymous with saving forests, and saving forests is essential for human survival. Beyond economic calculations or global prestige, there is a fundamental ethical principle at stake: every species has the right to exist. Conservation is not about choosing wildlife over people, but about recognising that human well-being is inseparable from healthy ecosystems.

This understanding forms the foundation for conservation education initiatives such as the Bagh Mitra Program, which seek to build informed, empathetic, and responsible relationships between communities and the landscapes they depend on.

“Saving the tiger is, in essence, about saving forests—and saving forests is about securing water, climate stability, and life itself.”

Picture: Boundaries are human. No fence for instinct. © Dr Dharmendra Khandal



NEED FOR CONSERVATION EDUCATION

Why Awareness and Understanding Matter in Forest-Fringe Communities

Increasing anthropogenic pressure on the forests of Ranthambhore, Kailadevi, and Ramgarh Vishdhari—along with limited access to environmental education—highlighted the need for focused conservation awareness in these landscapes. Habitat degradation, resource extraction, and growing human presence continue to threaten tiger habitats, while communities living close to forests often perceive wildlife primarily through fear or loss, in the absence of reliable ecological understanding.

Prior to the Bagh Mitra Program, many government schools in forest-fringe villages of Karauli and Bundi lacked structured, locally relevant environmental education. As a result, children frequently viewed wildlife through the lens of conflict rather than as part of a shared ecosystem—an especially critical gap given their role as future stakeholders in conservation.

Recognising that long-term conservation success depends as much on informed communities as on protection measures, Tiger Watch conceptualised the Bagh Mitra Program as a preventive, education-led approach. By connecting children meaningfully to their local ecological context, the program builds scientific understanding, nurtures empathy toward wildlife, and prepares young community members to engage constructively in the long-term stewardship of the Ranthambhore landscape.





ABOUT TIGER WATCH

Tiger Watch is a Rajasthan-based conservation organisation working at the intersection of wildlife protection, ecological research, and community development. Founded by **Sh. Fateh Singh Rathore**, the organisation has been actively engaged in tiger conservation for nearly three decades, with a sustained presence in some of the most critical tiger landscapes of western and central India.

The organisation’s work is rooted in the belief that enduring conservation is only possible when local communities are active partners. Accordingly, Tiger Watch adopts a holistic approach that integrates field-based tiger monitoring, anti-poaching support, education, livelihood interventions, and community welfare. This integrated model has helped strengthen forest-edge communities while contributing to the long-term protection of tigers and the landscapes they depend on.

Landscape Presence

Tiger Watch operates across key tiger landscapes in Rajasthan, including:

- **Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve**, one of India’s most iconic tiger habitats, where long-term monitoring and community engagement have been central to conservation success

- **Dholpur–Karauli Tiger Reserve**, a critical landscape supporting dispersing tigers and corridor connectivity
- **Ramgarh Vishdhari Tiger Reserve**, an emerging tiger reserve essential for landscape-level conservation and future population stability

Beyond protected areas, Tiger Watch’s work extends into buffer zones, corridors, and forest-fringe villages, where conservation challenges are most acute and community engagement is essential.

Conservation & Community Approach

Tiger Watch’s work is guided by:

- Science-led conservation, grounded in long-term field data and ecological monitoring
- Community-first solutions that address education, livelihoods, and coexistence
- Partnership-driven action with forest departments, donors, and local institutions
- Long-term commitment to landscapes, rather than short-term, project-based interventions

Key Areas of Work

Tiger Monitoring & Research

Tiger Watch conducts systematic field monitoring of tigers and co-predators through

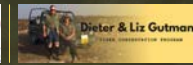
pugmark tracking, camera trapping, and daily patrolling. This long-term dataset supports management decisions, and early identification of conflict-prone situations. The organization has documented dispersing tigers moving over 240 km from Ranthambhore to Madhya Pradesh, generating rare insights into tiger movement, stress, and human interface in fragmented landscapes.

Anti-Poaching Support

Working in close coordination with forest officials and local communities, Tiger Watch supports frontline protection through intelligence gathering in vulnerable areas. The sustained efforts have contributed to the apprehension of nearly **200 wildlife criminals** and the seizure of illegal weapons, traps, and wildlife contraband. The steady recovery and growth of the tiger population in Ranthambhore stands as a visible outcome of long-term protection on the ground.

Community Support & Conflict Mitigation

Through its cattle compensation support, Tiger Watch provides timely additional relief, often covering up to half the government compensation, to families affected by livestock depredation. This support helps reduce immediate economic stress and encourages continued coexistence in forest-edge communities



Education & Awareness Programmes

Education is a central pillar of Tiger Watch's conservation strategy. The Bagh Mitra Programme, implemented across 135 schools in three districts, has reached over 25,000 students through structured conservation education and nature-based learning. Complementing this, Digital Education Programmes—delivered through static centres and a mobile digital unit—bridge the digital divide for children in remote forest-fringe villages.

Marginalised Community Education & Livelihoods

Since 2006, the Mogya Education Programme has supported children from marginalised Mogya communities, focusing on literacy, school retention, and positive social pathways. Parallel **livelihood initiatives** such as *Bagh Pari* and *Vanya Sakhi* support women and girls through skill development in traditional and contemporary crafts, enabling dignified income opportunities while strengthening community resilience.

“Long-term conservation is built through sustained presence, not short-term projects.”



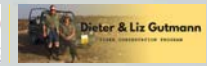
PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The Bagh Mitra Program was conceived as a long-term conservation education initiative aimed at strengthening the human dimension of wildlife conservation in forest-fringe landscapes. The program is guided by the following core objectives:

- To enhance knowledge and awareness of local wildlife, forests, and ecosystems among school children living in proximity to protected areas and wildlife corridors.
- To foster positive attitudes toward wildlife conservation and coexistence, moving beyond fear and conflict-driven narratives to an informed understanding of ecological roles and shared landscapes.
- To reduce fear-based and misinformation-driven perceptions of wild animals, particularly large mammals and commonly misunderstood species, through accurate, age-appropriate, and locally relevant education.
- To encourage children to act as conservation ambassadors within their families, schools, and communities, enabling the flow of conservation values beyond classrooms and into everyday life.
- To build a foundation for long-term community support for conservation initiatives, by nurturing informed, empathetic, and responsible future stakeholders in tiger-bearing landscapes.

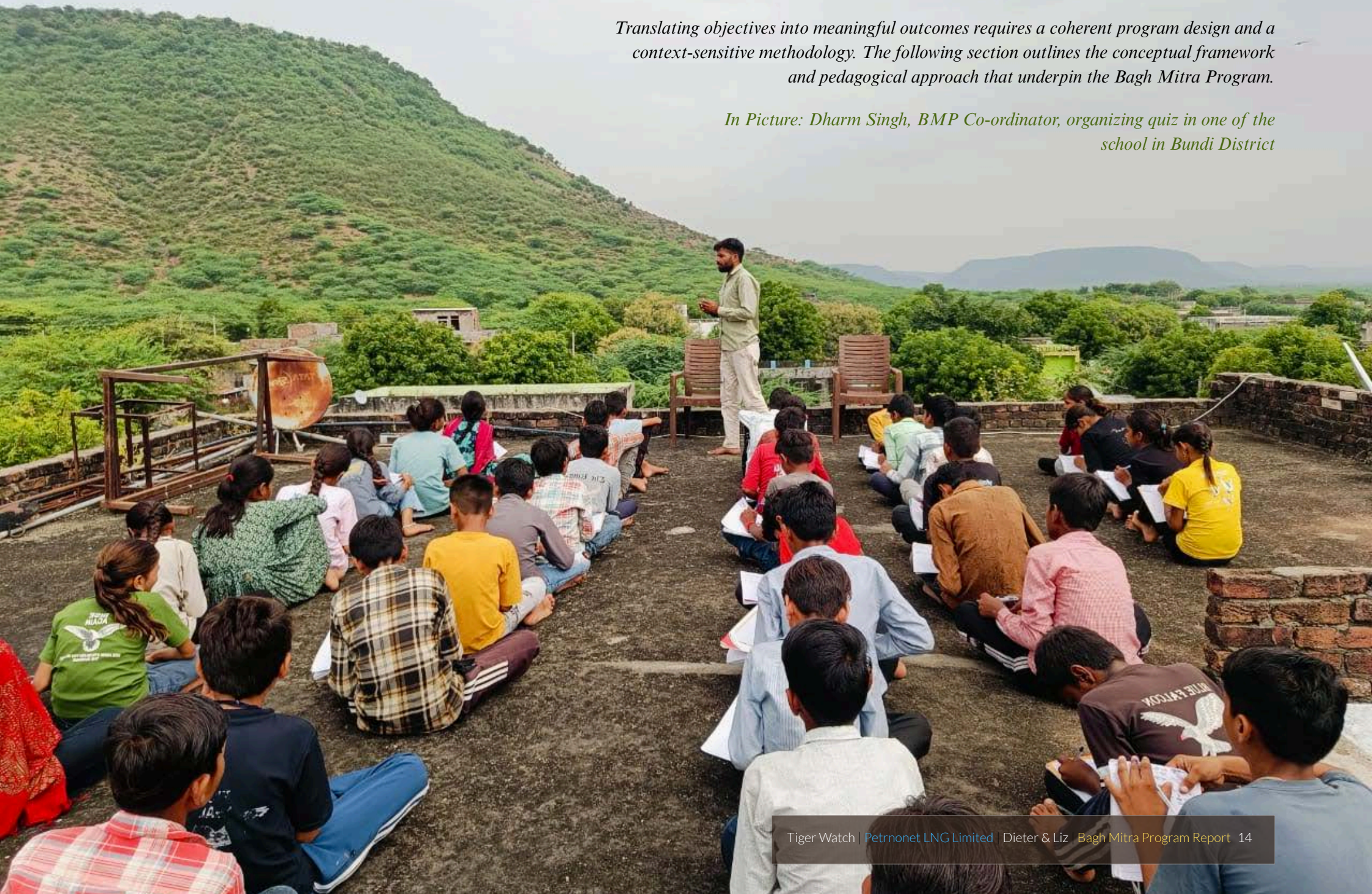
Together, these objectives position the Bagh Mitra Program as a preventive, education-led conservation strategy, complementing field-based protection efforts and contributing to sustainable coexistence between people and wildlife.





Translating objectives into meaningful outcomes requires a coherent program design and a context-sensitive methodology. The following section outlines the conceptual framework and pedagogical approach that underpin the Bagh Mitra Program.

In Picture: Dharm Singh, BMP Co-ordinator, organizing quiz in one of the school in Bundi District



PROGRAM DESIGN

An Experiential, Activity-Based Approach Rooted in Local Landscapes

The Bagh Mitra Program (BMP) is built on a simple yet robust engagement pathway that supports long-term conservation outcomes:

**Awareness → Understanding →
Ownership → Stewardship**

This model recognises that meaningful conservation attitudes cannot be created through one-time exposure. Instead, BMP adopts a school-centric, activity-based approach that is age-appropriate, participatory, and firmly rooted in the local ecological and social context of forest-fringe landscapes. By engaging students repeatedly over multiple academic years, the program enables gradual progression from basic awareness to informed stewardship.

Learning is designed to be experiential rather than didactic, allowing students to relate conservation concepts directly to their surroundings, daily experiences, and community realities.



In Picture: Bagh Mitra Educators participating in one of the educators' workshop

Building on its conceptual design, the Bagh Mitra Program was operationalised through a structured implementation framework. This framework ensured consistency in delivery while allowing flexibility to respond to local school environments and community contexts.



In Picture: Students participating in drawing competition



IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

A Mobile, Resource-Efficient Model for Large-Scale School Engagement

BMP is implemented as a large-scale, mobile education intervention executed by a dedicated team of **five trained educators** led by a **program coordinator**. At the outset of the program, villages were identified and prioritised based on levels of *anthropogenic pressure and proximity to forest areas*. This ensured that program resources were directed toward locations where conservation education was most urgently needed.

Educators were recruited locally and trained on a structured curriculum developed by Tiger Watch. To support effective delivery we equipped our teachers with **portable projectors** and developed specialised educational materials, including:

- Awareness posters
- An activity-based student workbook
- A teacher's handbook, *Rajasthan Ke Baghon Ka Sansar*, covering all program modules
- Photographic Posters covering faunal diversity

DELIVERY MECHANISM

Adapting Delivery to School Size and Student Levels

BMP follows a flexible but structured schedule, developed in coordination with school administrations. **Teachers visit each designated school three times per month**, ensuring regular and predictable engagement without disrupting routine academic activities.

Sessions are conducted in batches, typically in school halls. In schools with larger student strength, multiple sessions are organised to ensure effective participation and interaction. This approach allows our educators to adapt session depth and methods according to class levels, ranging from middle to senior secondary grades.

“When learning fits within the rhythm of schools, it lasts.”





COMPONENTS OF THE PROGRAM

Linking Curriculum, Creativity, and Community Action

The Bagh Mitra Program integrates classroom learning, creative expression, experiential activities, and community engagement through the following core components:

- **Structured Environmental Curriculum:** Fifteen thematic modules covering ecology, biodiversity, conservation, and environmental issues, aligned broadly with Classes 6–12 and adapted to local contexts.
- **Classroom & Outdoor Learning:** Interactive sessions using visual aids, storytelling, discussions, and outdoor observations to reinforce theoretical concepts.
- **Creative & Competitive Activities:** Annual drawing, essay and poem competitions, Mandana painting, and quizzes that encourage students to express conservation ideas creatively.
- **Bagh Mitra Clubs:** Formation of student-led clubs within schools and villages to promote peer learning, leadership, and community-level awareness.
- **Bagh Mela (Tiger Fair):** Periodic public events that extend conservation education beyond schools, engaging teachers, parents, and community members through exhibitions, performances, and interactive activities.
- **Teacher Involvement & Capacity Building:** Continuous engagement and periodic training of educators to ensure consistency, reinforcement, and sustainability of learning outcomes.



EMPHASIS ON CONTINUITY

A defining strength of BMP is emphasis on sustained engagement rather than one-time awareness events.

By maintaining a regular presence in schools across three years, the program has reinforced, revisited, and internalised conservation concepts over time.

This continuity is essential for achieving lasting attitudinal change and nurturing a generation of informed and responsible conservation stakeholders.



“Conservation education is strongest when learning extends beyond the classroom.”

CLASSROOM CONSERVATION MODULES

Building Foundational Ecological Knowledge Through Structured, Visual Learning

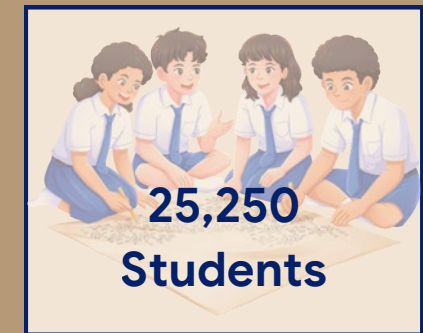
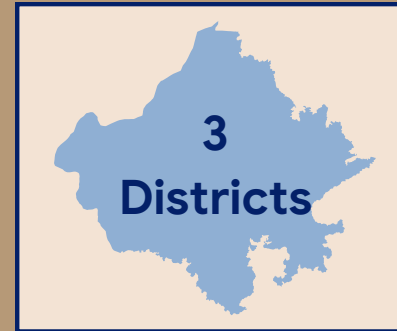
The classroom conservation modules formed the academic foundation of the Bagh Mitra Program, delivering structured and locally relevant environmental education to students across forest-fringe schools. A set of 15 thematic modules—covering tiger reserves, flora and fauna, water, air, avifauna, agriculture-linked biodiversity, and snakebite awareness—was implemented repeatedly to reinforce learning over time.

To improve comprehension and participation, **portable projectors** were introduced in all operational areas, converting traditional lectures into engaging audio-visual sessions using images, maps, and short videos.

Following the introduction of visual teaching tools, teachers observed a clear increase in student participation, with discussion-based interactions nearly doubling during sessions. Students demonstrated improved ability to identify local wildlife species, explain basic ecological processes, and confidently ask conservation-related questions.

Modules with strong real-world relevance—such as snakebite treatment and safety awareness—were particularly impactful, equipping students with practical knowledge applicable to everyday life in forest-edge villages.

Overall, the classroom modules resulted in measurable improvements in ecological awareness, engagement levels, and attitudes toward wildlife, establishing a strong foundation for coexistence values and long-term conservation stewardship among young learners.









ACTIVITIES FROM THE BOOK

Learning Conservation Through Play, Participation, and Creativity

During the first year of the Bagh Mitra Program, a dedicated activity-based learning book was developed to complement classroom modules and make conservation education more engaging, inclusive, and accessible, especially for younger students and mixed-ability classrooms. The activities were designed to translate ecological concepts into play, movement, storytelling, observation, and creativity, allowing students to learn by doing rather than listening alone.

The activity book included a wide range of participatory exercises focusing on sensory awareness, imagination and storytelling, ecological understanding, critical thinking, and physical coordination.

Over the course of the program, 20–25 activity-based sessions were conducted per school annually, reaching an estimated 60–80 students per session, depending on school size and grade composition.

These activities proved particularly effective in engagi-

-ng students from lower and middle grades, who often find conventional classroom teaching challenging. Teachers observed that participation levels increased noticeably, with a larger proportion of students actively taking part during activity sessions compared to lecture-based classes. The use of games, role-play, and group tasks allowed quieter students and those with limited reading or writing skills to participate confidently.

The activity book also provided operational flexibility. Activities were frequently conducted during periods of low school attendance, such as festivals or seasonal breaks, and used as bridging sessions between classroom modules to sustain continuity and student interest.

Overall, the activity-based approach contributed to higher attendance on activity days, stronger recall of conservation concepts, and sustained engagement across academic years. By embedding environmental learning within play and creativity, this component played a key role in reinforcing conservation awareness and positive attitudes toward nature among young learners.

1
Activity Book

32
Activities

6,500
Students' Participation Annually





TEACHER TRAINING & CAPACITY BUILDING

Equipping Teachers with Knowledge, Skills, and Ecological Context

The effectiveness of the BMP rests significantly on the capacity, confidence, and ecological understanding of its educators. Recognising this, teacher training and continuous professional development were embedded as a core component of the program from the outset.

Over the three-year period, six well-structured, residential teacher training workshops were organised by Tiger Watch for educators implementing the Program in Bundi and Karauli districts. These workshops were complemented by an extensive schedule of 65 online training and mentoring sessions conducted by **Dr Dharmendra Khandal**, both prior to the introduction of each module and intermittently during program implementation.

Objectives of Teacher Training

The training framework was designed to:

- Build a strong ecological foundation, rooted in the Aravalli–Vindhyan landscape.

- Equip teachers with effective, age-appropriate teaching methodologies
- Ensure conceptual clarity on wildlife conservation, ecosystems, and human–wildlife coexistence
- Align all educators with the objectives, structure, and pedagogy of the Program.

Structure and Content of Workshops

The residential workshops, held at Ranthambhore and associated field locations, combined classroom instruction, peer learning, and immersive field exposure. Key thematic areas covered across the workshops included:

- Ecology and geography of Ranthambhore, Kailadevi, Ramgarh Vishdhari, and adjoining landscapes
- Flora and fauna identification, with emphasis on local species
- Tigers as apex predators and umbrella species
- Ecosystem services, water cycles, and climate linkages
- Snake awareness and first-response education
- Dispelling myths related to wildlife and conservation
- Teaching methodologies, lesson structuring, & participatory learning tools

Building Educators for Conservation

6
Workshop

65
Online Classes

8
Experiential Learning

Educators were also introduced to and trained in using structured teaching resources, including the Teachers' Handbook (*Rajasthan Ke Bagho Ka Sansar*) and the Activity Book, ensuring consistency in messaging across schools while allowing contextual flexibility.

Experiential Field-Based Learning

A distinctive feature of the training program was immersive field exposure. Teachers spent five days in forest-edge villages and protected landscapes, participating in guided nature trails, wetland visits, and safaris within Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve. These sessions focused on:

- Learning plant and animal identification in natural settings
- Understanding habitat types, animal behaviour, and ecological processes
- Practising techniques for conducting effective student nature walks
- Observing real-world conservation challenges at the human–forest interface

This experiential approach helped educators move beyond textbook knowledge and develop the confidence to teach from lived ecological experience.

Continuous Mentoring and Performance Review

Training was not treated as a one-time input. Regular online classes, revision sessions, and thematic discussions were conducted to reinforce learning, clarify doubts, and introduce emerging conservation themes. Educators were evaluated through written tests, presentations, and micro-teaching sessions, followed by constructive feedback and guidance.

This process ensured consistent improvement in teaching quality, alignment of all educators with program objectives and smooth orientation and integration of newly recruited teachers

Outcomes and Impact

As a result of sustained capacity building educators demonstrated improved subject knowledge and teaching confidence; classroom sessions became more interactive, locally grounded, and engaging; teachers were able to simplify complex ecological concepts for diverse student groups. The program maintained consistency and quality across a

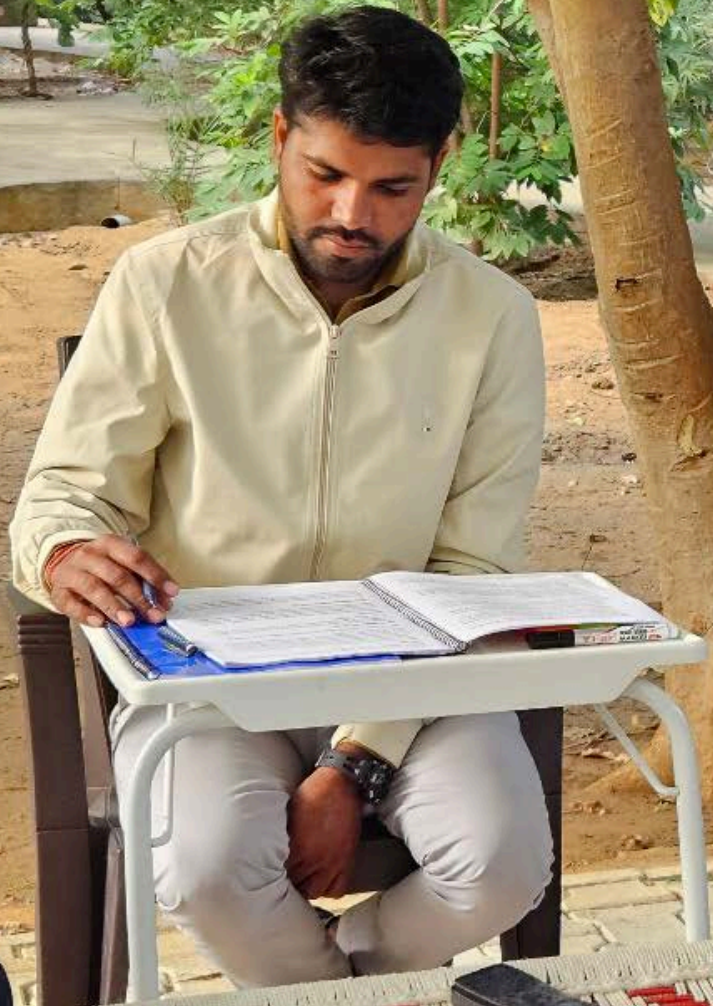
large number of schools and villages.

Teacher training thus emerged as a critical enabler of the Bagh Mitra Program's success, ensuring that conservation education delivered to students was accurate, engaging, and rooted in real ecological understanding.

“Well-prepared educators are the strongest foundation of effective conservation education.”

— Capacity-building principle, Bagh Mitra Program







SCHOOL TEACHERS' AWARENESS & ENGAGEMENT

School teachers play a vital role in reinforcing conservation values and sustaining learning beyond structured program sessions. Recognising this, the Bagh Mitra Program actively engaged school teachers as key partners in conservation education.

As part of this effort, 500 copies of the teacher's handbook "*Rajasthan ke Baghoon ka Sansar*" was distributed across participating schools in Bundi and Karauli districts.

To strengthen understanding and ownership, the program organised interactive discussions, debates, and constructive dialogue sessions with teachers. Over the **three-year period**, at

least **50 such sessions** were conducted, often on days with low student attendance due to festivals or examinations, ensuring effective use of school time while deepening teacher involvement in conservation discourse.

Teachers were also encouraged to participate in the field-linked activities, including plantation drives, awareness rallies, and nature walks alongside students and educators. Their involvement helped reinforce conservation messages through example and supported the integration of environmental awareness into everyday school activities.

Overall, this component strengthened the role of teachers as ongoing facilitators of conservation awareness, contributing to continuity, institutional ownership, and long-term sustainability of the Bagh Mitra Program within schools.

500
Rajasthan Ke Bagho Ka Sansar,
Teachers' Handbook
Distributed

50
Debate/Talks of
Teachers

“Teachers anchor conservation values within school culture.”

— Reflection from school-based conservation education



Teachers' Handbook Rajasthan Ke Baghon Ka Sansar being presented to teachers by our educatore



MANDANA ART: REVIVING TRADITION THROUGH CONSERVATION EXPRESSION

Mandana art is a deeply evocative rural art tradition of Rajasthan, one that connects present generations to ancestral ways of understanding nature, landscapes, and everyday life. Traditionally created using clay, cow dung, and natural chalk, and painted with twigs shaped into simple brushes, Mandana is both humble in material and powerful in expression. Its motifs often reflect harmony with nature, seasonal rhythms, and cultural beliefs rooted in rural life.

Recognising the cultural and ecological significance of this art form, the Bagh Mitra Program integrated Mandana Art competitions as a recurring creative component. Through this activity, conservation themes were expressed using a traditional medium familiar to rural households, allowing students to connect environmental ideas with their cultural heritage.

Each year, the Mandana competition was conducted in **three phases** with participation from approximately 6,000 students annually across the program districts. At the district level, **three outstanding artworks were awarded cash prizes, while around 20 students received consolation awards and certificates.** In addition, three winners at each participating school were recognised, ensuring encouragement and visibility at the grassroots level.

Beyond competition, the Mandana activity served a larger purpose: keeping a traditional art form alive among younger generations while using it as a medium for environmental reflection. Students depicted forests, wildlife, water sources, and coexistence themes through patterns and symbols, reinforcing conservation learning in a culturally rooted and creative manner.

By integrating Mandana art into conservation education, the Bagh Mitra Program strengthened the link between culture, creativity, and ecology, demonstrating that conservation values can be nurtured not only through science and information, but also through living traditions that communities already value and understand.

**6,500
Students'
Participation
Annually**

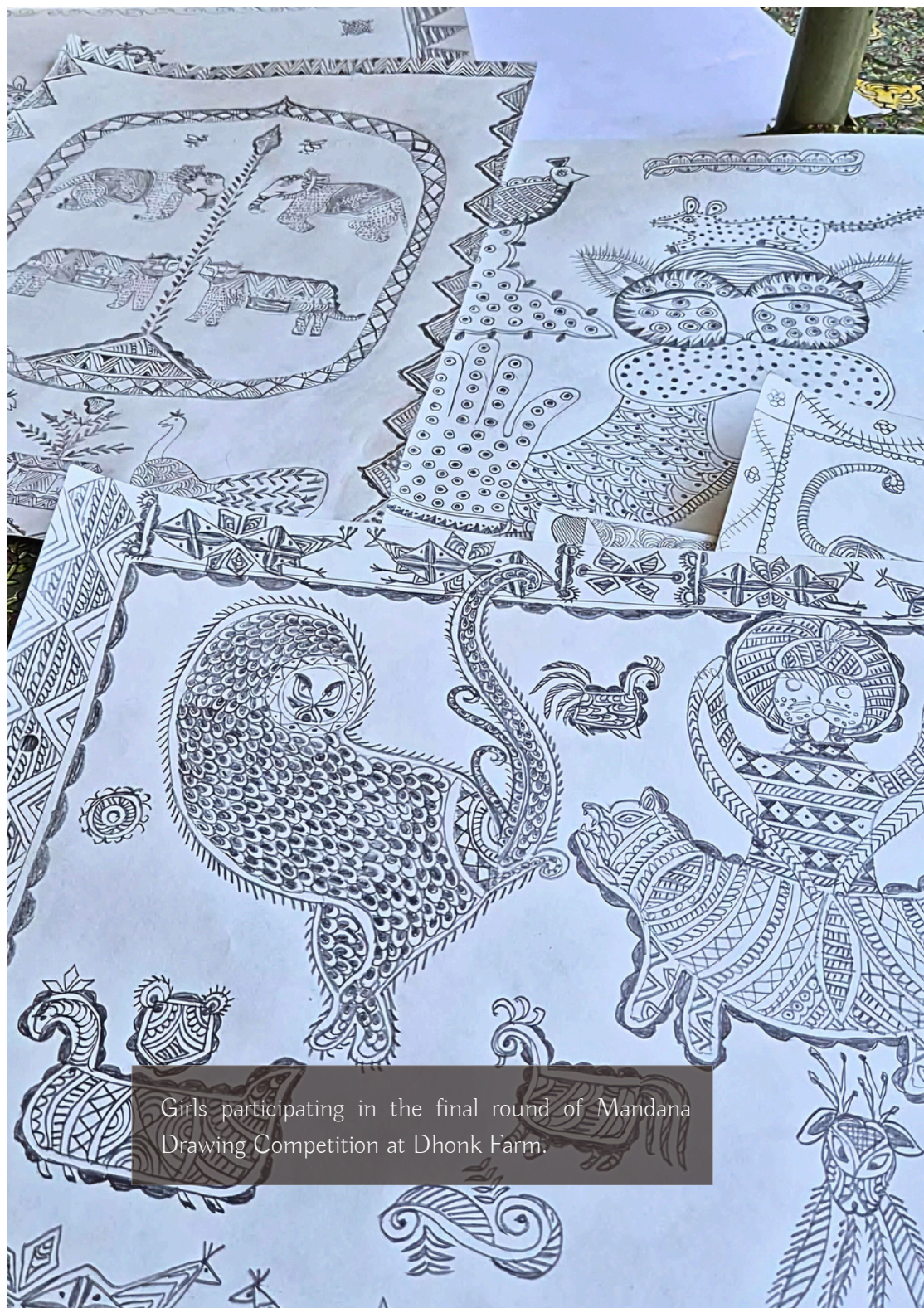
**20
Consolation
Awards**

**3
Winners**



Girls participating in the final round of Mandana Drawing Competition at Dhonk Farm.





Girls participating in the final round of Mandana Drawing Competition at Dhonk Farm.





Final Round Participants of Mandana Art Competition



BAGH MELA (TIGER FAIR)

Bagh Mela transformed conservation education into a shared community experience, extending learning beyond classrooms and engaging students, teachers, parents, and villagers together.

At a glance

- 14 Bagh Melas organised
- (5 in Karauli | 4 in Bundi | 5 Sawai Madhopur)
- 250–500 participants per Mela
- Thousands of community interactions.

What happened at the Melas

- Wildlife quizzes linked to classroom modules
- Student speeches on local environmental issues
- Bird and animal sound mimicry
- Short plays on forests, wildlife, and coexistence
- Photo exhibitions on wildlife and habitats



Dharm Singh, Bagh Mitra Coordinator during photo exhibition, explains the role of herbivores to students during Bagh Mela

Why it mattered

- Built student confidence in public speaking and expression
- Reinforced conservation messages at family and village level
- Encouraged positive dialogue on wildlife and coexistence
- Increased visibility and acceptance of conservation education



Ramkesh, Bagh Mitra teacher during photo exhibition, explains the role of herbivores to students during Bagh Mela



Students during a play dedicated to wildlife conservation during a Bagh Mela



Impact

The Bagh Mela helped shift conservation from a school activity to a community conversation, strengthening local ownership and support for long-term wildlife protection.



OTHER ANNUAL ACTIVITIES

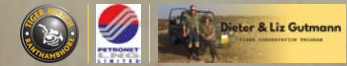
SUSTAINING ENGAGEMENT THROUGH THE ACADEMIC YEAR

To maintain student interest and ensure that conservation education remained engaging throughout the academic year, the Program incorporated a range of supplementary annual activities alongside core classroom modules and field-based components. These activities were designed to reinforce learning in interactive and creative ways while providing students with opportunities for expression and participation.

Key annual activities included **quizzes, essay writing, drawing, and poem recitation competitions**, all aligned with themes covered in the classroom modules. These competitions encouraged students to reflect on conservation concepts, articulate their understanding, and creatively express their ideas related to wildlife, forests, water, and coexistence.

In addition, the program marked important environmental days such as World Environment Day, World Wildlife Day, and Tiger-related observances through special sessions, discussions, and student-led activities.

Together, these annual activities helped sustain enthusiasm, improve retention of key concepts, and create a lively learning environment.



Students participating in Drawing Competition on the occasion of World Environment Day





BAGH MITRA CLUBS

SUSTAINING CONSERVATION BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

The Bagh Mitra Clubs emerged as an innovative response to a practical challenge, *how to sustain student engagement with conservation during the summer break*, when regular school sessions were not in progress. The idea was initiated by program coordinator to maintain continuity and prevent learning gaps during holidays.

During this period, each Bagh Mitra educator facilitated the formation of student-led Bagh Mitra Clubs in the villages they regularly visited. The clubs were created with the objective of keeping conservation learning active and extending conservation messages beyond classrooms into everyday community life.

In the initial phase, club activities focused on nature-based engagement, including **bird watching, short nature treks, Bird Water Feeder Installation, Seed Collection and Plantation**. These activities encouraged students to explore their surroundings, observe wildlife, and develop familiarity with local biodiversity.

As the clubs evolved, members began **organising social cleaning drives** within school premises and nearby village spaces. These activities helped students translate conservation awareness into visible, community-oriented action, reinforcing values of cleanliness, responsibility, and respect for shared natural and social spaces.

Over time, club activities expanded further to include **conservation talks, discussions, and informal debates**, often involving parents, elders, and other community members. This intergenerational participation strengthened dialogue around conservation and positioned students as active messengers of environmental responsibility within their villages.

Overall, the Bagh Mitra Clubs played a crucial role in maintaining continuity of conservation education, nurturing leadership and civic responsibility among students, and embedding conservation values beyond formal school settings.

84
Bagh Mitra
Clubs

980
Members

8
Voluntary
Activities



AWARENESS RALLIES BY BAGH MITRA CLUBS

Bagh Mitra Teacher, Pankaj Prajapat, with one of his Bagh Mitra Clubs, organised an awareness rally on the occasion of world environment day

“When awareness moves from classrooms to streets, messages begin to reach communities.”





AWARENESS PLEDGE BY CLUBS

Teachers guided students and school teachers in taking a collective pledge to conserve the environment.



**“Small
promises
today shape
responsible
actions
tomorrow.”**

— Student conservation pledge,
Bagh Mitra Program



BIRD WATCHING ACTIVITY OF BAGH MITRA CLUB

Bird watching activities introduced students to local avifauna, encouraging observation, patience, and a deeper appreciation of everyday biodiversity.

“Learning to observe birds is learning to observe nature.”

— Bagh Mitra Club activity, Bagh Mitra Program





SOCIAL CLEANING BY BAGH MITRA CLUB

Social cleaning activities enabled students to translate conservation awareness into visible community action by improving cleanliness in school premises and surrounding village spaces.

“Clean surroundings reflect responsible communities.”

— Bagh Mitra Club activity, Bagh Mitra Program



“Kanha Matki Phod”

Bird Water Feeder Installation By Bagh Mitra Clubs

As part of the Bagh Mitra Club activities, students installed and maintained earthen water feeders to support birds and small wildlife during the harsh summer months. Using locally available earthen pots, the initiative promoted simple, environmentally friendly solutions rooted in traditional practices.

Over the three-year period, **nearly 2,000 water feeders** were installed across school premises and village spaces. Students took full responsibility for placing, refilling, and maintaining the feeders, ensuring regular availability of water during peak heat.

Significantly, the activity was carried out without any installation or maintenance costs, relying entirely on student effort and community support. Beyond its immediate ecological value, the initiative helped cultivate empathy, responsibility, and a sense of ownership toward wildlife conservation, demonstrating that small, sustained actions can create meaningful impact.





“Sometimes, a bowl of water can make the difference between survival and loss.”

— Community-supported initiative by
Bagh Mitra Clubs





SEED COLLECTION & PLANTATION DRIVES

Seed collection and plantation activities were undertaken as part of the Bagh Mitra Program to encourage hands-on engagement with native plant species and to build a practical understanding of ecological restoration among students.

Before the onset of the monsoon, students actively participated in the collection of seeds from locally occurring tree species such as neem, mango, jamun, dhok, palash, and amaltas, among others. Under the guidance of educators, these seeds were used to prepare saplings through simple nursery practices, helping students understand plant life cycles and the importance of native species.

With the arrival of the monsoon, the saplings were planted in school premises, temple compounds, and village common spaces, ensuring community visibility and shared responsibility for their care. These plantation drives helped reinforce lessons on seasonal cycles, water dependence, and long-term ecological benefits of tree cover.

In parallel, program educators were encouraged to develop small backyard nurseries, with each teacher preparing at least 100 saplings of a minimum of 10 different native species. These saplings were later distributed to schools and community locations, strengthening local plantation efforts and promoting species diversity.

Through seed collection, nursery preparation, and plantation, students moved beyond awareness to direct ecological action, developing a sense of ownership and responsibility toward local green spaces. The activity demonstrated how simple, locally rooted efforts can contribute to long-term environmental stewardship.

15
Different types
of seeds
collected

Over
3000
Plantations

around
800
Sustained &
Surviving







FORT & MUSEUM VISITS OF THE STUDENTS

At least one educational visit to a fort and a museum was organised annually to help students connect local history, culture, and ecology beyond the classroom.

“Understanding landscapes also means understanding their history and cultural memory.”

— Learning beyond the classroom,
Bagh Mitra Program

MONITORING, LEARNING & ADAPTATION

The Bagh Mitra Program followed a continuous monitoring and learning approach to ensure effective implementation, quality delivery, and responsiveness to field realities. Program activities were monitored through a combination of structured documentation and regular field oversight.

Monitoring mechanisms included:

- Activity records and attendance logs maintained at the school level
- Regular reporting of daily activities through a dedicated WhatsApp group, enabling real-time sharing of updates, photographs, and observations
- Field supervision by the program coordinator, including school visits and on-site review of sessions

Beyond monitoring, the program emphasised learning and adaptation. Feedback from educators, students, and schools, along with observations from field supervision, was reviewed periodically to refine program delivery.

Learnings from each year were systematically incorporated into subsequent planning. For instance, based on classroom engagement feedback, portable projectors were introduced in the second year to strengthen audio-visual learning and improve student participation. Similarly, recognising the value of broader community engagement, the Bagh Mela was introduced in the third year to extend conservation awareness beyond schools.

This adaptive approach ensured that the Bagh Mitra Program remained dynamic, context-responsive, and progressively more effective, allowing it to evolve in line with on-ground needs while maintaining consistency in conservation messaging and educational objectives.



SUSTAINABILITY & WAY FORWARD

The Bagh Mitra Program has been designed as a long-term conservation education intervention, with sustainability embedded in its structure and delivery. By working closely with government schools, building teacher capacity, and fostering student-led initiatives, the program has created a strong foundation for continued conservation learning beyond the current project cycle.

Sustained engagement with schools and active involvement of teachers ensure that conservation messages are reinforced regularly and remain relevant within the school environment. Student platforms such as Bagh Mitra Clubs further support continuity by extending learning beyond classrooms and into community spaces.

Looking ahead, the program envisions the following directions:

- Deeper teacher-led integration, enabling teachers to independently reinforce conservation concepts within regular academic activities
- Expansion to additional villages and schools, particularly in forest-fringe areas facing similar conservation challenges
- Stronger linkage between education outcomes and broader conservation initiatives, including community outreach, habitat protection, and wildlife monitoring efforts

Through these pathways, the Bagh Mitra Program aims to strengthen its long-term impact, support informed community participation in conservation, and contribute meaningfully to the resilience of tiger landscapes and forest-edge communities.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Tiger Watch gratefully acknowledges the support and contributions of individuals and institutions who played a vital role in the successful implementation of the Bagh Mitra Program.

We extend our sincere thanks to Mr. Sundeep Bhutoria for enabling and facilitating support from Petronet LNG Limited, which made the implementation of the Bagh Mitra Program in Bundi and Karauli districts possible. We are deeply appreciative of Petronet LNG Limited for its committed CSR support and for recognising the importance of long-term conservation education in forest-fringe landscapes.

We acknowledge Dr. Dharmendra Khandal for his guidance in program planning, design, and implementation, and for his continued involvement in the regular training and mentoring of educators, which ensured conceptual clarity and quality delivery across all program components.

Our sincere thanks are due to Mr. Ishan Dhar for effectively managing all communications and coordination with Petronet LNG Limited, and for diligently fulfilling CSR-related compliances and reporting requirements on behalf of Tiger Watch.

We also acknowledge the dedicated efforts of Mr. Dharam Singh, Program Coordinator, whose field leadership, coordination, and commitment were central to the smooth execution and overall success of the Bagh Mitra Program across schools and villages.

Finally, we thank all educators, school teachers, students, and community members whose participation and cooperation brought the program to life and strengthened its impact on the ground.





PROGRAM COORDINATOR & TEACHERS PROFILE

Dharm Singh Gurjar: Dharm Singh joined Tiger Watch in 2016 as a village wildlife volunteer, and for the 2 years he was actively tracking and monitoring tigers and other wildlife around Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve. Later he joined Ranthambhore Foundation, an ally of Tiger Watch, as a nature educator and for two years he would raise environment awareness through education along the periphery of the tiger reserve. Finally, he returned to Tiger Watch as a teacher for its Mogya Education Program. He was engaged in the Mogya Education program for two years before joining the Bagh Mitra Program in the Sawai Madhopur district. Considering his versatility and effortless ability to lead his team of teachers he was made Co-ordinator of the Bagh Mitra Education Program of the Karauli and Bundi districts too.

Dharm Singh hails from Mharo village, Sawai Madhopur, and has a master's degree in history, along with B. Ed. And RS-CIT.



Bagh Mitra at Sawai Madhopur Chapter



Naresh Bairwa has been an integral part of the Bagh Mitra Program since November 2022. Soft-spoken and deeply rooted in his community, Naresh brings more than just knowledge to the classroom — he brings connection.



Rinku Yogi is associated with the Bagh Mitra program since 2022. He holds a Master's degree in Art History along with a Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.), combining his academic background with a strong commitment to community-based learning.



Pankaj Prajapat: Pankaj joined the program in November 2023, as a replacement for Mahaveer. He is a Bachelor of Arts and has recently graduated before joining the program. Upon graduation, he was taking home tuitions. He works in the Khatkar area of Bundi district.



Mukesh Gurjar: Mukesh hails from Mandrail area in Karauli district. He is a Bachelor of Arts with teaching experience of one year in schools. He joined the program in June 2023.



Keshoram Gurjar: Keshoram joined the program in November 2023 as a replacement for Mukesh Gurjar in Kailadevi area of Karauli district. He holds the Bachelor of Arts and was preparing for competitive exams before joining the Bagh Mitra Program



Banwari Lal Prajapat: Banwari Lal before joining the program used to teach in a private school in his village and take private tuition classes. He has a teaching experience of 6-years. He holds a master's degree in accountancy along with B. Ed. And RS-CIT.

Banwari is from Peepliya village of Bundi district and joined the program in June 2023.



Asharam Gurjar: Asharam is among the replacement teacher Tiger Watch hired in place of incompatible teachers. Holding a master's degree in political science, in addition to B. Ed and an experience of teaching in schools for 10-years, makes him a suitable candidate for our program.

Asharam hails from Kishanganj village in Bundi district and joined the program in July 2023 for Talwas area.

**“From learning to leading, Bagh Mitra nurtures
the next line of forest guardians.”**





BAGH MITRA PROGRAM

An CSR Initiative implemented by Tiger Watch.

