

What's happening in Be! Schools in Bihar

We've trained teachers, books are delivered to schools, children are learning a skill every week, they are creating stunning skills projects & winning hero badges for excellence!



Going to School's second academic year in Bihar began with reaching our first milestone: we completed teacher training sessions across nine districts (Patna, Gaya, Nalanda, Bhojpur, Siwan, Saran, West Champaran, East Champaran and Vaishali) by July 2013, so all teachers were trained before the school year began. This meant that Be! Schools could begin in the first weeks of school reopening after the summer holidays. trained before the school year began.

Number of schools in the program 871

Number of teachers trained 1,742

Number of head teachers (Principals) trained 632

Total number of teachers trained 2,372

In 2013-14, 87,000 children will read 21 design-driven skills stories and create projects over the weekend, for one academic year in Bihar, India. After the first year, we

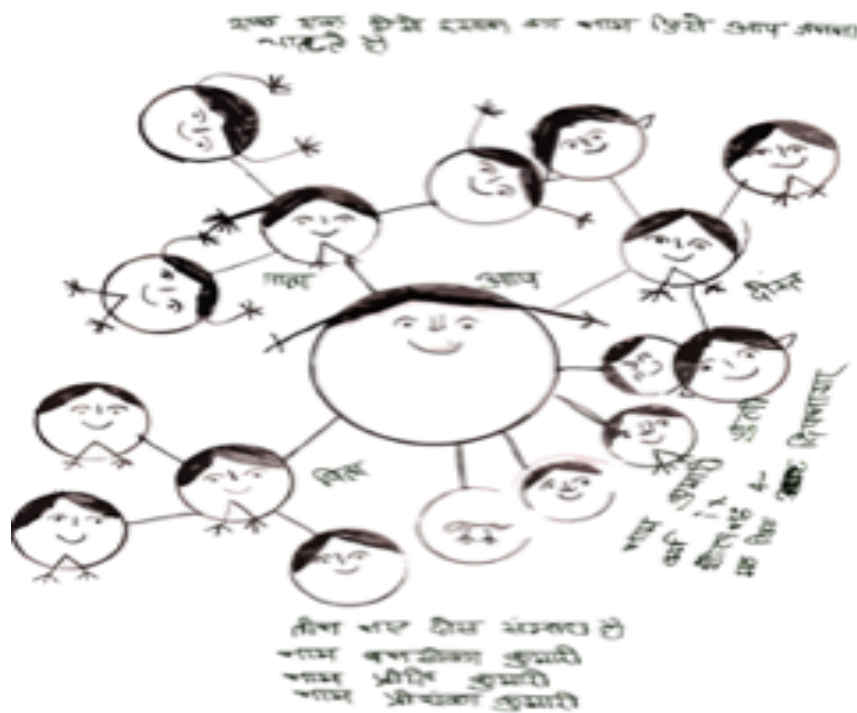
received excellent insight from teachers, children and trainers about what needed to change in our stories, projects and teacher training. In response, we made our stories shorter so that they could be read in a two hour session, we re-wrote children's activities so each step was clear and we included local stories in the skills books, for instance, in My Family Tree, a child told us that his grandfather taught local young people martial arts so they would learn about focus and perhaps stop causing trouble. You'll see new stories within our first generation stories this year, and six new skills stories have been introduced to the program. We changed the order of the skills, to move from simple to more challenging and, we published the best children's art projects from last year in the stories to encourage children this year to do even better. Teachers and our team were keen that children should receive recognition for their projects, so we developed 16 iconic skills badges that five children in every school can win each week for exceptional projects that show they learned the skill. Once children have collected five badges, we've delivered Skills Hero Backpacks for 'super skills heroes'. And for the best performing teachers, we built and delivered on Teacher's Day, 12 Little Free Libraries for the 12 highest performing teachers from last year. Be! Books will now be housed in classrooms, and without locks on the door, available for children at anytime they'd like to read the stories.

We're into our second year with our partnership with the Government of Bihar and we're excited about the extension of our MOU until 2017 to complete a five year commitment. As we understood the way the Government school system functions, we decided to experiment with technology that would help us monitor and evaluate our programme, equipping each of our team members with a mobile phone to log the number of projects completed by children every time they visit a school. This has proved to be exceptional in terms of on-time monitoring and we're able to take swift action reporting to Government about schools' progress or the need to encourage teachers to work just that little bit harder. Addressing how the program can be sustained within the Government system, we are exploring associations between our skills content and the mainstream curriculum and continue to meet and plan with the Government as to how this program can be taken to scale, and sustained within the system. With so many developments to our programme, we are excited to see our plans, ideas and efforts in action and continue to understand the impact of our new approaches. To crystallise and communicate what we know, we have brought together an in-house qualitative research team who constantly evaluates children's skills projects, the skills they learn, efficacy of our content and games, and based on what they're learning, develop new skills content and share public skills reports. The academic year for 2013 has started so well, yet we know, there is still so much more to do.

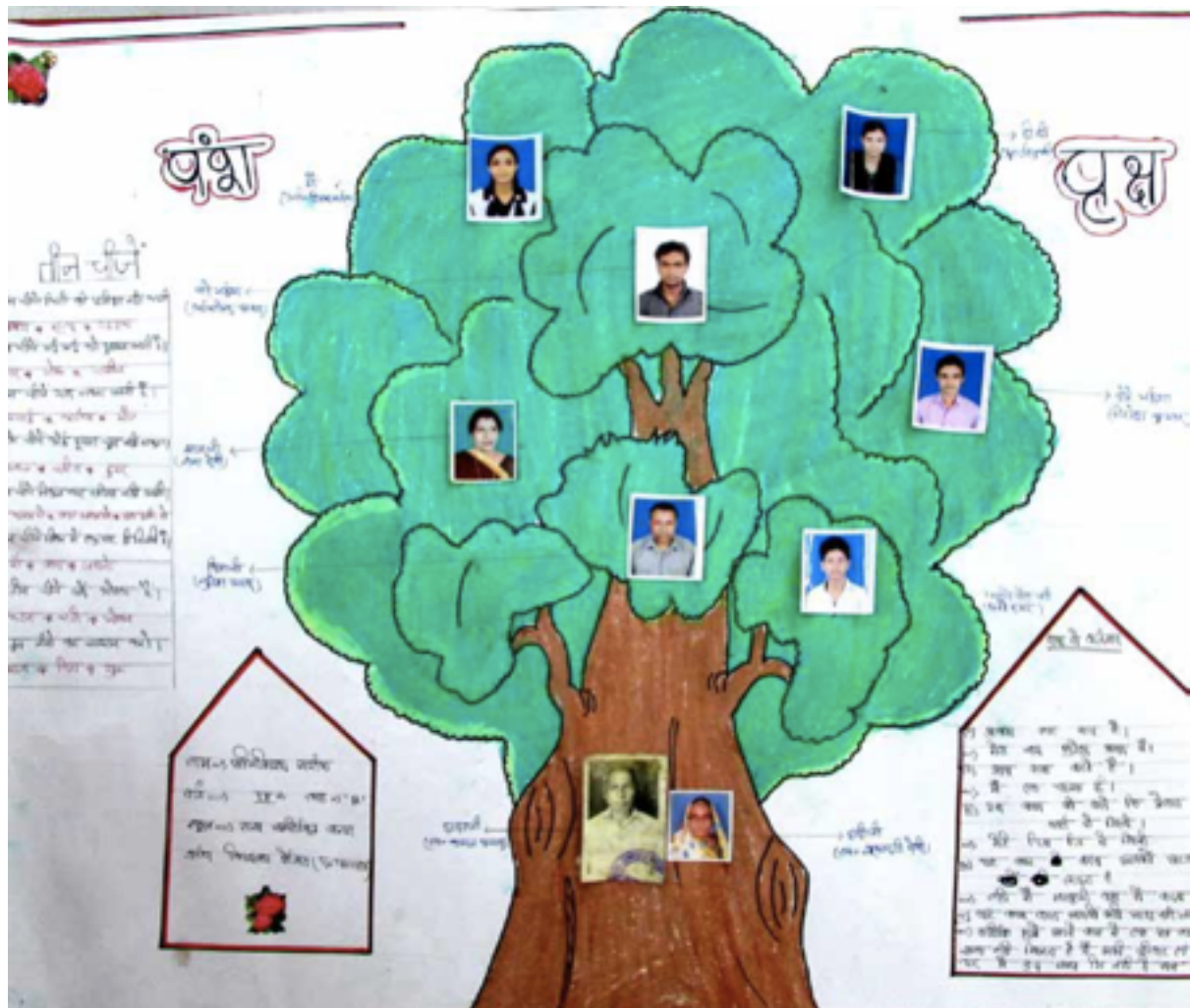


“Every child has talent. I know its hidden inside of them. But how do I tap each child’s potential? I tried, but I just couldn’t seem to make it happen. Now, through Be! Stories I’ve found a way to help children discover the skills hidden inside of them.”
Purna Kumari, teacher, Be! Schools, Sarvodaya High School, Nalanda District, Bihar

Teachers began the Be! programme in their classrooms in July. Over the last three months most of the participating schools completed reading the first six books and playing their skill activities. One school in Siwan district completed reading 10 books! Here is a look at some of the skills projects that our field officers have been grading.



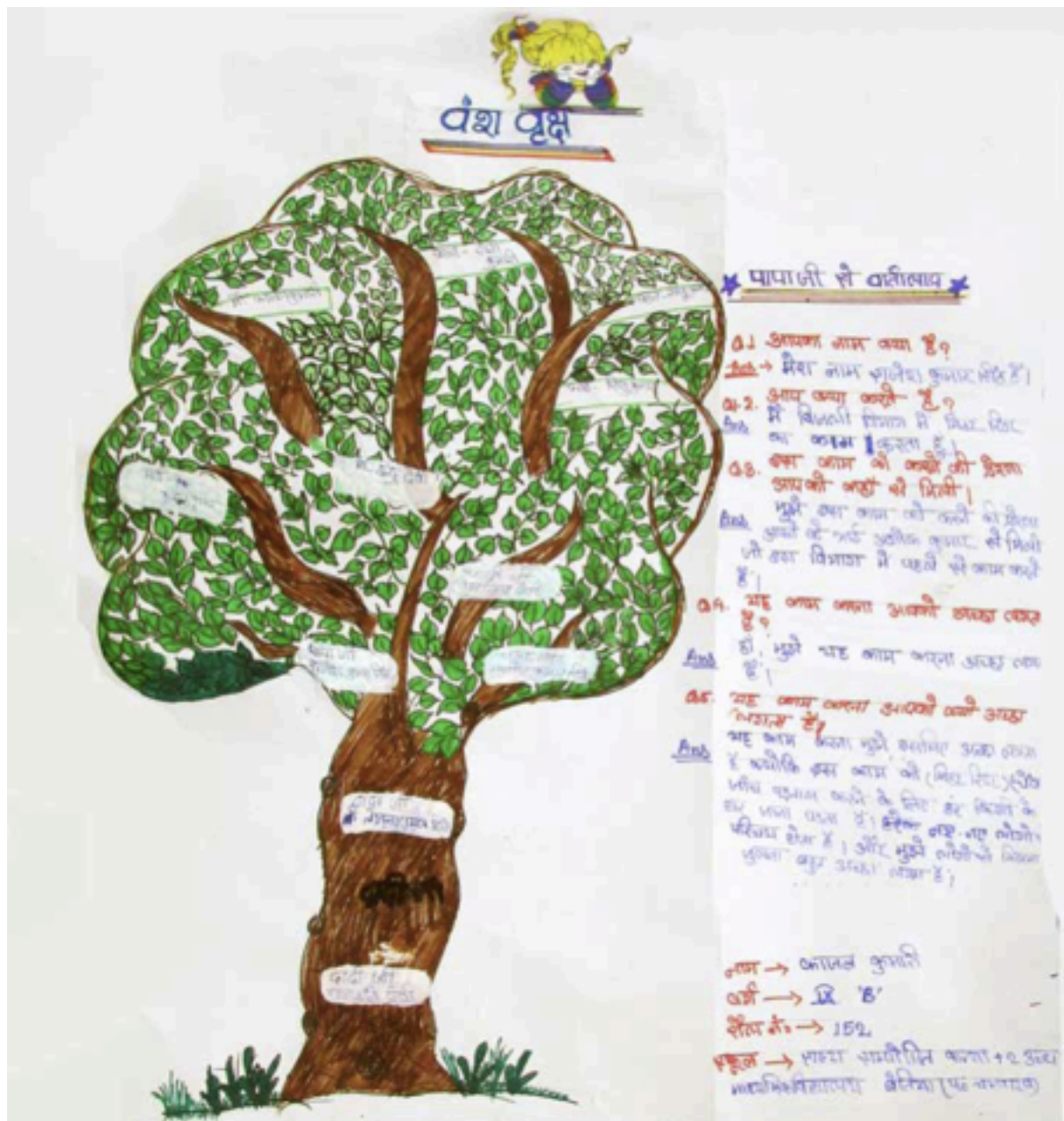
Julie Kumari of D.P. Rai Higher Secondary School in Nalanda made this adorable social network chart on a page from her notebook. All she had was one black colour pen and her imagination and creativity ran wild. She included her family, her friends and neighbours and even what looked like her dog in her expanding social network. We don't ask for big chart papers and sketch pens. Understanding of the skill and creativity to communicate that understanding is a full score.



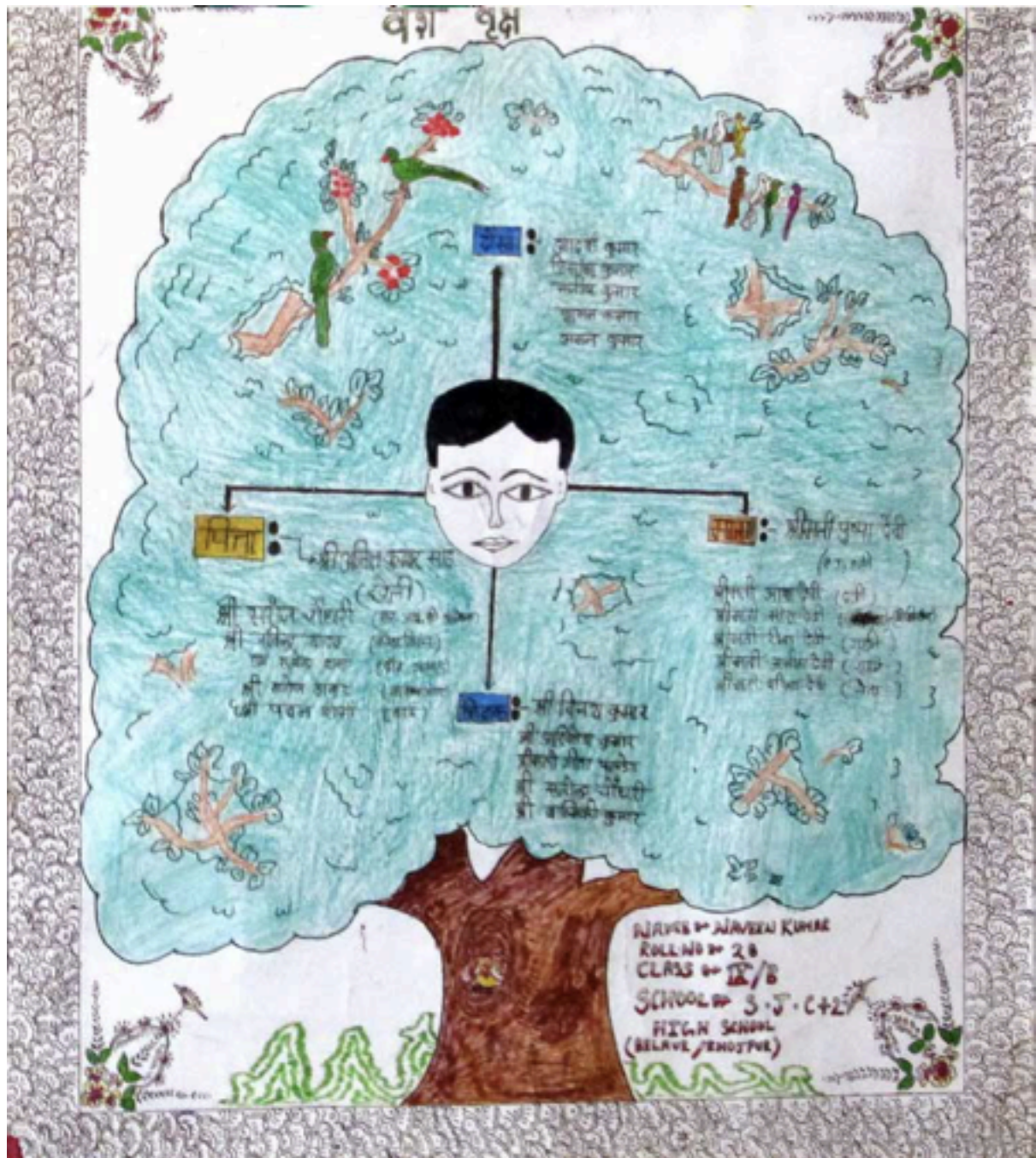
This neatly made Family Tree project is by Abhishikha Sarshaf of Raj Sampochit Kanya Uchh Vidyalaya, Betiya. She has written that her father is a driver who started his work out of sheer necessity to earn for his family. However, he does not enjoy his work because he does not get any free time to spend with his family.



Anita Kumari from Raj Sampochit Kanya Uchh Vidyalaya, Betiya created a masterpiece without colours. Using only pencil, she shaded a beautiful family tree with each family member flowing into a branch. She has written about her hero, her uncle who sells fruit on a pushcart to support his family.



Kiran Kumari from Raj Sampochit Kanya Uchh Vidyalaya, Betiya, went into the details of every leaf of her family tree. She wrote about her father who is a electricity meter-reader. He enjoys his work because he gets to visit people in their houses, meet different kinds of people and make new friends.



Naveen Kumar showed that girls were not alone when it came to producing project masterpieces. He created an intricate border for his project with a pen, and added beautiful artwork, parrots and flowers to his super family tree.

Last year we received outstanding skills projects from children in Bihar. We did not expect such beautiful work – understanding of skills, their application and their presentation. This year we decided to reward not only the best performing children from last year, but also introduce immediate rewards so kids knew they had done really well. We began with Hero Badges. 16 iconic designed collectable badges. The children with the best project after completing each skills activity will receive the Hero Badge for that book. Once each child has collected five Hero Badges they will receive a red or purple hero backpack. But the ‘prettiest of them all’ are Little Free Libraries – beautiful handmade structures, with no locks, made from old wood by carpenters in villages in Uttar Pradesh. The Little Free Libraries was given to 12 best performing teachers from last year on Teachers’ Day. The libraries will be kept in classrooms and the books inside them will be easily accessible by all children. The Little Free Library movie on You Tube :

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1kzAwAU3qM&feature=c4overview&list=UUnLSJaciXxDwvUCuHyFqs8w)

[v=1kzAwAU3qM&feature=c4overview&list=UUnLSJaciXxDwvUCuHyFqs8w](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1kzAwAU3qM&feature=c4overview&list=UUnLSJaciXxDwvUCuHyFqs8w)



The girls of Dhaneshwari Girls High School in Patna couldn't wait to stack up their old and new books inside their Little Library.



16 HERO Badges - one for each book. You have slippers and cows, pickle labels and maps. They're amazing. You collect 10 and do you know what happens then? You get a smart back-pack to pin your colourful badges on to your bag!