** enlighten 2 empower (e2e)**

**Objective**

To help 10 – 20 year old girls (who have dropped out of school) become literate, [**enlighten 2 empower**](https://www.enlighten2empower.org/) **(**e2e**)** will engage them in a multi-step program—an intensive two-month on-site literacy camp followed by an eight-month on-line homeschooling curriculum. In addition to educating the girls, this innovative program is designed to give them skills to become independent and be respected in their communities; to enable them to stand up for themselves when faced with physical or psychological aggression; and, to decrease their susceptibility to being abused.

**Principal Stakeholders**

Childhood classmates, Mrinalini Watson and Amita Lovett, wanted to help rural women achieve their potential. And, although Mrinalini lives in the U.S.A. and Amita lives in the UK, their roots in Bikaner, Rajasthan, drew them back to their ancestral homeland. Their combined wealth of personal and professional experiences, and the support of friends and family in the NGO sector, has resulted in an innovative solution to a problem that haunts many communities throughout the world—the need to educate girls from families who feel it is more important for their unmarried daughters to help with younger siblings or support the family by doing menial labor.

The development of this project is being guided by Tarun Sarwal, a development professional with more than 30 years of experience in the field of innovative humanitarian work. Additionally, e2e is collaborating with a local NGO, URMUL Setu (<http://www.urmul.org/urmul-family/urmul-setu/>) that has been serving rural Rajasthan for over 25 years. In preparation for the program, URMUL has helped e2e meet local villagers and panchayat leaders including the sarpanchs and will support e2e’s work as described below.

**The Program**

We wanted to create a program that would be minimally disruptive to the families since most girls, until they get married, have to help support their families either by looking after younger siblings or by engaging in income generating labor. The bilingual program we have crafted accounts for these sorts of situations. The first part will be conducted while the families are still in the villages, that is, before they migrate to the farms, which are remote and frequently inaccessible. The second part will allow our students to both support their families during the day and be educated by attending on-line real-time classes in the evening. The girls will be given tablets so they can join the class from the safety of their own homes via conference-call style classes.

The families will not incur any direct costs:

* no tuition,
* no extracurricular class fees,
* no uniforms will be necessary.

The girls will receive:

* a tablet computer with a data plan and if necessary a battery pack,
* school supplies including alphabet posters,
* a dictionary, and
* a subscription to National Geographic Kids magazine.

The program will be conducted in Rajasar village, Bikaner Disrict. During the two-month *on-site* segment, the girls will receive:

1. Simultaneous instruction in Hindi and English using videos (copyright use granted) of stories and songs that are available in both English and Hindi. The songs will be from <https://www.youtube.com/c/theflyingtentclassicchildrenssongs> and the stories from <https://www.planetread.org/anibooks>.
2. Instruction in how to use Hindi and English dictionaries.
3. Learn vocabulary that is relevant to their lives. The theme for each week will be reinforced by guest speakers who will inform the girls about either employment opportunities or life skills. For example, a lady *sarpanch* (head of the panchayat) of a local *panchayat* (village council) will explain how panchayats work.
4. Integrated mathematics instruction based on the weekly theme and reinforced with “Galli Galli Sim Sim” – Bert and Ernie’s Math World (if permitted) or other appropriate math videos. For example, the week that nutrition and healthy diets are taught, the math instruction will include language for weights and measures, while the language instruction for the week will include a discussion about potential food choices.
5. Instruction in digital literacy that will include how to – do research; do word-processing; create simple spreadsheets for home or farm finances; as well as perform more practical tasks such as how to download, complete, and then upload the completed Government of India online forms.
6. Daily art or drama instruction as well as exercise time to have different modalities for using the vocabulary they are learning. For example, during their exercise period they will receive instruction in self-defense and yoga, where they will have an opportunity to practice words for body parts, directions, movement, health benefits, empowerment, etc; and, during their art period, they would have the option to learn a puppet show in Hindi, which they will translate into English and perform in both languages.
7. Weekly instruction in operating and marketing an income-generating business (IGB) such as budgeting, preparing a website, and designing a calendar based on photographs of the products.
8. In-person, small group or one-on-one conversation practice in English.
9. Opportunities for long distance interaction with female Hindi-English bilingual pen-pals and conversation partners.
10. Encouragement to share with their families what they are learning in class and, during class time, the girls will be encouraged to ask questions raised by their family members. This is necessary for sustaining buy-in from the families.
11. An opportunity to share their artwork or dramatic abilities in a showcase for the families at the end of the camp.
12. Daily hot lunches.

Up to 20 of the 31 girls who attend the camp will be selected for the secondsegment—the *distance-learning* portion. This eight-month*, on-line* segment will include:

1. Regular webinar style language instruction.
2. Translation of videos and text that will gradually increase in complexity. In addition to facilitating their literacy, learning how to translate is an income-generating skill that the girls could potentially develop and use as online translators working out of their homes.
3. Weekly homework assignments aimed at improving their reading comprehension and writing skills.
4. The in-country coordinator will monitor the students to trouble-shoot when necessary.
5. Fortnightly evaluative testing.
6. Weekly interaction with conversation partners and pen-pals.

**Partner**

URMUL Setu will provide:

1. Support to e2e, including continued liaison between the families of the students and e2e—before the program commences, during the camp and during the distance-learning segment.
2. All necessary facilities to conduct the two-month on-site program.
3. A co-ordinator in Rajasar to supervise the students during the entire 10 months.
4. IT support, especially to set-up the tablets with good practice safeguards.
5. Accommodations and board for the e2e instructors during the two month on-site segment.

**Measurability**

1. Pre-program testing to evaluate the students literacy levels.
2. Weekly tests of material covered both during the literacy camp as well as the distance learning segment.
3. Testing at the end of the camp to determine progress of each student and their ability to work independently during the on-line segment.
4. Annual state level testing from March 2020 administered by URMUL. Followed by feedback to the students based on the results.

**The Future**

After attending the camp and distance-learning program for three years, most of the students will have achieved a 10th standard literacy level and should be able to pass the tenth standard Rajasthan state board examinations in Hindi and English. This is an important benchmark because a number of government sector jobs are available to individuals who are successful in passing this exam. In 5-7 years, the program will be scaled and will be available to neighboring villages. All funds in excess of those needed to run the program will be placed in a fund to provide scholarships for those girls who will be permitted to go to college.