



## Tailoring Programs & Adult Learning Center. Empowering Women through Education & Vocational Training.

**Three Year Program Expansion**  
**Total Funding: \$23,430**  
**Implementing Partner: FORRAD**  
**Location: Nalanda District, Bihar, India**

### What Is The Need?

Bihar is India's poorest state with over 30% of the population living under the poverty line. It has one of the highest unemployment and underemployment rates in India.

Data from the Centre for Monitoring the Indian Economy (CMIE) indicates an unemployment rate of 9.2% in the formal economy. However, most employment opportunities in India exist in the informal economy.

Field observations highlight a concerning rise in severe malnutrition among the population, particularly children, further emphasizing the need to enhance household income.

While school education is mandatory in Bihar, and families send their children to school, the quality of education remains suboptimal. Government jobs are the primary employment goal, leading families to incur debt for tutoring and entrance exam fees. Although Bihar is very highly represented at all levels of the public service categories, there are not sufficient vacancies to meet employment needs in the state. Most families have at least one member who has migrated out of state to find work and families still struggle to make ends meet.





### Who Will Benefit?

FORRAD is currently collaborating with **Samaj Kalyan Mandal**, and **Seva Mandal**, two community based organizations in **Nalanda district in Bihar**, to improve agricultural productivity and profitability in the district. However, most families either work as sharecroppers or own very small land parcels, typically less than an acre, making agriculture alone insufficient for survival.

This proposal includes three community-based initiatives for vocational training and education for women in rural Bihar:

- one tailoring program in Hilsa,
- one tailoring program in Silao,
- one adult learning center in Saristanagar

The objective of these vocational training courses is to enable at least one member of vulnerable families to supplement household income through self-employment or employment in local companies..

### Tailoring Training Programs: Silao and Hilsa Blocks in Nalanda District, Bihar

Two tailoring courses will be conducted in Hilsa

and Silao blocks in Nalanda district. The program in Silao is a pilot initiative to introduce tailoring to equip trainees with skills to secure employment in nearby commercial units or pursue self-employment. The Hilsa tailoring course which has been running successfully for the last five years as part of the **Kaliyachak Girls' Learning Center**, will be expanded to enroll additional trainees.

Both tailoring courses will run for two hours daily for six months taught by local instructors from the area. At the end of twelve months, our program goal is that **24 young women at Silao and 40 young women at Hilsa will be equipped with skills that enable them to find work locally, significantly improving their earning potential.**

For **the center in Silao block**, an additional goal will be for at least half the women to find regular paid employment in nearby tailoring businesses. These small businesses have already been approached and the employers have expressed their willingness to hire and further train successful graduates of the Silao tailoring courses. Our goal at the end of this pilot is to have established a successful and sustainable training center in Silao.

## Tailoring Course in Silao

Selection criteria for the trainees for the program in Silao will be:

- Applicants from the most vulnerable households will be given preference.
- Applicants must demonstrate personal aptitude and interest.
- Trainees must be willing to travel outside their village and work in a formal environment on a full-time basis.
- Applicants must have functional literacy.

The **center in Hilsa block** will run as a place for young women to acquire tailoring skills to enable them to sew for themselves and their families, and earn a supplementary income by sewing for others within their village in an informal way. These trainees will also be encouraged to seek opportunities outside of their village when possible.

Objectives of the tailoring training program are:

- To train young women in tailoring and garment making.
- To help them start their own small tailoring enterprise with 70% or more earning income from tailoring.
- To increase their confidence and financial independence.
- To expand the small tailoring training program with additional sewing machines and instructional support.

As a pilot program, **Sewa Mandal** is working with **FORRAD** to initiate the tailoring course in Silao. Their role includes:

### Community Mobilization

- Informing the community about the training program
- Selecting interested and eligible candidates
- Orientation meeting with trainees

## Setting up the Training Center

- Purchase of sewing machine and tools
- Arrangement of fans, lights, and basic seating
- Maintenance support for machines

By the end of this basic tailoring course, trainees will be able to:

- Understand the fundamentals of tailoring and garment construction.
- Operate and maintain sewing machines.
- Take accurate body measurements and draft basic patterns.
- Sew simple everyday garments.
- Perform basic alterations and repairs.
- Function effectively in a formal work environment, emphasizing punctuality, office rules, professional grooming and grievance redress.

In addition to tailoring skills, trainees will also receive preparation for working effectively in a formal work environment:

### Communication and Life Skills Training

- Basic spoken communication skills
- Building self-confidence
- Customer interaction and service skills
- Public speaking practice
- Teamwork and leadership
- Problem-solving and decision-making

### Business Skills

- Basic business knowledge
- Pricing and cost calculation
- Record keeping
- Marketing basics
- Savings and financial awareness

### Monitoring and Support

- Regular assessment of trainees
- Guidance for starting small businesses
- Linkages with local markets

## Basic Tailoring Course Syllabus

**Course Title: Introduction to Basic Tailoring**

**Duration: 6 Months, 6 days a week, 2 hours a day**

**Number of students per batch: 12 per location**

### Course Objectives:

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Understand the fundamentals of tailoring and garment construction.
- Operate and maintain sewing machines.
- Take accurate body measurements and draft basic patterns.
- Sew simple everyday garments.
- Perform basic alterations and repairs.
- Function effectively in a formal work environment, emphasizing punctuality, office rules, professional grooming, and grievance redressal.

### Course Outline:

#### Month 1: Introduction to Tailoring

- Overview of tailoring tools and materials
- Safety precautions in the workspace
- Introduction to sewing machines (types, parts, and functions)
- Basic hand stitches (running stitch, backstitch, hemming stitch)

#### Month 2: Measurements and Pattern Drafting

- Understanding body measurements and sizing
- Tools for pattern drafting (rulers, tape measures, pencils)
- Drafting basic patterns
- Cutting fabric using patterns

#### Month 3: Sewing Basics

- Operating a sewing machine (threading, tension adjustment)
- Sewing seams and hems
- Adding fastenings (zippers, buttons, hooks)
- Pressing and finishing techniques

#### Month 4: Garment Construction

- Measuring, designing, cutting and tailoring all the garments regularly worn in the area by women, men and children.

#### Month 5: Alterations and Repairs

- Taking in and letting out seams
- Shortening and lengthening garments
- Patching and darning techniques
- Replacing zippers and buttons

#### Month 6: Final Projects and Practical Application

Fulfilling a selection of orders from start to finish.

Presenting finished garments

Final review and feedback

#### Assessments and Reviews:

- Month end reviews
- Final garment presentation
- Personalized feedback sessions

#### Certification and Placement:

Successful candidates will receive a "Letter of Successful Completion" and be provided with assistance for internships or job placements in tailoring units.



### Adult Learning Center for Women in Saristanagar

FORRAD and its community-based partner **Samaj Kalyan Mandal**, have been running the **Kaliyachak Girls' Learning Center** the village of Kaliyachak for the past 9 years. This Center helps girls to achieve learning levels commensurate with their age.

However, the Center has been unable to provide **adult education to a section of women in the neighbouring hamlet of Saristanagar**. These women are hesitant, because of their age and social standing, to come to the Learning Center in Kaliyachak.

These women and girls belong to the most marginalised communities. They have no landholdings, no regular, reliable source of income, very few go to school, fewer still complete higher education. Most of the young women marry before the legal age of 18 years and have large families of 5 children or more. While FORRAD has tried to engage the people of Saristanagar in all the community work that it does in the area, the participation of these women is limited and diffident.

**FORRAD** believes it is essential to engage exclusively with the women in this hamlet in order to listen and understand their needs more closely, and then perhaps be able to be catalysts for more

lasting change. This new **Adult Learning Center in Saristanagar** will be a starting point where women can gather to acquire basic literacy and numeracy skills, and FORRAD can learn how to support the community more meaningfully.

Tarawati, the most experienced teacher from the Learning Center will spend an hour and a half at Saristanagar 6 days a week working with interested girls and women, **teaching basic literacy and numeracy skills**. In doing so, she will also try and persuade the younger girls to attend the Learning Center at Kaliyachak and the government school. In addition to functional literacy, there will also be introductory sessions (conversations) on **health, hygiene and nutrition, human rights, civil rights and women's rights**.

At present, there are **20 interested women and girls**. We will see how it progresses. A desirable outcome from being equipped with functional literacy is that some of the girls participating may continue their education. With improved skills and personal care the women participating may be given greater responsibility at their workplaces. **FORRAD** aims for the daily sessions to become a forum where the women can air their grievances, be heard, and collectively, find solutions.



## Why Is There A Funding Need?

Currently, there are no other organizations providing vocational training or adult literacy programs in this community. While individual donors within India and the US have provided funds for the annual budget to operate the **Kaliyachak Girls Learning Center**, funding for this program expansion will enable **Samaj Kalyan Mandal** and **Seva Mandal** to expand the tailoring program, enrolling additional trainees.

## What Will The Funds Be Used For And When?

Tailoring Unit, Hilsa	INR Monthly	INR Annual	USD Annual
Tailoring instructor	7,000	84,000	\$966
Estimated expenses for fabric and other materials	1,500	18,000	\$207
Utilities	500	6,000	\$69
Nutrition	5,000	60,000	\$690
<b>Hilsa Program Total</b>		<b>168,000</b>	<b>\$1,932</b>
Tailoring Unit, Silao			
Sewing Machines - Initial Purchase & Repair		60,000	\$695
Scissors, tapes, and other equipment for new unit		30,000	\$445
Tailoring instructor	7,000	84,000	\$966
Estimated expenses for fabric and other materials	2,000	24,000	\$276
Utilities	500	6,000	\$69
Nutrition	5,000	60,000	\$690
<b>Silao Program Total</b>		<b>234,000</b>	<b>\$3,041</b>
<b>Annual Cost per Tailoring Trainee</b>			<b>\$78</b>
Adult Learning Center - Saristanagar			
Teacher stipend	5,000	60,000	\$690
Assistant stipend	2,500	30,000	\$345
Learning materials	10,000	10,000	\$115
Infrastructure repair	25,000	25,000	\$287
Nutrition	5,000	60,000	\$690
<b>Saristanagar Program Total</b>			<b>\$2,127</b>
<b>Annual Cost per Student</b>			<b>\$106</b>
<b>Program Total</b>			<b>\$7,100</b>
<b>Program Monitoring &amp; Evaluation</b>			<b>\$710</b>
<b>Annual Program Budget</b>			<b>\$7,810</b>
<b>Three Year Program Total</b>			<b>\$23,430</b>

## How Will We Measure Success?

We measure success through a combination of quantitative and qualitative indicators, monitored by **Sewa Mandal** and **Samaj Kalyan Mandal**, and through weekly calls and quarterly on-site visits by **FORRAD**. All three programs aim for:

- Improved confidence for all trainees assessed by their ease in interacting with authority figures and strangers assessed by individual interviews and observation.
- Improved grooming and hygiene to have a suitable workplace appearance and reduce the social stigma these women and girls face at school and within the community.
- Awareness of their rights and the government benefits available to them.

## Tailoring Programs — Hilsa and Silao

- Pre- and post-course assessments of the ability of the trainees to cut, sew and finish common garments.
- Monthly reviews and a final garment presentation, with personalized feedback from the instructor.
- Number of trainees who complete the training program and earn the certificate of completion.
- Number of trainees who secure employment or earn income from tailoring.

## Adult Learning Center — Saristanagar

Assessments are informal, designed to gauge confidence, social skills, and basic literacy and numeracy. We will track:

- Attendance and retention of the 20 enrolled women and girls.
- Basic literacy and numeracy (write and read their own names and addresses, local road signs, and be able to recognize numbers) through a final program assessment by the teacher Tarawati.
- Participation in introductory sessions on health, hygiene, nutrition, and women's rights.
- Number of younger women and girls continuing their education at the Kaliyachak Girls' Learning Center or the local government school.

FORRAD's quarterly field visits will allow for course correction and ensure all program goals remain on track.





### Who Is the Implementing Partner?

The **Foundation for Rural Recovery and Development (FORRAD)** is a Public Charitable Trust that was established in 1980. Over the years, it has undertaken over 450 grassroots projects across rural India in 12 of India's poorest states. Currently, FORRAD operates in Tamil Nadu, Bihar, and Madhya Pradesh, integrating climate resilience, community health, girls' education and rural livelihood improvement in its community based programs. To implement this project, FORRAD is working with **Sewa Mandal** and **Samaj Kalyan Mandal**. Both are 40 year old, community based organizations located in the district that are trusted by the community.

### Who Is the U.S. Fiscal Sponsor?

**Friends of Tilonia, Inc.** is a U.S. 501(c)3 non-profit organization established in 2000 to support the development programs of its charitable affiliates in India creating craft-based enterprises employing rural artisans. Building on these early collaborations, FOT has developed the **Sprout Enterprise®** network of artisan enterprises creating sustainable livelihoods for rural communities in India, Mexico, Guatemala, Chile, Colombia, Ghana, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Cambodia and Indonesia. Through its collaboration with **FORRAD**, FOT is creating economic opportunities for women and girls in rural India through education, training and employment, and has been a supporter of the **Kaliyachak Girls' Learning Center** since 2017.

### How Will Funding These Vocational Training and Adult Learning Programs Have An Impact?

For the women and girls of Nalanda district, this program represents a genuine turning point. When a young gains an income, there is a shift in how she is seen – and how she sees herself – within her family and community. For the women of Saristanagar, the program offers an opportunity to learn to read and write, and to learn what else might be possible. Basic literacy opens doors to healthcare, to understanding their rights and government benefits, and to ensuring that their own daughters go to school. When women earn and girls learn, families are healthier, children are better nourished, and the next generation has a different future. We can interrupt a cycle of poverty and exclusion for these women and girls.