



Kaliyachak Girls Learning Centre. Empowering Girls through Education & Vocational Training.

Three Year Program Expansion
Funding: \$73,500
Implementing Partner: FORRAD

What Is the Need?

The literacy rate for women in Bihar, India at 53%, is alarmingly low, and rural female literacy is even lower at 45%. While most parents do enroll their children in school, the public school system in Bihar is severely underfunded, leading to understaffed schools with inadequate infrastructure and limited learning resources. Additionally, the quality of education offered in the classrooms that do run is less than ideal resulting in the children with learning levels far below their age. These girls are from families who cannot afford to attend the more competent private schools, and remain at a disadvantage for the rest of their lives. Furthermore, opportunities for skill building and vocational training are practically

absent in rural areas, thereby perpetuating a cycle of limited opportunities, early marriages, and low-income occupations for these girls.



Who Will Benefit?

Grant funding will provide three years of support for the **Kaliyachak Girls Learning Centre**, which is operated on the premises of **Samaj Kalyan Mandal**, a local community based organization. Operating Monday to Friday from 6.00 a.m. to 9.00 a.m. the Kaliyachak Girls Learning Centre bridges the gap between the girls' education and their age, by assigning students, otherwise enrolled in government schools, to classes based on their education levels and delivering accelerated learning sessions to enable them to finally reach education levels commensurate with their age.

The Centre provides free tuition in all academic subjects covered by the government school. The Learning Centre supports the girls studying at levels equivalent to Classes 1 to 6 of the government school. The Centre also offers a six month tailoring course to older girls to equip them to sew for themselves and their families and, if they are interested, to earn an income from tailoring.

All of the children attending the Centre come from families of casual labourers, marginal farmers and sharecroppers that survive on under three dollars a

day. **FORRAD** supplements the local organization's efforts by providing nutritious snacks to the students in the form of peanuts, roasted gram and molasses as most of the students subsist on a diet limited to rice and potatoes.

FORRAD engages with the community as a whole in projects related to water conservation, climate-resilient agriculture and nutritional security. FORRAD also assisted the families of these students during COVID lockdowns in 2020 and 2021 by providing weekly distribution of dry food provisions as these families had no source of income during the lockdowns, and offering COVID health training sessions, along with distributing pulse oximeters, thermometers and blood pressure monitors to facilitate early detection and timely treatment of COVID.

Direct beneficiaries of this program will be approximately 130 girls between the ages of 6 and 18 attending the Kaliyachak Girls Learning Centre, and another 120 young women acquiring tailoring skills within the three year period. Indirectly, the impact of educating and training these young women will benefit their families reaching approximately 1,500





Why Is There A Funding Need?

Currently, there are no other organizations running learning centres for girls or providing vocational training in this community.

While individual donors within India and the US have provided funds for a basic budget to operate the Kaliyachak Girls Learning Centre, funding for this program expansion will enable **Samaj Kalyan Manda** to train teachers, improve infrastructure and add additional learning resources. The funds will also be used to develop the tailoring program by linking young women who have completed the course, and shown aptitude and interest, to artisan enterprises for home-based employment.

What Will The Funds Be Used For And When?

Budget Item	Annually	Program Total
Teacher Stipends	\$10,000	\$30,000
Learning Resources & Daily Nutrition	\$5,500	\$16,500
Workshops for Teachers & Students	\$2,500	\$7,500
Infrastructure Repair & Toilet Construction - Year 1	\$2,300	\$3,300
Year 2 & 3	\$500	
Program Administration & Reporting	\$5,400	\$16,200
Total Budget	\$25,700	\$73,500

The Kaliyachak Girls Learning Centre is an ongoing program and this budget funds three years of the Centre's expanded program..

Where Will The Funds Be Used?

The funds will be utilized in the village of Kaliyachak, Nalanda district, Bihar, India. The National Statistical Office ranks Bihar as India's poorest state with an annual per capita of Rs 46,292 per year. The situation in our program area is worse with over **95% of the population living under the poverty line**. Bihar's child nutrition figures are alarming and according to the National Health and Family Welfare survey conducted three years ago Bihar fares the worst, **with over 25% of children in the 5 to 9 age group facing stunting as a consequence of malnutrition**. Furthermore, the National Statistical Commission of India, measuring the Human Development Index across states ranks Bihar the worst in a study conducted in 2017-2018. According to a study conducted by the Centre for Monitoring the Indian Economy (CMIE), Bihar's unemployment rate stood at 19.1%, which is the fourth highest in the country.

How Will This Make A Sustainable Difference?

Through this program, 130 girls will witness an improvement in their academic performance, bridging the gap with their more privileged peers. Most of the girls who have spent a few years at the Centre go on to complete their high school exams and do better than they would have done if they had not attended the Learning Centre. Some of the students have found jobs in the state administration, in the police force and as teachers.

As important as the academic support that the students receive is the fact that they are in a safe space where they gain confidence, make friends from other community groups and villages and get some time to play. This is a luxury not afforded girls as they get older and their social circle gets restricted to their family and immediate neighbors.

Bihar has been the site of caste conflict for centuries and while the violence has dissipated in the past decade, the tensions remain. By inviting students from all communities, and paying special attention to the most vulnerable, the Centre is a site for reconciliation.

Through vocational training, 120 girls will acquire valuable tailoring skills, equipping them to meet their own and their family's tailoring requirements, as well as providing them with the ability to increase their income by sewing for others within their villages. Some of the students who have successfully completed the tailoring course, and show aptitude and interest, will be linked to artisan enterprises for work and will receive further training to meet quality standards of commercial production.



How Will We Measure Success?

The success of the program will be measured through pre- and post-tests to assess academic achievement aligned with age, for the students of the Kaliyachak Girls Learning Centre. For the tailoring unit, pre- and post-tests will be conducted to evaluate the skills acquired by the trainees.

In addition to pre- and post-tests, we will employ a comprehensive set of parameters to measure the success and impact of the program. These parameters will provide a holistic view of the progress made by the girls attending the Kaliyachak Girls Learning Centre and the trainees in the tailoring unit:

- 1. Academic Performance:** In addition to pre- and post-tests, regular assessments will be conducted to track improvements in academic performance, covering subjects such as mathematics, language, and general knowledge. The students' progress in catching up with their age-appropriate grade levels.
- 2. Attendance and Dropout Rate:** Tracking attendance records will provide insights into the girls' engagement and commitment to education. The dropout rate will be monitored to ensure that girls remain enrolled and actively participate in the Learning Centre.
- 3. Participation in Extracurricular Activities:** Monitoring the participation of girls in extracurricular activities, such as sports, arts, and cultural events, will indicate their overall development and social integration within the Learning Centre.
- 4. Parental Engagement:** Bi-monthly parent-teacher meetings will be held. Feedback from parents will be collected to assess their involvement and support for their daughters' education. Increased parental engagement signifies the program's success in promoting education within the community.
- 5. Vocational Skills Development:** For the trainees in the tailoring unit, we will evaluate their skill progression through periodic assessments of their sewing techniques, pattern-making abilities, and time management in completing tasks.

By combining all of these parameters, we aim to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the program's effectiveness and identify areas for continuous improvement. The data collected will guide us in making evidence-based decisions, ensuring that the program creates sustainable and lasting positive change in the lives of the girls and trainees, and leaves a meaningful impact on the community as a whole.



Student Profiles

Preeti Kumari belongs to Aganubigha village in the Akbarpur Panchayat of Nalanda district. She is the daughter of Shivilalprasad and Urmila Devi. She has five siblings: three sisters and two brothers. Two older sisters are married. The third sister is studying in class 7 in the government school in Akbarpur Village. The parents have a small patch of farm land and also work as laborers on other fields or migrate to the city to find work as casual laborers.



Supriya is 12 years old and has been a student of the school since August 2020. She studies in Class 6. She used to study at a school in her father's village, Amera, Post Bhathar, Tharthari, district Nalanda. Supriya has been staying with her maternal grandmother and three uncles in nearby Linepar village since her mother's passing. Her uncles work in factories in Patna and one of her uncles who is unmarried takes care of her and encourages her to study.

When Supriya's father remarried, she moved to her grandmother's home. Her step mother does not show any affection or care for Supriya and does not allow Supriya's father to give money to support her. She has three step brothers who stay with their parents and paternal grandmother in Amera. Her father works in a factory in Delhi and visits home once or twice a year. There is a government primary school through Class 5 in Linepar and in another nearby village, there is a government high school, but for now, Supriya prefers to walk the 1.5 km to reach the Kaliyachak Girls Learning Centre.

She is a serious student who is attentive in class and does her work well. She participates in all activities and also helps her classmates with their studies. Supriya wants to be independent. She dreams of having a government job after finishing her high school and will be preparing for competitive exams to that end.

