

KALIYACHAK KANYA SHIKSHA SETU: LEARNING CENTRE FOR GIRLS

DISTRICT NALANDA, BIHAR, INDIA

The Foundation for Rural Recovery and Development (FORRAD)

December 2023



FIGURE 2 CLASS 5



FIGURE 1 THE HEAD OF SAMAJ KALYAN MANDAL, SADHU SHARAN SINGH, SPENDING TIME WITH THE OLDER STUDENTS

BACKGROUND

The Learning Centre operates on the premises of Samaj Kalyan Mandal, a community-based organization and a long-term partner of FORRAD's. The centre has classes from Standard 1 – 6 and runs 6 days a week from 6.30 am to 8.45 am after which the girls return to their chores at home or attend the government day school in the village.

THE SCHOOL IS NOW A LEARNING CENTRE

The year began with the decision to convert the school to a Learning Centre. This was done for several reasons:

1. All the girls coming here are now enrolled, and most are attending, classes in the government schools.
2. While their enrollment in the state school is essential and desirable and will help them with their future, the need for our centre however, continues, as the education provided by the schools is as yet inadequate, and most students attending the Centre have not attained learning levels commensurate with their age.
3. Most students of the centre are first generation literate and do not have an environment that facilitates learning at home. The centre provides a space to prepare them and their parents for school.



FIGURE 3 RANJEET WITH CLASS 6

STUDENT STRENGTH

The centre continues to have 141 girls on its rolls. The distribution of students and their respective teachers by class is:

Class	No. of students enrolled	Name of class teacher
1	47	Sinku Kumari
2	31	Tarawati Kumari
3	19	Shailendra Kumar
4	14	Shravan- ji
5	14	Sweta Kumari
6	16	Ranjeet Kumar (head teacher)
Total Enrolled	141	
Tailoring	24	Rajesh Tanti
		Mahesh Kumar (admin support)



FIGURE 4 PREPPING FOR A GAME!

ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED IN THE ACADEMIC YEAR

The priority this year was to consolidate the learnings from the workshops conducted for the teachers in the previous year. The teachers were encouraged to make learning more child-centric, interactive and fun. Saturdays are now spent entirely for extracurricular activities. Children do art and craft, enact scenes from their books and play games.



FIGURE 5 "HOW MUCH WATER IS IN THE WELL?"



FIGURE 6 PEANUTS AND JAGGERY IS PACKED WITH NUTRITION AND A CROWD FAVOURITE

The distribution of nutritious snacks daily. The provision of the snacks encourages the parents to send the girls regularly to the centre. Significantly, the nutrition provided to the girls has helped them achieve parameters of height and weight as per their age. A recent malnutrition assessment of 45 children conducted by FORRAD in the hamlet of Saristabad showed normal readings only for 5 children, 2 who were being breastfed, and 3 who come to our learning centre.



FIGURE 7 ASHWINI - THE PROGRAM LEAD IN DELHI, PAYING A VISIT TO THE SCHOOL TO INTERACT WITH THE STUDENTS AND ASSESS LEARNING LEVELS

Coordination from the Delhi office. Regular video calls have helped in monitoring the various activities at the centre. The calls have helped identify areas of concern, where teachers themselves require assistance in improving their classes.

Acquiring soft skills. The students attending the centre are first generation learners, and their parents are unable to help them prepare for school. Over time the students have learned to groom themselves for school, be punctual, participate in group events, greet their teachers and acquire similar social skills that will prepare them for more formal environments.



FIGURE 8 SETTLING IN FOR A PARENT-TEACHER MEETING

Parent – Teacher meetings. Meetings with guardians are held once in two months and these meetings have helped convey the importance of girl education. It is a platform to discuss the value of encouraging the children to read, do homework, be regular and consistent with their studies. The teachers ask the parents to be more involved in their children’s education and take more responsibility towards their grooming and nutrition.



FIGURE 4 TALKING ABOUT CHILDREN’S DAY

Children’s day celebrations. 14 November this year had the teachers performing two skits for the children. This was different for both the children and the teachers. The girls were thrilled to see their teachers perform on stage and are now looking forward to enacting short plays in the coming year. The teachers too learned to get over their inhibitions and perform. It became a learning experience for all and an enjoyable one too!



FIGURE 5 ENJOYING THEIR TEACHERS PERFORMING!



FIGURE 6 VISITING THE ZOO

Day trip to Patna on 10th September.

This was for the students of class 6, and 10 girls were able to come. Two teachers accompanied them. They visited some of the famous landmarks in the city such as Golghar (The Granary), the Bihar museum, the zoo, Patna airport, a Gurudwara and the Mata Patan Devi temple. This was the first time that the students were visiting these places and it was a memorable adventure for them.

Maintenance of the school building. The classrooms were given a fresh coat of paint, giving the learning centre a neat and clean appearance. The light fixtures were changed to the more energy efficient LED bulbs.

Examinations. Exams have been regularized, with a mid-term and a final – and recognition for the top 5 in each class. This serves as motivation for both the children and the parents – and helps them accord more importance to the education of their daughters.

TAILORING CLASSES

The sewing class continues to be very popular with girls and young women of the community. Many more women from the surrounding villages have registered for the class. A new sewing machine was added to the existing machines as more students needed to practice on the machines.

The course lasts 6 months, where each student learns to make everyday items of clothing for women, men and children.



FIGURE 9 THE SEWING CLASSES ATTRACT OLDER GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN AND CONTINUE TO BE VERY POPULAR

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

The school has had a productive and intense year where the aim was to ensure that the teachers were more focused by preparing schedules in advance and adhering to the curriculum. In the coming year we look forward to improving academic performance of all children, and we will concentrate our efforts and focus our work to this end.

Thank you very much for your solidarity and support. None of this would have been possible without you.



FIGURE 7 CLASS 2 PAYING RAPT ATTENTION

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