

ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORT

of the project:

~JAGARAN~

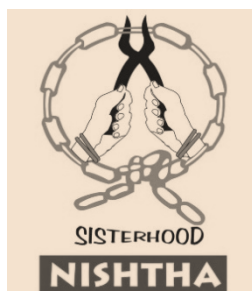
For the period:

JULY – 2024 to JUNE - 2025

Supported by:



Implemented by:



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Area of Implementation: Six villages of Bishnupur-I Block, South 24 Parganas – District, West Bengal



BACKGROUND:

Nishtha, a grassroots women organisation based in South 24 Parganas, has been working for over five decades to empower women and girls in rural West Bengal through education, health, and rights-based initiatives.

The Jagaran Project has strengthened Nishtha's mission by supporting the capacity building of girls and women. It has led to significant improvements in girls' education, women's leadership, and positive shifts in community attitudes. This progress continues to inspire Nishtha to strive harder for the empowerment of girls and women.

But the covid and lockdown and destructive cyclone like AMphan and YAAS destroyed everything and made the people frustrated and hopeless. And this has been exacerbated by the recurring cyclones like Remal and Dana 2024.

The compounded crises created an environment where child marriage and trafficking became increasingly prevalent. Economic hardships and the lack of educational opportunities left many young girls vulnerable to early marriage and exploitation. However, through the Jagaran Project, more than 1,000 girls and women were successfully protected from vulnerability, violence, trafficking, and child marriage.

The Jagaran Project is a focused effort to tackle these challenges through education, awareness, and protection strategies, aiming to build resilience and restore dignity and opportunities for women and girls in this rural community.

BENEFICIARIES OF JAGARAN:

Class	No of Students
Secondary Students:	
VI	1
VII	11
VIII	16
IX	15
X	13
X (M.P) Appeared in Board Examination 2025	14
Higher Secondary Students:	
XII	12
XII (H.S) Appeared in Board Examination 2025	14
College Students:	
1 st Year	12
2 nd Year	44
3 rd Year	6
Total Students	158

ACHIEVEMENTS AT A GLANCE:

Academic Progress:

It brings us great joy to celebrate the academic success of our Batch 2024 students.

- In 2024, all 17 eligible girls appeared for their Madhyamik Board Examination, achieving a 100% pass rate. Among them, one girl secured star marks, 8 girls passed with First Division, and the remaining 8 girls passed with Second Division.
- In 2024, all 14 eligible girls appeared for their Uchha Madhyamik Board Examination and achieved a remarkable 100% pass rate. Among them, two students secured star marks, five students passed with First Division, and the remaining seven students passed with Second Division

Looking Ahead:

- In February 2025, all 14 eligible girls appeared for their Madhyamik Board Examination, with 9 girls securing First Division and the remaining 5 girls passing with Second Division.
- In March 2025, all 14 eligible girls appeared for the Uchha Madhyamik Board Examination. Among them, 2 girls secured star marks, 6 girls achieved First Division, and the remaining 6 girls passed with Second Division.

Strength in Adversity: After Graduation

Despite the significant downturn in the job market following the pandemic, our students have shown remarkable resilience, determination, and adaptability. Their ability to overcome challenges and create meaningful opportunities for themselves stands as one of our proudest achievements.

Many of them have successfully secured employment or enrolled in further studies, contributing not only to their personal growth but also to the well-being of their families and communities.

Here are some inspiring examples from this year's graduates:

- Sarupa Barik – Employed as a Data Entry Operator at IVS Company.
- Payel Adhikary – Pursuing Nursing at Ramanagar Patel College, Karnataka
- Triyasha Naskar – Completed Post Graduation and B.Ed, now working as a Teacher
- Sima Ghosh – Working as a Nurse at Shantiniketan Nursing Home
- Disha Mondal – Pursuing Hospital Management
- Sabikunnehar Khatun – Working as a Post Master
- Anisha Das – Working as a Post Master
- Swagata Naskar – Working as a Teacher
- Tuhina Ghosh – Working as a Nurse at MR Bangur Hospital
- Sampa Halder - Working as a Nurse at Sambhunath Pandit Hospital
- Aparna Paik – Working as a Nurse at Nursing Home.

Six girls have passed their Higher Secondary (H.S.) examination last year and this year with Science stream, all securing First Division. They are currently preparing to appear for the entrance examination for admission to Government B.Sc. Nursing Colleges are Piu Gayen, Moumita Gharami, Mohima Manna, Priya Barik, Sneha Barik and Susmita Shaw.

ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN:

Distribution of Tuition Fees:

During the reporting period, a total of 158 students received tuition fee support through the project, as planned in the budget. This included:

- 70 Secondary students, all of whom received tuition support for 10 months.
- 26 Higher Secondary students — among them, 14 students received support for 10 months, while 12 students received it for 8 months.
- 62 College students — 50 students received tuition support for 10 months, and 12 students for 8 months.

According to the budget plan, all students were supposed to receive tuition fees as per the budget. However, due to certain constraints, tuition fees for the month of March could not be provided to any group — secondary, higher secondary, or college. (Except Class XI beneficiaries, who received tuition fees for 8 months as per the budget)

With special approval from Asha for Education, the unused funds of ₹31,200 (from the one-month shortfall) were reallocated to purchase school uniforms for 26 H.S. students. This adjustment ensured that the project continued to support students' essential educational needs, while staying true to its goals of promoting educational access and equity.

Distribution of Educational Materials:

During this reporting period, educational materials were distributed once to 70 secondary-level students. Each student received 11 paper-bound notebooks and 8 pens to support their academic needs and enhance their learning experience. This timely support helped reduce the financial burden on families and ensured that students had the necessary tools to actively participate in their studies.



Spoken English Classes:

During the reporting period, a total of 72 spoken English classes were held for 30 students at Nishtha's Baruipur Office and Sarada Bhawan in Tongtala, facilitated by a professional instructor. These venues were strategically chosen for easy access by girls from nearby villages and those commuting by train, with the Baruipur Office located near a railway station. The participant's confidence is improving, communication skills, and ability to express themselves in English—during interviews and group discussions. This progress has significantly boosted their readiness for higher education and job opportunities.



Girl's Get Together:

On January 7th, 2025, a vibrant Girls' Gathering brought together over 270 participants from Jagaran and other community. Focused on the theme "Gender inequality and violence and role of girls group," the event became a powerful platform for young voices to share experiences, identify local challenges, and discuss practical solutions. From education gaps to health issues and gender inequality, the girls showcased their commitment to building stronger, more equitable communities. The gathering highlighted the strength of collective action and the power of youth-led change.



Women's Get Together:

On December 6th, 2025, a significant Women's Gathering brought together over 800 participants, including 85 dedicated leaders from Jagaran and other Nishtha groups. Centered on the critical issue of Domestic Violence, the event



created a safe and empowering space for women to share their stories, raise awareness, and explore ways to seek justice and support. Through open discussions, workshops, and solidarity, the gathering reinforced the urgent need to break the silence around abuse and to build stronger, more informed communities that stand against violence in all forms.

TRAINING DETAILS:

Mother's Group Leader's Training:

A set of targeted training sessions was conducted for Mothers' Group leaders on critical topics such as Gender gap and existing power relations, the importance of girls' empowerment through formal education, child protection, and community solidarity etc. These sessions have significantly contributed to enhancing the participants' confidence and awareness. As a result, many leaders have emerged as vocal advocates for girls' rights, actively engaging in efforts to promote gender-sensitive practices and positive change within their families and the wider community.

The dates and number of participants:		
Sl. No	Date	Participants
1	26.12.2024	29
2	27.12.2024	32
3	24.05.2025	27
4	25.05.2025	28
5	26.05.2025	34
6	27.05.2025	30

Girl's Group Leader's Training:

To strengthen the leadership and advocacy capacities of Girls' Group leaders, a series of dynamic training sessions were organized. These trainings covered essential topics such as gender discrimination, Gender-related concepts and the application of the concepts to promote gender equity, navigating government schemes, understanding gender roles and expectations, and recognizing male vulnerability. A key focus was on how to effectively mobilize group members and foster inclusive participation. Through these sessions, young leaders are gaining the tools and confidence needed to question harmful norms, strengthen peer networks, and champion gender equality within their communities.



The dates and number of participants:

Sl. No	Date	Participants
1	18.12.2024	26
2	22.12.2024	29
3	24.12.2024	33
4	20.06.2025	27
5	22.06.2025	30
6	23.06.2025	35

MEETING DETAILS:

Meeting with Girl's and Mother's Groups:

During this reporting period, the Girls' and Mothers' Groups showcased remarkable resilience and leadership by convening a total of 30 focused meetings with 360 attendees. Led by trained group leaders, these gatherings were organized in response to the growing challenges faced by the community in the aftermath of recurring disasters and economic instability. At a time when livelihoods were severely disrupted, the meetings became vital forums for survival strategies, protection mechanisms, and empowerment discussions.

Group leaders steered conversations toward urgent priorities—such as ensuring consistent school attendance, encouraging parental involvement in girls' education, and creating protected time at home for girls to focus on their studies. The groups also addressed immediate threats, including the increased risk of trafficking, child marriage and exploitation by cheap labour agents, and developed community-based action plans to prevent school dropouts, forced marriage and gender-based violence.

Beyond their immediate objectives, these meetings fostered shared responsibility, with group members monitoring progress, evaluating interventions, and refining strategies for broader community recovery. What once may have been seen as passive victims of disaster, the women and girls in these groups have now emerged as powerful agents of change—organizing at the grassroots to rebuild their communities with strength, purpose, and solidarity.





Meeting with Father's Group:

As part of this project, we organized 5 meetings specifically for fathers, with a total participation of 60 individuals. Recognizing that fathers play a pivotal role in family decision-making, it was essential to engage them directly—raising awareness and challenging societal misconceptions. These meetings aimed to provide fathers with accurate information and foster a deeper understanding of key issues, particularly those affecting girls.

A special focus was placed on girls' empowerment, especially through education, as it is the most powerful tool for ensuring a dignified and prosperous future for their daughters.

Key topics discussed during the meetings included:

- The importance of girls' education and how fathers can support their daughters.
- Strengthening the bond between fathers and their daughters.
- Balancing work responsibilities with family life.
- The critical role fathers play in preventing child marriage.



Stakeholder's Meeting:

On June 14, 2025, a stakeholders' meeting was held at the Multi Gram Panchayat, bringing together 61 key frontline service providers—including ASHA and ICDS workers, school teachers, Panchayat members (including the Pradhan), and community leaders.

The meeting focused on ensuring girls' retention in formal education up to the college level. Special emphasis was placed on the need to reduce discrimination, abuse, and violence, and to highlight the crucial role of stakeholders in creating a safe and supportive environment for girls.

The gathering reflected a strong sense of unity and commitment, marking an important step forward in promoting girls' education, safety, and long-term empowerment in the community.



BCC ACTIVITIES:

Campaigns:

On Independence Day, 15 brave women took to the streets of Julpia Bazar and Nepalgunge Hat at a bustling intersection, igniting powerful conversations about the rights and freedom of women and girls. Despite facing scepticism and heated debate, the organizers responded with unwavering confidence and a clear, compelling message.

Meanwhile, three spirited leaders from the Girls' Group hit the road with a mobile campaign, traveling to two villages. They connected with more than 200 people, spreading awareness and rallying support for gender equality and personal freedom.



Rally:

On October 24, 2024, we proudly celebrated International Day of the Girl Child with a vibrant rally cantered around the empowering theme: "Girls are the Strength of the Family and Society." More than 1500 women and girls participated, filling the streets with unity, colour, and determination. At four major road junctions Domdoma Bazar, Jhinki more, Uchhakhali more and Manikjor more, where the crowd was particularly dense, a few women courageously stepped forward and shared real-life stories of violence that had occurred recently. These spontaneous and bold acts captured public attention. The impact was remarkable—more than 50 men came

forward and pledged to support group leaders in taking a stand against all forms of violence. Their commitment signified a strong message of ally ship and social awakening.



OBJECTIVE V/S ACHIEVEMENT:

Objective – 1:

158 (70 secondary, 26 higher secondary and 62 college) most vulnerable girl children from poorest families are admitted in formal schools with retention of at least 80 % of the targeted girls in formal school.

Achievement:

Out of 158 girls supported during this reporting period, we have achieved an outstanding 96% retention rate, with only six girls dropping out due to child marriage.

This achievement is particularly significant in the context of West Bengal, where, according to ([Newsclick](#)), out of 11.1 lakh students who passed the Class X Secondary Exam in 2022, only 7.8 lakh appeared for the Higher Secondary Exam in 2024 — a staggering 3.3 lakh students dropped out within just two years.

Against such a concerning backdrop, the 96% retention rate of Jagaran girls stands as a powerful testament to consistent educational support, deep-rooted community involvement, and the unwavering determination of every girl to pursue her dreams despite all odds.

Objective – 2:

80% of the supported girls are protected from being married before the legal age of marriage (i.e., 21 years).

Achievement:

Jagaran successfully protected 96% of its girls from child marriage and trafficking even in this devastating situation —a remarkable achievement when viewed against both national and state statistics.

This accomplishment stands in sharp contrast to the alarming trend in West Bengal, where, according to the National Family Health Survey-5, 41.6% of women aged 20–24 were married before the age of 18, compared to the national average of 23.3%, despite years of policy interventions and awareness campaigns. (Source: [UNFPA – Child Marriage in West Bengal](#))

In this challenging context, Jagaran’s 96% protection rate is not just an achievement—it is a bold statement of impact, a model of effective grassroots intervention, and a reflection of the courage, vigilance, and resilience of every leader of the girls’ and women’s groups.

Objective – 3:

To create an environment more conducive for the education of girls in the project area.

Achievement:

Through a series of community meetings and targeted training sessions, Jagaran has empowered mothers to play a central role in preventing child marriage, school dropouts, and trafficking. These women have become vigilant guardians and advocates, fostering open, trusting relationships with their daughters. Girls are now more comfortable sharing their challenges and seeking support—knowing they will be met with understanding, not judgment.

The leaders of the girls' groups are very active, well-organised, and deeply committed to driving change. They are consistently mobilising the community and sensitising key stakeholders to prevent child marriage and ensure that girls remain in formal education up to the college level.

These young leaders regularly collect data from various villages on incidents of child marriage and violence against girls and women. They present this crucial information to local stakeholders—such as Panchayat members, ASHA and ICDS workers and Block administration—enabling them to understand the real and often alarming ground realities within their own jurisdictions. As a result of these tireless efforts, more than 25% of stakeholders are now proactive and strongly supportive of the girls' groups. This growing alliance between grassroots leadership and institutional actors is playing a pivotal role in protecting girls and building a more just and equitable society.

Objective – 4:

Formation of Women and Girls collectives and capacity building.

Achievement:

During this reporting period, 11 existing Girls' Groups and 11 Women's Groups were further strengthened through twelve leadership trainings, nine informal sessions, and active involvement in five community-based social actions.

These groups and their leaders are truly the backbone of Nishtha. They serve their fellow sisters with unwavering dedication, free from fear or judgment. Over time, they have evolved into a vital support system for girls and women—not only within the Jagaran area but also across 16 surrounding villages.

Their presence is now more visible and respected by both the community and local stakeholders, and they continue to boldly confront and overcome social challenges.

It is no exaggeration to say that, thanks to the courageous efforts of these young grassroots leaders, hundreds of girls, women, and vulnerable villagers have been protected—from hunger, unsafe migration, trafficking, and exploitation by cheap labour suppliers. These threats had intensified in the wake of the post-COVID crisis and repeated devastating cyclones, but the resilience and action of these Jagaran groups have created a shield of protection and hope.

CASE STUDY:

Sonali's Fight for Her Dreams:

Sonali, a bubbly and brilliant student from Bhandaria village, was once known for her love of learning and her shining smile. But life changed drastically when her father, the only earning member of the family, suffered a paralytic stroke due to a cerebral attack. Their world collapsed overnight. There was no one to take up the responsibilities except her mother. Her mother took up zari (embroidery) work, but her meagre earnings were not enough to support the family of four.

Caught in the whirlwind of poverty, Sonali had to give up school when she was as student of class VIII, and join her mother in embroidery work. Though she worked day and night, her heart remained in the classroom. She missed her books, her school friends, and her dream of education. But her family's helplessness kept her tied to the sewing needle instead of a pen.

One day, a member of the Jagaran Girls' Group noticed Sonali's absence from school and visited her home. Moved by her story, the girls' group of her village, took up her cause. They encouraged her to return to school, but her mother, burdened by survival, hesitated. The girls group didn't give up. Together with the leaders of women group, they assured her family that all of Sonali's educational expenses—tuition fees, educational materials, clothing—would be taken care of by the Jagaran project so kindly supported by Asha for Education.

Finally, her mother agreed. The girls then met the headmaster of Sonali's school, who, understanding her situation, allowed her to re-join the school in mid-session. With newfound hope, Sonali returned to school and worked harder than ever.



In March 2025, Sonali passed her Higher Secondary exam with First Division! She decided to



pursue Geography Honours, but her mother once again feared the cost. The girls' and women's groups stepped in, assuring her that support would continue by Jagaran project—and even girls and women group will take care of her college expenses.

But just when things were beginning to look hopeful, one of her relatives brought a marriage proposal from a wealthy man in a nearby village. He was 15 years older; he offered financial help to Sonali's struggling family. Her parents, under pressure, agreed to marry her off. When the girls came to know, the group acted swiftly. They discreetly gathered information about the man and soon uncovered the truth—he was already married and had a child. Without delay, more than 300 members from the girls' and women's groups assembled in front of Sonali's house. Together, they exposed the man's true identity and confronted Sonali's family with determination and courage. They firmly warned her mother about the legal consequences of forcing a girl into

marriage and pledged to stand by Sonali to protect her future. They also issued a strong warning to the relative who had brought the proposal—demanding he never step foot in the village again, or be held accountable for endangering the lives of girls with such deceitful actions.

Their determination worked.

The marriage was stopped. Today, Sonali has applied for Geography Honours at a college under Calcutta University. The admission process will begin soon. With eyes full of hope and a heart brimming with gratitude, she is ready to take the next steps towards her dream.

Sonali says—

“If the Jagaran groups hadn’t held my hand, and if Asha for Education hadn’t stood by my side, I would have lost myself and never dreamed of completing Higher Secondary or studying in college. They didn’t just help me study—they helped me live. I owe everything to their love, courage, and belief in me.”



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Name of the Organization : **Nishtha**

Name of the project : **Jagaran**

Supported by : **Asha for Education**

Project Period : **01.07.2024 to 30.06.2025**

Financial Report from **01.07.2024 to 30.06.2025**

S.L	Line Item	Budget Amount	Expenses INR	Permission Obtained on 19 May 2025 for Clothing from unspent balance of this line	Variance INR
A	Personal Cost				
A.1	Honorarium of Accountant				
	Rs.7500 X 12 Months	90000.00	90000.00	0.00	0.00
	Sub Total:	90000.00	90000.00	0.00	0.00
B	PROGRAMME COST				
B.1	Education Support to 70 Students upto Secondary				
B.1.1	Education Materials (Khata, Pen, Pencil, bags, books etc.)				
	Rs 500 X 70 students	35000.00	35000.00	0.00	0.00
B.1.2	Tuition fees for 70 Students				
	Rs100 X 70 students X 11 months	77000.00	70000.00	7000.00	0.00
	Sub Total:	112000.00	105000.00	7000.00	0.00
B.2	Education Support to 26 H.S Students				
B.2.1	Tution Fees				
B.2.1.a	Rs.300 per month X 11 Months X 14 Girls	46200.00	42000.00	4200.00	0.00
B.2.1.b	Rs.300 per month X 8 Months X 12 Girls	28800.00	28800.00	0.00	0.00
	Sub Total:	75000.00	70800.00	4200.00	0.00
B.3	Education Support for 62 college Students				
1	Stipend for 62 College girls				
a	Rs.400 per month X 11 Months X 50 Girls	220000.00	200000.00	20000.00	0.00
b	Rs.400 per month X 8 Months X 12 Girls	38400.00	38400.00	0.00	0.00
	Sub Total:	258400.00	238400.00	20000.00	0.00
B.4	Honorarium for English Teacher				
	Rs.400 Per Day X 8 days in a month X 9 Months	28800.00	28800.00	0.00	0.00
	Sub Total:	28800.00	28800.00	0.00	0.00
B.5	Travel Cost for 25 Students				
	Rs.50 X 15 students (average attendance) X 8 days in a mon	54000.00	54000.00	0.00	0.00
	Sub Total:	54000.00	54000.00	0.00	0.00
B.6	Capacity Building				
	Kishori Vahini Training				
B.6.1	TA Rs.60 X 30 heads X 6 Days	10800.00	10800.00	0.00	0.00
B.6.2	Food Rs.60 X 30 Heads X 6 Days	10800.00	10800.00	0.00	0.00
B.6.3	Fees for Resource @ Rs.3000/ per day	18000.00	18000.00	0.00	0.00
B.6.4	Travel cost for Resource @ Rs.1800/ per day	10800.00	10800.00	0.00	0.00
B.6.5	Get together of 800 members of Mohila Mondal	24000.00	24000.00	0.00	0.00
B.6.6	Get together of Girls	20000.00	20000.00	0.00	0.00
	Womens Group Training				
B.6.8	TA Rs.60 X 30 heads X 6 Days	10800.00	10800.00	0.00	0.00
B.6.9	Food Rs.60 X 30 Heads X 6 Days	10800.00	10800.00	0.00	0.00
	Sub Total:	116000.00	116000.00	0.00	0.00
B.7	Awareness Building				
B.7.1	Stakeholder meeting	5000.00	5000.00	0.00	0.00
	Sub Total:	5000.00	5000.00	0.00	0.00
B.8	Honorarium of Social Worker				
	Rs 8000 X 12 Months	96000.00	86500.00	0.00	9500.00
B.9	Other Benefit for the Social Worker				
	Rs 1500 X 12 Months	18000.00	18000.00	0.00	0.00
B.10	Collection & User of testaments for the betterment of Field Work				
	Rs.7000X 12 Months	84000.00	84000.00	0.00	0.00
	Sub Total:	198000.00	188500.00	0.00	9500.00
C	Administration				
C.1	Audit & legal charges incl. service	5000.00	5000.00	0.00	0.00
C.2	Printing, Postage, Stationery, Electricity, Telephone etc	5000.00	5000.00	0.00	0.00
C.3	Travel cost for staff, volenteers etc.(Rs.1500 X 12 months)	18000.00	17971.00	0.00	29.00
C.4	Miscellaneous and maintenance	4000.00	3988.00	0.00	12.00
C.5	Annual maintenance for computer	1500.00	1500.00	0.00	0.00
	Sub Total:	33500.00	33459.00	0.00	41.00
	GRAND TOTAL	970700.00	929959.00	31200.00	9541.00

FUND STATUS

Particulars	Amount in INR	Amount in INR
Opening Balance as on 01.07.2024	4,540.88	
Add : Grant in Aid received (2024-2025)	970,000.00	
Total Fund Available		974540.88
Less : Expenses from 01.07.2024 to 30.06.2025		929959.00
Less : Expenses for extra Clothing for 26 H.S Girls from Unspent Tuition Funds (Permission Obtained on 19 May 2025 for Clothing from unspent balance of this line item)		31200.00
Closing Balance as on 30.06.2025		13381.88