

PROJECT PROPOSAL

~JAGARAN~

...Awakening Hope and Dignity among the Most Marginalized...

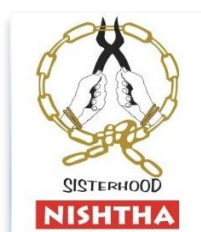
For the Period

(April 2025 – March 2026)

PROPOSED TO:



PROPOSED BY:



NISHTHA

Subuddhipur, De para, Baruipur,
South 24 Parganas District,
West Bengal, India, 700144

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AREA OF IMPLEMENTATION: Six villages of Bishnupur-I Block, South 24 Parganas District, West Bengal, India

ABOUT ORGANISATION, NISHTHA:-

In the heart of a remote land of West Bengal, where gender discrimination, child marriage, trafficking, and cruelty against women were once an accepted norm, Nishtha dared to dream of change.

NISHTHA, a community based women's organization was born in the mid-seventies in South 24 Parganas with the aim to empower women through awareness building on rights and strengthening them to demand for their rights. Nishtha's mission is empowerment of women to fight for equal opportunities, equal rights and equal dignity. Nishtha presently works in more than 369 villages in 9 blocks in the District of South 24 Parganas. The programs of Nishtha are a reflection of continuous self-analysis & subsequent proactive revisions that made us a participatory resource centre for community women, youths and elderly women.

Over the years, Nishtha has been working through the leaders of Mahila Mandals and Kishori Vahini who have been the back bone of Nishtha. These leaders are from among the village women who are victims of violence and injustice. They have committed themselves to work for their fellow sisters. They protest against violence, protect the girls and women, take action to improve their environment, speak up against violence, and advocate for their rights. They have mounted successful campaign against discrimination, humiliation and injustice. These grassroots groups have broadened the social network, developed new ideas, and facilitate changes in village attitudes and behaviors.

With each passing year, we witnessed incredible transformation. The once-rampant horrors of child marriage and trafficking began to decline. More and more girls stayed in school. Women, once silenced, found their voices. It was as if hope had taken root, and our resolve grew stronger, our confidence unshakable. We knew we were on the right path, and we pushed forward, determined to rewrite the fate of our girls and women.

But then, the world trembled. The COVID-19 lockdowns swept through like an unforgiving storm, paralyzing livelihoods and deepening despair. As if that weren't enough, nature struck with unrelenting fury—two devastating cyclones tore through our villages, leaving behind nothing but ruin. And just when we were struggling to rebuild, Cyclone Remal in May and Cyclone Dana in October 2024 brought fresh waves of destruction.

In every crisis, it is the women and girls who suffer the most. The progress we fought so hard for seemed to slip away as violence and deprivation surged once again. The threat of child marriage loomed larger, trafficking networks became more dangerous, and the voices of the oppressed grew faint under the weight of hunger, loss, and fear.

Vanishing Futures: The Alarming Rise in Girls Dropping Out, Getting Married, and Disappearing into Trafficking Networks:-

West Bengal's Girls Are Disappearing from Education — and Falling into Danger.

The two-year school closure during the pandemic has had devastating consequences—around 65% of girls have not returned to formal education. In 2023 alone, over 4 lakh students, mainly girls, vanished from the academic system without taking the Secondary final exam. And Between 2022 and 2024, 3.3 lakh students dropped out after passing Class X but never reached Class XII.

(Source: <https://www.newsclick.in/Bengal-School-Dropouts-Rise-Number-Candidates-Secondary-Exam-Falls-4-Lakh-Due-Pandemic>)

This alarming dropout rate is not just about education—it's a gateway to trafficking and child marriage.

West Bengal now accounts for 25% of India's trafficking cases, with South 24 Parganas—our target project area—being the worst-affected, contributing 37% of the state's total cases. Child marriages have surged to 32.3%, twice the national average, making the state the highest in India. *(Source: <https://www.newsclick.in/bengal-sundarbans-south-and-north-24-parganas-report-highest-cases-child-women-trafficking-say>)*

We urgently need a bold and strategic intervention in the remote corners of South 24 Parganas—where vulnerable girls continue to face the grim realities of exploitation, violence and lost dreams.

RATIONALE FOR THE PROJECT:-

But the need far exceeds our current reach~

In the remote villages of South 24 Parganas, poverty, patriarchy, and social injustice have long kept girls from dreaming beyond survival. Early marriage, school dropout, and violence were once seen as unavoidable. Just ten years ago, only three girls in the Jagaran project area had completed matriculation.

The Jagaran Project emerged as a powerful force for change. Today, nearly 25–30 girls complete their board exams each year, many advancing to higher secondary, college and vocational training. Girls and mothers, once silenced by fear, are now part of empowered collectives that fight back — against child marriage, violence, and discrimination.

Child marriage has dropped from 47% to 3.16%. Girls once on the brink of being trafficked or forced to quit school now stand strong, supported by community-led interventions, education, awareness, and relentless care. Even during the pandemic, not a single girl from Jagaran was trafficked — a testament to the project's life-saving impact.

But the progress is fragile.

After the COVID lockdown, two devastating cyclones, and two more in 2024, families in the villages are facing tremendous hardship and massive destruction. Many parents are now unable to support even the basic requirements of their daughters as they once could.

With rising poverty and growing threats, these girls remain vulnerable. Without continued support, many may again be pulled out of school or pushed into early marriage. Their dreams — so close to becoming reality — could vanish.

Jagaran is not just about education. It is about protection, dignity, and giving girls the power to decide their own future. This project is a lifeline for 172 vulnerable girls. It ensures that no girl is left behind — that each one has a chance to rise, to learn, and to lead.

ACHIEVEMENT:-

- In February and March 2025, 100% of eligible girls appeared for the Secondary and Higher Secondary Examinations — 14 girls each — and all 28 passed successfully, marking a 100% pass and appearance rate in both board examinations.
- During the year, we achieved a remarkable retention rate of 96%, with 152 out of 158 girls continuing their education. Despite challenges, 152 girls were protected from early marriage (only 6 early marriage) with a protection rate of 96%.
- A significant milestone was the emergence of 9 Girls' Groups and 8 Mothers' Groups as strong and independent. These groups are now confidently leading their own activities and

interventions without external support — a true testament to the project's grassroots empowerment model.

- 19 domestic violence cases were successfully prevented, 51 girls were re-admitted to school, and 12 cases were formally reported to the police, with prompt action taken in 5. Out of 15 cases of violence addressed by community groups, legal action has been initiated in 7, reflecting a strong community response and growing trust in local support systems.
- Despite the challenges posed by the post-pandemic job market, our girls have exhibited extraordinary resilience and drive. Their collective achievements reflect both individual growth and a positive ripple effect on their families and communities.
 - Nursing Professionals: 5 graduates are currently employed as nurses in hospitals and nursing homes.
 - Post Masters: 2 graduates have secured employment in the postal department.
 - Teachers: 2 graduates are now working as teachers.
 - Data Entry Operator: 1 graduate is working in a private company.
 - Hospital Management: 1 graduate is pursuing a course in hospital management.
 - Nursing Students: 1 student is currently studying nursing at a college in Karnataka.
 - Postgraduate with B.Ed Qualification: 1 graduate has completed postgraduation along with B.Ed and is now working as a teacher.
 - Higher Secondary Science Stream Students Preparing for B.Sc. Nursing Entrance Exams: 6 girls, who passed H.S. in First Division (Science), are preparing for entrance into Government B.Sc. Nursing Colleges.

The Jagaran Project serves as a lifeline for the most vulnerable girls and women in rural Bengal. In these challenging times, when the national and state rates of child marriage and school dropout are alarmingly high, the Jagaran girls have stood strong. With unwavering determination, they have fought against all odds and continued their journey toward a life of dignity, independence, and empowerment.

THE PROJECT:-

GOAL:-

To empower 172 girls from the remotest villages of South 24 Parganas through formal education—preventing early & forced marriage, trafficking, and violence and preparing them to take up the challenge of future life.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT:-

Objective 1. - To ensure at least 90 % of the girls supported continue their education till graduation level.

Objective 2. - To ensure at least 90% of the girls supported are protected from early marriage and trafficking.

Objective 3. - More than 50% of the girls' and women's groups become strong enough to raise their voice and run their own groups efficiently.

Objective 4. - To make 30% of the stakeholders and service providers more responsible towards women's causes.

PLANNED ACTIVITIES TO ACHIEVE THE PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND GOAL:-

- Tuition Fee Support for 172 Girls will be provided (as per budget):
- Distribute hygiene kits monthly (12 times a year) to all 172 girls to support their health, dignity, and regular school/college attendance.

- Distribute educational materials once a year to 70 secondary girls to help them meet their academic requirements and reduce financial burden on families.
- Ensure 5 monitoring visits per year to the tuition classes to assess regularity and quality.
- Strengthen 11 Girls' Groups and 11 Women's Groups across the project area.
- Facilitate 6 group meetings per year for each group under the leadership of group leaders, aimed at fostering solidarity and mutual support.
- Conduct 6 structured leadership training sessions annually for each of the 11 Girls' Groups and 6 training sessions for 11 Women's Groups (22 leaders and 22 co-leaders) under the *Jagaran Project* to build leadership, courage, confidence, and collective decision-making.
- Organise 1 community stakeholder meetings per year with local influencers, school authorities, Panchayat members, and service providers to improve responsiveness to girls' rights and needs.
- Conduct a minimum of 12 one-on-one stakeholder meetings annually to address critical individual cases and build long-term alliances.
- Implement 7 distinct BCC activities each year (Rally, Campaign, street plays, poster exhibitions, community dialogues, etc.), led by the leaders of girls' and women's groups, and aimed at challenging harmful norms and promoting gender equality.
- Conduct at least 2000 home to build strong relationships with the 172 families, monitor girl's wellbeing, and strengthen family-level support for education.
- Organise 10 small group sessions with mothers and 10 individual counselling sessions with fathers per year to promote positive parenting and reduce resistance towards girls' higher education.
- Organise 2 annual get-togethers for all Girls', Women's Groups and community women and girls to enhance motivation, reinforce group identity, and celebrate collective progress.

RISK and MITIGATION STRATEGIES:-

We are currently facing an alarming and unprecedented crisis—one that threatens the future of thousands of vulnerable girls. The only effective response to this situation is a massive fight-back through collective struggle, resilience, and action. Our goal is to prepare today's girls to become educated, courageous, and empowered leaders and change makers, who will pave the way for a gender-equitable, dignified, and violence-free society.

To address this critical challenge, Nishtha has developed the following key strategies:

- **Strengthening Stakeholder Accountability:**
Make all relevant stakeholders—including parents, teachers, local authorities, and service providers—more responsive, proactive, and accountable in protecting girls' rights and promoting their higher education.
- **Empowering Girls and Women as Leaders:**
Equip the targeted 22 girls groups and the women's groups with comprehensive knowledge, leadership training, and access to formal education, enabling them to transition from passive beneficiaries to confident decision-makers and powerful agents of change.
- **Building Strong Public opinion for Women's Leadership:**
Launch strategic community-based campaigns and behaviour change initiatives to raise strong public opinion in favour of women's leadership, thereby creating an enabling environment where women are accepted, respected, and supported as community leaders.

BENEFICIARIES:-

The project will directly support 172 vulnerable girls and 172 women through education and empowerment initiatives, while indirectly reaching over 1000 community members—including men, women, stakeholders, and influencers—to build a supportive environment for girls' education and women's leadership.

PROJECT PERIOD:-

One year - from July 2025 to June 2026.

BUDGET:-

The total budget of proposed project, Jagaran, from April 2025 to March 2026 is INR 13, 54,400.00. As of June 30, 2025, we have an unspent balance of INR 13,381.88. Therefore, the amount required for this period is **INR 13, 41,018.12 (Thirteen Lakhs Forty One Thousand and Eighteen Rupees Only)**

Name of the Organization : **Nishtha**
Name of the project : **Jagaran**
Supported by : **Asha for Education**
Budget for the Period from **01.04.2025** to **31.03.2026**

S.L No.	Line Item	Budget Amount in INR
A	Personnel Cost	
A.1	Project Monitoring Coordinator (Including Benefit)	
	Rs.9800 X 12 Months	117600.00
	Sub Total:	117600.00
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
B.1.2	Hygiene Kit to 70 Students	
	Rs100 X 70 students X 12 months	84000.00
B.1.3	Tution fees for 70 Students	
	Rs100 X 70 students X 11 months	77000.00
	Sub Total:	196000.00
B.2	Education Support to 32 H.S Students	
B.2.1	Hygiene Kit to 32 Students	
	Rs100 X 32 students X 12 months	38400.00
B.2.2	Tution Fees	
B.2.2.a	Rs.300 per month X 11 Months X 15 Girls	49500.00
B.2.2.b	Rs.300 per month X 10 Months X 17 Girls	51000.00
	Sub Total:	138900.00
B.3	Education Support for 70 college Students	
B.3.1	Hygiene Kit to 70 Students	
	Rs100 X 70 students X 12 months	84000.00
B.3.2	Stipend for 70 College girls	
B.3.2.a	Rs.400 per month X 11 Months X 56 Girls	246400.00
B.3.2.b	Rs.400 per month X 10 Months X 14 Girls	56000.00
	Sub Total:	386400.00
B.4	Fees for English Teacher	14400.00
B.5	Travel Cost for 20 Students	57600.00
	Sub Total:	72000.00
B.6	Capacity Building	
	Kishori Vahini Training	
B.6.1	TA Rs.60 X 30 heads X 6 Days	10800.00
B.6.2	Food Rs.60 X 30 Heads X 6 Days	10800.00
B.6.3	Training Materials, Flex, expenses for practical and other training inputs.	
	Rs.4800 x 06 Days	28800.00
B.6.4	Get together of 800 members of Mohila Mondal	24000.00
B.6.5	Get together of Girls	20000.00
	Womens Group Training	
B.6.6	TA Rs.60 X 30 heads X 6 Days	10800.00
B.6.7	Food Rs.60 X 30 Heads X 6 Days	10800.00
	Sub Total:	116000.00
B.7	Awareness Building	
B.7.1	Stakeholder meeting	5000.00
	Sub Total:	5000.00
B.8	Honorarium of Social Worker (Including Benefit)	
	Rs 9000 X 01 head X 12 Months	108000.00
B.9	Collection & User of testaments for the betterment of Field Work	
	Rs.7000X 12 Months	84000.00
B.10	Non-Wage Benefit for the Service Providers	
	Rs.8000 X 12 Months	96000.00
	Sub Total:	288000.00
C	Administration	
C.1	Audit & legal charges incl. service	5000.00
C.2	Printing, Postage, Stationery, Electricity, Telephone etc	5000.00
C.3	Travel cost for staff, volenteers and carrying cost etc.	18000.00
C.4	Miscellaneous and maintenance	5000.00
C.5	Maintenance for computer	1500.00
	Sub Total:	34500.00
	GRAND TOTAL (A+B+C)	1354400.00

FUND STATUS	
Particulars	Amount in INR
Proposed Budget for the period (April 2025 to March 2026)	1,354,400.00
Less: Unspent Balance from the period (April 2024 to March 2025)	13,381.88
Total Fund Requested for the Project Period (April 2025 to March 2026)	1,341,018.12