

**‘WITHDRAWAL PLAN for SATHI FOR EDUCATION SUPPORTBY
SUPPORTED BY ASHA FOR EDUCATION**

Brief background of the Programme

SATHI for Education Support project for back up support, aimed at retention of children in the formal school system, is operational at two locations under Kamarhati Municipality and Panihati Municipality. INSPIRATION being the implementing agency of the project intends to achieve the best within its limited scope.

This programme has been able to make children more or less regular in schools by inculcating the school going habit among them as well as through academic preparedness. For this, the organization has undertaken an intensive backup support programme in line with the school curriculum. Back up support helps the children to cope with classroom teaching.

Along with back up coaching support, the other add-ons to the programme include counselling of children, a provision for token tiffin. Further, some truly deserving children are supported with other academic and non-academic support also.

The withdrawal plan

Bridging the Divide, has been supported by Asha for Education since 2009 at Kamarhati Municipality. The programme has been designed towards achieving SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 5 (Gender Equality). The programme has been the longest and successfully run project of Hijli INSPIRATION with the support of Asha for Education.

The project was initiated at a time when there was an absolute need for children, in this community, to be introduced to education and accustom them to books, learning and education. As much as the children the parents too were oblivious of the necessity of educating their children. Most of the children coming to the centres were neither found enrolled in schools nor were they regular school goers. Besides mainstreaming these children to schools, the challenge was also to retain them in their respective schools. With years of intervention, however, these challenges have been overridden and newer challenges have been dealt with.

The project has been able to bring about some visible changes in terms of attitude towards education, early marriage, child labour, gender balance in the students and also in the community to certain extent. Though the primary objective has been to address the concerns pertaining to education, and developing the learning skills, the peripheral issues which directly contribute to a child’s development have always been incorporated.

The pressing concern in the current time has been to continue with the project, with limited resources; considering the programme being successfully operational over a span of 11 years, it is obvious that it has been a well perceived and goal driven approach. However successful it might have been, it has now come to a juncture when gradual withdrawal from the programme is the way to a very logical exit, what with the overriding expectation of the community to be always supported by the organization.

But the organization does not endorse this approach and has always encouraged community participation, as a method of sustaining the programme beyond any external support. With the present batch of 70 students, comprising students from classes VII to X, the organization is expecting support till the year 2024 to enable all students complete their secondary education. The appending table shows the year wise distribution of students.

YEAR	VII	VIII	IX	X	TOTAL
2020	25	22	10	13	70
2021	0	25	22	10	57
2022	0	0	25	22	47
2023	0	0	0	25	25
2024	The last batch of students will complete their secondary examination in February 2024				

The number of students in each of the six centres had been 25; therefore, the total number of students each year were approximately 150. However, the number had to be restrained this year; at present, the number has been brought down to approximately 70 comprising students from classes VII to X. The secondary level students of classes VIII, IX and X are at a very crucial juncture, with years of effort from all quarters it will all but go in vain, if any of these students drop out of school and not complete the secondary examination.

At present, the students from classes V and VI have been excluded from the curricular support, but they will be provided library support once a week. These students can come to the reading centres and be part of the reading acceleration programme. However, the students from class VII have been retained along with students of classes VIII, IX and X; the students of class VII have been found to be very promising and needs to be provided with curricular support to enable them to be in the mainstream. The curricular support will continue to be the same with the students of classes VIII – X, they have identified the opportunities that lie ahead of them once they complete the secondary examination. They have also realized that education can help them be eligible for jobs or other academic opportunities also.

The table projects the actions taken or to be taken during the exit:

POINTER	ACTION TAKEN / TO BE TAKEN DURING EXIT
Focused intervention targeting the high school children for effective outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curtail the number of beneficiaries • Design some programmes for the younger children before tapering off
Capacitate volunteers and develop a local resource to ensure sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train them on programmes aimed at improving basic learning skill of children • Enable them for community engagement on gender sensitivity • Encourage advocacy and stakeholder engagement
Replication of the model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the programme • Document case studies • Publicize success stories

The activities would continue to lay emphasis on:

- Reading acceleration programme
- Basic learning skill enhancement
- Academic support
- Gender sensitization programme

Gradual phasing out from such an impactful project will be a trying experience for the organization. But this has to be brought about through a very strategic conclusion with sufficient time for the beneficiaries to be capacitated and spearheaded to a direction where they can make the best of any opportunity.

The table shows proposed budget for the years 2020 - 2024

Year	Proposed Budget	Budget for Gender Workshop	No. of Students	No. of volunteers
April to March – 2020 - 2021	5,25,240.00	1,44,000.00	70	8
April to March – 2021 - 2022	3,81,040.00	0.00	57	5
April to March – 2022 - 2023	3,70,040.00	0.00	47	5
April to February - 2023 - 2024	2,75,715.00	0.00	25	4

The workshop on Gender Sensitization will phase out in the year 2021; students who had previously participated in this workshop will continue to do so. The volunteers are being trained to continue with the similar approach through their activities.