

# KHEL

## Knowledge Hub for Education and Learning

### A Comprehensive Programme Overview

**Prepared for Asha for Education, Silicon Valley Chapter**

Diksha Foundation | Patna, Bihar | May 2026

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*A document for Asha Silicon Valley - covering KHEL's model, evidence, partnerships, and current funding need for the Patna centre.*

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# 1. Executive Summary

KHEL - Knowledge Hub for Education and Learning - is Diksha Foundation's flagship holistic education programme for children from low-income communities in Bihar. It began in 2011 as a single after-school centre in Rukanpura, Patna. Today, it operates through three centres in Patna, Bihta, and Sarairanjan, combining after-school learning, government school outreach, nutrition support, arts, sports, STEAM, social-emotional learning, and digital practice.

The programme is built on a simple but rigorous belief: children learn best when education recognises their full humanity. KHEL therefore combines foundational literacy and numeracy with theatre, sports, civic education, creative expression, digital learning, and reflective practice. The aim is not only school readiness or test performance, but confidence, agency, affiliation, imagination, and the ability to participate meaningfully in community life.

KHEL now directly enrolls 486 children across three centres and reaches approximately 1,500 additional children through government school outreach. In 2025-26, students logged 1,44,584 minutes of structured Khan Academy learning and received 70,036 hot cooked meals through the Zomato Feeding India partnership. External and partner-led assessments show measurable progress, especially in Hindi and mathematics at Patna and Bihta, with current-year verified Sodhana 2 results expected from North-South Foundation in June 2026.

The immediate funding need is the Patna centre - KHEL's original centre and the programme's proof-of-concept site. Patna is currently without institutional funding and is being sustained through general donations. Support from Asha Silicon Valley would stabilise this core centre, protect continuity for children, and help Diksha deepen a model that Asha has historically helped build through its long support via the Purdue chapter.

Diksha is also beginning to extend KHEL's learning ecosystem digitally through Rusty, a WhatsApp-based AI support tool being piloted through Glific. The first controlled launch is scheduled for the last week of May 2026, and the Know Your Body, Know Your Rights adolescent girls' life skills curriculum has been integrated as an early teacher-support use case.

KHEL at a glance	Current status
Centres	3: Patna, Bihta, Sarairanjan (Samastipur)
Direct enrolment	486 children: Patna 138, Bihta 155, Sarairanjan 193
Government school outreach	12 partner schools, designed to scale to 15
Total current reach	Approximately 2,000+ children through centre and outreach model
Operating rhythm	Tuesday-Saturday, 2-6 PM; Sunday, 10 AM-4 PM; two batches per day
Teacher-student ratio	Approximately 1:30, compared with 1:50+ in many government-school contexts
Nutrition support	70,036 meals served in 2025-26 through Zomato Feeding India
Digital learning	1,44,584 Khan Academy learning minutes in 2025-26
Funding gap	KHEL Patna is currently without institutional support

# 2. Diksha Foundation in Brief

Diksha Foundation is a Bihar-based nonprofit working at the intersection of education, empowerment, and social development. Founded in 2010 and registered as a society, Diksha has spent 15 years building sustained relationships with children, families, alumni, local institutions, and community leaders in Patna and across Bihar.

The organisation's work is anchored in three principles: Relationship, Responsibility, and Reverence. These principles have shaped a long-term, community-rooted approach: Diksha does not enter communities for short-term projects alone; it builds spaces where children and young people grow over years and often return as teachers, mentors, and staff.

Organisation fact	Details
Founded	2010

Organisation fact	Details
Legal status	Registered Society   FCRA   80G   12A
Operational base	Patna, Bihar
Registered office	New Delhi
Team	18 staff members; approximately 30% are programme alumni
Children served since 2010	15,000+

### Diksha's three current programme pillars

- **KHEL Learning Centres:** Flagship after-school education programme across three centres in Bihar.
- **Empowering Futures:** Capabilities-based adolescent girls project supported by Azim Premji Foundation for 2025-28.
- **Poonji Project:** Women's economic empowerment initiative in urban slum communities, supported by eGain Communications Pvt. Ltd.

## 3. Why KHEL Exists: Bihar Context and Educational Philosophy

KHEL responds to a persistent gap in Bihar: children are enrolled in school, but many do not receive the academic, emotional, creative, and social support required to thrive. KHEL is designed as a complementary learning space - not a substitute for school, but a hub that strengthens what school alone often cannot provide.

The learning crisis remains severe. ASER 2024 Bihar rural data shows that only 26.1% of children in Standard III can read a Standard II level text, and only 37.4% of Standard III children can do at least subtraction. By Standard V, 43.6% can read a Standard II level text and 55.7% can do at least subtraction. These figures underline the need for consistent foundational support, especially for children from low-income, government-school-going families.

Source: ASER 2024 Bihar Rural Report. Figures are presented here by grade to avoid over-aggregation across different age and grade groups.

### Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences

KHEL's pedagogy draws on Howard Gardner's view that intelligence is not a single measurable trait but a diverse set of human capacities. A child may struggle in a conventional classroom and still be strong in movement, rhythm, interpersonal awareness, visual thinking, storytelling, or practical problem-solving. KHEL therefore gives children multiple pathways to discover competence and dignity.

Intelligence	How KHEL nurtures it
Linguistic	Reading, writing, storytelling, theatre, spoken language
Logical-mathematical	Mathematics practice, puzzles, problem-solving, Khan Academy
Spatial	Visual arts, Mithila art, models, design, STEAM projects
Bodily-kinesthetic	Football, theatre, dance, movement, games
Musical	Songs, rhythm, performance, cultural expression
Interpersonal	Teamwork, peer learning, Bal Sansad, group projects
Intrapersonal	Reflection, SEE Learning, meditation, emotional vocabulary
Naturalistic	Observation, environment, science, local context

### Capabilities Approach: education as real freedom

KHEL also draws from the Capabilities Approach developed by Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum. In this framing, education is not only skill acquisition; it is the expansion of what a person is actually able to be and do. KHEL uses this orientation to ask three programme questions repeatedly: What capability does this activity build? How does it honour diverse forms of intelligence? Does it expand a child's real freedom to choose the life they value?

Nussbaum's Ten Core Capabilities guide KHEL's long-term outcome framework:

- Life - living a full, dignified human life
- Bodily Health - good health, adequate nourishment
- Bodily Integrity - freedom from violence, autonomy
- Senses, Imagination, and Thought - literacy, creativity, critical inquiry
- Emotions - the capacity to love, grieve, feel attachment
- Practical Reason - forming a conception of the good and planning one's own life
- Affiliation - living with and toward others; dignity and non-discrimination
- Other Species - relation to animals, plants, and the natural world
- Play - laughter, recreation, enjoyment
- Control over One's Environment - political and material control over one's own life

This is why play, theatre, nutrition, civic education, sports, and emotional learning are not treated as peripheral to academics. They are part of the same human-development arc.

## 4. Programme Journey and the Asha Relationship

KHEL began in 2011 in Rukanpura, Patna: one room, one teacher, and a conviction that the children of the community deserved richer learning opportunities than the system was offering them. The programme grew gradually through trust, continuity, and relationships with families.

Asha for Education has been part of KHEL's story from its formative phase. The Purdue chapter supported Diksha for approximately 11 years, beginning around 2012, including support for early computer-lab work and later expansion of the KHEL model. That relationship gave KHEL the institutional stability to grow from a small after-school centre into a holistic learning programme with evidence systems, trained fellows, digital learning, arts, sports, and community outreach.

### Growth milestones

- **2011:** KHEL begins as a single after-school centre in Rukanpura, Patna.
- **Around 2012 onward:** Asha for Education Purdue chapter begins long-term support, including computer-lab and programme expansion support.
- **2015-2022:** KHEL expands beyond academics to include digital learning, arts, theatre, sports, and structured partner-led learning support.
- **2024:** Sarairanjan centre launches in Samastipur district, expanding KHEL into a rural/village context.
- **2025-26:** Three-centre model consolidates with assessment partners, Khan Academy data, Feeding India meals, and hub-and-spoke government school outreach.

## 5. Current KHEL Model: Three Centres and Hub-and-Spoke Outreach

KHEL is now organised as a three-centre hub-and-spoke model. Each centre operates as a daily after-school learning space and also serves as a hub for outreach to nearby government and community schools. Teaching Fellows spend mornings supporting school-based learning and afternoons running KHEL centre sessions.

Centre	Direct enrolment	Current funding / status	Notes
KHEL Patna	138	Currently without institutional funding	Original centre and proof-of-concept site; current request focuses on stabilising this centre.
KHEL Bihta	155	Supported by Ruban Memorial Hospital CSR	Established centre with strong assessment and Khan Academy engagement.
KHEL Sarairanjan	193	Supported by BP Singh & Shakuntala Devi Foundation	Rural/village centre in Samastipur district; newer centre with large learning gaps and growing engagement.

## Operating design

- Children attend 10-12 hours per week through centre sessions.
- Sessions run Tuesday–Saturday from 2–6 PM and Sunday from 10 AM-4 PM.
- Centres run two batches per day, helping manage age, learning level, and space constraints.
- The teacher-student ratio is approximately 1:30, significantly more supportive than many crowded government-school settings.
- Teaching Fellows visit nearby government schools in the morning, then return to centres for after-school learning in the afternoon.

## Hub-and-spoke reach

The hub-and-spoke model multiplies impact without proportional additional cost. The 486 enrolled KHEL students are complemented by approximately 1,500 children reached through government school outreach, bringing total current reach to approximately 2,000 children.

## 6. What Children Experience at KHEL

A KHEL child does not experience the centre as a tuition class. The child comes into a structured learning community where academics, digital practice, play, art, theatre, civic participation, and emotional reflection sit together. This integration is the programme's core strength.

Learning domain	Core activities	Human-development purpose
Foundational literacy and numeracy	Hindi, English, mathematics aligned to Bihar Board and CBSE learning needs	Strengthens core learning, confidence, and school participation.
Digital learning	Khan Academy, MS Office, structured digital practice and tracking	Builds purposeful technology use and individualised learning pathways.
Social-emotional and ethical learning	SEE Learning, meditation, My Life Mere Faisley, reflection	Builds self-awareness, emotional regulation, empathy, and ethical decision-making.
Arts and creative expression	Theatre, puppetry, dance, music, visual arts, Mithila art	Builds imagination, expression, cultural identity, and public confidence.
Sports and play	Football, structured physical activity, team games	Builds teamwork, resilience, leadership, gender participation, and joy.
STEAM projects	Simple machines, renewable energy, basic coding, hands-on models	Builds curiosity, applied thinking, and scientific confidence.
Civic education	Samvidhan Mela and Bal Sansad	Builds democratic participation, rights awareness, voice, and responsibility.

## Monthly rhythm

Delivery follows a disciplined monthly cycle: planning, implementation, and reflection. Teaching Fellows prepare daily lesson plans, write short post-session reflections, and review progress with the Education & Empowerment Specialist in weekly meetings. This makes KHEL both child-centred and operationally accountable.

## 7. Teaching Fellow Development

KHEL's quality depends on its Teaching Fellows - locally recruited young people, many of whom are programme alumni or come from similar communities. This gives the programme cultural proximity and credibility, while also creating a pathway for young people to grow as educators and community leaders.

- **External training:** LIFI Foundation for literacy/numeracy, TFI for pedagogy; Swatantra Talim for STEAM; SEE Learning India for social-emotional and ethical learning; North-South Foundation for assessment tools.
- **Coaching and observation:** Monthly observation and feedback by the Education & Empowerment Specialist.

- **Reflection discipline:** Daily lesson planning and short reflections to build teaching craft.
- **Career pathway:** Fellow -> Senior Fellow -> Head Teacher -> Education & Empowerment Specialist.
- **Retention:** Approximately 75% year-on-year Teaching Fellow retention

The result is a local educator pipeline that supports children while also creating dignified employment and leadership opportunities for young people from the same ecosystem.

## 8. Evidence of Learning: Assessments and Progress Data

KHEL uses a mix of external assessments, partner-led baseline/endline tools, and digital dashboards to understand children's learning levels and adjust instruction. The strongest verified learning-gain data currently available comes from LIFI's 2024-25 baseline and endline cycle for Patna and Bihta. North-South Foundation Sodhana 2 results for all three centres are expected in June 2026 and will be added once available.

### North-South Foundation: KHEL Patna available assessment round (Grade 6)

Subject / level	Students assessed	Average score	Key reading of the data
Mathematics Level 1	17	83.1%	88% scored 70% or above; 76% scored 80% or above. Strong foundational numeracy.
Mathematics Level 2	10	65.3%	80% scored 60% or above. Covers more complex operations including multiplication, division, measurement, time, and word problems.
English Level 1	17	65.9%	Meaningful engagement with English despite limited home exposure.
English Level 2	11	57.3%	English remains a stretch area, especially in applied tasks.
LSR: Listening, Speaking, Reading	10	70.3%	8 of 10 students scored 65% or above; oral and communicative English appears relatively strong.

### North-South Foundation: earlier all-centre round (directional data only)

NSF flagged data quality concerns with an earlier 2025-26 all-centre assessment round. The figures below are therefore treated as directional evidence, not as final verified outcome data. A verified Sodhana 2 re-test was conducted in March 2026, with performance data expected by 5 June 2026.

Centre	Mathematics average	English average	Interpretation
Patna	76.2%	64.5%	Strongest and most mature centre data; English LSR component averaged 70.3%.
Bihta	77.1%	56.1%	Strong mathematics profile; English needs continued support.
Sarairanjan	50.3%	40.1%	Lower scores reflect newer centre status and deeper baseline gaps in the community.

### LIFI learning gains: Patna and Bihta, 2024–25 (LIFI assessments; Sarairanjan data not yet available for this cycle)

Centre and subject	Baseline	Endline / midline	Learning movement
Patna - Mathematics	52 students   Avg 41.3%   48% below 40%   19% at 70%+	124 students   Avg 63.4%   16% below 40%   46% at 70%+	+22 percentage points average. Children below 40% reduced from 48% to 16%.

Centre and subject	Baseline	Endline / midline	Learning movement
Patna - Hindi	53 students   Avg 51.2%   32% below 40%   26% at 70%+	124 students   Avg 69.1%   10% below 40%   62% at 70%+	+18 percentage points average. Students scoring 70%+ rose from 26% to 62%.
Bihta - Mathematics	122 students   Avg 69.2%   54% at 70%+	120 students   Avg 65.4%   46% at 70%+ (midline; endline files not valid for Bihta)	Bihta entered the year with relatively stronger Math levels. Midline data shows a slight dip, which should be read cautiously rather than as a decline — the more reliable finding is that Bihta's baseline was already strong.
Bihta - Hindi	122 students   Avg 60.0%   21% below 40%   48% at 70%+	116 students   Avg 73.6%   2% below 40%   66% at 70%+	+13.6 percentage points by midline; children below 40% reduced from 21% to 2% — a near-elimination of the most serious learning gaps at this centre.

### LIFI baseline: all three centres, 2025–26

Centre	Mathematics baseline	Hindi baseline	Reading of baseline
Patna	72 students   Avg 46.2%   38% below 40%	77 students   Avg 41.9%   43% below 40%	Large entry-level gaps; previous Patna gains show the model can move children toward proficiency.
Bihta	125 students   Avg 72.7%   64% at 70%+	122 students   Avg 74.3%   73% at 70%+	More established cohort with stronger starting levels.
Sarairanjan	94 students   Avg 42.2%   41% below 40%	130 students   Avg 40.2%   57% below 40%	Deep foundational gaps; needs sustained support and patient improvement tracking.

## 9. E-Learning: Khan Academy Data

Khan Academy is integrated into KHEL's daily learning routine as a structured digital practice platform. Students use it for personalised mathematics and reading pathways, while Teaching Fellows review dashboards to identify learners who need additional support.

Centre	Total hours	Approx. average hours per student
Patna	759	21.7
Bihta	1,204	22.5
Sarairanjan	446	7.8
Total	2,410	-

Patna and Bihta learners averaged more than 20 hours of structured digital learning per student over the year - equivalent to more than two full school days of focused self-paced practice, in addition to regular classroom instruction. Sarairanjan's usage is lower but growing as the newer centre matures.

Quarter	Patna	Bihta	Sarairanjan
Q1 Apr-Jun 2025	78 active   18,635 mins	45 active   18,830 mins	50 active   4,980 mins
Q2 Jul-Sep 2025	74 active   13,728 mins	49 active   20,725 mins	54 active   5,390 mins
Q3 Oct-Dec 2025	63 active   6,681 mins	56 active   12,411 mins	47 active   4,142 mins
Q4 Jan-Mar 2026	64 active   6,513 mins	64 active   20,296 mins	78 active   12,253 mins

## 10. Nutrition and Attendance: Zomato Feeding India Partnership

Hunger is an invisible barrier to learning. A child who arrives after a day at school without an adequate meal cannot concentrate, retain, or participate fully. KHEL therefore treats nutrition not as an add-on, but as a foundational condition for learning.

Through Zomato's Feeding India initiative, all enrolled KHEL students receive a daily hot cooked meal. Two to three mothers per centre prepare the meals and are paid directly by Zomato, creating a livelihood layer within the community while supporting children's attendance and learning readiness.

Centre	Meals served Apr 2025-Mar 2026	Functional days	Approx. meals per day
Patna	19,781	263	75
Bihta	24,314	270	90
Sarairanjan	25,941	259	100
Total	70,036	-	-

Attendance is tracked through biometric devices provided by Feeding India. This creates a relatively reliable attendance and meals dataset that can be used alongside academic and digital learning data to understand participation patterns over time.

## 11. Experiential Learning: Maths, Art, Theatre, and Football

KHEL's holistic approach becomes visible through its public learning events. These are not showcases detached from pedagogy; they are ways of making learning visible to children, families, teachers, and communities.

### Matrix Mela: mathematics as public learning

In December 2025, KHEL organised the Matrix Mela at Bihta - a community mathematics and STEAM fair where 270 children showcased concepts through hands-on activities, models, and games. The event included 20 stalls and 25 projects across number sense, fractions, divisibility, mensuration, math games, balloon carts, electric circuits, and vacuum pressure demonstrations.

Matrix Mela turns mathematics from a private classroom struggle into a public, joyful demonstration. Children explain, defend, and perform their learning in front of peers, parents, teachers, and community members.

### Mithila Art Workshops: culture as capability

In April-May 2026, KHEL Patna ran Sunday Mithila Art workshops in collaboration with DWAR Organisation. Students learned by making: they engaged with one of Bihar's major cultural traditions while building spatial intelligence, fine motor skills, cultural identity, and creative confidence.

### Theatre Showcase: stage as confidence

On 29 March 2026, students from KHEL Sarairanjan and the Empowering Futures adolescent girls programme performed at Bhartiya Nritya Kala Mandir, Patna. The KHEL Sarairanjan team performed Main Bihar Hoon, facilitated by Ankita Sharma; the Empowering Futures team performed Gonu Jha, facilitated by Saurabh Kumar.

For many participants, this was their first time standing on a stage of that scale. The event made visible the confidence that grows when children receive sustained mentorship, safe rehearsal spaces, and a programme that trusts their expressive capacities.

### Diksha Premier League: football for life skills

The Diksha Premier League, launched in May 2026, uses football as a vehicle for teamwork, communication, leadership, resilience, and joy. The first season was an internal tournament among Diksha children, youth, staff, and mentors, with four teams representing programme centres.

SRJ Champions from Sarairanjan, Manika village, won the first season. Eight of the twelve players had been playing football for only about twenty days when the tournament began. They practiced seriously, beat Futures FC 1-0 in the

semi-final, and defeated Patna Paltans 2-0 in the final. The least experienced team won because it organised, learned, and showed up.

Girls participated as players, not as a symbolic category. In Bihar, where girls' access to sport and public physical activity remains constrained, this matters beyond the match itself.

## 12. Government School Outreach

Each KHEL centre works with nearby government and community schools. Teaching Fellows provide volunteer classroom support, help identify learning gaps, conduct remedial learning camps, collaborate with teachers, and support community events such as Art & Craft Melas, Summer Camps, and Samvidhan Mela.

KHEL hub	Current partner schools
Patna	Primary School Rukanpura; RMS Khazpura; Primary School Maurya Path; Primary School Lalu Nagar
Bihta	Primary School Electricity Office; Primary School Bihta-1 and Bihta-2; Middle School Raghapur; Kanya Madhya Vidyalay Udehan
Sarairanjan	Primary School Khetapur; Middle School Khetapur Board; Primary School Dhuniya Tola Ward-5; Uchatar Uchcha Madhyamik Vidyalaya Manika

The current outreach footprint covers 12 partner schools and is designed to scale to 15. The model allows KHEL's methods and Teaching Fellow capacity to benefit children beyond those formally enrolled in the centres.

## 13. Alumni Pathways and Sustainability

KHEL's long-term impact is visible through alumni pathways. The programme is not only producing immediate academic gains; it is helping children and young people imagine wider futures and return to support the next generation.

Pathway	Illustration
Public service	Priyanka Kumari joined KHEL as a struggling student, later passed the Bihar Police examination, and now serves her community as a police officer.
Alumni educator	Maya Kumari enrolled at KHEL Patna in 2012 and later became a KHEL teacher while pursuing a Master's in Sociology, contributing to community outreach for 12 years.
International exposure	Three KHEL alumni received competitive government scholarships to study in the United States through the Community College Initiative Program and UGRAD Program.
Creative recognition	Two students received Ignite National Awards for innovation and creativity in 2015 and 2017.
Employment	Sunny Kumar secured employment as Guest Service Associate at Sheraton, Hyderabad in 2024.
Higher education	Five youth, including three Diksha alumni, are currently supported through higher education scholarships at institutions including Shiv Nadar University, Azim Premji University, Amity University, and JJ School of Arts, Mumbai.

### Alumni staff model

Approximately 30% of Diksha's current staff are programme alumni. This creates a self-reinforcing cycle: children who were invested in return as educators, mentors, and organisers. The model builds organisational continuity and community trust.

## Media validation

In December 2025, a representative from The Lallantop visited KHEL Bihta along with Dr. Satyajit Singh, Managing Director of RUBAN Memorial Hospital, Diksha's CSR partner for the Bihta centre. The visit brought KHEL's work to a wider Bihar audience and signalled local recognition of the centre's learning environment.

## 14. New Initiative: Rusty AI WhatsApp Tutor and Life Skills Support

Rusty is Diksha's AI-powered WhatsApp learning and teacher-support tool for Bihar Board students, Teaching Fellows, and adolescent life-skills facilitators. It sits within Bodhi Works, Diksha's broader AI-for-good initiative, and is designed to extend KHEL's learning environment into the digital channel most accessible to children, families, and field teams: WhatsApp.

The tool is delivered through WhatsApp using the Glific platform and ValueFirst messaging infrastructure. Diksha has already made progress on the Glific implementation, and the first controlled pilot launch is planned for the last week of May 2026. The initial pilot will work with approximately 70 learners, while also testing teacher-facing support for structured session planning.

A key recent milestone is the integration of the Adolescent Girls Life Skills curriculum, Know Your Body, Know Your Rights. Through this track, Rusty can support facilitators with session plans, warm-up activities, reflection questions, closure prompts, and safeguarding-aware guidance for sensitive discussions. This links Rusty directly with Diksha's Empowering Futures work while keeping KHEL's child-centred pedagogy at the core.

Rusty is not a replacement for teachers or centres. It is a supplementary layer — helping children practise after class, helping Teaching Fellows prepare better sessions, and helping Diksha explore how responsible AI can support community-rooted education without weakening the relationships at its core.

- Student learning track: Bihar Board-aligned support for Classes 5-10, beginning with a controlled pilot rather than open public deployment.
- Life-skills track: Know Your Body, Know Your Rights integrated as an adolescent girls curriculum support use case.
- Delivery layer: WhatsApp-based flow through Glific, supported by ValueFirst messaging infrastructure.
- Pilot status: first controlled launch planned for the last week of May 2026 with approximately 70 learners and facilitator-facing testing.
- Learning design: culturally grounded characters such as Alice, Sherlock Holmes, Gonu Jha, and Dashrath Manjhi to make learning contextual and engaging.
- Technology partners and support: Glific and JP Morgan Chase support through Tech for Good engagement.

## 15. Why Asha Support Matters Now

KHEL aligns strongly with Asha's tradition of supporting community-rooted, education-focused initiatives that combine access, dignity, and long-term learning. It also carries a direct Asha lineage: the Purdue chapter's long support helped build KHEL's foundation. Asha Silicon Valley's support would help protect and deepen that legacy at a moment when the original centre needs renewed institutional backing.