

# Navjyothi (NJSS)

Yearly Update for the year 2024-2025

August 2025

# Important Documents for Annual Review

- Yearly Progress Report: [Progress Report 2024-25](#)
  - Report was prepared by a former ASV student who has gone to Bhopal for further studies (Azim Premji Foundation)
- Latest site visit by Akshay in Feb/Mar 2024: [Site Visit Report Feb 2024](#)
- Budget for current year has been provided: [Budget 2025-26](#)
- Fund Utilization Report for last year should be available in a few days
  - Audited Report of Asha Trust is typically ready after October
  - Last years report will also be provided

# Background of Navjyothi (NJSS)

- This project is located in rural areas near the city of Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh
- The area is famous for the Banarasi sari weaving industry. Most of the weavers are illiterate and very poor and most children in the area worked with their families in the local sari weaving industry
- Nandlalji started teaching kids from the neighborhood in 1994 and that is why he is called Nandlal Master or Masterji.
- He first started teaching with an informal teaching center in the evening with four children from Nagepur village. This inspired other youth in the neighboring villages to start teaching children in their villages. This effort over the years ramped up to support 10 such schools – 2 day schools and 8 night schools, without any outside support. These centers have now stopped and children have been integrated into ASV school or government schools nearby
- Three major initiatives are run by Navjyothi – Asha Samajik Vidyalaya, Kishori Kendras and Self-Help Groups with Austin supporting the first two initiatives

Asha Samajik Vidyalaya



# Asha Samajik Vidyalaya

- Asha Chicago first started supporting the Asha Samajik Vidyalaya in 1999
- This is a regular day school, and it is located on land that was donated by Nandalaji to Asha Trust
- The school has been registered officially under the Right to Education Act
  - School building with library and computer room
  - Separate toilets for boys and girls
- There were 273 students in the last academic year from LKG to Class 8
- Various School Functions are celebrated like Independence Day, Republic Day, Gandhi Jayanti, Children's Day and other religious & social events
- Children are taught about issues relating to Gender, Human Rights, Child Rights, Domestic Violence & other social issues
- School timings: Summer – 8 am to 1 pm; Winter – 9 am to 2 pm

# ASV School Updates (1)

- School provides education from LKG to Grade 8
- No of students: 273
  - Boys: 155, Girls: 119
- April is when the new session starts with summer break from May 20<sup>th</sup> – June 30<sup>th</sup>
- Half yearly exams were conducted in Nov
- Children from class 6 – 8 attended online classes conducted by CLE Trust (group of volunteers from IIM Bangalore)





# ASV School Updates (2)

- Teachers participated in training programs in June (11<sup>th</sup>–16<sup>th</sup>) and July (18<sup>th</sup> -26<sup>th</sup>)
- Celebrated different national and religious holidays
  - Independence Day, Republic Day, Children's Day, Gandhi Jayanthi, etc
  - Children's Day celebrations were held and stationery was distributed amongst the children
- Eye checkup camps were organized for the children
- Aadhaar camp organized for children to receive aadhaar cards
- Bal Mela was organized in February where the children put up cultural performances



# ASV School Updates (3)

- Achievements
  - Student participation is improving in cultural events
  - Children are showing more interest based on use of science lab, computer classes, online lessons and kids play activities
  - Children are participating and help distribute food during the MDM, and helping in cleanup
  - Children are becoming tech-savvy and helping set up and start online classes



# ASV School Updates (4)

- Children went on an education tour to Sarvaved Temple, Sarnath Museum, Zoo and Stupa and visited Asha Kaithi Center
- Feeding India has added biometric enabled attendance system at the ASV school in 2025-26 school year
  - Started last week and they are working through the issues
  - Expect about 85-90% attendance rate
- Mid-Day-Meal (MDM) Program was started from July 15<sup>th</sup> with support from Feeding India which included morning breakfast and lunch











## आशा सामाजिक विद्यालय के बच्चों को मिलेगा नाश्ता और खाना, मिड डे मील में खीर पूड़ी और केला पाकर बच्चों के चेहरे खिल उठे



इस दृष्टिकोण के बीच सार्वजनिक विकास

चाराणसरी-प्रधानमंत्री आदर्श ग्राम नागपुर में आशा ट्रस्ट व लोक समिति द्वारा संचालित आशा सामाजिक विद्यालय में जोमैटो फीडिंग इंडिया के सहयोग से स्कूल में पढ़ने वाले बच्चों को मिड-डे मील योजना शुरू किया गया। सोमवार को योजना की शुरुआत की गई। योजना के तहत बच्चों को गरमागरम पका हुआ भोजन उपलब्ध कराया गया। पहले दिन बच्चों को खीर पूड़ी और केला दिया गया। ताजा गरम खाना पाकर बच्चों के चेहरे खिल उठे। इस

योजना से बच्चों को शिक्षा के साथ-साथ उनके स्वास्थ्य और पोषण को स्थिति में सुधार लाना है साथ ही सभी बच्चे एक साथ बैठकर खाना खावेंगे तो उन्हें अपनी समस्याओं से बचेंगे। इसके अलावा सामाजिक विद्यालय पिछले 30 वर्ष से नागपुर और आसपास के गरीब, बुनकर व वंचित समाज के बच्चों को निःशुल्क शिक्षा दे रहा है। बच्चों को ठीक से अगर पोषण नहीं मिल पाता है तो उनके स्वास्थ्य पर बुरा प्रभाव पड़ता है। इनका पढ़ने में भी मन नहीं लगता है। इस योजना के लागू होने

से बच्चों को अब पोषण की कमी से नहीं जूझना होगा। जोमैटो और फीडिंग इंडिया के मदद से अब प्रतिदिन बच्चों को नाश्ता और खाना मिलेगा साथ ही सप्ताह में चार दिन बच्चों को दूध भी

दिया जायेगा। इस स्क्रीम के तहत नर्सरी से आठवीं तक के तीन से बच्चे शामिल हैं। आशा सामाजिक विद्यालय के प्रधानाचार्य श्यामसुंदर मास्टर ने योजना लागू करने के लिए जोमैटो फीडिंग इंडिया का आभार जताया। इस अवसर पर मनीष, पंचमुखी, आशीष, सुनील गौड़, विद्या, मंजीता, शमा बानो, ज्योति, सीमा आदि लोग मौजूद रहे।

## मिड-डे-मील में खीर-पूड़ी खाकर बच्चों के चेहरे खिल उठे

मिर्जापुराद (जनवार्ता)। प्रधानमंत्री आदर्श ग्राम नागपुर में आशा ट्रस्ट व लोक समिति द्वारा संचालित आशा सामाजिक विद्यालय में जोमैटो फीडिंग इंडिया के सहयोग से स्कूल में पढ़ने वाले बच्चों को मिड-डे-मील योजना शुरू किया गया। सोमवार को योजना की शुरुआत की गई। योजना के तहत बच्चों को गरमागरम पका हुआ भोजन उपलब्ध कराया गया। पहले दिन बच्चों को खीर पूड़ी और केला दिया गया। ताजा गरम खाना पाकर बच्चों के चेहरे खिल उठे।

लोक समिति संयोजक नन्दलाल मास्टर ने बताया कि आशा सामाजिक विद्यालय पिछले 30 वर्ष से नागपुर और आसपास के गरीब, बुनकर व वंचित समाज के बच्चों को निःशुल्क शिक्षा दे रहा है। बच्चों को ठीक से अगर पोषण नहीं मिल पाता है तो उनके स्वास्थ्य पर बुरा प्रभाव पड़ता है, उनका पढ़ने में भी मन नहीं लगता है। इस योजना के लागू होने से बच्चों को अब पोषण की कमी से नहीं जूझना होगा। जोमैटो और फीडिंग इंडिया के मदद से अब प्रतिदिन बच्चों को नाश्ता और खाना मिलेगा साथ ही सप्ताह में चार दिन बच्चों को दूध भी दिया जायेगा। इस स्क्रीम के तहत नर्सरी से



आठवीं तक के 300 बच्चे शामिल हैं। आशा सामाजिक विद्यालय के प्रधानाचार्य श्यामसुंदर मास्टर ने योजना लागू करने के लिए जोमैटो फीडिंग इंडिया का आभार जताया। इस अवसर पर मनीष, पंचमुखी, आशीष, सुनील गौड़, विद्या, मंजीता, शमा बानो, ज्योति, सीमा आदि लोग मौजूद रहे।



# ASV Updates (5)

- A group of 65 college students visited from Denmark (Nov 2024)
- They raised money amongst themselves and made a donation which allowed the school to buy sweaters for all the children



Kishori Kendra



# Kishori Shiksha Kendra

- Kishori Shiksha Kendra or Kishori Sewing Center is a program which targets adolescent girls who have never been to school and some who are recently married
- Provides them with basic education, health camps, training in sewing & embroidery, awareness about their rights and other ways to empower them
- They organize a summer camp for girls where they provide training for computer work, handicrafts, beautician, martial arts, dance, painting, scooter or bike driving.
- NJSS is currently running 17 sewing centers with Asha Austin supporting 10 sewing centers with around ~380 teenage girls attending





# Kishori Kendra Updates (1)

- 17 different centers – 380 girls – training in sewing and embroidery
- April – sanitary pad distribution and education on menstruation – hygiene and nutrition
- Celebrated national festivals and Balika Mahotsav in Oct (Girls festival)
  - Street plays, songs, dances and rallies – to raise awareness about girls rights and issues
- On international day of the girl, 51 girls received bicycles



# Kishori Kendra Updates (2)

- Muslim women are increasingly participating in programs
- 10 girls who had dropped out were given books and fees support to restart their education
- Educational tour – Sarnath, Kaithi Center, Sarvaved and Markandey Mahadev Temple
- Achievements:
  - Girls openly talk about menstruation
  - Seeking employment
  - 6 girls opened their own sewing centers, 4 girls employed in private companies





# Kishori Kendra Updates (3)

- Summer Camp held from 10 May – 10 June 2024
- One month training
  - Beautician, computer literacy, dance and self-defense
- Special training
  - Scooter riding
  - Art and Craft
  - Career counselling
  - Police station visit
  - Music and singing



SHG

# Women Self Help Groups (SHG)

- Women traditionally do not have much rights – whether it is the household or the community. The objective of SHG is to organize the women into groups so that they can deal with issues common to them
- There are about ~300 women self-help groups running with a strength of more than 7500 women from 80 villages
- Every month the money from groups is being deposited and women are trading among themselves as per their need. The saving of all the groups collectively is close to 71 lakh rupees
- Training of group operations was given to the leaders of these groups
- In order to empower women in these groups, training programs were organized on issues such as violence against women, women's rights, their participation in Panchayat, and participated in various events organized by them





# SHG Updates (1)

- SHG in 80 villages with 7500 women
- Festivals and Women's Day celebrations were held
- Small business
  - Pickle making, washing powder, jam, papad, etc
- Women get freedom from moneylenders and become more independent
- Reduction in child marriage and dowry practices

## Financial Summary

Total Savings	6,476,700.00
Total Interest Earned	944,220.00
Total Penalty Collected	4,740.00
Other Income	9,430.00
Loans Given	5,993,000.00
Current Fund Balance	1,442,090.00





# Feeding India Program

# Feeding India Program

- It is a CSR initiative by Zomato
- They are sponsoring mid-day-meal (MDM) scheme at the ASV school
  - Provide Rs 10/kid/day for breakfast and Rs 15/kid/day for lunch
  - Food is cooked fresh by women of the SHG
- Program has done very well and have been supporting 36 Anganwadi centers in 5 villages, serving 2160 children
  - To include delivery cost, sponsorship amount is Rs 15/kid/meal/day
  - Women are happy to work for this program - work 2-3 hours; work is local; children are part of the Anganwadi/school; food for themselves;
- Recently in August 2025 they expanded the program to 41 more Anganwadi centers
  - 77 centers and 11 villages in total
  - SHG women are being trained to cook and deliver the food being prepared
  - Kitchen and staff need to be scaled
- They are in talks to expand to 1 full block which would include 117 villages, 525 centers and 21,500 children
  - Nandlalji has said they cannot expand this rapidly but will scale it organically

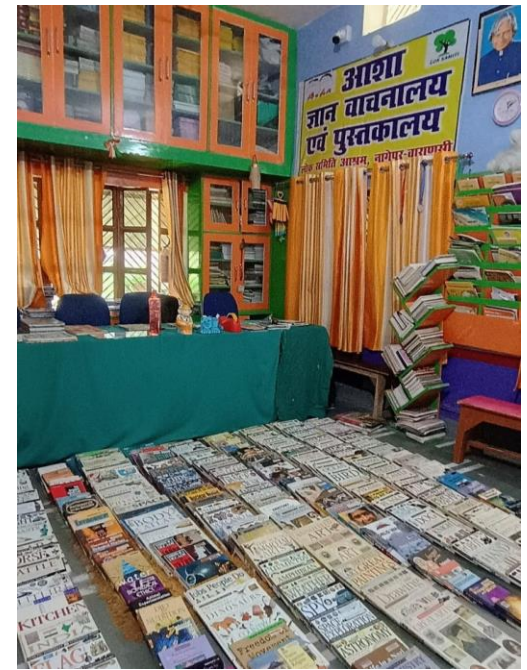
# Feeding India Program (2)

- E-rickshaws training was provided to women from the SHG to deliver the food to the anganwadis
  - Started with 5 second hand e-rickshaws but they were having repair issues
  - 10 new e-rickshaws have been ordered
  - Women found it challenging to take on this role for social concerns
  - Few women dropped out from the training but about 4-5 women have completed it and they have started working. It has been inspiring for all
    - Video on E-Rickshaw initiative: <https://www.facebook.com/share/r/1AMACPqyCU/>
    - Video on Feeding India initiative - [https://www.linkedin.com/posts/feeding-india\\_nutrition-childrenofindia-varanasi-ugcPost-7328808580030091264-MY5K?utm\\_source=share&utm\\_medium=member\\_android&rcm=ACoAACS2VFcBCpu2CYWiUbsZVDf-E-CihrKFcMg](https://www.linkedin.com/posts/feeding-india_nutrition-childrenofindia-varanasi-ugcPost-7328808580030091264-MY5K?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_android&rcm=ACoAACS2VFcBCpu2CYWiUbsZVDf-E-CihrKFcMg)
- SHG created an organization Janta Rasoi to work on this initiative – GST registered, FSSI registered
  - Funding for these efforts go to this organization

Library

# Asha Library Updates (1)

- Membership of 1800 students
- Students are from poor families who cannot afford books
- 52 girls applied for Girls Icon Project and 17 were selected and received Rs 20,000 each financial aid for education
- CLE team helped 10 students get re-admission who had dropped out



# Asha Library Updates (2)

- Library is doing very well and it has been very popular among the local kids
- Plan is to add a digital library and study hall where students can gather and study
  - Library project is supported by Asha Boston
  - Will help in acquiring computers etc





# Asha Library Updates (3)

- Students receive help to apply for scholarships when pursuing graduate studies
- 1 kid who studied at ASV and 2 from the library have got scholarship to pursue nursing in Coimbatore
  - One of the parents is a teacher at the kids Kishori Kendras
- Other students from the library who have got admission to colleges with scholarships
  1. Varsha Patel – Bangalore, Azim Premji University,
  2. Akash Kumar – Banaras Hindu University (BHU)
  3. Priya Kumari – Allahabad University
  4. Anish Kumar – Azim Premji University, Bhopal
  5. Vikas Kumar – Azim Premji University, Bangalore
  6. Anjali Singh – Azim Premji University



Anish, Vikas and Anjali shown above

Budget

# Fund Utilization Report for 2024-25

## Approved Budget and Funds Sent

Austin – 9,31,000

- KK – 8,33,000
- KK Salaries – 98,000

GF – 16,65,000

- ASV - 10,53,000
- Others – 6,12,000

Total - 25,96,000

Asha Education and Social Program at Rajatalab		
Fund Utilisation Report		
Fy 2024-2025		
S. No.	Particular	Amount
<b>A</b>	<b>Education</b>	
1	Coordinator Honorarium With Travell and Phone	126000.00
2	Honorarium - Principal	125000.00
3	Honorarium of 8 Teacher	718300.00
4	Teaching, Learning and Stationery Materials	25500.00
5	Bal Mela Program, 15 August and Other Program	32200.00
6	Educational Tour	26000.00
	<b>Total Education Program Expenses</b>	<b>1053000.00</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>Kishori Kendra and Summer Camp Program</b>	
1	Coordinator Honorarium With Travell	130800.00
2	10 Teacher Honorarium	439200.00
3	Kishori Balika Mahostav Program	34800.00
4	Summer Camp Program	99249.00
	<b>Total Kishori and Summer Camp Program Expenses</b>	<b>704049.00</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>Construction / Infrastructure and Other Exp.</b>	
	Construction / Infrastructure Expenses	583440.00
	Youth Program Honorarium With Travell	84400.00
	SHG Program Salary With Travell	106000.00
	<b>Total Construction / Infrastructure and Other Exp.</b>	<b>773840.00</b>
	<b>Total Fund Utilised in Fy 2024-2025 (A+B+C)</b>	<b>2530889.00</b>
S. No.	Particular	Amount
1	Fund Receive in Fy 2024-2025	2596000.00
	2.5 Admin Expenses	64900.00
2	Fund Utilised During Fy 2024-2025	2530889.00
	<b>Balance Amount</b>	<b>211.00</b>

Bangalore – Nandlal Salary  
Austin – KK and Infra  
General Funds – ASV School and Infra  
Boston – ASV Library

## ASV Approved Budget

ASV - 10,53,000 (GF)

- Salaries – 9,60,000
- Educational Tour – 30,000
- Functions – 40,000
- Training & Learning Material – 75,000

## KK Approved Budget

KK Total – 8,33,000 (Austin)

- Total Salaries = 5,82,000
- Summer Camp = 1,20,000
- Balika Mahotsav = 40,000

## Infra/One Time Approved Budget

One time – 7,10,000 (GF + Austin)

- SHG Salaries - 1,00,000
- Youth Program Salaries - 70,000
- KK Salaries – 98,000
- Construction – 3,80,000

# Budget 2025-26

	Budget Summary		Original Budget 2025-26	Proposed Support for 2025-26	Proposed Split for 2025 - 26	2024-25 Austin Approved amounts	Comments
1	ASV School		1,214,400	1,214,400	GF	1053000	Covered by GF last year
2	Kishori Kendra		894,000	894,000	Austin	833000	Covered by Austin last year
3	Audit Fee		63,000	63,000	Austin		
4	Construction/Miscellaneous Budget		503,000	486,000	GF	612,000	612,000 supported by GF last year
				17,000		98,000	98,000 supported by Austin last year
	Total		2,674,400	2,657,400			
				Year 2025-26		Year 2024-25	
	Austin Budget Proposal	Austin		974,000		931,000	
	GF Budget Proposal	GF		1,700,400		1,665,000	
		Total		2,674,400		2,596,000	
				USD	INR		
	Austin Allocation			11,264	957,440		Assumes 1USD = 85 INR
	GF Allocation			20,000	1,700,000		
	Total available				2,657,440		

- Asha Rajatalab should receive 20K USD from Asha General Funds (~17 lakhs)
- Asha Austin has allocated about 11.2K USD
- SHG initiative is currently supported by AID
- Nandlal's salary is supported by Asha Bangalore
- Asha library initiative is supported by Asha Boston

# Budget 2024-25

- Requested the construction of digital library and study hall from remaining funds from Asha GF

# Questions (1)

- Asha Central call held on Aug 23<sup>rd</sup> to approve Asha GF Budget
- Q: At what age can one apply for Aadhaar card?
  - Aadhaar card can be issued at birth. It is now required for admission to schools
- Q: Who organized trip of students from Denmark? How long was their visit? Can you request a report from the students?
  - The students from Denmark were visiting India as part of an exposure trip planned by college. Somebody recommended that they visit Rajatalab and they coordinated their visit for a day
  - Nandlalji and his wife Ranju are currently visiting Europe from Sep 5<sup>th</sup> – Sep 26<sup>th</sup> and they will be visiting with this group in Denmark
  - Nandlalji will have a talk/presentation about Education and Ranjuji will hold one on Women's Empowerment
  - The group is planning to visit again in November 2025



# Questions (2)

- Q: What is the plan for expanding the MDM?
  - The SHG women are currently cooking food for 77 aanganwaadi centers and they are in talks to expand it to about 525 centers (with >20,000 children)
  - Main issue is that the current infrastructure cannot support the scaling of the kitchen to support such a large output
  - In talks with Feeding India to provide support for a community kitchen with all the necessary equipment and also training for the women to work in a large kitchen. Need to come up with an agreement for the work
  - Feeding India is considering sending the women for training to Akshaya Patra which runs a similar program in conjunction with the Indian government. Another training option is to visit a gurudwara in Delhi where food is prepared at scale
    - Informed Nandlalji about the Shikshana Foundation doing similar work in Karnataka
  - About 250 women have been identified who are interested in working on this and being trained for the same
- Nandlalji requested support/information for teacher training programs for the teachers from ASV
- Also requested training support for KK teachers to help them prepare high quality bags which can be used for production
  - Maharashtra, Gujrat and Rajasthan produce such products. Would like to connect with an organization that can help with training

# Archive links to videos and articles

- <https://bookofachievers.com/articles/weaver-is-changing-the-face-of-varanasi-by-eradicating-evil-practices-but-how>
- <https://youtu.be/X0eQwobdTVI> (Awareness about elections)
- [https://youtu.be/U\\_RFYbmItwg](https://youtu.be/U_RFYbmItwg) (Mobile Health Camp)
- [https://youtu.be/8HzjUn\\_F\\_aY](https://youtu.be/8HzjUn_F_aY) (Washing Powder Initiative)
- Article on Terrace Garden maintained by Nandlalji – [Link](#)
- Nandlal Interview - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dVc9kHnTKoY>