

Title of the Proposal: “Improved access to qualitative school education for the Musahar children in Jamui district of Bihar”

1. Context

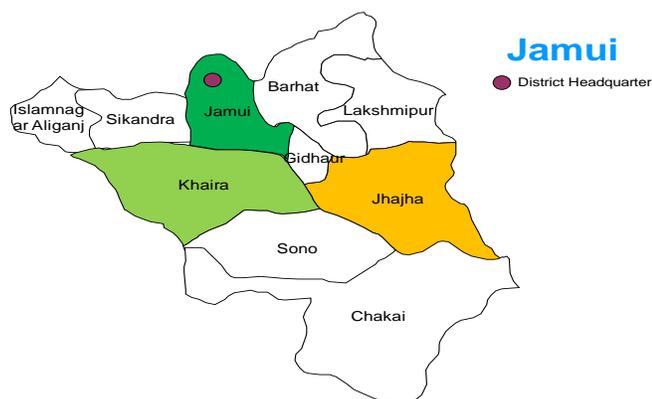
1.1 Socio-economic situation of Bihar

With a population of 103.8 million in 2011, Bihar is the third most populous state in India (Census 2011). In 2018, Bihar’s population is estimated to be about 122.0 million. The density of population in Bihar (1106 persons per sq. km) is nearly three times higher than in India (382 persons per sq. km). As per the estimation of Census 2011, approximately 39% of India’s population lies in the age bracket of 0-18 years. But for Bihar, 48% of the population lies in the age group of 0-18 years. The state accounts for 11% of India’s total child population. The state is home to 4.98 crore children, of which 4.47 crore (89.9%) reside in rural areas and 0.50 crore (10.1 percent) live in urban areas.

During 2012-13 to 2016-17, total enrolment in elementary classes has increased at an annual rate of 2.3 percent, from 214.87 lakh in 2012-13 to 235.64 lakh in 2016-17. At the primary level, the dropout rate recorded a decrease of 9.5 percentage points between 2012-13 (31.7%) and 2016-17 (22.2%). Overall, the gender gap in elementary education is decreasing gradually, as the growth rate of enrolment of girls was 2.3 percent during 2012-13 to 2016-17, compared to 2.2 percent for boys.

Despite these figures, the fact remains that the most disadvantaged sections of the society have lagged behind due to lack of necessary motivational and social interventions that should have been converged with the above situation. The quality of education is another lamentable point which has, on several occasions, assessed to be being at the bottom level.

Country	India
State	Bihar
District	Jamui
Block	10
Panchayat	153
Village	1528



1.2 Socio-economic situation of Jamui District

Jamui District, one of the most under developed districts of Bihar, is located adjacent to neighbor Jharkhand state with its administrative headquarters located at Jamui city. According to 2011 census, the district encompasses a geographical area of 2494 sq km and has a population of 17,60,405 (persons) including 9,16,064 (males) and 8,44,341 (females). The district has a sex ratio of 922 (females for every 1000 males). The major religions in the district are Hindu (86.67%) and Muslim (12.36%) of the total population respectively. The literacy rate in the district is 59.79% (persons), 71.24% (males) and 47.28% (females). Main spoken languages are Hindi (89.43%), Urdu (6.81%) and Santali (3.66%). Labour Force

Participation Rate is 33.98%. Main source of income in the district is from the agriculture sector and per capita income is Rs. 15033. Total cropped area is 1,50,445 in hectares and the forest area is 641 in sq km (2017).

The peculiar characteristics of the district include infestation of Left Wing Extremism (LWE) and high concentration of 'Musahar' community. As per Census 2011, *Musahars* population in Jamui district is 104,852, i.e 6% of the district's total population. Among the dalit communities, the position of *Musahars* is particularly worse as they are placed lowest among all scheduled castes in India. Even among the *Dalits*, they are called *maha dalits*. They are the most disadvantaged groups and are the poorest of the poor. Despite continuous effort to universalize Education in India, the most deprived *Musahar* children of Bihar still are ignored and held responsible for their Educational backwardness. Out of twenty three Scheduled Caste in Bihar, *Musahars* are the third highly populous after *Chamars* and *Dusads*. But their literacy level is lowest among all *dalits*, i.e. just 6% (Census of India, 2011). They are held responsible for their educational backwardness and negatively portrayed in most literatures. It is widely believed that they are unable to understand the relevance of education, mentally not accustomed to school work, seen as attending schools only for midday meals, disinterested in formal schooling and slipped into a culture of silence. Apart from this some other factors such as, the indifferent attitude of parents to educate (particularly female child), poverty, unawareness, and early marriage are also held accountable for their educational backwardness.

Nearly 78% of *Musahar* population in 2011 is completely illiterate - as defined by the Census. Females of *Musahar* remain mostly illiterate. Many factors contribute to low level of literacy such as due to poor economic conditions, most of them cannot afford to send their children to school, those who do enter school often drop out of school system at an early age on account of either *untouchability* at school environment or have to take care of young children in the family and or to contribute to family income. Field monitoring data reveals that nearly 63% of *Musahar* households migrate out to distant cities for about six months of a year for searching of daily labour. This results in forcible dropout of school children.

1.3 The *Musahars* in the proposed project area

The proposed project area extends over four blocks, namely, Barhat, Jamui Sadar, Jhajha and Khaira which house nearly 52% of the district's total *Musahar* population. Total *Musahar* population of the proposed blocks is 55,000. However, *Musahar* population of the project villages constitutes 9,954 persons belonging to 1,991 households. Children population in the age group of 0-18 years and 6-14 years are respectively 6,530 and 3,564. As *Musahar* community is still devoid of education, the female literacy rate is hardly 5%, while the male literacy rate is about 9% in the target blocks. No student in the *Musahar* community had passed even an Inter previously. The parents usually go out for labor work and the elder children, specially the girls, are compelled to tend to smaller siblings or accompany their parents for labor work. The parents in this community, by tradition, do not attach any importance to education. Since they fail to find round-the-year employment opportunity locally, 70% of them tend to migrate with their family to distant locations to work often in hazardous and exploitative jobs. Usually, the whole family is engaged there in work including the children who become victims of child labour in an early age.

This community inhabits on the Government land, by the side of roads, canals or ponds, away from the village and they usually construct a single roomed shack in which they all live with their animals and household items. The children do not find a place to study in. This situation puts the *Musahar* children away from education who spend their time either in picking leaves and twigs for oven fuel or graze household animals or just while away it in play. The children who are somehow enrolled in schools usually dropout early as the dropout rate is as high as 70%. Mostly, they are rendered very weak in studies and hence suffer from an intense inferiority complex.

Though, government has specially opened primary schools in the *Musahar* hamlets, this step has failed to make any tangible difference except that the children are now enrolled in these schools to receive the mid day meals and provide the ground for the teachers to keep their posts in the school. The teachers and schools have been highly irregular, least to speak of the quality of education and the motivation level among the children. Being devoid of education for years and due to lack of dignified access to formal education system, *Musahar* children have generated a feeling of incompetency and inferiority in their minds. In July 2018, a survey was conducted from *Mahadalit* students studying in different classes of school for their knowledge of subjects and availability of study books to them and the result was quite on the lines explained above.

2. Work of 'Samagra Seva' among Musahar Communities & Children

It is in this community, that Samagra Seva has been successfully lighting the lamp of education which is a unique feat that have so far succeeded in doing. This has been possible only due to the very hard work of our workers who have, by their diligent and dedicated efforts over the years successfully won the confidence of the *Musahar* communities they work with. This is no ordinary success and hence we remain desirous to continue this effort to reach it a goal distinct enough to present as a model for all to replicate, the implementers and the funders alike.

Our most successful intervention in this direction has been running of the **Cultural Education Centres (CECs)** which is basically a centre for non-formal education imparted to the children of this community through games, songs etc. to make the process as entertaining and engaging as possible. Every such centre is assigned to a teacher which is either from the same community or from outside, if no suitable candidate is available within the community. The teacher is, first, provided an intensive training in the methodology of running this centre which has been perfected on the basis of our long years of work in this direction.

These centres are, usually, run from 7.00am to 9.00am or at some different time agreed upon by the children and their parents which may suit to them as per the seasonal variations and their engagement profile. These centres, in a way, work as bridges to the formal education system that facilitates their smooth entry and retention therein. We strive to link these students to the local school as soon as possible as per their preparedness for it while assuring full support through the CEC. In the meanwhile, we continue with our other allied interventions in the same community as awareness generation among it for education, nutrition, general health, sanitation and cleanliness, etc. with a result that the community, families and parents get adequately motivated to send their children to school regularly. This helped in keeping the children attached to the school and parents motivated to make the most of

this free facility. At present, we are running 10 CECs in which about 300 *Musahar* children are being educated. Our intervention has contributed to improve in the quality of education imparted at school through community and the Panchayati Raj Institutions (the local self government at village and higher levels) representatives while also striving for improving the physical infrastructure of the school. We, over a time, have invariably succeeded in improving the same everywhere we have worked.

The twin interventions have produced splendid results by engaging volunteers and without financial support from any agencies. Today we boast of producing 30 children from these CECs who appeared in the matriculation examination and 25 of them passed out with good marks. Many of these passed out children are striving at the still higher echelons of education like inter and bachelor degrees. It is only in this current year that assistance for 10 CECs have been received by us from the National Foundation for India (NFI).

3. Project Design

3.1 Theory of change

In light of the abovementioned context, lack of access to school education for *Musahar* children is the core issue that needs to be addressed without further delay. It is assumed that if the situation persists the society would miss the *Musahar* community in the nation building processes and lose social equilibrium and eventually the Sustainable Development Goal cannot be achieved in true sense. Intervention to improve access to equitable and qualitative school education should consider factors associated with livelihood sources of *Musahar* community, their responsiveness in community building and an enabling environment to access formal education system. Therefore, a three-pronged strategy needs to be adopted to address the core issue which must aim at reduction of out-migration by creating alternative livelihood options, community empowerment and promotion of qualitative school education. The proposed theory of change envisages that cultural education centres are instituted to reduce dropout rate, provide bridge course for re-enrollment and ensure quality in school education; parents and community leaders are actively involved in school management committees to create enabling environment in school education and poorest of poor *Musahar* households are engaged in farm and non-farm income generation schemes to stop out-migration to retain the children in schools. In this light, the project will result in creating an environment where *Musahar* community of the project area responsively engaged in promotion of elementary education by ensuring (i) 100% enrollment and retention of school going *Musahar* children and (ii) active involvement in school management committees.

3.2 Target Group

The target group comprises of the *Musahar* population of the 50 project villages, i.e. 9954 belonging to 1991 households. Children population in the age group of 0-18 years and 6-14 years are respectively 6530 and 3564. However, the direct target group includes approx. 1000 children of 6-14 years age group belong to 650 poorest of the poor household who are likely to migrate to distant cities for search of work.

Village wise Location of 30 culture education Centre

SN	Block	Name of village	Hamlet /Tola
1	Jamui	Maniyadda	Musahari
2		Amba	Musahari
3		Sonai	Musahari
4		Balthar	Musahari
5		Agahara	East – Musahari
6		Agahara	West Musahari
7	Jamui	Borar	Musahari
8		Indaipe	Kabaiya Musahari
9		Indepai	Dighi Musahari
10		Lathane	Musahari
11		Chaura	Musahri
12		Baruatta	Chakapira
13		Baruatta	West Musahri
14		Maniyadda	Mishri Maniyadda Musahari
15		Nim Nawada	Musahri
16		Sahpur	Musahri
17		Sahpur	Damdama Musahri
18	Khaira	Dumarkola	Musahari
19		Dharpur	Musahari
20		Khutauna	Musahari
21		Amari	Musahrai
22		Mahapur	Musahati
23		Milki	Musahri
24		Bariyapur	Musahari
25		Naudiha	Musahari
26		Dabil	Musahari
26	Jhajha	Dhiba	Musahari
28		Sohajana	Khaira ghat
29		Dadpur	Musahari
30		Ramdapur	Musahri

3.3 Expected Outcome

- i) 1000 *Musahar* children in the age group of 6-14 years belonging to 650 poorest of the poor households of 30 target villages are enrolled in school and retained while getting a quality education with due motivation;
- ii) Critical awareness among the *Musahar* community has motivated them to obtain their entitlements from Government as well as ensure active involvement in school management and community empowerment processes by extricating themselves from the abyss of their ignorance and age old vices, superstitions and bad habits rampant among these communities.

3.4 Planned Outputs

- i. 95% children between 6-14 years enrolled in schools and retained;
- ii. Dropout rate in our target areas came down to 15% from around 70% in the past years;
- iii. More than 70% of target children imbibed with leadership quality and demonstrated an affinity to education;
- iv. Teachers' attendance raised up to 95% in all schools within the target areas with quality of education raised for school children;
- v. Leadership qualities among the *Musahars* improved and the target groups participated in all social functions with dignity and self respect.

3.5 Proposed Activities

3.5.1 Education promotion

a) Management of 30 Cultural Education Centres (CEC) in 50 dalit tolas (hamlets):

The targeted dalit children are completely devoid of educational environment and motivation and hence, remain perpetually weak in studies. As such, one NFE centre by the name of CEC (Cultural Educational Centre) will be run in every target dalit tola where children in 06-14-yr age group will be prepared and motivated for mainstream education through the aid of games and songs. The centres will be run between 6.30 am to 8.30 am or 3.30pm to 5.30pm by engaging a suitable NFE instructor and providing them the required training.

b) Educational material support to most needy 700 Mahadalit children

As a large number of poor *Musahar* children drop their education for their inability to buy necessary education material, we would provide this support to the neediest 700 such children as an incentive to facilitate continuation of their education. Although text books are provided by the Education Department, but necessary education materials such as copy writing book, pen, pencil etc. are not given to the students. Further, supply of text books also is erratic and inadequate compelling students from well-to-do families to purchase on their own. Therefore, it is essential to provide education material to poor *Musahar* children to boost their motivation in education.

c) Running 05 special coaching classes for the dalit children of class 8 and above:

Even if the dalit children are able to study up to class 7, it has been observed that they generally drop out up to around 80-90 percent in class 8 and turn to becoming child labourers. As such, 05 Special Coaching Classes will be run in 10 Panchayats in which the dalit children will be provided tutorials free of cost so that at least 90% children stay with mainstream education.

- d) Organising quarterly **Bal Sangam (Children's Congregation)** Program wherein different activities pertaining to studies, games, songs and music, problem resolution and confidence raising will be held:

A congregation of all children of class 6 and above will be organised on monthly basis on Block level in which the children will meet one another and exchange their opinion and ideas. Their leadership qualities will be developed in these congregations by linking them to inspirational stories, poems, articles, etc., and discussions on their roles in the development of the society.

- e) Formation and strengthening of **Vidyalay Shiksha Samitis (VSSs)** in 10 schools: (Non Budget)

At present, the mandatory provision of constituting Vidyalay Shiksha Samiti for every school is observed more on paper than on ground resulting in lack of all-round development of the school and the children are devoid of facilities concerning studies, games and others. As such, the VSS will be made functional by motivating all its members to exercise their rights and responsibilities and motivating them to provide their cooperation in improving the facilities.

- f) Formation and strengthen **Panchayat Shiksha Samitis** in 05 Panchayats and organising quarterly meetings: : (Non Budget)

There is a provision of constituting Panchayat Shiksha Samiti in every Panchayat to look after the education related matters, but in most of the Panchayats, it is defunct with the result that the Panchayat representatives are unaware of their roles and responsibilities in improving education for the children of their Panchayats. Their activation will go a long way in improving the situation in village schools in general and for dalit children in particular.

- g) Organising **Bal Srijan Shala** Program at the district level for Annual Games and Cultural-cum-Leadership Development Program:

Once in a year this program will be organised at the district level in which games competition, cultural programs including songs, music, writing, painting, etc., will be held. The children will be free to participate in the program suitable to their interest and ability so that they may showcase it on a higher level and derive inspiration to rise.

- h) Organising Annual Educational Exposure Visit:

Every year a 3-day educational exposure visit of the children will be organised to make them aware, develop mutual understanding and leadership qualities in addition to draw inspiration from the world outside their own area. It would be a memorable event in the lives of the dalit children who seldom get such an opportunity

3.5.2 Community Empowerment

- a) Awareness generation among 300 target community-members by quarterly meetings on savings habit, advantages of prohibition and harms of migration, etc. : (Non Budget)

There is no tradition or habit of savings in this community which has been traditionally living on a hand to mouth basis. They are also habituated to take various intoxicating substances which harm them in so many ways impacting their families and children, promoting mutual conflicts and degrading their lives. As a result, 95% families of this community is invariably falls prey to a vicious circle of debt that often leads to debt bondage while keeping them perpetually poor. This situation promotes their migration. So, attempts will be made to stop or, at least, bring about a tangible reduction in all these by this awareness generation drive.

- b) Facilitating linkages of youths and women to the governmental schemes and programs for their mainstreaming: : (Non Budget)

There are a number of governmental schemes and programs for this target group but they largely remain unutilised for want of information as well as the dominance of middlemen. As such, it is proposed that we would act as a bridge between the two and link our target group to these by positive advocacy to get them their rightful entitlements.

- c) Organising monthly community meetings on different themes holding them backward:

In this community, even today about 60% persons believe in black magic among others. So, monthly meetings will be organised with this community on different relevant themes to effectuate their gradual extrication from these vices that will go a long way in preparing them for the intended changes.

- d) Constituting *Bal Clubs* on Panchayat, Block and District level and empowering them: : (Non Budget)

To develop leadership quality in children from their very childhood and to shape their outlook towards the society and various aspects of the human life, it is necessary to facilitate an organised approach among them which would be promoted through the constitution of Bal Clubs (Children's Clubs). These Clubs would organise different collective activities among them like Bal Panchayat, Bal Sansad, Chaupal, etc. to inculcate positive thinking among the target group children. Thus, they will be motivated to tackle various hindrances in the way of development and make a collective effort to combating them. They will also be able to raise different issues before competent authorities while seeking their redressal.

3.5.3 Mechanism for internal monitoring and external audit

- a) A Project Monitoring Committee will be formed for the purpose with representation from beneficiaries, PRIs, Education department officials, local Government Officials, the Implementing Organization office bearers as well as the Project implementation team. This team will hold its regular meetings and monitor the project progress against the pre-set indicators and the implementation time line. For the external audit, the supportive agency will be requested to depute a consulting firm.
- b) Organising monthly staff meetings for review cum planning: In this organizational monthly staff meeting, the review of the progress made would be undertaken as well as plan for the upcoming project activities would be finalised.

3.6 Timeline

	Monthly activities timeline-											
Activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Activity –a												
Activity –b												
Activity –c												
Activity –d												
Activity –e												
Activity –f												
Activity –g												
Activity –h												
	Non Budget activities(Community Empowerment-3.5.2)											
Activity –a												
Activity –b												
Activity –c												
Activity –d												

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Samagra Seva							
Annual Budget							
Sl No A	Planned Activities	Unit	Unit Cost	No of Units	Total Amount (INR)	ASHA Education Contribution (INR)	Samagra Seva contribution (INR)
1	Running 30 CECs in 30 dalit tolas (hamlets)	30	2250	360	810000	690000	120000
2	Learning Material for children 700	700	100	700	70000	70000	0
3	Running 5 special coaching classes for the dalit children of class 8 and above	5	4000	60	240000	240000	0
4	Organising quarterly Bal Sangam (Children's Congregation)	4	10000	4	40000	40000	0
5	Organising <i>Bal Srijan Shala</i> at the district for 2 days	1	35000	1	35000	35000	0
6	Orientation to PRIs/ Tola Sevaks/ Vikas Mitras/ Teachers and Officials	2	10000	2	20000	20000	0
7	Education Exposure Visits for senior students	1	30000	1	30000	30000	0
8	Monthly Staff Meetings	30	50	360	18000	12000	6000
	A-Sub Total				1263000	1137000	126000
9	Project Coordinator	1	12000	1	144000	144000	0
10	Field Motivators	2	7000	2	168000	168000	0
	B- Sub Total				312000	312000	0
12	Office expenses, Travel etc		2500	12	30000	30000	0
14	Internet, Postage , Printing		1500	12	18000	18000	0
15	Audit	1	3000	1	3000	3000	0
	C- Sub Total				51000	51000	0
	Total (A+B+C)				1626000	1500000	126000
INR Sixteen lakh, twenty six thousand only							