

# Strengthening Education Ecosystem in Rural and Tribal Communities through a holistic approach Proposal for ASHA for EDUCATION 2026

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## Executive Summary

Seva Mandir is seeking support to continue the project 'Strengthening Education Ecosystem in Rural and Tribal Communities through a Holistic Approach', which is being implemented in 11 villages of Kotda block, Udaipur district. The project aims to provide quality education to 1,849 children, enabling them to complete their primary education and pursue higher education. The total funding requested for year 2026-2027 is Rs. 41,59,928. This project will enable continued efforts to strengthen the education system and support the academic and personal development of children in these underserved communities.

## I. Key Achievements of 2025

- **Improve access and quality of education** - 1,189 children (41% girls) from 11 villages were supported through the program - 491 (37% girls) out-of-school children received quality education through 11 Siksha Kendras (SKs) and Residential Learning Camps (RLC). Work with 5 government schools benefitted 712 children (292 girls) of primary grades

Three Siksha Kendra alumni supported by the Peter Patel Scholarship scored 60–70% in Class 11 at Vidya Bhawan, a residential school and progressed to Class 12 (2025–26). One more girl received the Rajendra Jindal Scholarship in 2025, and joined Class 11 in the same school.

- **Mainstreaming out of school children** - 197 (50 % girls) out of school children from SKs and RLC (40 children) were mainstreamed in 1st to 6th grades of government and private schools for continuing education, in July' 25. 12 school dropout children (5 girls) were re-enrolled in government schools. 142 children (out of 174) in primary grades and 51 children in upper primary grades (out of 56) were regularized in schools.

- **Alumni engagements**- An alumni meet was organized in Kotra, in which 105 alumni (51 girls) graduated from SKs, and RLC in last 10 years participated. Among them, 40% completed class 12, 37% pursuing undergraduate studies, 13% completed postgraduate studies, while 10% dropped out after class 8 and were engaged in household work and farming. Some alumni were working as

### Meena's Journey

Meena, a 13-year-old girl from Taravali Phala hamlet of Taravali village of Kotra, had stopped going to school because her family was preparing for her early marriage. With this decision, her education was expected to end.

During a routine visit, a Seva Mandir instructor met Meena and her parents and gently discussed the importance of continuing her studies. After several conversations and counselling sessions, her parents agreed to let her attend the Shiksha Kendra (SK) running in their village.

In 2020, after regaining her learning levels, Meena was mainstreamed into Class 2 in the government school. Since then, she has continued her education without interruption. Today, in 2025, she is a confident Class 8 student and an active member of Bal Manch, participating in various activities and motivating other girls to stay in school.

Meena's journey shows how timely support, regular follow-up, and collaborative efforts with the community can help girls continue their education and build better futures.

community workers. A career counselling session was held to inform about various academic and vocational courses. 3 SK alumni volunteered in 4 schools of 2 villages in Kotda focusing on improving school functioning and addressing teacher shortages. One school with over 350 students had only 4 teachers, where alumni raised the issue in SMC meetings and met the Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) of Kotda for intervention for teacher's appointment.

## II. The Proposal for 2026

**Project Goal:** Strengthening Education Ecosystem in Rural and Tribal Communities through a holistic approach.

### Project Objectives

- Improving enrollment, regularity, and retention of children.
- Improving foundational literacy and numeracy skills of children in school
- Reintegrate out of school children into the education cycle

### Geography

The project will be implemented in 11 villages of Kotda block of Udaipur district. The block has a population of 288,675 comprising 57,199 households. 97% of the population belong to scheduled castes and tribes. 73% of the population is engaged in agriculture and the literacy rate is 26.58%. In the selected 11 villages, government schools lack teachers, infrastructure, and WASH facilities. Most schools do not have separate toilets, and the water system is not working. There is also a high prevalence of early marriage and gender fragmentation. As a result, there is a high dropout rate among students, especially after grade 10. Parents are reluctant to interact with teachers, and there is a lack of community awareness and responsibility for their children's education.

### Target beneficiaries

The project will benefit 1,800 tribal children over a period of three years, from January 2025 to December 2027. The project will indirectly benefit parents and community members from the 11 villages of Kotda block, fostering greater awareness and involvement in the education of their children and promoting community responsibility.

### Strategy and activities

#### **Objective 1 - Improving enrollment, regularity, and retention of children in School**

The program covered 11 Shiksha Kendras and 5 government schools in Kotda block (4 Upper Primary and 1 Senior Secondary), supported by 11 Anudeshaks and 5 Shiksha Sahayaks. While Seva Mandir has strengthened their WASH facilities over the years, toilet upgrades in all 5 schools were carried out with support from another donor. Existing resource rooms were enhanced with artistic paintings in 2024 and child-friendly furniture in 2025. Overall, 1,189 children (41 percent girls) from 11 villages benefited, including 491 out-of-school children (37 percent girls) who accessed quality education through the Shiksha Kendras.

- Mapping and Tracking of Children:** In 2025, 174 irregular and 56 dropout children in Grades 1–5 were tracked through home visits and counseling, resulting in 142 children becoming regular and 51 re-enrolled. In 2026, this activity will continue, focusing on both previously tracked and newly identified children to ensure regular attendance and sustained enrollment.

**ii. Creating Bal Samuh (Children's Groups):** In 2025, 11 Bal Samuhs were formed for children aged 6–14, providing regular spaces to discuss school attendance, learning, safety, and daily challenges, while building confidence and problem-solving skills. In 2026, these groups will be strengthened through monthly meetings, educational and well-being activities, child leader training, and exposure visits, including sessions on gender, adolescence, menstruation, child protection, and early marriage, ensuring active participation and continued support for children.

**Objective 2: Enhance the foundational literacy and numeracy skills of children.**

**i. Capacity building of Siksha Sahayak:** Siksha Sahayaks continued to support activity-based learning for primary grade students across 5 schools. In 2025, five Shiksha Sahayaks supported activity-based learning in five schools. They participated in one residential training and several follow-up meetings focused on improving teaching in Hindi, English, and Math, using ABL methods, low-cost TLMS, Science and Math kits, and strengthening skills in storytelling, gender awareness, and community engagement. In the proposed period, capacity building for Siksha Sahayaks will continue. 1 training session and six review meetings will be organized, focusing on Hindi, Mathematics, and English concepts. A combination of acceleration and curriculum-based support will be provided to help bridge learning gaps while adhering to the school curriculum. Additionally, they will receive training on lesson adaptation and multi-level, multi-grade teaching methodologies.

**ii. Workshop for government teachers:**

in 2025, two capacity-building workshops were conducted for government school teachers—one on strengthening Science and Mathematics teaching for Classes 1 to 5, and another on making schools more gender-sensitive and responsive to the needs of girls' education. These trainings equipped teachers with practical, child-centred methods and improved their understanding of inclusive classroom practices. The same set of workshops will continue in the third year (2026), with expanded participation to further reinforce teachers' skills and support more gender-responsive and engaging learning environments.

### iii. Demonstrating activity-led pedagogy

#### **Upgradation of resource rooms:**

Upgradation of resource rooms: In 2025, resource rooms were enhanced with artistic wall paintings and reading corners to promote storytelling and joyful learning. In 2026, they will be further strengthened with Science and Math kits, eco-friendly furniture, and additional learning materials to make the spaces more engaging and child-friendly.

**Academic support to children:** Shiksha Sahayaks assessed the learning levels of 361 children in June 2024 and June 2025, including 163 girls (45 percent) and 198 boys. In June 2024, 120 children were at Level 1, 150 at Level 2, and 91 at Level 3. By June 2025, the distribution showed clear improvement, with Level 1 reducing to 105 children (a 4 percent decrease), Level 2 increasing to 169 children (a 5 percent increase), and Level 3 rising to 108 children (a 3 percent increase). With Level 1 representing the lowest competency and Level 3 the highest, the results indicate a positive shift in learning outcomes, with more children moving from lower to higher learning levels.

To improve learning outcomes, the Shiksha Sahayaks engaged children through activity-based learning pedagogy and taught key concepts in Hindi, English, and Mathematics. Each Shiksha Sahayak spent three days per week in schools, dedicating a total of 18 hours weekly, with two hours per day for each subject. A variety of teaching-learning materials—such as storybooks, flashcards, educational games, worksheets, handmade charts, and interactive learning tools—were used to support classroom teaching. All instructional activities aligned with the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) and the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 guidelines.

In the year 2026, SS will continue engaging children through activity-based learning pedagogy. They will work closely with government teachers, utilizing digital tools and other resources to enhance learning experiences. Additionally, they will act as intermediaries between children, teachers, parents, and the community to address any challenges faced by students. Assessment of children's learning progress in primary grades will continue, allowing for tailored academic support where needed. The focus will be on integrating activity-based learning into Hindi, Mathematics, English, and Environmental Science subjects. All children from classes I to V will receive supplementary academic support, while children of classes 6 to 8 will receive indirect support.

#### **Engaging School Management Committees (SMC's)**

In 2025, SMC meetings were regularized to improve participation and accountability, with a stronger focus on education-related issues and consistent follow-ups. Orientation sessions and quarterly meetings helped members understand their roles, school development plans, and proper fund utilization. In 2026, these efforts will continue, and a dedicated SMC workshop will be conducted to further strengthen SMC capacity and enhance their active involvement in school governance.

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<sup>1</sup> At level 1, children can read and write short words and identify numbers, at level 2, they can read simple sentences and perform basic arithmetic and at level 3, they can read simple texts, write sentences, and understand multiplication and division

**Village Communities:** In 2025, regular meetings with community leaders, including panchayat representatives, were initiated to discuss school engagement and social barriers to education. This increased awareness and participation, with communities supporting school activities. Going forward, meetings will continue with follow-ups and strengthened monitoring to sustain engagement and improve learning outcomes.

**Objective 3: Reintegrate out of school children into the education cycle**

This involves mainstreaming out-of-school children and school dropouts into the formal education system through running of 11 Shiksha Kendra and residential learning camps

**A. Running Shiksha Kendra:**

The key features of a Shiksha Kendra include the selection of instructors from local areas to ensure better compatibility with students and the community, with comprehensive training provided on academic practices for delivering quality education. A camera monitoring system is employed to ensure regular operations through photo verification. Annual examinations assess and monitor children's progress. A nominal Shiksha Shulk fee is charged to promote community engagement and a sense of ownership. Graduated students receive follow-up support to facilitate smooth enrollment in government or private schools and ensure their successful transition into formal education.

During 2025, 11 SKs reached ensured quality primary education to 491 (37% girls) children of 6 to 14 years of age by 17 instructors. In the proposed period, 11 Shiksha Kendras will continue to support out of school children through 17 Instructors. Following activities will be undertaken at these SKs:

- **Teaching and Learning:** The SKs will follow a child-centric pedagogy, utilizing multi-grade teaching through activity-based learning. Students will be grouped into three levels – Group A, Group B, and Group C – according to their learning needs. Effective teaching aids will be used to enhance learning outcomes. Various events, including Pravesh Utsav (Enrolment Day), International Literacy Day, Independence Day, and Republic Day, will be celebrated to engage children, parents, and the community.
- **Assessment of Children:** To monitor student performance, two evaluations will be conducted each year—a mid-term evaluation in November/December and an annual evaluation in April/May. The results will be shared with parents to help them understand their child's progress and create a supportive home environment for learning.
- **Mainstreaming with Formal Education:** Graduating students will be encouraged and supported to enroll in government or private schools once they achieve the necessary competencies. Regular monitoring will ensure their continued retention in mainstream education.
- **Retention Study:** A retention study will be conducted every three years to evaluate how many Shiksha Kendra graduates remain in formal education.
- **Capacity Building of Instructors:** Capacity-building sessions will include a 6-day annual residential training and four quarterly trainings totaling 8 additional days. Monthly review meetings will be held to assess progress, address challenges, and provide ongoing support.
- **Parent-Instructor Meetings:** Parents will contribute an annual fee of Rs. 300 or more and offer additional support to help the centre function effectively. These meetings will foster collaboration

between parents and instructors.

- **Home Visits:** Instructors will make home and community visits to counsel students, parents, and community members, promoting a supportive environment for education. Dropout children will be identified and guided to enroll in open or regular schools.
- **Community Contribution:** Community leaders will be encouraged to visit Shiksha Kendras and help address operational challenges. Communities will also contribute by supporting rent payments, improving infrastructure, and providing other resources to create child-friendly learning environments.
- **Digital learning:** It will be expanded across 14 Shiksha Kendras. In three centres, tablets will continue to be used for English learning, while one centre will operate a digital lab where children will learn basic computer skills such as typing, using Google, and digital painting. In addition, the Tablets for Kids initiative will be introduced in 10 SKs to build both basic and advanced digital competencies, including drawing, typing, photography, video creation, internet searching, and calculations. These tools will make the teaching–learning process more interactive and engaging for both Anudeshaks and students.
- **Saturday Activities:** It will remain focused on integrated, experiential learning to strengthen children’s life skills. Activities will include clay modelling, nature walks, conversations with farmers, seed collection, and sessions on Good and Bad Touch. Following the successful pilot on local biodiversity and environmental education, ecology-based activities will continue as part of the SK curriculum. Children will explore nature, observe birds, learn from farmers about sustainable agriculture, make clay toys, plant seeds, understand medicinal plants, and study soil types. These experiences will nurture environmental responsibility, appreciation for wildlife, and holistic learning among children.

## **B. Running RLC camps:**

Children aged 6 to 14 years who are out of school will be identified and enrolled in a residential learning camp designed to enhance their prospects of continuing education within the formal education system. The intervention offers accelerated learning for children who have never attended school or have lost interest in education. The program spans 150 educational days, divided into three camp cycles of 55-60 days each.

From the first year of the project 142 children were identified as out of school in 2024 .80 out-of-school children have been successfully mainstreamed through the Remedial Learning Centres (RLC). In 2025, an additional 40 children were mainstreamed, and in July 2026, the next batch of 25 children is planned to be integrated into formal schools. Targeted RLC activities, including remedial learning, life skills, and digital literacy, will continue, along with engagement with families and community members to address barriers to enrollment and ensure sustained attendance.

- **Parental Consent** - A consent form, covering camp policies and expectations, must be completed by both parents, providing permission for their child’s participation in the residential camp at Seva Mandir’s training center in Kaya village. Parents are thoroughly informed about the camp’s activities. The consent form also collects essential contact information, including phone numbers and emergency contacts. Instructors review and submit the completed forms to the RLC camp coordinator for necessary arrangements.
- **Instructor Selection** - Experienced teachers are selected through written exams and interviews conducted by program leaders and block coordinators. The student-to-instructor ratio is 10:1. Instructors, including both male and female teachers, reside with the children for the entire 180-day camp period to provide close supervision. The camp emphasizes holistic child development, integrating academic and extracurricular activities.

**Instructor Training** - Program associates conduct training sessions to familiarize instructors with their roles and responsibilities. Training covers effective communication, leading engaging activities, addressing children's questions, and guiding them to supplementary resources. Regular updates and feedback sessions are part of the training process.

- **Parental Exposure Visits** - Instructors conduct home visits to meet parents of selected children. The parents are invited to visit the training center, where they tour classrooms, dining areas, sleeping quarters, and resource rooms. They interact with parents of previous camp participants to gain assurance about their children's safety and well-being. Separate accommodations are provided for boys and girls.
- **Daily Activities at Residential Learning Camp** - Children stay at the camp where trained local teachers live and teach them. The curriculum includes Mathematics, Hindi, English, and Computer education using activity-based methodologies and diverse teaching materials. Additional activities include counseling, health checkups, sports, and computer literacy. A library fosters reading habits. Physical activities encompass volleyball, basketball, cricket, football, skipping, kho- kho, kabaddi, and other outdoor games. Instructors conduct weekly assessments to monitor children's progress, followed by strategic discussions and session planning. Mid-year and annual evaluations are performed by a separate team of instructors from Shiksha Kendra to ensure objectivity.
- **Baseline learning assessment of children** - Program associates conduct a baseline survey to evaluate each child's initial learning level. Findings are compiled and discussed with instructors to inform strategic planning.
- **Health Checkups** - Weekly health checkups are conducted by a visiting doctor. Necessary medications and hospital referrals are provided as required. Children receive training on good touch vs. bad touch, self-defense, and hygiene practices. Adolescent girls participate in sessions on menstruation and hygiene.
- **Children's Exposure Visits:** Educational and recreational visits are organized to enhance learning through hands-on experiences. Activities include puzzle solving, clock reading, measurement, drawing, and painting.
- **Endline learning assessment of children** - At the camp's conclusion, an endline survey assesses each child's progress. Data is compiled for comparative analysis against baseline results to measure improvements.
- **Mainstreaming** - After completing the third camp cycle, instructors assist children in enrolling in government or private schools. Support includes guiding families through the documentation required for admission.
- **Retention Study** - Annual retention studies track whether children from the RLC camps continue their education or drop out. Data collection and analysis help assess long-term impact.

### iii. Monitoring and Evaluation

The project incorporates a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to ensure its effectiveness and track progress. At the onset of the program, a baseline survey was conducted to assess the learning levels of children and understand the educational landscape in the target villages. This assessment established a foundation for measuring the program's impact over time. In the second year, a midline survey will be carried out to evaluate improvements in children's learning levels and identify any persisting social issues impacting their education. The findings from this midline survey will help refine the program's strategies, ensuring a more targeted approach to addressing challenges and enhancing outcomes.

Regular monitoring through field visits, interactions with stakeholders, and data collection will also be conducted throughout the program to maintain transparency and adapt interventions as needed.



### ***From Shiksha Kendra to Police Constable: The Inspiring Journey of Kalpesh Kumar***

Kalpesh Kumar, 22, belongs to a tribal family from Hemlate village (Gura Nichla Fala) in Kotra block. Growing up in a remote area, he faced many challenges—long distances to school, limited support for studying at home, and scarce educational resources.

His life began to change when he joined the Gura Nichla Fala Shiksha Kendra. There, he received regular guidance, personal attention, and encouragement to continue his studies. Kalpesh attended the Shiksha Kendra for several years, building his foundation in basic literacy, numeracy, and life skills, which prepared him for further education and competitive exams.

Despite financial difficulties, he remained disciplined, studying late into the night and maintaining physical training each morning. His hard work paid off when he cleared the selection for Police Constable. For the past seven months, he has been undergoing intensive training in Jodhpur.

Kalpesh's journey—from a struggling student at a Shiksha Kendra to a police constable—

#### **iv. Proposed Outcomes**

The proposed outcomes to be achieved by the end of three years are as follows (2024-27)-

- 70% Increase in the regularity of children in school from baseline
- 80% Reduction in school dropouts from baseline
- 90% School children will have age-appropriate learning levels from baseline
- Increase involvement from the parents and community in education issues
- 75% of children in primary grades attending RLC and SK will be independent learners and improve in age-appropriate learning levels

#### **v. Proposed Budget**

The total budget requested for 2026 is Rs. 41,59,928. The detailed budget is given in the table below

S. No.	Budget Head	Details	Unit of Measurement	Unit Cost	Units	Budget 2026
<b>A.Improving enrolment, regularity, and retention of children and Improving foundational literacy and numeracy skills</b>						
<b>Shiksha Kendra</b>						
A.1	Instructor stipend	Honorarium of Instructor @Rs.6,700 per instructor per month for 12 months; few schools have more than 1 instructor	No.of instructors	6,700	13	10,45,200
A.2	Evaluation of children	Half yearly and annual evaluation of children at sk	No.of sk	1,000	11	11,000
A.3	Study Material for sk children	Stationary @750 including workbooks of Hindi, English maths	No.of children	750	500	3,75,000
A.4	Instructor meetings and training	Quarterly meetings of instructors to know progress ,challenges,learning of Sk and Capacity building of instructors of SK through 6-day residential training	no of instructor	2,200	13	28,600
A.5	Shiksha Kendra Alumni meeting	Meeting of Sk graduated children to know educational status and career counselling of children ; exposure visit in 3rd year	No. of SK s	1,000	11	20,000
<b>Government school</b>						
A.6	Workshop with government teachers and trainings	In second year one workshops for teachers to discuss ways to make schools gender sensitive and respond to needs of girl education( 2 teacher per school from 5 schools and 2 resource persons);In 3rd year (3 teachers and 2 resource person/school)	No. of workshops	20,000	1	25,000
A.7	Shiksha Sahayak stipend working at government school	In 2 year the Stipend of 5 instructors @ Rs. 8,750 per instructors per month for 12 months and in 3 year @Rs 9,000 per instructor per month	No. of Teachers	8,750	5	5,40,000
A.8	Bal manch meeting and exposure visits of Bal manch children	In 2 year Quarterly meeting of Bal manch children and in 3 year exposure visit of Bal manch children	No.of meetings	1,000	10	20,000
A.9	Community meetings and events	Quarterly meeting with parents, community, PRI bodies and community event	No. of schools	500	5	2,500
A.10	SMC meetings and Parents meeting	Monthly meetings of SMCs and parents	No. of Schools	500	5	2,500
<b>B.Reintegrate out of school children into the education cycle</b>						
B.1	Lodging and Boarding	2nd year Rs.230/day/child for 22 persons (20 Children, 2 Teachers who stays overnight throughout the camp)in 3rd year @Rs 275 per day for 22 people	People	5,060	120	7,26,000
B.2	Study Material	Rs.750 per child per camp for 20 children	Students	750	20	15,000
B.3	Uniform	25 children @Rs.750 per child.	Students	750	20	15,000
B.4	Doctor visit	Weekly checkup of children @ 2000	No of visits	2,000	4	8,000
B.5	Teacher's Stipend	2nd year @Rs.475/day/teacher for 2 teachers for 120 days ; in 3rd year @Rs 512/day/teacher for 2 teachers 120 days	Teachers	57,000	2	1,23,120
B.6	Teacher training	Rs.1920 per teacher per training @4 teachers and one Resource person	Teachers	1,920	4	-
<b>Sub Total</b>						<b>29,56,920</b>

<b>D</b>	Monitoring & Evaluation	Baseline ,Midline and Endline assessment( learning assesment,household surveys)/ data compilation and analysis	lumpsum			70,000
<b>E</b>	Communications	Photography, branding, social media	lumpsum	10,000	4	40,000
<b>F</b>	Implementation Cost	implimentation cost- Field staff, coordinator and Project Manager consolidated @ Rs. 53,000 per month for 12 months	No. of months	53,000	12	6,74,160
<b>G</b>	Travel	travel at head office , block and zone level for project implimentation and monitoring	No.of months	8,000	12	96,000
<b>Sub Total</b>						<b>8,80,160</b>
<b>Total</b>						<b>38,37,080</b>
<b>H</b>	Admin Cost	administrative cost at 6%				2,30,225
<b>Grand Total</b>						<b>40,67,305</b>

## vi. Conclusion

The extension of the project in Kotda block aims to further strengthen the educational ecosystem by focusing on foundational skills, reintegrating out-of-school children, and fostering community involvement. Seva Mandir's efforts will address key barriers to education, improve learning outcomes, and ensure equitable opportunities for all children. With continued collaboration and support, the project will drive lasting improvements in education and empower children to succeed academically and beyond.