



Ensuring Quality Education for Out-of-School Children through Shiksha Kendra (Bridge Schools) Proposal to ASHA Danbury – 2025-26

Executive Summary

Since 2017, ASHA Danbury has been a vital partner in improving access to quality education in rural and tribal areas of south Rajasthan. Through its partnership with Seva Mandir, ASHA has ensured that children continue their education despite tough conditions.

This program has helped out of school children get back to education and further continue it. It has also adapted to better engage the community and raise awareness about the importance of education.

This proposal requests INR 850,035 (\$10,000) to continue educating to 345 out-of-school children in Jhadol block, Rajasthan. The funding will support five Shiksha Kendras (SKs) for 12 months, from November 2025 to October 2026, helping these children get back to learning and build a better future.

Context

The villages of southern Rajasthan are located in hilly, forested areas with small, scattered hamlets. The population consists mainly of subsistence farmers, with 84% working in agriculture—70% of whom are tribal. These farmers struggle to make a living from their small landholdings.

Though access to public services is improving, many villages still face challenges in education. While school enrollment has increased, issues like a shortage of qualified teachers, poor infrastructure, and inadequate sanitation remain. These problems contribute to high absenteeism and low graduation rates.

Rajasthan has over 54,000 government schools with more than 6.2 million students, but around 26% of girls aged 14-18 are out of school, with girls making up about 60% of this group. In rural and tribal areas, the situation is worse, with many children unable to attend school due to long distances and unsafe travel conditions. Parents, especially those with farming duties, often cannot afford to send their children daily.

Traditional practices like early marriage, child labor, and gender-based restrictions also disrupt education, particularly for girls. Caste differences and safety concerns further complicate efforts to send children to school, especially for higher education. Given these challenges, a multifaceted approach is needed to provide quality education to these communities.

Shiksha Kendra (The Bridge School)

The primary goal of the Shiksha Kendras is to provide quality education for children and help them transition smoothly into the formal education system. The program aims to build a society that values education as a right and keeps children engaged in learning, empowering them to imagine a better future as independent learners.



Shiksha Kendras are established in remote communities once the need is identified with support of village institution committee. Once operational, the Kendra enrolls children and offers education up to Class 5, after which they transition to government schools for higher grades. Studies show that students from Shiksha Kendras tend to outperform their peers in mainstream schools, demonstrating stronger literacy skills and higher grades.

The teaching approach at Shiksha Kendras is participatory, activity-based, and child-centered. This makes learning fun while helping children develop essential skills for academic growth and integration into the formal education system.



Shiksha Kendras have proven to be highly effective in improving educational outcomes, leading to more positive attitudes toward education in rural communities. Over time, enrollment rates, particularly among girls, have steadily increased, signaling a shift in traditional views on girls' education.

Key features of Shiksha Kendra

Shiksha Kendras are primary education centers that provide learning opportunities for children aged 6-14, especially those who have never attended school or have dropped out. The program offers an engaging, activity-based curriculum developed by Seva Mandir, designed to help these children integrate into the formal education system. Key features of the Shiksha Kendras include:

- **Regular Training for Instructors:** All teachers receive ongoing training in academic practices to ensure they provide quality education.
- **Monitoring and Accountability:** A camera monitoring system tracks the attendance and operational hours of the centers. Teachers must submit photos of themselves and their classes at the start and end of each day, which are then reviewed by the education team to confirm compliance with the schedule.
- **Local Instructors:** Teachers are from the local community, which helps them better understand the children's context and challenges. Instruction is provided in both Hindi and the local dialect.
- **Annual Assessments:** Two assessments are held each year to evaluate students' progress, with students placed into four levels based on their performance.
- **Post-Bridge School Support:** We maintain regular communication with the families and schools of students who graduate from the Bridge Schools to ensure they continue their education at higher levels.



Program Objectives

- **Ensure access to quality education** for rural and tribal children aged 6 to 14, aiming for 90% of students to achieve independent reading and comprehension skills in Hindi (with basic proficiency in English) and demonstrate competence in core arithmetic (addition, subtraction, multiplication, division) and fundamental geometry.
- **Increase community engagement** and build local capacity to support and sustain quality education initiatives.
- **Facilitate transitions to government schools**, with at least 20% of children continuing their education in formal schools by the end of the year.

Proposed Activities

The Shiksha Kendras will operate in seven locations, supported by local communities. The teaching approach will be activity-based and child-centered, aimed at improving children's learning levels. Once children reach level 3, they will graduate from the Shiksha Kendra and transition to government or private schools for further education.

A. Capacity Building: Instructors are locally appointed and come from the same communities as the children, but many have limited academic qualifications. To address this, Seva Mandir provides capacity-building training, including a six-day residential course each year and monthly block-level meetings to enhance teaching skills and resolve challenges.

B. Special Activities and Celebrations: Each Shiksha Kendra will host an Enrolment Day in July to encourage out-of-school children to enroll. National celebrations like Independence Day and Republic Day will also be observed, either individually or in collaboration with nearby Shiksha Kendras.

C. Evaluation of Children: Two assessments are conducted annually: a mid-term in December and an annual assessment in June. Results help evaluate students' progress and categorize them into four academic levels (1, 2, 3), roughly equivalent to government school grades.

D. Continuing Studies into Further Education: Once students acquire the necessary skills in language and math, they will be encouraged to enroll in government or private schools. On average, 25% of Shiksha Kendra students transition to higher-level education, marking a significant achievement for children who often start with no prior education.

E. Monitoring of the Shiksha Kendras: Seva Mandir's Education Department and field staff conduct regular visits to Shiksha Kendras to monitor student participation, material usage, instructor-student interactions, and other activities. A camera monitoring system is in place to verify teacher attendance, with instructors' remuneration linked to verified attendance through date- and time-stamped photos.

F. Shiksha Shulk (Fees): A nominal fee of Rs. 150-300 per year is collected from parents to support the Kendra's operations, used for purchasing educational essentials like uniforms, shoes, and umbrellas. In cases of financial difficulty, fees can be waived.



Budget

S.N	Budget Head	Details	Budget for 1 SK (Rs.)	Budget for 5 SKs (Rs.)	Budget in USD for 5 SKs (1\$ = 85INR)
1	INSTRUCTOR STIPEND	Honorarium of instructor Rs.7200	86,400	4,32,000	5,082
2	STUDY MATERIAL	Rs.750 per child	18,750	93,750	1,103
3	EVALUATION	Rs.1,000 per evaluation for 2 evaluations	2,000	10,000	118
4	COMMUNITY AWARENESS MEETING	Rs. 750 per SK per month	9,000	45,000	529
5	INSTRUCTOR MEETING & TRAINING	Rs.600 per instructor for 4 meetings a year Rs. 2,200 per instructor for a 6-day residential training	4,600	23,000	271
6	COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY	Photography, branding and communication	3,535	17,675	208
7	IMPLEMENTATION COST	Includes program implementation cost, monitoring, reporting	32,000	1,60,000	1,882
8	TRAVEL	Rs.2,520 per year per SK. Includes program monitoring at field, block and head office level, distribution of study material	2,600	13,000	153
	Total		1,58,885	7,94,425	9,346
9	Admin	7%	11,122	55,610	654
	Grant Total		1,70,007	8,50,035	10,000