

Concept Note

Title: "Shikhar Alo"–Community-Based Education Program for Marginalized Children and Youth

Submitted by: Kachua Dalima Association (KDA)

Location: Patuakhali district and Surrounding Rural Areas, Bangladesh.

Duration: 3 Years

Estimated Budget: BDT 1,80,00,000

Target Group: Out-of-school children, adolescents, and underprivileged youth (6–24 years), especially girls

1. Background and Rationale

Bangladesh has made progress in education, but rural and marginalized areas like Kachua continue to face significant barriers: poverty, early marriage, dropout rates, child labor, and lack of infrastructure. Girls and children with disabilities are particularly at risk of educational exclusion. The Kachua Dalima Association (KDA), a local community-based organization committed to social empowerment, recognizes the urgent need for an inclusive, equitable, and community-led education initiative.

The COVID-19 pandemic worsened the learning crisis, pushing many children permanently out of the education system. Furthermore, digital divides, lack of trained teachers, and inaccessible learning environments remain significant hurdles.

2. Goal and Objectives

Overall Goal:

To ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for children and youth in Kachua and adjacent areas.

Specific Objectives:

1. To re-enroll and retain 1,000 out-of-school children and youth (6–24 years) in formal or non-formal education.
2. To establish 10 community learning centers providing basic education, life skills, and digital literacy.
3. To train 50 local youth (especially women) as community educators and facilitators.
4. To engage parents, local leaders, and government education officials in promoting child-friendly and gender-sensitive learning environments.

3. Key Components of the Program

A. Non-Formal Education & Literacy:

- Bridge education for dropouts (Grades 1–5 equivalency)
- Literacy and numeracy for adolescents and working youth
- Special focus on girls, disabled children, and ethnic minorities

B. Community Learning Centers (CLC):

- Safe, child-friendly spaces in village schools or community halls
- Provide remedial classes, life skills, hygiene education, arts, and digital literacy
- Solar-powered facilities with basic ICT tools

C. Youth Skills & Pre-Vocational Training:

- Digital skills, entrepreneurship, communication, and leadership
- Linkages with vocational institutions and government schemes

D. Parental and Community Engagement:

- Mother groups and parent-teacher dialogues
- Community awareness sessions on the value of education and gender equity

E. Capacity Building of Local Educators:

- 6-month training program for community educators
- Emphasis on participatory, inclusive teaching methods

4. Expected Outcomes

1. Increased enrollment and reduced dropout rates among children aged 6–16
2. Enhanced literacy, life skills, and digital literacy among rural adolescents
3. Greater community participation in educational development
4. Empowered female youth through educator training and leadership roles
5. Improved coordination with Upazila Education Office and local schools

5. Sustainability and Exit Strategy

- Community management committees will gradually take over CLC operations
- Partnership with local schools for integration of learners into the formal system
- Engagement with local government for long-term support under PEDP and DPE
- Establishment of local education funds and alumni mentor groups

6. Potential Partners and Donors

- Government: DPE, Upazila Education Office, LGED
- Development Partners: UNICEF, Save the Children, BRAC, JAAGO Foundation
- Corporate Donors/CSR: Grameenphone, bKash, ACI Ltd.
- Local stakeholders: School Management Committees, Imams, Union Parishads

7. Monitoring and Evaluation

- Baseline and endline surveys
- Monthly progress tracking by KDA M&E Team
- Annual impact assessment and participatory review
- Student portfolios and progress reports.