Nurturing Critical Literacy through Literature in Indigenous Children

Implementing Organization: Muskaan, Bhopal, India

Supported by: IBBY–Yamada Fund (with support from Yamada Bee Farm)

Reporting Period: January 2025 – December 2025 (Project End Report)

Project Locations: Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh - India (Dhekpur, Muskaan – Mitti Ka Ghar, Gandhi Nagar)

Target Communities: Kanjar, Pardhi, Gond

Project Coordinated and Facilitated by: Parag-IBBY India

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Project Overview

“While the children developed new perspectives and critical understanding, I too, as a facilitator, received valuable opportunities to learn and deepen my own insights. This initiative, along with the support received, has truly been a remarkable and impactful effort.

Mursalin, a library facilitator

The project ‘Nurturing Critical Literacy through Literature in Indigenous Children’ was implemented by Muskaan, Bhopal with the support of the IBBY–Yamada Fund. The purpose of the project was to foster critical thinking and reflective engagement among children from marginalized and Indigenous (Adivasi and other deprived caste) communities through meaningful engagement with literature.

The project aimed to move beyond basic reading skills and instead used carefully selected children’s literature as a tool to question stereotypes, examine social hierarchies, and encourage independent thought. Through structured reading sessions, dialogic discussions, creative writing, and reflective activities, children were supported in developing the ability to analyze issues related to gender, caste, tribal identity, war, food diversity, constitutional values, and communal harmony.

The primary target group included children and adolescents (approximately 10–16 years) from Muskaan’s community libraries located in urban and rural areas and Adivasi bastis of Bhopal, including Gandhi Nagar (Pardhi community), Dhekpur (Kanjar community), and Neelbad (Pardhi, Kanjar, and Gond). Many of these children come from historically marginalized backgrounds with limited access to diverse and high-quality literature. The project also worked closely with librarians and facilitators, strengthening their capacity to conduct critical literacy sessions and document children’s responses.

The broader context of the project is shaped by persistent social inequalities, gender biases, caste discrimination, cultural marginalization of Indigenous communities, and shrinking spaces for democratic dialogue. In such a context, children often internalize dominant narratives without opportunities to question them. This project sought to create safe and reflective learning spaces within community libraries where children could critically examine social realities, articulate their perspectives, and build a stronger sense of identity, dignity, and constitutional citizenship.

Over the course of implementation, the project evolved into a sustained journey of transformation—beginning with exploring gender beliefs, expanding into discussions on war and peace, caste and tribal identity, and culminating in strengthened constitutional understanding, creative expression, and community-level engagement through events such as writing workshops and a story fair.

The journey of the project, from **January 2025 to December 2025**, with the children has been deeply enriching and meaningful. In every session, it was a truly gratifying and inspiring experience to witness the children move to higher levels of thinking and reflection.

Objectives and Results

This project sought to create safe and reflective learning spaces within community libraries where children could critically examine social realities, articulate their perspectives, and build a stronger sense of identity, dignity, and constitutional citizenship.

Core Objective

To nurture critical literacy among Indigenous children through literature-based discussions on different social and political issues

Geographical Area

Community libraries (Pardhi, Kanjar, and Gond communities) in Bhopal, India

Total Children Engaged	Total Structured Sessions	Librarians and Facilitators Engaged	Volunteers Engaged
125	165	22	50

Total Structured Session Types

Read-alouds, facilitated discussions, creative responses, documentation by librarians, and reflective assessments to measure change

Objective 1

To nurture critical literacy skills among Indigenous and marginalized children through engagement with diverse and thought-provoking children's literature

Over the project period, children demonstrated a visible shift from surface-level reading to analytical and reflective engagement with texts. Initially, many children reproduced socially dominant beliefs (e.g., rigid gender roles, unquestioned nationalism, stereotypical views of caste and food practices). Through sustained dialogic reading sessions and guided discussions, children began to:

- Question stereotypes related to gender, caste, and tribal identity
- Distinguish between personal opinion and constitutional values
- Identify power structures embedded within stories
- Express disagreement respectfully and support arguments with reasons

Baseline and endline reflections showed a clear improvement in children's ability to articulate independent viewpoints. By the final quarter, children were not only responding to texts but also connecting them to lived experiences in their communities.

Objective 2

To promote values of equality, dignity, constitutional awareness, and peaceful coexistence among children

Thematic engagements around war and peace, caste discrimination, food diversity, tribal identity, and the Indian Constitution led to measurable attitudinal shifts.

- Children showed increased understanding of equality and constitutional rights.
- Discussions on caste and food practices reduced visible hesitation in speaking about discrimination.
- Children began recognizing discriminatory language and practices in everyday life.
- Conversations around war shifted from glorified nationalism to more nuanced reflections on human cost and peace.

By the end of the project, several children were able to articulate why dignity, diversity, and peaceful coexistence are essential for a democratic society.

Objective 3

To strengthen children's creative expression and confidence through writing, storytelling, and participatory activities

The introduction of structured writing workshops and reflective activities significantly enhanced children's expressive abilities. Children produced original stories, poems, and reflective pieces engaging with themes of identity, fairness, and imagination. Participation in the Story Fair (with 156 children across communities) demonstrated increased confidence, collaboration, and public sharing of ideas.

Children who were initially hesitant began volunteering to read aloud and lead discussions, indicating growth in self-confidence and ownership.

Objective 4

To build the capacity of librarians and facilitators to conduct critical literacy sessions effectively

- The project significantly strengthened the pedagogical confidence of librarians.
- Facilitators shifted from transactional reading sessions to dialogic and inquiry-based approaches.
- Documentation quality improved, capturing children's reflections more analytically.
- Librarians demonstrated greater comfort in facilitating discussions on sensitive topics such as caste and identity.

By the final quarter, facilitators were independently designing reflective prompts and adapting sessions based on children's responses, indicating institutional capacity strengthening.

Overall Change Observed

“In riots and religious rallies, it’s always the poor youth from our communities who participate. The children of the rich or the politicians never get involved – they go to good universities, while we are made to fight.

Vandana, a student

Across the project duration, the most significant transformation was in children’s ability to move from passive acceptance of dominant narratives to active questioning and reflective engagement. The libraries evolved into safe spaces for dialogue, critical thinking, and democratic learning.

The project not only improved reading engagement but also nurtured identity affirmation, constitutional awareness, and social sensitivity among Indigenous and marginalized children.

Children recognized how religious hatred is sown early, and how it breaks down the fabric of communal harmony and unity. These discussions reveal the emergence of a critical political consciousness among children–they were not only interpreting the stories, but also questioning the systems of power and inequality that fuel such violence.

Activities and Approach

Selection of Books and Themes

The project began with careful selection of diverse and thought-provoking children's literature. Books were chosen around themes such as gender, war and peace, caste, tribal identity, food diversity, constitutional values, and equality. Lesson plans were developed around each book to guide reflective discussions rather than conventional comprehension-based reading (see annexure 1).

Approach

- Dialogic reading approach
- Developed lesson plan with open-ended questioning (see annexure 2)
- Small-group and whole-group discussions
- Reflective writing exercises

This approach directly supported the objective of nurturing critical literacy by encouraging children to question, analyze, and connect texts to lived realities.

Structured Reading and Critical Dialogue Sessions in Libraries

Regular library sessions were conducted across Muskaan's community libraries in Gandhi Nagar (Gond community), Dhekpur (Kanjar community), and Neelbad (mixed group of Pardhi, Kanjar, and Gond communities).

Books focussed on themes of gender beliefs, war and nationalism, caste discrimination, food practices and diversity, tribal identity and cultural dignity, and constitutional values were introduced progressively.

Approach

- Baseline and endline reflection tools: We developed a survey using a Likert scale, posing questions linked with gender and war. Based on the response children were scored (see annexure 2)
- The data shows a gradual shift in the children's perception (see annexure 3)
- Facilitated dialogue circles
- Use of visual prompts and story-mapping
- Group reflection charts

Children were encouraged to disagree, reason, and respectfully debate, creating safe democratic spaces within libraries. These sustained engagements resulted in visible shifts in children's attitudes and reasoning capacities, directly advancing objectives related to equality, constitutional awareness, and identity affirmation.

Writing Workshops and Creative Expression

In the later phase of the project, writing workshops were introduced to deepen children's expressive capacities.

Approach

- Guided prompts linked to themes discussed
- Peer-sharing sessions
- Individual storytelling exercises

Children produced original stories and poems and reflective pieces, demonstrating internalization of critical themes (see annexure 3). This strengthened confidence, articulation skills, and ownership over ideas, fulfilling the objective of creative expression and voice-building.

Story Fair (Community Engagement Activity)

A Story Fair was organized involving 156 children from multiple communities. The event included:

- Story-writing corners
- Kabad se Jugad ('Waste to Wonder') creative corner
- Storytelling and reading spaces

Approach

Activity-based participatory stations encouraged collaboration and imagination. The fair expanded the impact beyond individual reflection to collective learning, confidence-building, and community-level celebration of children's voices.

> *"I had never seen war from this perspective—how so many innocent people, children, and animals die in something they have nothing to do with.*

Urmila, a library educator

Capacity Building of Librarians

Continuous mentoring and reflection sessions were conducted with librarians.

Approach

- Team training sessions
- Feedback meetings
- Strengthening documentation practices
- Co-designing lesson plans

Facilitators gradually shifted toward inquiry-based pedagogy and demonstrated increased comfort in handling sensitive discussions.

This ensures sustainability and institutional strengthening of critical literacy practices.

Main Challenges and Adjustments

1. Initial Resistance to Sensitive Themes

Discussions on caste, tribal identity, and food practices initially led to hesitation and discomfort among children.

Action Taken

Facilitators slowed the pace, used storytelling as an indirect entry point, and built trust before deep discussions. Gradual scaffolding allowed children to open up more confidently.

2. Deeply Internalized Gender and Nationalistic Narratives

Baseline responses showed rigid gender beliefs and uncritical glorification of war.

Action Taken

Instead of confrontation, facilitators used comparative stories, reflective questioning, and peer dialogue to encourage gradual rethinking.

3. Librarian Confidence in Handling Complex Themes

Some facilitators initially felt underprepared to guide conversations on caste and constitutional values.

Action Taken

Additional mentoring sessions were conducted. Reflection meetings strengthened conceptual clarity and facilitation confidence.

4. Adjustments from Original Plan

- Writing workshops were expanded in the final phase after observing children's increased readiness for deeper expression.
- The Story Fair was strengthened as a culminating community-sharing event to consolidate learning.
- Additional time was allocated to discussions on constitutional values based on children's interest and engagement levels.

These adjustments enhanced the overall impact and responsiveness of the project.

Target Groups and Reach

1. Direct Beneficiaries (Children)

The project directly engaged 125 children and adolescents (aged approximately 10–16 years) through sustained critical literacy engagement in Muskaan's community libraries.

These children primarily belonged to marginalized and Indigenous communities, including the Pardhi community in Gandhi Nagar, the Kanjar community in Dhekpur, and a mixed group of Pardhi, Gond and Kanjar communities at Neelbad. Many participants came from historically marginalized backgrounds with limited access to diverse literature and structured spaces for dialogue and reflection.

Over the course of the project:

- 165 structured sessions were conducted across libraries.
- 157 children participated in the Story Fair, expanding outreach beyond the core group.

The project therefore ensured both sustained engagement (depth) and wider community outreach (breadth).

2. Secondary Groups Involved Librarians / Facilitators

A total of 22 librarians and facilitators were trained and actively involved in the project. Their role included:

- Conducting 165 structured sessions
- Facilitating critical dialogue on themes such as gender, caste, tribal identity, war, food diversity, and constitutional values
- Maintaining qualitative documentation
- Supporting writing workshops and Story Fair activities

The project significantly strengthened their confidence in handling sensitive themes and adopting dialogic teaching methods.

3. Youth Volunteers

50 youth volunteers were engaged in supporting the project.

They contributed to:

- Session coordination and logistics
- Community mobilization
- Facilitation support during the Story Fair
- Activity management at creative corners

Their involvement strengthened youth leadership and intergenerational engagement within the community.

4. Parents and Community Members

Parents and community members were indirectly involved through:

- Children's continued discussions at home
- Attendance and observation during the Story Fair
- Increased visibility of library-based activities

Several children reported sharing conversations about gender equality, caste discrimination, and constitutional rights within their families, indicating ripple effects beyond direct participants.

Qualitative Results and Indicators of Change

Over the course of the project, significant qualitative changes were observed in children's thinking patterns, expression, confidence, and social attitudes. These changes were documented through baseline–endline reflection tools, session documentation by librarians, children's written work, and observation of participation in discussions and public sharing spaces.

"You say that the government has no religion, but I saw our Prime Minister performing rituals at the Ram Temple. If the government is not supposed to promote any religion, then why is no action taken against that?

Nakul, a student

"If the government itself is not following what is written in the Constitution, then who can we complain to?

Gulabi, a student

1. Change in Critical Thinking and Analytical Skills

Observed Change: Children moved from giving fixed, socially dominant responses to offering reasoned, multi-layered perspectives. They began questioning stereotypes rather than accepting them as 'normal'.

Measurement Approach

- Comparison of baseline and endline responses
- Quality of reasoning in group discussions
- Written reflections and stories
- Documentation notes by facilitators

For example, in early sessions on gender roles, many children expressed rigid beliefs such as specific tasks being 'naturally' assigned to boys or girls. By the endline phase, several children articulated that such roles are socially constructed and unfair when imposed.

One child reflected during a later session, *"Pehle mujhe lagta tha ki kuch kaam ladkiyon ke hote hain aur kuch ladkon ke. Ab lagta hai ki kaam ka gender nahi hota, bas logon ne baant diya hai."*

This indicates a clear cognitive shift from acceptance of norms to critical questioning.

Observed Change: Children demonstrated greater understanding of equality, dignity, and constitutional rights. Discussions on caste, food practices, and tribal identity showed reduced hesitation and more reflective engagement.

Measurement Approach

- Responses during structured dialogue sessions
- Ability to reference constitutional values in discussions
- Participation in debates with respectful disagreement

Children who initially hesitated to speak about caste discrimination later openly discussed discriminatory practices in schools and communities, questioning their fairness.

"The police never treat our Pardhi people well. They come to our settlements and take people without a warrant, even though the Constitution says that no one should be treated unjustly. But our people never get justice. Even the judges

look at us as if we are criminals. If a rich person commits a crime, the police talk to him respectfully and offer him a chair. But they treat us like animals. I don't see any respect for human dignity anywhere." (Dilbaaz, a child)

In one discussion on food diversity and discrimination, a participant stated, *"Kisi ke khane ko galat bolna matlab uski pehchaan ko galat bolna hai. Agar sab barabar hain, to khana bhi barabar ka samman paana chahiye."*

Such reflections demonstrate growing empathy and the ability to link lived experiences with the principle of equality.

2. Strengthened Identity and Cultural Confidence

Adivasi and marginalized children showed increased confidence in speaking about their cultural practices without visible shame or defensiveness. Participation became more assertive, and children began taking pride in sharing their traditions during discussions.

3. Growth in Creative Expression and Confidence

Children who were initially reluctant to speak or write began volunteering to read aloud, share original stories, and participate in public forums. The Story Fair, which included 156 children across communities, served as a visible indicator of collective confidence and creative ownership.

Overall Indicator of Change

By the final quarter, libraries had evolved into safe and dialogic spaces where children engaged critically, debated respectfully, and expressed independent viewpoints. The most significant qualitative outcome was the shift from passive acceptance of dominant narratives to thoughtful and reasoned engagement with social realities.

Quantitative Outputs

Planned versus achieved outputs and criteria used to define success

S.No.	Indicator	Planned	Achieved	Criteria for Success
1	Sustained engagement of Indigenous children	Year-long structured critical literacy engagement	125 children engaged consistently across the year	Year-long participation (not one-time attendance)
2	Community representation	Inclusion of diverse Indigenous communities	Participation from Pardhi (Gandhi Nagar), Kanjar (Dhekpur), and mixed Pardhi–Gond–Kanjar groups (Neelbad & other settlements)	Cross-community representation
3	Community-level outreach event	Culminating literary event	156 children participated in Story Fair	Participation beyond core group; public sharing
4	Capacity building	Train and involve facilitators	22 librarians/ facilitators trained and actively engaged	Active facilitation & documentation
5	Structured reading sessions	Regular dialogue-based sessions across libraries	165 structured critical literacy sessions conducted	Completion of planned session frequency
6	Thematic implementation	Thematic cycles aligned to critical literacy	Cycles completed on gender, war & peace, caste, tribal identity, constitutional values, and food diversity	Completion of thematic modules
7	Strengthening library collections	Procure diverse, theme-aligned literature	14 books purchased and integrated into community libraries	Books actively used in sessions
8	Reflective writing by children	Encourage thematic creative expression	250 original writing pieces collected (stories, reflections, responses)	Increase in voluntary participation

Sustainability and Continuity

The project has laid a strong foundation for sustained critical literacy engagement within Muskaan's community libraries. Sustainability has been built at three levels: institutional capacity, resource strengthening, and children's ongoing engagement.

1. Institutional Capacity Strengthening

Through continuous mentoring and reflective practice, librarians have developed confidence and skills to independently conduct dialogic and inquiry-based sessions. The shift from transactional reading to critical engagement is now embedded in regular library functioning. Facilitators are capable of:

Designing reflective questions

- Handling sensitive themes such as caste and identity
- Documenting qualitative observations systematically

This strengthened pedagogical capacity ensures that critical literacy practices will continue beyond the funded period.

2. Strengthened Library Resources

Strengthening library collections with diverse, high-quality literature aligned to project themes. The procurement of 314 diverse and high-quality books has permanently enhanced the resource base of Muskaan's community libraries. These books remain accessible to children and will continue to support thematic sessions in the coming years. Since the books are fully integrated into structured programming rather than kept as passive resources, their educational impact will extend well beyond the project timeline.

3. Sustained Engagement of Children

A core group of 125 children has been consistently engaged over the years. These children now demonstrate increased confidence, reflective thinking, and creative expression. Many have taken ownership of library spaces and are emerging as peer influencers during discussions and public activities such as the Story Fair.

The continuation plan includes:

- Integrating critical literacy themes into regular weekly library sessions.
- Continuing writing workshops as a periodic activity.
- Organizing annual or bi-annual Story Fairs to sustain community-level engagement.
- Expanding thematic discussions to new groups of children

4. Building on Achievements

Muskaan plans to build on the project's achievements by:

- Developing a structured critical literacy module based on learnings from this project. The learning module can be shared online/offline with interested organizations and learnings from the project supported by IBBY-Yamada Fund can be shared widely.
- Strengthening documentation practices to track long-term attitudinal change.
- Exploring partnerships and funding opportunities to scale the model to additional communities.

The project has shifted libraries from being reading spaces to becoming democratic dialogue spaces. This cultural shift within the institution represents the most sustainable outcome of the initiative.

Financial Report

The detailed Financial Report, including the approved budget, actual expenditures per budget line, and explanations for variances is provided in Annexures 4 and 5.

ANNEXURE 1
List of Books

Theme: Tribal Identity and Culture, Caste System and Its Roots in India

Total sessions conducted: 66

Title	Publisher	No. of Children
The Pardhi Rule	Muskaan	79
Andhero ke Rakhwale	Katha	70
Ek Bhil Katha	Tulika	71
Niyamgiri ke Pahaad aur Jungle from Jacinta Ki Diary	Jugnoo Prakashan, Ektara	73
Meri Zameen Main Bachaungi	Tulika	70
Mor Dungari	Jugnoo Prakashan, Ektara	61
Lady Tarzan! Jamuna Takes A Stand	Jugnoo Prakashan, Ektara	61
Bikhre Moti	Eklavya	70
Thakur ka Kuan	Diamond Books	70
Joothan	Radhakrishna Prakashan	67
Badbu	State Resource Centre, Haryana	56
Kaali aur Dhamin Saanp	Tulika	74
Bhimrao Ambedkar: The Boy Who Asked Why	Tulika	64
Pongal	Muskaan	86
Preamble of Constitution	Government of India	70

Theme: Food Diversity and Disability

Total sessions conducted: 45

Title	Publisher	No. of Children
Head Curry	Eklavya	76
Kaisa Kaisa Khana	Jugnoo Prakashan, Ektara	71
Tiffin Dost	Eklavya	81
Machher Jhol	Eklavya	73
Kali Aur Dhamin Saanp	Tulika P	67
Chutney	Muskaan	69
Algaav	Muskaan	70
Khichdi...Ek Lok Katha	Eklavya	71
Kaamchor Dokra	Eklavya	76
Jadui Bartan	Tulika	73
Chicken Wala Sunday/ Chicken Sunday	Puffin Books, Penguin	68
Maavli	Muskaan	76
Ud Chali	Tulika	71
Pakdo, Pakdo us Bille ko!	Tulika	67

ANNEXURE 2
A Comparative Analysis of Baseline and Endline

Caste System, Tribal Identity and Pride in India

Aspect	Baseline (Initial Perspective)	Endline (Final Perspective)	Key Observations
Understanding of Tribal Identity	Most children had only a superficial understanding of tribal communities, with limited awareness of their traditions, lifestyle, and social structures.	By the end, children developed a better understanding of tribal identity and its cultural, social, and familial aspects.	Children gained a deeper understanding of tribal life and culture.
Cultural Pride	Initially, children's sense of tribal identity was shaped largely by experiences of social discrimination.	By the end, children recognized the cultural and historical value of tribal identity and found reasons to take pride in it.	Children developed a stronger sense of self-identity and pride.
Distinguishing Caste and Identity	Initially, children viewed tribal identity mainly through experiences of discrimination and hardship.	Children began to understand that tribal identity goes beyond social challenges and includes cultural, moral, and traditional heritage.	Children developed a more positive and holistic understanding of identity.
Empathy and Social Awareness	Initially, children's perspectives were limited to personal experiences and restricted information.	Children became more sensitive to the struggles, achievements, and contributions of tribal communities.	Children's social and moral awareness improved
Critical and Positive Thinking	Children mostly absorbed information passively.	Children reflected on and took pride in their tribal identity, while developing a proactive stance against discrimination and inequality.	Critical thinking and self-respect strengthened significantly.
Understanding Social Justice and Equality	Initial understanding was limited and superficial.	Children recognized principles of equality and social justice.	Greater sensitivity, awareness, and ethical reasoning developed.

Caste System and Its Effects

Aspect	Baseline (Initial Perspective)	Endline (Final Perspective)	Key Observations
Understanding of Caste and Discrimination	Children had only a passing knowledge of Ambedkar and a limited understanding of caste-based discrimination.	Children began understanding caste-based discrimination and its impact on school and social life.	Awareness and sensitivity to discrimination increased.
Empathy and Social Sensitivity	Initially, children's understanding was mostly informational, with little personal connection to experiences of discrimination.	Children developed empathy and sensitivity toward the experiences of Dalit communities and discrimination.	Children understood discrimination more deeply and began thinking about ways to challenge it.
Knowledge of Caste and Task Allocation	Limited understanding of the caste system and its exploitative nature.	Children recognized how socially assigned roles affect the opportunities, respect, and dignity of certain communities.	Children showed a better understanding of the link between caste and occupation.
Questioning and Critical Thinking	Children mostly gave factual responses and rarely questioned or challenged discrimination.	Children became more sensitive to the struggles, achievements, and contributions of tribal communities.	Children's social and moral awareness improved
Understanding Social Justice and Equality	Early understanding was limited and superficial.	Children recognized principles of equality and social justice.	Sensitivity, awareness, and moral reasoning improved significantly.

Food Diversity

Aspect	Baseline (Initial Perspective)	Endline (Final Perspective)	Key Observations
Understanding of Various Types of Food & Discrimination	Children preferred their own food habits and often showed bias toward foods and people they disliked.	Children understood that food preferences differ and that all food habits deserve respect.	Children began viewing food as nourishment and recognized that discrimination based on food is wrong.
Empathy and Social Sensitivity	Children often reacted with disgust or anger toward peers whose food habits they disliked.	Children developed respect and understanding for diverse food habits.	Empathy and social sensitivity increased, and children recognized that judging others for food choices is wrong.
Understanding of Regional Food Habits	Children were unaware that food habits are shaped by region and available resources.	Children understood that food habits are shaped by local produce and regional contexts.	Awareness and respect for diverse food practices increased.
Questioning and Critical Thinking	Children often associated dislike for pork eaters with the belief that it is "haram" in Islam.	Children recognized that food choices are personal and that everyone's choices deserve respect.	Children developed stronger critical thinking and a fairer perspective on diversity.

ANNEXURE 3
Children's Expressions

"When I was in school, there was a boy named Aniket who was our friend. One day, we found out that he liked eating pork. That very day my friend and I stopped being friends with him. We looked at him with dislike. That incident stayed in my mind for a long time.

Today, when didi (library facilitator) discussed food habits with us, I understood that everyone has their own choices. People can eat what they like, and it does not affect our lives. Yet, we often start feeling hatred and even break friendships over such things.

Thinking about that incident today makes me feel ashamed of my behaviour.

Kajal

"When I was around 6 years old, my younger sister and I used to go around rag picking. In the morning, whenever we heard a knocking sound at the door, we would wake up immediately and go out to pick.

Once, while we were out collecting, we even went to shops asking for food. People would give us food from a distance, but we did not feel bad about it. After collecting and doing work, we reached Gitanjali. My sister started feeling hungry, so I went to ask for food.

At one house, when I went to ask, they saw my clothes and drove me away. At another house, someone said, "A dirty boy has come," and that hurt me a lot. Still, I continued asking. After collecting some food, my sister and I sat down and ate together. After eating, I went to ask for water. I saw a man washing his car with a pipe. I asked him, "Could you please give my sister and me some water?" He said we should drink from a distance, and he made us drink water from afar.

Vikrant and Khushi Pardhi

Time has come

Time has come to stand and fight

Time has come to protect our land.

Time has come to change our fate.

Stop waiting for prayers, time has come to ask questions.

Our culture is fading

Time has come to save our forest

Our rivers and our earth and our mountains are asking – for how long will we remain silent?

Time has come to speak up

This nature belongs to us

Time has come to raise our voice

This nature is ours

Time has come to bring new change, a new world

Time has come to speak up against what is wrong

Time has come to bring equality and fairness

Wake up from deep sleep, time has come to spread the bright light.

A Poem by Khanak Jagat on Tribal Identity

> *“I do not like eating meat, but my uncle eats it at home. Whenever they cooked meat in their house, I used to feel disgusted by it. Even seeing it made me feel very uncomfortable.*
>
> *But from today’s session, I understood that we should not feel hatred towards what others eat. Meat is also food. Even if I don’t like it, others may like it and they can eat it.*
>
> *Just as I like eating paneer, they like eating meat.*
>
> **Himani, Goregaon**

ANNEXURE 4
Project Budget

Cost Item	Description	Amount (INR)	Requested from IBBY (INR)
Library Educators	2 people @ Rs. 6500 per person	1,56,000	1,56,000
Books	3 sets of books @7000 Rs per set	21,000	14,500
Stationery	3 sets @ Rs. 8000	24,000	9,000
Mentor	1 person @ Rs. 20,000 (for 10 days a month)	2,40,000	1,80,000
Collective Events and Workshops with Youth	12 days @ 5000 per day	60,000	35,000
Admin Costs	Rs. 1000 per month for 12 months	12,000	5,000
Total		513,000	399,500

The balance funding of INR 114,000 will be supported by the organization.

ANNEXURE 5
Financial Statement with Remarks

Expenses for the period from 01.01.2025 to 31.12.2025

Cost Item	Budget	Expenses			Total Expenses	Balance as on 31.12.2025	Variation (%)
		01.01.2025 to 31.03.2025	01.04.2025 to 30.06.2025	01.07.2025 to 31.12.2025			
Library Educators	1,56,000		37,424	1,26,285	1,63,709	-7,709	-4.94
Books[1]	14,500		7,213	10,248	29,060	-14,560	-100.41
Stationery	9,000		10,739		10,739	-1,739	-19.32
Mentor	1,80,000		57,860	1,48,841	2,06,701	-26,701	-14.83
Collective Events and Workshops with Youth[2]	35,000	3,980		17,676	21,656	13,344	38.13
Admin Costs[3]	5,000		1,840	1,368	3,208	1,792	35.84
Grand Total	**399,000**	**3,980**	**1,15,076**	**3,04,418**	**4,35,073**	**-35,573**	**-8.90**

Summary

Fund Received on 18.02.2025	4,27,950
Interest Earned on unutilized grant in savings account till 31.12.2025	7,123
Expenses Upto 31.12.2025	4,35,073
	0

Remarks

[1] To effectively strengthen children's engagement with reading and sustain the project's objectives, the availability of high-quality, diverse reading material was found to be critical. During implementation, the number and range of books were insufficient to meet the learning needs of children across different age groups, reading levels, and social contexts.

Therefore, the procurement of additional books to ensure access to a wider range of age-appropriate, culturally relevant, and thematically diverse literature. This decision directly contributed to increased participation, improved reading continuity, and deeper engagement among children. The additional expenditure thus aligned with the core goals of the project and enhanced its overall educational impact.

[2] Certain writing workshops were conducted at library centres, resulting in minimal expenditure under venue and logistics heads. Additionally, story fairs (Kahani Melas) were organized with support from available stationery resources, leading to further cost savings. The savings generated were judiciously reallocated towards the procurement of additional books to meet children's diverse reading needs. This reallocation ensured optimal utilization of funds and alignment with the project objectives.

[3] The amount allocated under this head was relatively small; therefore, even a marginal additional expenditure resulted in a higher percentage variation.

SIP

2025/03/24 13:29

POTATO
LADIE FINGER
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