Empower- Ed in rural Uttarakhand villages:

***Transforming Unutilised schools and Classrooms into Dynamic Learning Hubs* for Shaping Young Minds into Tomorrow's Leaders in Uttarakhand**

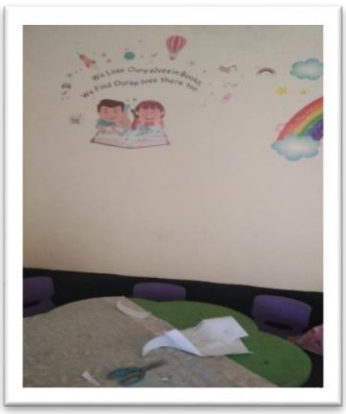
One Room, One Educator will be the catalyst for the holistic transformation of rural schools in Uttarakhand. (special focus on pre-primary and primary schooling and skill building- career guidance for higher classes)

Paromita Sarkar

Founder and CEO, NALF, UTTARAKHAND

NEW AGE LEARNING FOUNDATION

Project Proposal- EmpowerEd for rural government schools in Uttarakhand


Abstract

***Reviving Empty Spaces in rural Uttarakhand: Transforming Classrooms into Dynamic Learning Hubs* for Shaping Young Minds into Tomorrow's Leaders in Uttarakhand**

One Room, One Educator will be the catalyst for the holistic transformation of rural schools in Uttarakhand.

Districts: Nainital and Almora

Key areas of intervention:

1. Digital Literacy
2. Foundational Literacy (Focus on Pre-Primary- Primary)
3. Green School Model
4. After-School Coaching
5. Extracurricular Activities (STEAM)
6. Teacher training in digital literacy and the use of technology tools to improve educational outcomes.

Projected Impact numbers: 768 students, 200 teachers, 1536 parents in 14 learning hubs in 20 schools/ location of rural Uttarakhand.

Project Proposal- EmpowerEd for rural government schools in Uttarakhand

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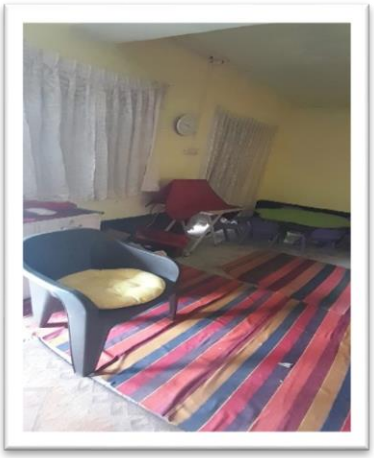
Empowering villages leads to sustainable and resilient cities, not the other way around. The future of India is rooted in its villages. By strengthening our villages, we are shaping a stronger, more resilient India. Education is the cornerstone of development, and we are dedicated to transforming the educational model in the Himalayas. Our efforts aim to be a catalyst for lasting change, paving the way for future generations to thrive. 33

- Paromita Sarkar, Founder & CEO, New Age Learning Foundation, Uttarakhand. 34

NEW AGE LEARNING FOUNDATION

Project Proposal- EmpowerEd for rural government schools in Uttarakhand

A. Executive Summary:



This proposal outlines the Empower-Ed initiative, aimed at addressing the gaps in foundational education across rural Uttarakhand through the establishment of Learning Hubs with a dedicated educator. These hubs will focus on enhancing pre-primary and primary education, improving literacy, numeracy, and overall student performance along with diverse skill developmental workshops and career guidance for the higher classes. By integrating modern teaching methods, community engagement, and low-cost technological solutions, we anticipate making a lasting impact on over 768 students, 200 teachers and 1536 parents from 20 remote underserved schools/ villages in Nainital and Almora districts with 14 learning hubs. This initiative will play a crucial role in ensuring a sustainable transformation in education, providing children with the skills needed to succeed academically and socially.

About Hairakhan and the implementing agency NALF

Hairakhan: A Himalayan Gem

Nestled in the serene Kumaon region of Uttarakhand, **Hairakhan** is a spiritual haven with a rich cultural and mystical heritage. Known for its breathtaking natural beauty and deep spiritual significance, Hairakhan is home to an ancient cave dedicated to Lord Shiva, said to contain a sealed tunnel that once led to Tibetan Kailash. This sacred mountain is revered as the oldest Kailash on Earth, while the nearby **Gautami Ganga** River is considered one of the oldest tributaries of the Ganges.

Photo credits: Photographs captured on camera by a Spanish visitor

Hairakhan's allure extends far beyond its natural beauty. It attracts spiritual seekers from around the globe, with individuals from over 100 countries visiting to experience its profound energy. In the 1970s, the mystic **Hairakhan Babaji** reappeared from the cave, reigniting the village's sacred legacy and inviting people from all walks of life to come and seek peace, wisdom, and truth. Today, it remains a place where cultures, religions, and philosophies converge, making it a unique destination for spiritual tourism.

B. New Age Learning Foundation (NALF)

The New Age Learning Foundation (NALF) is a grassroots organization based in Hairakhan, Uttarakhand, dedicated to empowering the rural Himalayan communities through sustainable development initiatives. Drawing inspiration from the teachings of **Hairakhan Babaji**, NALF's mission is guided by values of truth, compassion, and humanity, aiming to uplift underserved communities while preserving the region's rich cultural heritage.

NALF focuses on key areas such as education, skill development, environmental sustainability, and community-driven economic growth. The foundation strives to address critical challenges faced by these communities, including educational disparities, lack of employment opportunities, and gender biases, while providing platforms for marginalized youth and women to gain the skills they need to thrive. Through innovative programs and projects, NALF is working towards transforming the future of Hairakhan and neighbouring Himalayan villages, creating sustainable, impactful change and fostering a brighter, self-reliant future for the region's residents. The current pilot projects initiated by NALF in 2023-2024 include Hairakhandhi Crafts- rural skilling and livelihood initiative for rural Himalayan communities and Educate Hairakhan, which has since evolved into Empower-ed. In partnership with local communities, NALF aims to promote sustainable livelihoods and contribute to the holistic development of the region, combining modernity with tradition to pave the way for long-term growth.

C. Educational Status in Hairakhan and Uttarakhand:

The educational status of pre-primary and primary education in Uttarakhand has been a subject of concern for several years, with studies highlighting a number of challenges that hinder quality education and access, especially in rural areas. Here are some key findings from various studies:

1. **Enrolment and Attendance**:
    - According to data from the **Uttarakhand Education Department**, while enrolment rates in government schools have improved, attendance, especially in rural and remote areas, remains a concern. In 2020, the gross enrolment ratio for primary school children was higher than the national average, but there were large disparities between urban and rural regions.
    - **Anganwadi** play an important role in the early years of education (0-5 years), but studies show that many Anganwadi centres are primarily used for mid-day meals, with insufficient focus on early childhood education (ECE). This often leads to children entering primary schools with little to no foundational learning.
    - **At the Anganwadi centres in Uttarakhand,** the primary focus for many students is attending for the mid-day meal, with minimal educational activities taking place. According to stakeholder feedback and direct observations made during field visits, students often receive their meals and are left without proper learning engagement. This situation is compounded by the lack of structured educational programs for children in the early childhood stage, particularly between 0-5 years, which is crucial for their cognitive and social development.
    - **A report by the Uttarakhand State Planning Commission (2020)** highlights that a significant percentage of Anganwadi in rural areas are understaffed and lack sufficient resources, which directly impacts their educational effectiveness. Moreover, the State of Education Report 2021 by the Uttarakhand Education Department indicates that early childhood education (ECE) programs are severely underfunded, resulting in weak foundational education for children, particularly in rural regions. The absence of goal-oriented curriculum and teacher engagement further exacerbates this gap, leading to a lack of readiness when students enter formal schooling, as reflected in the learning outcomes observed in primary schools.

2. **Quality of Education**:
    - A study by **Pratham** in 2020 (ASER report) found that children in rural Uttarakhand struggled with foundational skills, particularly in reading and arithmetic. In primary schools, around 50% of students in class 3 were unable to read class 2-level texts or do basic arithmetic.
    - One of the significant issues identified was a lack of skilled teachers in rural areas. Many schools face staffing shortages, especially in primary schools where single-teacher schools are common, and the quality of teaching is inconsistent and sub-standard.
    - Based on our experience in Hairakhan, even youth who have completed their Master's degree often struggle to write a single sentence correctly in Hindi which is the commonly used language after Pahadi. They commonly use Hinglish, a mix of Hindi and English, and tend to write in the informal, abbreviated style used for texting on platforms like WhatsApp.
    - The youth in Hairakhan, as well as across the entire state, often enrol in degree courses simply to obtain a degree, without any real consideration of a specific career path or aspirations. They lack a clear sense of direction and purpose in their education. Goal setting, which should ideally start from childhood, is completely absent in their lives.
3. **Infrastructure and Resources**:
    - According to a report by the **National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA)**, infrastructure in many primary schools in Uttarakhand is inadequate. There is a shortage of proper classrooms, learning materials, and technological resources. In some schools, the learning environment is further compromised by the absence of basic sanitation facilities.
    - The **Uttarakhand Educational Survey** of 2019 pointed out that a significant portion of schools did not have proper access to computers or digital learning tools, which would be essential for improving learning outcomes, especially in the post-pandemic era.
4. **Teacher Training and Professional Development**:
    - **Teacher training** is a critical issue in the state. The lack of professional development for educators has been highlighted in various studies as one of the reasons for poor learning outcomes in primary schools. Many teachers, especially in remote areas, have not received formal training in modern teaching methodologies or child-centric education.
    - A report from the **Uttarakhand Council for Education Research and Training (UCERT)** highlighted the need for continuous training and capacity building programs to ensure teachers are equipped with the right skills to teach effectively, especially in rural schools where students come from diverse educational backgrounds.
5. **Impact of Mass Migration and School Closures**:
    - The educational landscape of Uttarakhand is further impacted by **mass migration**, especially from hilly areas. Studies show that many schools in remote villages have been closed due to decreasing student populations. Additionally, students who have migrated to urban centres often miss out on continuity in their education, exacerbating learning gaps.
    - A study by **UNICEF** showed that over 2,000 schools in Uttarakhand have been shut down due to migration and demographic shifts. This has led to overcrowded classrooms in the remaining schools, further complicating the delivery of quality education.
6. **Digital Literacy**:
    - Despite the state's push for digital literacy, **internet connectivity issues** in rural and remote areas have hindered the implementation of tech-based education solutions. Even though there have been initiatives to introduce digital learning through tablets and computers, the

lack of infrastructure, poor internet connectivity, and a gap in teacher training have made such interventions ineffective in many areas.

7. **Parental Awareness and Engagement**:
    - Parental engagement remains low in many rural communities, especially in hilly and remote areas. This issue is compounded by a general lack of awareness about the importance of early childhood education. Programs that promote **parental awareness** and **community involvement** are still in the nascent stages, with only a few schools and NGOs working on bridging this gap.

D. NALF Interventions with Government Schools: Empowering Education and Transforming Future

Personal stories of transformation will be documented, showcasing the impact of the learning hubs on students, local educators, and communities. Nisha, Poornima, and other local women who have gained computer skills through our initiative will share their journeys, highlighting how the program has empowered them and their communities. Additionally, stories of students who have gained new skills and confidence will be captured, illustrating the profound effect of education on their lives.

Digital literacy for all: July- August Highlights:

1. ***Bridging Hairakhan with the New Age World!***

The computer program started in the month of July, 2024. Students from far-off villages started coming to the community resource and skilling center. They walked almost two hours daily to learn computers. The news had spread like wildfire as the classes began. Within a short time, we managed to gather a big batch of students from Hairakhan and neighboring villages. We did not do any promotion to attract such numbers. No mobilization drives.

We taught them all the latest topics, including AI. Mostly, we had girls in the 4 batches. Seeing these girls do a PowerPoint presentation on computers was unbelievable, especially considering that the community perceived girls as primarily engaged in farming activities and only capable of cutting grass. This program would definitely change the overall community perception about girls and women in this region.

2. **Summer drawing competition for government schools:** Drawing competition was conducted for school students for understanding their artistic aptitude in which more than 40 students participated. There are no trained art and craft teacher in the schools in any of the schools at Hairakhan and satellite villages. We realized that there was nothing done for enhancing their creative and artistic interest which could also be a future vocation for them which could help them earn from their homes itself without the need for moving out of their villages to the cities like Delhi and Dehradun.

3. The Digital Literacy course at Hairakhan Centre and village government school by the fellows after the computer course:

We have the first computer enabled field centre at the centre of the village which is accessible for everyone from neighbouring villages too and there is local team in place which is backed up by a team of women who are still associated with the organisation and they are working from home for stitching based upon the work. They are ably backed up by a local team of part time coordinators and senior consultants from different thematic areas like education, IT, Social sector and environmental experts. Recently we have shifted our field office to the GPS Hairkhan after converting the unused store room into a learning hub for conducting

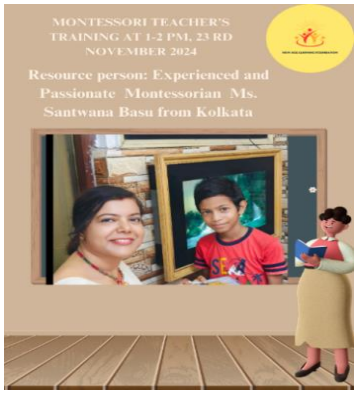
4. Intervention with primary schools started with GPS Murukuriya, Hairakhan Gram Panchayat

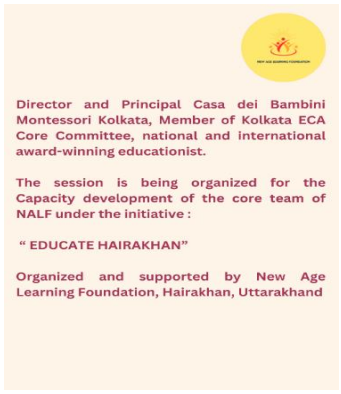
NALF began its intervention at GPS Murukuriya by expanding its efforts to a nearby primary school in Hairakhan village, which is part of the Hairakhan Gram Panchayat. Newly graduated trainees, Nisha and Poornima, volunteered to teach computer skills to the students while also enrolling in the Nayi Disha fellowship, a program designed to guide and mentor the youth in exploring various career paths. Passionate about teaching, Nisha and Poornima saw this primary school as an ideal environment to develop their teaching skills before pursuing a formal teacher training course, which they planned to do soon.

In addition to teaching computers, Nisha and Poornima organized various group activities under the guidance of Shrikar Parashar, one of NALF's trustees who spearheaded the computer program in Hairakhan. The activities included yoga, meditation, and playground games. After completing the computer course, we recognized the potential for a more structured and impactful intervention in the local primary schools. This led to plans for expanding our efforts in a more focused and comprehensive manner.

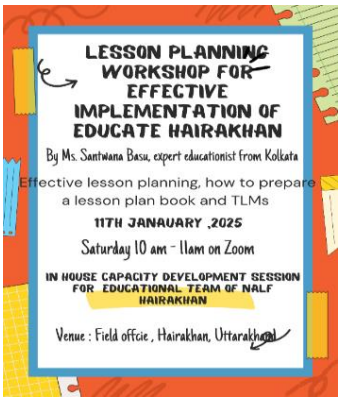
Shrikar Parashar left full time engagement (supports remotely from Bangalore) with NALF in the first week of September,2024 and ever since then the Founder and CEO, Paromita sarkar has been single handedly running the NALF with the support of Nisha and Poornima and a team of expert consultants supporting voluntarily for online workshops. They are being groomed as Educators and Coordinators since then. They were appointed as Project Coordinators on 14th September, on the Children's Day for the Educate Hairakhan Project meant for supporting the local primary schools of Hairakhan and now has taken the shape of Project Empower- Ed.

5. **Capacity Development through Virtual Workshops by Consultants:**
Virtual workshops were organized to enhance the team's skills, including topics like Menstrual Hygiene and the Use of Menstrual Cups by *Periods ki Pathshala*, eco-friendly lesson planning, eco-friendly stationery kits, and sustainable learning materials by Vaishali Sule. Additionally, Santwana Basu conducted a session on "Happy Teachers, Happy Classroom," focusing on creating positive learning environments, while also delivering Montessori training and a session on lesson planning for the team.





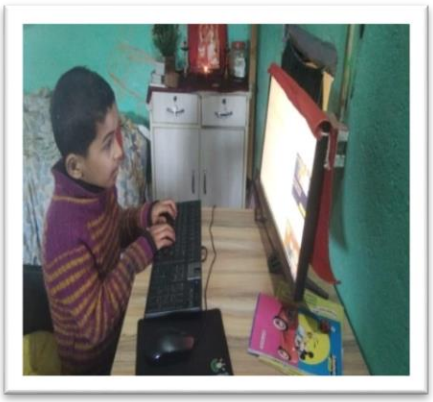
6. **In-House Meetings, Training and Mentoring:** Team meetings and review sessions, held on Saturdays, also serve as important capacity-building opportunities, providing a platform for ongoing mentoring and skill development within the team.



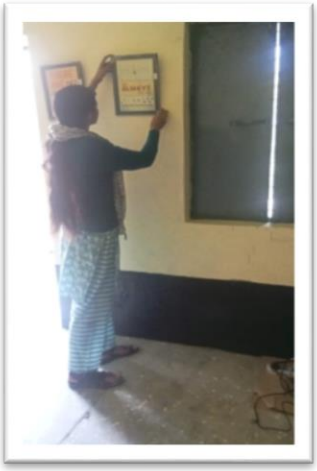
7. **Colourashram Foundation, Mysore Workshop on Natural Dyeing Techniques:**
The first workshop session on natural dyeing techniques was successfully completed, with participation from 10 students from GPS Hairakhan, 2 coordinators and 3 women artisans of Hairakhandhi crafts. Additional sessions are planned in the coming weeks, allowing the team and students to explore natural dyeing in its entirety. The coordinators would get completely trained and then take sessions for the students in both the primary schools at the learning hub.

8. **Photos of the 15-Day Winter Camp – A Journey of Learning and Creativity for GPS Hairakhan Students (January 2025)** and the activities at the school campus





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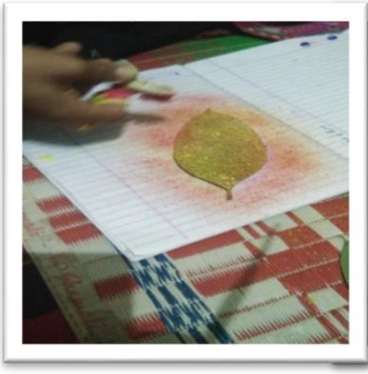
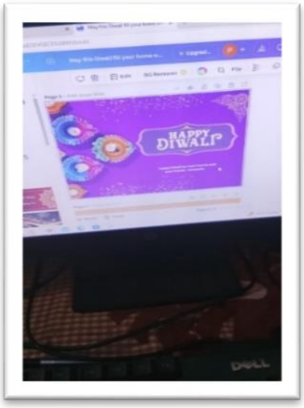
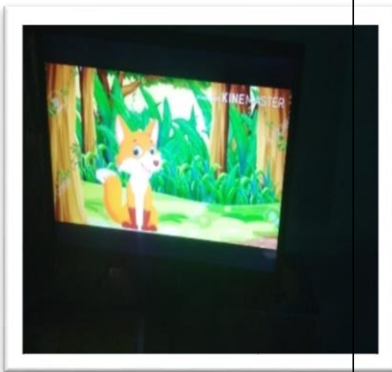
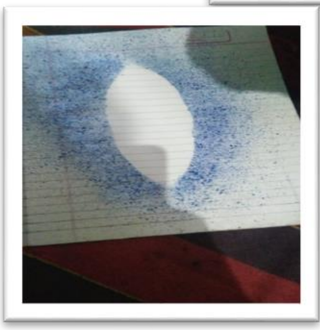











Project Proposal- EmpowerEd for rural government schools in Uttarakhand

The Winter Camp was organized by NALF with the support and approval of Principal Mrs. Hemlata Joshi, who had previously sent a notification to parents before the winter break. The camp kicked off with 12 eager students, excited for a mix of education, creativity, and fun. In the mountainous region, students often lack constructive activities after school hours, which can sometimes lead to negative behaviours, such as experimenting with substance abuse at an early age. Recognizing this, Mrs. Joshi wanted to provide students with opportunities for both academic enrichment and extracurricular engagement during the holidays, and NALF was more than happy to support her. It would not be an exaggeration if we say this was the first ever winter camp organised for underserved government school students in the history of this region.

Day 1: The camp began with a prayer session, followed by an introduction to computers, covering components like the CPU, monitor, and keyboard.

Day 2: After prayer, the students explored digital art through Microsoft Paint, learning basic tools to create their own masterpieces.

Day 3: The children learned about global cultures and Uttarakhand, followed by an introduction to Microsoft Word for typing and formatting practice.

Day 4: Students engaged in storytelling using images and practiced typing to improve speed and accuracy.

Day 5: The children watched the film *I Am Kalam*, then delved into Canva to design digital projects like posters and invitations.

Day 6: Students explored artistic skills through fabric poster making and attended workshops on eco-printing and block printing.

Day 7: The final day focused on advanced typing practice and crafting, where students learned to make movie pouches and frocks, guided by *Hairakhandhi Crafts* trainers.

Day 8: The camp concluded with a documentary on climate change, followed by creative sessions on Canva where students designed posters and invitations for upcoming events.

Students' testimonials from the Winter Camp

Hina Sammal
Class: 5
Year: 10

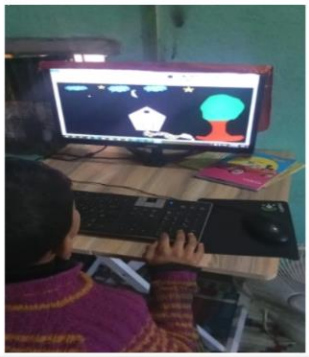
"I attended the Winter Camp for 15 days, and it was a wonderful experience! I learned how to turn the computer on and off, and I got to create five pictures using the computer. I also practiced typing and made posters for occasions like birthdays, Diwali, Christmas, and New Year's using Canva. The movie screening was really fun, and I loved learning about different computer tools. I can't wait to learn even more about computers in the future. Thank you for such a great experience!"

Himani Sammal
Class: 5
Year: 10

"My 15 days at the Winter Camp were so much fun! I learned how to open and close the computer, and I practiced my typing skills. I also got to make digital paintings and create posters for different occasions using Canva. It was exciting to explore the creative side of computers, and the movie screening added an extra element of enjoyment. Thank you for making this learning experience so special!"

Komal Arya
Class: 5
Year: 10

"Attending the Winter Camp for 15 days was an amazing journey! Each day, we began with a peaceful prayer session, which set the perfect tone for our learning. I learned to type faster on the computer and explored how to make posters on Canva. I also had the chance to watch a movie, which was both entertaining and educational. I'm thankful for this wonderful learning opportunity!"



Dheeraj Sammal
Class: 5
Year: 10

"The Winter Camp was so much fun! Over 15 days, I learned how to type more efficiently, and I also learned to open and close the computer properly. I enjoyed making posters and digital paintings, and the entire experience was both educational and fun. I also liked the movie screening we had. Thank you for this great opportunity!"

Rahul Sambhal
Class: 5
Year: 10

"Though I attended the Winter Camp for just two days, I learned a lot! I practiced typing, learned how to turn the computer on and off, and even performed the Om Namah Shivay chant. It was a great way to start learning about computers, and I look forward to more learning in the future.

Last Day of the Winter Camp ended with a pouch making and frock making session

Mayank Singh
Class: 5
Year: 10

"My 8-day experience at the Winter Camp was amazing! I learned how to make posters and cards on the computer, and I also practiced turning the computer on and off. I loved creating pictures and digital paintings, and the Om Namah Shivay chant added a peaceful touch to the day. Thank you for this wonderful opportunity!"

Mayank Sammal
Class: 5
Year: 11

"I spent 7 days at the Winter Camp, and it was a fantastic experience! I learned how to type faster on the computer and got to create posters using Canva. I also enjoyed making digital paintings, including fun designs like houses, stars, and clouds. It was a great way to learn about computers and creativity!"

Pratiksha Sammal
Class: 4
Year: 10

"Attending the Winter Camp for 10 days was such a wonderful experience! I learned how to turn the computer on and off and practiced typing. I loved creating pictures on the computer, and I especially enjoyed designing posters for special occasions like Diwali, New Year, and my best friend's birthday using Canva. The Om Namah Shivay and Ganesh Mantra sessions were a peaceful start to each day. Thank you for this amazing learning experience!"

9. Impact numbers: The table showing the impact numbers from July onwards with 2 part time Coordinators cum educators and 3 computers (computers specifically mentioned for digital literacy):

Activity	Location	Number of Students/Participants
GPS Murukuriya	-	35
GPS Hairakhan	-	22
Digital Literacy Course	-	20 adolescents and youth
15-Day Winter Camp for GPS Hairakhan	GPS Hairakhan	14
Drawing Competition	Local Schools	40 (mixed group)

***10.* Basant Panchami Plantation Drive & NALF's One-Year Milestone: Inauguration of the New Learning Hub- Shiksha aur Kala Kendra- Students centre**

On Basant Panchami, NALF celebrated its one-year milestone by launching a new Learning Hub focused on the holistic development of students. The occasion was marked by a plantation drive, where old tubs were filled with vermicompost manure and neem, and each tub was assigned to a student to care for, with t1heir names written on them. Nisha, Poornima, and the school staff worked together in the school playground, sowing seeds of lentils and flowers, fostering a spirit of teamwork and environmental consciousness. This is the first step towards converting the school into a green school.

***11.* Nisha and Poornima's Journey as a community leaders and change agents**

From Learners to trainers to Leaders: Nisha and Poornima's Journey of Empowerment

Nisha and Poornima engaged in plantation drive along with the students

The inspiring stories of Nisha and Poornima showcase the transformative power of educational interventions. Both of them have completed their Masters degrees from Haldwani after their schooling in Hairakhan village. After completing computer training at NALF, they interned in local schools through the Nayi Disha Fellowship program. With guidance and mentorship, they advanced to part-time educational coordinators for the *Educate Hairakhan* initiative, which focuses on improving school infrastructure, enhancing digital literacy, and supporting the Nipun Bharat program. Nisha and Poornima has been teaching all the subjects in both the schools besides computers and other activities for their holistic development. Their success reflects the immense potential of local talent in driving educational change. Now, they are preparing to lead the *Empowered*

initiative from Hairakhan, which is set to make a lasting impact across Uttarakhand and transform the educational landscape in the Himalayas for generations to come.

E. **Proposed Project for Holistic Educational Model- Empower-Ed**

Introduction/Background: "Empower-Ed Initiative: One Room, One Educator will be the catalyst for the holistic transformation of rural schools in Uttarakhand" (special focus on pre-primary and primary school and skill building- career guidance for higher classes)

The Empower-Ed initiative aims to provide holistic, sustainable, and transformative education for the children of rural Uttarakhand. We seek to blend modern educational practices with local traditions, creating a lasting legacy that fosters long-term community development.

A significant gap exists in the foundational education of children, particularly in the 0-5 age group. In rural Uttarakhand, Anganwadis primarily serve as centres for mid-day meals, neglecting the early learning needs of children. As a result, many students enter primary school already academically behind. Teachers, often working in extremely resource-constrained environments with minimal support, are left to teach students from scratch, which exacerbates educational inequalities. Additionally, many schools face severe staff shortages, with some primary schools having only one teacher responsible for both teaching and administration.

The GPS Hairakhan school, for instance, has an underutilized room that could be converted into a learning hub, but it requires additional resources like computers and finishing touches to become fully operational. Once approval from the Chief Education Officer in Nainital or the Director of Education in Dehradun is granted, we will further develop this hub in collaboration with the local education system.

The storeroom at GPS Hairakhan has almost been transformed into a learning hub, though it still requires some finishing touches and a few computers. We plan to propose adding more systems once we meet the Chief Education Officer in Nainital or the Director of Education in Dehradun to obtain formal approval for collaboration with the Uttarakhand education system. This step will also help us navigate and mitigate local political challenges.

The ultimate goal is to establish one-room learning hubs in underserved schools, focusing on strengthening foundational education in Uttarakhand, which is currently lacking. Without addressing these fundamental gaps, no amount of development projects can succeed. Even digital literacy initiatives, like tablet-based courses, will not be effective if the foundation of primary and pre-primary education is weak. Over 2000 schools in Uttarakhand have been shut down due to mass migration, displacement from dam construction, and overall lack of development.

We are already familiar with several schools and principals, either personally or through former NGO colleagues, who are eager to support such initiatives. We can make a tangible difference by setting up 14 such hubs 768 students, 200 teachers and 1536 parents from 20 remote underserved schools/ villages in Nainital and Almora districts. This approach will be far more effective than the tab-based intervention in Almora, where 700 tablets were distributed at a cost of 30k per student, reaching 600 students with no meaningful results due to no human intervention/ supervision and lack of transparency from stakeholders, and poor net connection. Another major reason being the fundamental flaws at the foundational level and lack of parental awareness and engagement. This was a misguided expenditure, symptomatic of the failure in many corporate social responsibility projects that lack genuine understanding of the ground realities. Ed- tech can only be tech enabled and cannot rely solely

on tech for driving the educational system. Human role is inevitable in the form of educator/ facilitator. There are no after school educational support for these students which will be fulfilled by this project in these 20 remote schools with 14 such learning hubs.

Our proposed learning hubs, on the other hand, will be grounded in reality and focused on tangible, sustainable improvements. With 14 learning hubs, we will have a significant impact on 768 students, 200 teachers and 1536 parents from 20 remote underserved schools/ villages in Nainital and Almora districts. The impact will be transformational, not just for the students, but for future generations. We won't need to spend on rent or electricity—only approval from the authorities. The goal is to create a low-cost, replicable model that can be scaled without large financial investment.

For example, the school at Gaja, where Nisha's father teaches, has several unused computers due to a lack of teachers. Similarly, GPS Hairakhan has qualified educators like Nisha and Poornima, but lacks the necessary computers to support their teaching. This situation highlights a simple, yet critical issue: we just need to fill in the gaps. It's common sense, not rocket science.

The **Empower-Ed** initiative provides a sustainable model for transforming rural education in Uttarakhand, creating vibrant learning spaces, enhancing literacy, and fostering community development. This program is an investment in the future of Uttarakhand's children, empowering them with the skills they need to thrive in an increasingly digital and environmentally conscious world.

F. Objectives and Goals of Empower-Ed:

- Establish **14 one-room learning hubs** in rural Uttarakhand, benefiting over **768 students**.
- Digital literacy to be imparted to 200 teachers in these 14 schools/ locations.
- Reaching out to 1536 parents during the course of 3 years for enhanced parental engagement and support for initiatives.
- Provide **after-school educational support** to supplement limited resources in government schools.
- Offer high-quality education at a low cost ranging between Rs. 213- 260 **per student per month**, ensuring sustainability.
- Focus on **foundational literacy and numeracy**, addressing key gaps in early education.
- Bridge the **digital literacy gap** by laying a strong academic foundation, ensuring effective use of technology in the future.
- **Prioritize human engagement** with qualified educators to ensure consistent, hands-on support, unlike previous tech-based initiatives that lacked teacher involvement.
- **Ensure long-term improvements** in rural education by creating replicable, scalable models for educational enhancement.

G. Local Partnerships:

  - Collaborations with local schools and principals ensure support for the initiative.
  - Example: Gaja village's primary school has unused computers, which could be used if there were enough teachers.
  - GPS Hairakhan has qualified educators but lacks necessary resources, a gap Empower-Ed can address to foster student learning.
  - Identified schools are highly interested in the initiative due to previous successful NGO interventions.

- Challenges faced by schools: limited resources, staff shortages, and gaps in foundational education.
- Schools are eager to adopt sustainable, transformative educational models.
- Past collaborations have established a foundation for impactful projects aligned with schools' long-term goals of improvement and community development.
- A farewell gift from a young woman artisan of Hairakhandhi crafts to Mrs. Shanti Joshi, a teacher who recently retired from GPS Hairakhan. This gesture was made in appreciation of her support, with warm regards from the NALF staff.

H. Details of the chosen schools, student count, number of learning hubs to be established, and the number of educators needed:

Sr. No	Location/School	Block and District	No. of Students	No. of Schools/Locations	No. of Learning Centers to be Created	No. of Educators	
1	Someshwar Range - KULSHIBI -	Dwarahaat, Almora	220	3	2	1	
2	Jaiti - KGBV, PS Sunari, Pre-Primary in Sunari and Kutoli	Lamgarah, Almora	200	4	3	2	
3	Home-based learning center at Pawas, GPS Gaja,	Bhimtal, Nainital	102	4	4	3	
4	GPS Deenapani, Pre-Primary School Deenapani	Hawalbagh, Almora	50	2	1	1	
5	Sunoli - GIC, PS and Pre-Primary, GPS Khali Betuli, and Pre-Primary School	Takula, Almora	150	5	3	2	
6	34-GPS Devraj Kaniyagair Block Dhari Bhateliya, Nainital - 12 Pre-Primary, 2 Teachers	Dhari, Nainital	46	2	1	1	
Total	**Number of Blocks/Districts**	**Total Locations/Schools**	**768**	**20**	**14**	**10**	
Total Number of Blocks/Districts: 6							
Locations: Dwarahaat (Almora), Lamgarah (Almora), Bhimtal (Nainital), Hawalbagh (Almora), Takula (Almora), Dhari (Nainital)							

Project Proposal- EmpowerEd for rural government schools in Uttarakhand

Total Number of Blocks/Districts: 6
Locations: Dwarahat (Almora), Lamgaraha (Almora), Bhimtal (Nainital), Hawalbagh (Almora), Takula (Almora), Dhari (Nainital).

Note: These schools have been carefully selected based on extensive research, our past experience working on various developmental projects, and valuable feedback from grassroots workers and NGO professionals with years of experience in Uttarakhand schools while working for different projects. Additionally, these schools have previously reached out to Paromita Sarkar for support.

A home-based learning centre by Nisha and Poornima at Pawas: There is currently no school or after-school coaching at PAWAS, and many students there have to travel long distances for education with no guidance after school hours. To address this, we aim to establish an after-school coaching centre cum learning centre for these students. Nisha and Poornima, both natives of Pawas, can start a small learning centre in their village to support local students. This initiative will not only benefit the children but also provide valuable experience for Nisha and Poornima as budding educators, with guidance from NALF. Additionally, there are 10 children in Pawas who are eligible for pre-primary schooling but currently have no access to Anganwadi centres.

A home-based learning centre will be established by Vikram Singh Bisht in Kutoli village, Lamgaraha. This model, led by an experienced educator and social worker, will be tested at the Anganwadi in his native village. The village currently lacks after-school educational support and access to modern education. The main town, Jaiti, is located far away, and while there are some training centres, the challenging mountain terrain makes it difficult for students to access education. Additionally, this location is near the Indo-China border, making it quite isolated from modern development.

I. Impact and Sustainability:

- Empower-Ed initiative will create vibrant, cost-effective learning hubs for over 1,000 students in Uttarakhand.
- Operating cost: Rs. 213 – Rs. 260 per student per month, ensuring scalability and sustainability.
- No additional investment needed for rent or electricity, as hubs will be set up within existing school facilities.
- Long-term sustainability ensured through the involvement of local educators, community leaders, and schools.
- Focus on foundational education, digital literacy, and community development, preparing students for success in the digital age.
- After project completion, NALF will continue supporting local educators through salaries and ongoing training.
    J. Mo**del and Impact:** Proposed learning hubs will operate at a low cost of ₹141.7 per student per month, making the approach highly cost-effective compared to previous interventions.

- The hubs will encourage community engagement and foster educational development, providing students with personalized attention.
- Example: Gaja village and GPS Hairakhan have existing resources (unused computers and qualified teachers) that can be utilized to create learning hubs at minimal cost.
- Focus of these hubs will be on foundational literacy and numeracy, laying the groundwork for future digital literacy initiatives.

K. Pre-primary level- with the Anganwadis

Activity	Objectives	Indicators	Assessment Tools
Story-telling	- Improve listening and comprehension skills.	- Children can recall parts of the story and discuss characters and events.	- Observation checklist for comprehension and participation.
		- Develop vocabulary and understanding of narratives.	- Oral assessments through group discussions.
		- Enhance imagination and creativity.	
Word-Object Recognition (Hindi and English)	- Introduce basic vocabulary in Hindi and English.	- Children can correctly identify and name objects in both languages.	- Flashcards for word-object matching.
		- Build recognition of common objects and their names.	- Simple quizzes or interactive activities for word recognition.
		- Foster bilingual awareness.	- Observation while playing or engaging with objects.
Drawing (Drawing Books)	- Enhance fine motor skills.	- Children can draw basic shapes and objects.	- Portfolio of drawings.
		- Encourage creativity and expression.	- Observation checklist for creativity, technique, and attention to detail.
		- Foster an understanding of shapes, colours, and forms.	
Songs	- Develop rhythm and language skills.	- Children can sing along with songs.	- Observation of participation during singing.
		- Encourage participation and listening abilities.	- Assess rhythm, pitch, and enthusiasm in a group setting.
		- Foster emotional expression and social bonding.	- Ability to recall and sing parts of familiar songs.
Children's Movie	- Develop listening skills and comprehension.	- Children demonstrate understanding of the movie's plot or characters.	- Group discussions or simple Q&A after watching the movie.
		- Introduce values, moral lessons, and social interactions.	- Creative drawing or role-playing based on the movie.

		- Ability to discuss key points after the movie.	
Mud-Clay Moulding and Play	- Improve hand-eye coordination and fine motor skills.	- Children can Mold shapes and objects using clay.	- Observation of individual and group play.
		- Foster creativity and tactile exploration.	- Simple checklist of skills used (shapes created, cooperative play, etc.).
		- Promote social play and teamwork.	- Participation in group play and sharing materials.
Games	- Improve physical coordination and teamwork.	- Active participation in physical games.	- Observation of physical skills (running, jumping, coordination).
		- Enhance social skills and cooperative play.	- Checklist for participation, communication, and teamwork.
		- Encourage physical activity and outdoor learning.	- Demonstrate cooperative behaviour and fair play.
Scrapbook – STEAM Activities	- Introduce concepts of Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math.	- Children can draw, cut, and paste to create their scrapbooks.	- Review of completed scrapbooks for creativity and content.
		- Foster creativity through hands-on activities.	- Observation of the child's approach to STEAM concepts (e.g., sorting, building, etc.).
		- Develop problem-solving and critical thinking skills.	- Ability to explain their creative process and outcomes.
Numbers and Alphabets (Basic Words, Sums, Subtractions)	- Introduce children to basic numbers and alphabets.	- Children can recognize and write numbers and alphabets.	- Flashcards for letter and number recognition.
		- Teach simple addition and subtraction.	- Simple worksheets for basic addition and subtraction problems.
		- Help children build foundational math and literacy skills.	- Observation of children completing basic math sums and letter/number writing exercises.
		- Ability to recite the alphabet and count from 1 to 20.	- Group or individual quizzes on basic sums and alphabet recognition.

Phonics	- Develop phonemic awareness and letter-sound correspondence.	- Children can identify letter sounds and associate them with corresponding letters.	- Flashcards for letter-sound matching.
		- Build the foundation for reading and spelling.	- Phonics worksheets with sound-symbol associations.
		- Improve pronunciation and articulation.	- Observation of children's participation in phonics exercises.

L. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Compliance (MEC) Indicators:

MEC Indicator	Details
Overall Child Engagement	Are the children participating actively and showing interest?
Skill Development	Are children developing cognitive, motor, and social skills as per expected milestones?
Teacher-Child Interaction	How effectively are educators interacting with children during activities?
Environment	Is the learning environment safe, stimulating, and inclusive?

This matrix gives a structured overview of the activities, objectives, indicators, and assessment tools that can be used in pre-primary education at Anganwadis to track children's development and improve learning outcomes.

M. These are the Key Areas: SDG Breakdown for the Primary level school

1. **Digital Literacy** - SDG 4: Quality Education
2. **Foundational Literacy with a Special Focus on Pre-Primary Level** - SDG 4: Quality Education
3. **Green School Model** - SDG 13: Climate Action, SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities
4. **After-School Coaching** - SDG 4: Quality Education, SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities
5. **Career Guidance and Mentoring by Experts** - SDG 4: Quality Education, SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth
6. **Extracurricular Activities - STEAM-based Activities** - SDG 4: Quality Education, SDG 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure
7. **Teacher's Training** - SDG 4: Quality Education
8. **Parental Engagement** - SDG 4: Quality Education, SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities

Key Area/Activity	SDG Link	Learning Objectives	Suggested Assignments
1. Introduction to Computers	**SDG 4: Quality Education**	- Understand the basic functions of a computer. - Learn the importance of technology in education.	- Search websites using Google Apps. - Switch on/off the computer.

			- Identify and learn the parts of a computer.
2. Operating a computer	**SDG 4: Quality Education**	- Learn how to operate a computer effectively.	- Switch on/off the computer. - Handle the mouse and practice its functions (right-click, left-click, scroll).
3. Keyboard and Its Function	**SDG 4: Quality Education**	- Understand the function of the keyboard as an input device.	- Practice typing in MS Word. - Identify keys, understand their uses, and practice basic typing skills.
4. Email Basics	**SDG 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure**	- Understand email components: Inbox, Compose Pane, Message Pane, Outbox, Spam, Send, Trash. - Learn how to write and manage emails.	- Create and send an email in Gmail. - Understand the importance of security (e.g., password management, spam).
5. MS Word Introduction	**SDG 4: Quality Education**	- Learn how to create, edit, and save documents in MS Word.	- Typing test in MS Word. - Apply text formatting (Bold, Italic, Underline).
6. Search Techniques	**SDG 4: Quality Education**	- Learn advanced search techniques to gather information efficiently.	- Practice searching for complex topics on the internet using various search engines. - Learn how to use a QR code.

Linking Activities to SDGs

- **SDG 4: Quality Education** - The digital literacy activities support **SDG 4** by providing access to learning opportunities that empower students with the knowledge and skills required to succeed in a technology-driven world.
- **SDG 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure** - By understanding and using email and digital tools, students learn about communication technologies and their role in innovation and infrastructure.

N. Training Module for Educators

Module Title	SDG Link	Learning Objectives	Suggested Assignments
1. Introduction to Holistic Education	**SDG 4: Quality Education**	- Understand the importance of integrating digital literacy with other learning areas. - Equip educators with tools to teach digital literacy effectively.	- Train educators on using free digital tools for teaching. - Practice designing lessons that incorporate digital literacy.
2. Teaching Digital Literacy	**SDG 4: Quality Education**	- Familiarize teachers with basic computer operations and tools.	- Hands-on practice with MS Word, Gmail, and computer operation. - Guide teachers in creating

			email communication for students.
3. Promoting Digital Citizenship	**SDG 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure**	- Teach educators the importance of digital citizenship, privacy, and security online.	- Develop lesson plans on responsible internet use and online security. - Conduct workshops on protecting personal data.
4. Assessment and Evaluation Techniques	**SDG 4: Quality Education**	- Train educators on how to assess digital literacy skills.	- Create assessment rubrics for email writing, MS Word assignments, and internet search skills.
5. Use of Technology in Classrooms	**SDG 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure**	- Enable teachers to incorporate digital tools for lesson delivery and student engagement.	- Integrate digital tools in class activities and share examples with peers. - Use platforms like Google Docs for collaborative assignments.

Linking the Training to SDGs:

- **SDG 4: Quality Education** - The module supports educators in delivering quality education through effective use of technology in the classroom.
- **SDG 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure** - Teaching digital literacy prepares students and teachers for the evolving digital landscape, fostering innovation and practical application of technology.

By linking each digital literacy activity to the corresponding SDGs, this framework ensures that the educational model aligns with **global development priorities** and contributes to building **life skills** while fostering **responsibility toward technology and the environment**

O. Here is a matrix form for **Project-Based Learning through Free Digital Resources** with the recommended tools, activities, and key areas of focus:

Area/Activity	Tools & Resources	Objectives	Indicators	Assessment Tools
1. Hands-on, Interactive Learning	- **Khan Academy Kids** - **ABC mouse** - **TinkerCAD** (3D design & engineering)	- Provide free lessons in math, reading, science, and arts. - Enable students to create 3D models and learn engineering principles.	- Children actively engage with the lessons and complete tasks. - Demonstration of understanding 3D concepts and design.	- Observation of task completion - Progress tracking through platforms' built-in assessments.
2. Incorporating Creative Projects	- **Scratch Jr. (for younger students)** - **Scratch (for older students)** - **Storybird**	- Foster creativity by creating digital stories, animations, and games. - Encourage students to write	- Children can demonstrate basic coding concepts. - Ability to express ideas through digital stories.	- Review of digital stories and games. - Assessment of coding logic, creativity, and storytelling.

		and illustrate digital stories.		
3. Collaborative Group Work	- **Google Docs/Slides/Sheets** - **Padlet**	- Facilitate collaboration on digital projects and presentations. - Share notes, images, and videos for group work.	- Active participation and collaboration among students. - Quality of shared content and team engagement.	- Observation of group dynamics. - Evaluation of final presentations and contributions from each group member.
4. Subject-Specific Project Resources	- **Science Buddies** - **Exploratorium** (Science projects) - **Prodigy Math** - **National Geographic Kids**	- Provide resources for subject-specific projects in science, math, history, and geography. - Encourage problem-solving and project exploration.	- Completion of project tasks related to the subjects. - Understanding key concepts and scientific methods.	- Project assessment based on scientific principles or math problems solved. - Teacher observation during tasks.
5. Arts and Craft Projects	- **Pinterest** - **YouTube** - **ClassDojo**	- Provide inspiration for creative arts and crafts. - Allow students to showcase their creativity.	- Creation of innovative craft projects. - Positive engagement in sharing and creating.	- Observation of project completion. - Review of creativity and effort in arts and crafts.
6. Language and Literacy Projects	- **Epic!** - **Storybird**	- Encourage reading and writing through digital books and creative storytelling.	- Children read books, complete related projects, and engage with storytelling.	- Review of project submissions (digital books). - Teacher assessment of vocabulary, writing, and comprehension.
7. Digital Art and Design	- **Canva for Education** - **Artful Thinking**	- Introduce digital art creation through visual projects, infographics, and posters. - Engage students in art critique.	- Students produce visually appealing projects. - Demonstration of design principles in digital art.	- Portfolio assessment of designs. - Evaluation of critical thinking and creativity in design.
8. Social Studies and Geography	- **Google Earth** - **World Atlas**	- Explore countries and geographical concepts using digital tools.	- Active exploration and understanding of countries, landmarks, and geographical terms.	- Observation of exploration tasks. - Geography-based quizzes or discussions.

9. Coding and Computer Science	- **Code.org** - **Tynker**	- Learn coding concepts through interactive tutorials and game creation.	- Ability to create simple codes and interactive games. - Engagement with coding challenges.	- Assessment through coding challenges. - Review of interactive projects and games.
10. Environmental Projects	- **WWF for Kids** - **Green Schools**	- Promote environmental sustainability through learning activities about conservation.	- Participation in eco-friendly projects. - Understanding of environmental protection and sustainability.	- Observation of environmental engagement. - Project evaluation on sustainability outcomes.
Additional Key Areas	- **Introduction to Computers & Software** - **Cyber Safety** - **Digital Citizenship** - **Digital Storytelling**	- Teach the basics of computing, safe internet practices, and responsible digital behaviour. - Encourage creative digital storytelling.	- Demonstrated knowledge of digital safety and responsible usage. - Ability to use software tools for storytelling.	- Assessment through digital literacy quizzes. - Evaluation of digital stories and participation in safety discussions.

P. Project Goals and Objectives:

Project Goals, Objectives, and Deliverables (End of 3 Years)

1. Goal: Improve Foundational Education in Rural Areas

Objectives:

- Establish **14 learning hubs** across **20 remote villages** to provide education support.
- Train **200 teachers** on modern teaching methods, education practices, and digital literacy.

Deliverables at the end of 3 years:

- **14 learning hubs** set up in remote villages.
- **200 teachers** trained, covering modern teaching methods, digital literacy, and education practices.
- **85%** of educators proficient in digital literacy tools for teaching.

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2. Goal: Promote Parental and Community Engagement in Education

Objectives:

- Conduct workshops for parents on early education and its importance.
- Engage **1536 parents** through various school activities.

Deliverables at the end of 3 years:

- **80%** of parents in target areas engaged through workshops and educational activities.
- **75%** of parents actively participating in school events, contributing to a positive learning environment.

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3. Goal: Increase Literacy Rates

Objectives:

- Increase literacy rates in target villages by **50%** over 3 years.
- Focus on **pre-primary education** through Anganwadis to improve early literacy skills.

Deliverables at the end of 3 years:

- **50% increase** in literacy rates in targeted villages.
- **85%** of pre-primary level students in Anganwadis demonstrating improved literacy skills.

Q. Project-Based Learning Activities Deliverables at the End of 3 Years:

1. Hands-on, Interactive Learning

- **Tools & Resources:** Khan Academy Kids, ABC Mouse, TinkerCAD
- **Deliverables:**
  - **90%** of students complete interactive lessons.
  - **75%** of students demonstrate understanding of 3D concepts and design through project completion.

2. Incorporating Creative Projects

- **Tools & Resources:** Scratch Jr., Scratch, Storybird
- **Deliverables:**
  - **85%** of students engage in creating digital stories, games, and animations.
  - **80%** demonstrate basic coding and storytelling skills.

3. Collaborative Group Work

- **Tools & Resources:** Google Docs/Slides/Sheets, Padlet
- **Deliverables:**

- **70%** of students actively collaborate on digital projects.
- **80%** of groups produce quality presentations and share content effectively.

4. Subject-Specific Project Resources

- **Tools & Resources:** Science Buddies, Exploratorium, Prodigy Math, National Geographic Kids
- **Deliverables:**
  - **80%** of students complete subject-specific projects.
  - **85%** demonstrate understanding of key concepts in science, math, and geography.

5. Arts and Craft Projects

- **Tools & Resources:** Pinterest, YouTube, ClassDojo
- **Deliverables:**
  - **80%** of students complete innovative craft projects.
  - **75%** of students demonstrate creativity and effort in arts and crafts.

6. Language and Literacy Projects

- **Tools & Resources:** Epic! Storybird
- **Deliverables:**
  - **90%** of students engage in reading and creative storytelling projects.
  - **80%** of students improve vocabulary and comprehension skills.

7. Digital Art and Design

- **Tools & Resources:** Canva for Education, Artful Thinking
- **Deliverables:**
  - **85%** of students produce visually appealing projects using digital tools.
  - **80%** of students demonstrate design principles in digital art.

8. Social Studies and Geography

- **Tools & Resources:** Google Earth, World Atlas
- **Deliverables:**
  - **80%** of students actively explore geographical concepts.
  - **75%** of students improve knowledge of countries and landmarks.

9. Coding and Computer Science

- **Tools & Resources:** Code.org, Tynker
- **Deliverables:**
  - **80%** of students complete coding challenges.
  - **70%** of students create interactive games or projects.

10. Environmental Projects

- **Tools & Resources:** WWF for Kids, Green Schools
- **Deliverables:**
  - **75%** of students participate in environmental sustainability projects.
  - **80%** of students gain an understanding of conservation and sustainability.

Training Module for Educators Deliverables at the End of 3 Years:

1. Introduction to Holistic Education

- **SDG 4: Quality Education**
- **Deliverables:**
  - **90%** of educators trained on integrating digital literacy into teaching.
  - **80%** of educators effectively using free digital tools in lessons.

2. Teaching Digital Literacy

- **SDG 4: Quality Education**
- **Deliverables:**
  - **95%** of educators proficient in basic computer operations and tools.
  - **85%** of educators comfortable with using email for communication.

3. Promoting Digital Citizenship

- **SDG 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure**
- **Deliverables:**
  - **85%** of educators develop lesson plans on responsible internet use.
  - **80%** of educators conduct workshops on online security.

4. Assessment and Evaluation Techniques

- **SDG 4: Quality Education**
- **Deliverables:**
  - **90%** of educators create assessment rubrics for digital literacy skills.
  - **85%** of educators successfully assess students' digital learning.

5. Use of Technology in Classrooms

- **SDG 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure**
- **Deliverables:**
  - **80%** of educators incorporate digital tools in classroom activities.
  - **75%** of educators share examples of digital tool use with peers.
- **Table 1: Beneficiaries**

Primary Beneficiaries	Secondary Beneficiaries

Project Proposal- EmpowerEd for rural government schools in Uttarakhand

Over 768 students in remote villages in Uttarakhand	200 teachers trained for digital literacy
	1536 parents participating in workshops
	Local communities benefiting from improved literacy

R. Project Implementation Plan: Outline the key activities, timelines, and phases involved in implementing the project.

Example:

- **Phase 1: Needs Assessment and Stakeholder Engagement** (Month 1-2)
  - Conduct a needs assessment with local schools and government authorities.
  - Meet with community leaders and parents to introduce the project and gain support.
- **Phase 2: Establishment of Learning Hubs** (Month 3-6)
  - Set up 14 learning hubs in government schools.
  - Equip the hubs with teaching materials, books, and digital learning resources.
- **Phase 3: Teacher Training** (Month 4-7)
  - Select 50 teachers from local schools for training on modern teaching techniques and child-centered learning approaches.
- **Phase 4: Community Engagement & Workshops** (Month 6-8)
  - Conduct workshops for parents to encourage their involvement in their children's learning.
- **Phase 5: Monitoring & Evaluation** (Month 9 onwards)
  - Regular assessment of students' learning outcomes.
  - Feedback and improvement of teaching methods and materials

S. Resources and Budget:

Provide a breakdown of the resources required for the project and a detailed budget estimate:

Sr. No	Line items	1st year	2nd year	3rd year	Total budget
1	**Teching Learning Aid and IEC material**	NALF	NALF		
2	**Renovation and setting up of the learning centers**	NALF	NALF		
3	**Computers- Refurbished computers**	420000	0		420000
4	**Salary for Educators**	960000	960000	1152000	3072000
5	**Salary for MEC officer**	240000	252000	264000	756000
6	**Salary for the Program Director**	300000	300000	300000	900000
7	**External Evaluation**			50000	50000
8	**Rental for office at Haldwani**	60000	60000	60000	180000
9	**Travel and communication**	360000	360000	360000	1080000
10	**Capacity Development of project team**	50000	20000	20000	90000
11	**Total**	2390000	1952000	2206000	6548000
	Misc cost	10000	10000	10000	30000
	Grand total	2400000	1962000	2216000	**6578000**
	Per student cost per year	**260**	**213**	**240**	

Co- funding and resource mobilisation:

- **NALF and Donatekart**
- **Government schools**
- **Other popular crowd funding portals**

T. Sustainability Plan: To ensure the long-term sustainability of the project, we will implement a multi-faceted approach involving financial support and active community engagement:

- **Community Contributions:** Over time, the community will contribute a nominal fee towards the educator's salary, helping cover the operational costs of the learning hubs.
- **Common Service Facility Centres:** Educators will also support the establishment of common service centres in central village locations. These centres will cater to various community needs, creating income opportunities for educators while reducing the need for villagers to travel to cities for essential services.
- **CSR Support:** By the end of three years, we will seek funding from corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives and donations to ensure continued operation and expansion of the project.
- **Community Involvement:** The local community will play an active role in maintaining the learning hubs, organizing parent-teacher meetings, and encouraging volunteer participation in workshops and other activities.
- **Local Activity Clubs:** After three years, we aim to establish local activity clubs, led by educators, to ensure the initiative's continued progress and integration within the community.

U. Monitoring and Evaluation (MEC) indicators:

Key Area	Indicators
Digital Literacy	- Percentage of students proficient in digital skills.
	- Percentage of teachers using digital tools.
	- Number of students completing digital literacy programs.
	- Student engagement with digital platforms.
	- Frequency of technology use for research and problem-solving.
Foundational Literacy (Pre-Primary Focus)	- Percentage of students meeting literacy benchmarks.
	- Progress in reading and writing skills.
	- Parent involvement in literacy activities.
	- Frequency of early literacy assessments.
	- Teacher effectiveness in literacy.
Green School Model	- Percentage of waste reduced/recycled.
	- Energy consumption and reduction.
	- Student and staff participation in sustainability projects.
	- Number of green initiatives implemented.
	- Environmental awareness among students.
After-School Coaching	- Number of students participating in programs.
	- Academic improvement of students.
	- Retention rate in after-school programs.
	- Student attendance in after-school programs.
	- Parent/student feedback on impact.
Career Guidance and Mentoring	- Number of career counselling sessions.
	- Percentage of students receiving mentorship.
	- Student satisfaction with counselling and mentorship.
	- Post-graduation career tracking.
	- Number of industry partnerships for mentoring.
STEAM-based Extracurricular Activities	- Number of STEAM clubs/activities.

	- Student participation rates.
	- Number of STEAM-related projects/competitions.
	- Student feedback on skill development.
	- Teacher engagement in STEAM activities.
Teacher's Training	- Number of professional development hours.
	- Percentage of teachers completing training.
	- Improvement in teaching effectiveness post-training.
	- Teacher retention after training.
	- Implementation of new skills in the classroom.
Parental Engagement	- Number of parent-teacher meetings.
	- Parent attendance at school events.
	- Number of parents volunteering at school.
	- Feedback on school communication and involvement.
	- Parental involvement in student learning.

These indicators will be further refined by the hired team for comprehensive monitoring and assessment.

Evaluation Methods:
The evaluation process will include periodic surveys, along with feedback gathered from students, parents, and teachers. Monitoring visits will also be conducted to track progress. Formal assessments will be carried out at the beginning and end of the project to measure progress and outcomes.

Internal Annual Review and External Evaluation:
An internal review will be conducted annually to assess progress. Additionally, an external evaluation will take place at the end of the three-year period to evaluate the overall outcomes and effectiveness of the project.

V.Risk Management and Mitigation Strategies presented in a matrix form

Risk	Mitigation Strategy
1. Delay in receiving government approvals for learning hubs	Engage early with local education authorities and government representatives. Schedule regular follow-ups and prepare necessary documentation to expedite approvals.
2. Low community participation	Build strong relationships with community leaders. Conduct engagement activities (informational sessions, cultural events). Offer incentives like recognition for participation.
3. Inadequate teacher training and capacity building	Implement a robust professional development program (workshops, training, peer learning). Partner with local experts and monitor progress through evaluations and feedback.
4. Technology-related challenges	Conduct technology assessments. Provide ongoing technical support. Integrate digital literacy into the curriculum with regular workshops for students and teachers.
5. Insufficient funding and resources	Secure funding through grants, CSR contributions, and community contributions. Diversify funding sources (local businesses, government programs, international NGOs). Monitor financial resources.

Risk	Mitigation Strategy
6. Resistance to new teaching methodologies	Engage teachers and school leaders early, emphasizing benefits. Offer support, mentoring, and opportunities to voice concerns. Foster a collaborative, experimental teaching environment.
7. Inadequate monitoring and evaluation systems	Develop a clear M&E framework with SMART indicators. Conduct periodic assessments and collect feedback from teachers, parents, and students. Use digital tools for real-time data.
8. Low student retention in after-school programs	Tailor after-school programs to students' needs and interests. Involve parents, seek their input, and ensure communication about the benefits. Offer engaging activities.
9. Limited long-term community ownership and project sustainability	Increase community involvement in hub operations by training local educators and leaders. Promote local entrepreneurship and create income-generating activities for sustainability.
10. Political or social instability in the region	Stay informed on local political and social conditions. Establish contingency plans to adapt to disruptions. Collaborate with authorities to ensure the safety and stability of learning environments.

This matrix format provides a clear and concise overview of the risks and the strategies in place to mitigate them.

Conclusion: Project Empower Ed represents a transformative opportunity to reshape the educational landscape of rural Uttarakhand. By establishing Learning Hubs and focusing on building strong foundational education, we are addressing the immediate needs of underserved communities while also setting the stage for long-term, sustainable development. This initiative not only responds to the current gaps in primary and pre-primary education but also empowers the next generation with the skills needed to thrive in an increasingly digital world.

With your support, we can expand this vision to more schools across the Himalayan region, impacting over 1,000 students and creating a ripple effect of positive change for years to come. Together, we can build a brighter, more equitable future for Uttarakhand's rural communities, laying the groundwork for the success of future generations.

Ways to Donate & Contact Information:

- **Bank Transfer:** Contact us for details.
  Account: 924010074602816, New Age Learning Foundation, IFSC: UTIB000032
- **Paytm:** 8469845044
- **Cheque:** Paromita Sarkar, Rajanigandha Annexe, Surabhi Creation, Sanjay Colony, Haldwani, Uttarakhand, Pin: 263139
- **Email:** paromita@nalfoundation.org.
- **Phone:** 8469845044
- **Website:** www.nalfoundation.org

Empowering villages leads to sustainable and resilient cities, not the other way around. The future of India is rooted in its villages. By strengthening our villages, we are shaping a stronger, more resilient India. Education

is the cornerstone of development, and we are dedicated to transforming the educational model in the Himalayas. Our efforts aim to be a catalyst for lasting change, paving the way for future generations to thrive.

- Paromita Sarkar, Founder & CEO, New Age Learning Foundation, Uttarakhand.

Thank you for your generosity and support!