



December 2022 Featured Project

Holistic interventions in support of girls' education in India



TOGETHER WOMEN RISE

Introducing Ek Tara

School Support Project for Adolescent Girls (Kolkata, West Bengal, India)

The mission of Ek Tara is to **educate**, **engage**, and **empower** girls and women from marginalized, urban, low-income settlements to become agents of change.



About India

- Population of almost 1.4 billion; 360 million live in squalid conditions, among the most impoverished in the world
- Low-income settlements are home to millions
- Rampant discrimination against women and girls
- Kolkata: second largest city in India and the primary business, commercial, and financial hub of East India



Life challenges for women in India

- Girls in low-income settlements are relegated to the bottom of society with nearly no rights or choices
- Challenges include early child marriage, poor health and hygiene conditions, class discrimination, general lack of safety
- Girls lack quality, accessible schools, access to proper nutrition, and safe, clean spaces
- Drop-out rate for girls as high as 57% in some areas
- Girls are at risk for early pregnancy, trafficking, violence, and poverty



The Project

Helps children from low-income settlements complete secondary level of education so they can enroll in college or vocational programs and ultimately get vocational jobs

- Monitoring of regular attendance in school, academic performance, and non-academic engagement including health, hygiene, and meals
- Enrollment in leading schools based on their academic competencies
- Growth plan including access to co-curricular activities, leadership training, participation in events and activities to expand knowledge and worldview
- Parental participation and capacity building

The Project

Holistic program interventions begin early and include

- social skills
- academic skills
- sports
- creative arts
- health and wellbeing
- parental engagement

They are designed to build a supportive community invested in the long-term academic goals for girls, with follow-through on tertiary level education and job attainment.

DIRECT IMPACT: 80; INDIRECT IMPACT: 750

Budget

Item	Description	Cost
School Fees	Monthly fees, registration, computer class fee, exam fees and other school costs	\$17,550
Books	Textbooks, workbooks, copies, stationery items	\$6,933
Transportation	Daily cost of transportation to and from school/cost of online education (either will be supported)	\$10,240
Staff	Project coordinator, homework support teachers, co-curricular activity teachers (music, art, martial arts)	\$10,400
Leadership Training	Monthly workshops for students (leadership development, including public speaking and problem solving)	\$1,600
Health/Hygiene, Parent Capacity Building	Quarterly health checks, periodic health and hygiene kits, parent capacity building	\$1,337
Administrative Costs	Portion of electricity, rent, and overhead	\$1,138
TOTAL		\$49,198

About Ek Tara

- Founded in 2011 by Vinita Saraf and Namrata Sureka
- Has reached more than 40,000 children in low-income settlements in partnership with approximately 70 organizations, schools, and individuals across India
- Has worked with nearly 1,000 families and impacted the lives of more than 5,000 individuals through direct and indirect programs
- In the past 10 years, 98 percent of girls have graduated from Ek Tara projects ranging from primary to secondary levels of education
- Girls develop strong academic foundation leading them to secure positions in formal schools
- Marked improvements noted in Foundational Literacy and Numeracy and overall classroom performance



Share your thoughts

1. How do you think this project can bolster gender equality in the community and beyond?
2. How do you think the value placed on keeping girls in school, along with associated parent capacity building, can make a generational impact on participating families?
3. Girls can get connected to Ek Tara as young as 3 years old. Do you think this approach evens the playing field for them more than intervening when they are adolescents? Why or why not?



