



Shishur Sevay

"Empowering the Most Vulnerable"

Project Proposal for Asha for Education, Colorado Chapter, for the year 2017-18

Date: 10/2/17

About your organization:

1. Name of the organization: Childlife Preserve Shishur Sevay.

2. Objectives of the organization/group: To protect orphans and abandoned children, including those having differing abilities and disabilities, by providing a safe environment where they will be sheltered, nurtured, and educated in ways that build competence, confidence, independence and leadership.

3. Affiliations. Please give reasons if any of these are religious and/or political: Shishur Sevay does not have any religious or political affiliation.

4. Community development activities, if any (apart from education).

-We have frequently taken part in various awareness programmes organised by different NGOs and disability groups over the years.

-Our presence in the community has raised awareness about issues related to disability. We have raised our voice against inaccessibility of local parks.

-We buy all our supplies (food, medicines etc.) locally, and that was a deliberate decision, to contribute to the local economy. Most of our staff members are also from nearby.

-We have helped out at another orphanage as community service.

5. Brief description of previous projects (including funding sources and amounts).

Shishur Sevay is home for 13 orphan girls and a young mother and her daughter. The children live at Shishur Sevay where all their needs (education, food, material needs, health care etc.) are met. Shishur Sevay provides a space for the children to feel secure, protected, and sheltered. We also stress health and hygiene, nutrition and psychosocial care, where opportunities for their developmental milestones can be achieved. Shishur Sevay is a "full-service" home.

Since December 2013 we started our inclusive school, Ichche Dana Inclusive Learning Center, to meet the educational needs of the abled and differently abled children of Shishur Sevay.

CHILDLIFE PRESERVE SHISHUR SEVAY

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Email: info@shishursevay.org
Website: www.shishursevay.org
Blog: www.shishursevay.com
Holding 80G in Perpetuity and FCRA

Reg. West Bengal Societies Act XXVI of 1961 Reg. AS/107263 of 2006-2007
Awarded Guidestar India Gold Seal 2017



In the year 2016-17 till date grants for expenses incurred in running Shishur Sevay (including Ichche Dana Learning Center) were received from:

1. Asha for Education, Delaware chapter: ₹ 2,22,000
2. Asha for Education, Cornell Chapter: ₹ 3,34,000
3. Friends of Shishur Sevay (The US non-profit): ₹ 4,25,848
4. Children's Hope India: ₹ 5,00,846.77
5. Peerless General Finance and Investment Company Ltd.: ₹2,91,000
6. Dr. Michelle Harrison and other individual donors.

Dr. Michelle Harrison, the founder, continues to be the biggest donor. She fills in whatever is the shortfall after fundraising from grants. We have to decrease our dependence on her funds as they are not sustainable long term.

6. Other pertinent information (annual report and/or budget, newspapers clips etc.)

Attachments:

-A copy of our budget has been attached.

-A video of Ganga using the walker in the neighbourhood is attached with the email.

-Video of presentations that the children do. This video is from earlier (2014) and we have moved ahead in terms of some of the technology, we don't have an updated video yet but this still gives a good sense of what the presentations are like.

-A photo update of activities in 2015-16 and 2016-2017(till date)

-We got certified with the Advance Level – GuideStar India Gold Seal for the year 2017, having gone through the due diligence process for transparency and public accountability. The Gold Seal is attached.

Links of interest:

-We have a website which has a lot of information about us: www.shishursevay.org. The website also has some of our official documents including organizational profile, the child protection policy, personnel policy and the income expenditure for the financial year 2013-14 to 2015-16.

-Dr. Harrison maintains a blog on life at Shishur Sevay at www.shishursevay.com.

-We also have an active [facebook](#) and twitter page which have regular updates.

-In 2015 the Shishur Sevay Inclusive dance group performed an inclusive dance drama at Children's Little Theater. Dr. Michelle Harrison, Shishur Sevay's founder, had written a children's mythical story which she adapted as a dance drama. The backdrops used were projections of paintings that one of our talented girls had made. Most of the costumes were also made by the children and staff of Shishur Sevay. Here is a link to the performance:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C1OjCSq9wQA>.

Our youngest, four year old, performing as a part of a group dance at her dance school, Mamata Shankar's Udayan Kala Kendra on 1/2/2017:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wfy3WsKoHyA>

Five of the girls, in their 5th year of studying dance at Udayan, performing a dance they choreographed themselves, for Saraswati Pujo, at their dance school, Mamata Shankar's Udayan KalaKendra: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JkwfRVW6Npg>

More links to other performances by the children can also be found in our youtube channel.

-Dr. Harrison's blog piece on our experience in the local parks:

<https://shishursevay.com/2015/12/14/cats-welcome-in-the-park-ganga-not-welcome/>

-Dr. Harrison's talk at the "Empowering Disabled Persons with Accessible & Assistive Technology" conference organized by ASSOCHAM, in Delhi:

<https://shishursevay.com/2016/02/23/to-not-feel-alone-in-the-universe/>

-A link to our webpage with links to newspaper/webzine articles on Shishur Sevay/Dr.

Harrison: <http://www.shishursevay.org/news-media/#1483020330706-c7f93c12-2f9f>

About your project area:

7. List and location of school(s) operated by your group in the project area.

Shishur Sevay, including Ichche Dana Inclusive Learning Center, has only one location:

The registered office and correspondence address is

Shishur Sevay

17/2/7 Sahapur Main Rd.,

Kolkata, 700038

This is the address used for the purpose of all communications.

Shishur Sevay is where they live and study.

8. Existing drinking water, electricity and health facilities (include information about nearest doctor/hospital).

An aquaguard water filter is used to filter water that is used for drinking and cooking.

Shishur Sevay has electricity. Fire extinguishers and shock proof electrical systems with circuit breakers are installed. There is also a generator for back up.

Dr. Harrison has many years of experience in OB/GYN, family medicine and Psychiatry.

Although she doesn't practice here, she lives with the kids at Shishur Sevay, so she is always around and her years of experience has been very useful. We do have a general physician to whom the children are taken when they fall ill, which is very rare. Given the level of nutrition and hygiene the children are very healthy and rarely fall sick. Whenever the children have

required a consultation or hospitalization, they have been taken to very reputed hospitals, including Institute of Neuro Sciences, Calcutta Medical and Research Institute (CMRI) and Medica Super Specialty Hospital, Apollo, Mon Psychiatric Nursing Home, SEVAC mental Health & Human Rights Resource Center.

9. Details of children enrolled in your school(s): Male 0 Female 15 Age range 4-27 (1 adult) Years. The 27year old is the mother of the 4 year old.

10. Average distance the children travel to attend your school. NA

11. Details of the local community. (primary occupation/average annual income/male and female literacy rate/source of this information).

NA

12. Details of support you receive through governmental education programmes (such as DPEP etc.)

We do not plan to apply for funds from the government, because receiving funds from them interferes with our freedom to function according to our purposes. We do not want to become a warehouse because then we can't care for the children properly. During the early years of Shishur Sevay the government tried to force us into taking children who were not orphans. We were not in a position financially or logistically to take more children. If we are funded by the government they would force us into these situations where refusal would not be an option.

13. Details of the staff employed at your school(s): no. of teachers, minimum qualifications etc.

There are 11 teachers; 2 full-time (>35hrs/week each), 4 part-time (<35 hrs/week each), and 5 tutors/lessons(<9 hrs/week conducting 1-3 classes/week each). Apart from teachers for academic subjects and Special Educator this includes art, dance & tabla teachers and physiotherapy and rehab. The reason for the high student to teacher ratio is that the individual needs and academic level of the children vary a lot and the children with disabilities require more one on one interaction. Some teachers are college graduates while some have a Masters degree or above. The minimum qualification among the teachers is Secondary (with some additional diploma/degree/experience in their relevant fields). Apart from teachers on Shishur Sevay Payroll we have two regular volunteer teachers. One of them is a lecturer and Graduate Coordinator at the Civil Engineering Department at Morgan State University, Maryland who does a spoken English class with the children and also teaches math to one of the students preparing for National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS), using an online video conferencing site, gotomeeting. Another volunteer who is a PhD in Political Science comes on Sundays and talks to the girls about human rights and other issues.

14. Existing infrastructure facilities (own building, toilets, playground, library, teaching aids etc.)

Shishur Sevay is very well equipped. The building is owned by Shishur Sevay. There are enough toilets, there is a small backyard which has been paved so that wheelchairs could be taken out easily. In the future we would like to be in a place which has a larger play area.

Total area is 1500 sq. ft. and that includes living, school and office space. What is classroom and feeding space during the day becomes sleeping space at night and mats are rolled out for sleeping.

The ground floor of Shishur Sevay has been made accessible, by building ramps. The bathrooms have also been made accessible.

There are a lot of books, both reference and story books.

Various teaching aids are used for the girls' education. Assistive computer hardware and software is used for some of the children with disabilities. The Tobii PCEyeGo that uses an eye tracker interface for using the computer, including an assistive communication software is being used for two of the children with cerebral palsy. For one of the girls this was life changing because she is unable to speak but really wants to communicate with everyone around. Assistive apps on ipads have been effective for communication and learning for many of the girls. Many other hands-on teaching aids are also used.

Shishur Sevay aims to be cutting edge. We are constantly researching new assistive technologies in order to be state-of-the-art in a community that is lagging behind.

15. Expansion plans for the future.

Some of the children can never live on their own. We will have to extend our scope of service to lifetime care as they grow. We have developed plans ranging from continuation of what we are doing now to a multi-unit inclusive housing and rehabilitation facility, but these are long term vision and also require large funding.

Our basic aim is to increase reach, to use our areas of expertise to assist in the development of other such group homes as a means of non-institutional care of orphans and those with disabilities.

Our Ichche Dana Inclusive School serves only our children, but we would like to expand it to the community in the future.

Research and Training will be central to broadening our reach in the community and through our research participation with Vanderbilt, to the wider social service and education community.

First and foremost though is increasing our Fundraising efforts and insuring the security of the girls for whom we carry responsibility.

16. Number of other schools in the project area and the range of classes offered by them.

There are a few public and private schools, some offering classes up to Higher Secondary level. There are very few schools for children with special needs or regular schools that practice real inclusion. We had the girls enrolled in government and private schools at various times but they faced harassment as orphans and they stopped trying to learn and do well.

17. Differences in the program provided at your school(s) to other schools in the project area.

Shishur Sevay is a successful, innovative, and replicable model of a non-institutional inclusive Home for lost and abandoned girls, some with profound disabilities. Among our 15 children are the following conditions:

Cerebral Palsy with Spastic Quadriplegia....Autism... Seizure disorders... Visual impairment... Hearing loss,... Cognitive impairment... Down Syndrome... Microcephaly... Stroke, Post Meningitis and Encephalitis, Mental Health Difficulties: Depression..., Psychosis... Bipolar Disease...Impulsive Behavior Disorders, Sexual Aggression, Eating Disorders, Suicidal behavior...PTSD...Delayed Development. They suffered with neglect, hopelessness, anger, and fear.

Shishur Sevay is just for orphan girls, although we see our learning as being applicable to other children over time. Shishur Sevay is different from other homes or orphanages in the level of intensity of the teaching and the expectation of adherence to standards of formal schooling. Many formal schools also stick to a system of memorization and has very harsh learning environments. At Shishur Sevay the stress is on understanding concepts and gaining knowledge in an environment that is friendly and enabling.

Most of the girls are late learners which presents a new set of challenges for their education. The supportive environment with a more hands-on learning has had a positive impact on their learning. They are much more curious and they also feel safe to ask questions.

Our experience with schools for disabled in the area has not been good. The children have faced discrimination as orphans, or have been seen as too disabled for schools. A school specifically built for mentally challenged children is fully accessible but won't take children in wheelchairs.

The practice of inclusion is gathering more and more importance in the west. Although it has begun in rudimentary forms here as well there are very few places that practice real inclusion. Inclusion is the keystone of Shishur Sevay

About the project:

18. Objectives of the project: short term (1-2 years) and long term (3-5 years)

In the near future we just want to make sure that we make good progress with the children who are here right now. We want to focus on the education of the girls. With the setting up of Ichche Dana Learning Center that is being taken care of. Three of them are preparing for their secondary level exams through NIOS and two out of them were recently registered with NIOS. The third would need more time to prepare for the exam but she is also getting intense training in art because she is really talented. She has already worked on illustrating two stories, one a short children's story written by Dr. Harrison and another one, a fairytale, she wrote herself. For two of the girls who are not academically inclined and have some learning disabilities we are training them to be assistants to special educators and in the care of differently-abled children. One of the girls who was with us but had been a big behavioural problem was back with the government but she turned around and is back with us with a new vigour to learn and do something in life. She has expressed an interest in doing an office job so we are in the process of figuring out a plan for her to be able to do that. As of now she is getting regular classes to get her literacy level up, she is a determined learner.

For the children with disabilities we want to expand the possibility of use of assistive apps and other technologies for them. We have acquired two Tobii PCEyeGo eye tracker. Two of the girls are learning to use it as an interface to use the computer and the communication

software. It will take a long time to be adept at it but they have already been using it to express some of their needs and communicating their feelings. They have also been using the eye tracker for their presentations.

In the long term we hope to be a resource, based on our experience, for other children, facing similar problems.

The girls have a wide range of abilities and disabilities and these 10 years of experience have helped us figure out some of what works and what doesn't work with different individuals with different needs. We have been working on developing individualized tracks for each of the girls and having the benefit of hindsight will not only help improve the future prospects of our girls but also help other children with similar problems.

Shishur Sevay is one of the leading organizations in Kolkata practicing inclusive living and education, where all children, regardless of their abilities and disabilities, participate in activities at home and in the community. Despite reservations from many quarters, including some in the government, we have demonstrated that inclusion has many advantages and works really well for all involved individuals. We really hope that the success of inclusion in Shishur Sevay will serve as a model for a more inclusive society and for other group homes. Shishur Sevay is raising the bar in the use of assistive technology for children with disabilities, not just for general communication but for education as well.

We were the subject of a study out of Vanderbilt University, led by Anjali Forber Pratt, PhD an Assistant Professor at the Department of Human & Organizational Development, on inclusive living and education at Shishur Sevay. She was in Shishur Sevay in December 2015 to conduct her research. This is what she had to say: *"Having a foundation of inclusion that permeates social interactions, learning, living and recreation is part of what makes Shishur Sevay unique. They are an inclusive school in a part of the world where many may think would be impossible."* in "An International Case Study Illustrating Disability Inclusion in Action" at the Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association Denver August 2016

19. Name, experience and education of the Project Director and others involved in the project from your group.

Dr Michelle Harrison, the Founder and Secretary, is a doctor, writer and educator. She has many years of experience in obstetrics, gynaecology and psychiatry. She was a pioneer in rural health in the US and the first part-time resident in obstetrics and gynaecology, in the US. Her academic associations included Harvard Medical School, Kennedy School of Government, University of Pittsburgh, Tufts University and Robert Wood Johnson Medical School. Before retirement, she was worldwide director of Medical Affairs with Johnson and Johnson in their Consumer Division, and then Executive Director of the Johnson & Johnson Institute for Children, an initiative of Corporate Social Responsibility. She lives at Shishur Sevay, with the children and is involved in all aspects of the functioning of the organization.

Mrs. Seema Gupta, the Vice President, retired as a Joint Registrar at Kolkata High Court since then has been very involved in the children's daily lives. She has also been teaching the girls Bengali.

Minu Ghosh, joined Shishur Sevay as the Associate Director in February 2016. With more than two decades of experience in NGOs and an expertise in fundraising & administration, she has been a valuable addition to Shishur Sevay.

Purba Rudra, Treasurer and Academic Director, has a PhD from Rutgers University. She oversees Ichche Dana Learning Center. Teaches classes, and manages the advanced communication technologies.

20. Details of planned operation of the project (methodology of implementation etc.)

Objective 1: Students will demonstrate growth in basic academic skills, reading, writing, and math.

Activities:

- Classroom teaching with co-teaching – Some require individual teachers, and often one class will have two teachers. One teacher is always needed just for those with disabilities.
- Online K5 teaching – An online curriculum of English and Math from US, that students use independently, and where regular assessments of progress and difficulties are given.
- Using the online Khan Academy sessions.
- WIDGIT symbol language for non readers – specialized software from UK that “speaks” and gives symbols (pictures) of meaning of words.
- Tobii Eye Tracker and eye pointing for assistive communication – One of the most advanced technology we use now with two students who cannot speak or use hands to communicate.
- Use of computers and AV materials. Students use internet for research and projector for presentations.
- Field trips - Like the trip to Botanical Gardens and mapping out origins of plants in different areas of India.
- Group and individual projects – Students do regular interest based projects and presentations, sometimes each on their own, other times in small groups.
- Preparation for the National Institute of Open Schooling exams.

Objective 2: The functional abilities and disabilities of students will be addressed with rehabilitation, adaptation, and accommodation.

Activities:

- Outdoor activities – Intentional play is more effective in improving motor skills than just “exercising” without the motivation or automatic muscles that are used in play.
- Physiotherapy – This is done in the form of daily massage, yoga, standing boxes, walkers, and games.
- Dance and Movement Class –Innovative program developed by Shishur Sevay for dance that involves the abled and those with disabilities to dance as a group.
- Participation in crafts – for fun and for development of fine motor skills
- Communication Tech – a series of devices, iPad usage, and now Eye Tracking to facilitate communications
- Inclusive classes – mixing of abled and those with disabilities has benefits to both groups
- Walkers -used for exercise, and to be able to be upright, and have some ability to move where they want to.
- Games and Play – recreation, purposeful motion, good for gross motor development and sense of belonging.

Objective 3: Achieve inclusion in the broadest context throughout Shishur Sevay for students, teachers, and staff

Activities:

- Mixed classes - abled and disabled working together where appropriate
- Inclusive dance
- Trips – For recreation, visits to places with activities for abled and disabled. Recreation, experience being away from home, in different environments. Requires much planning and sufficient vehicles as wheelchairs and other equipment must also be transported, and with special care.
- Communication technology and aids – facilitates communication
- Adaptive classrooms and facilities for students, teachers, and staff
- Inclusive in times of play, prayer times, TV, student meetings.

Objective 4: Develop students' capabilities for independence.

Activities:

- Vocational training as assistant to special educators – Older girls with academic limitations are being trained by us as Assistants to Special Educators.
- Tutor in art tech/theory – Girl who is artistically gifted has an artist-tutor three times a week for technology and theory. She is producing a book of a fairy tale she wrote and illustrated.
- Preparation for NIOS exam
- Home traditions, sewing, cleaning, child care – The girls have regular responsibilities.
- Career counseling – Learning is best when people can pursue areas of interest.
- Cultural arts and family rituals – Five of the big girls have been studying dance at Mamata Shankar's Udayan. The youngest one also joined recently; Ichche Dana arranges for girls to attend many art functions. In the home, the traditional Pujas and celebrations are conducted. Children also take part in family rituals of staff and others who have become part of their “extended family.”

Objective 5:Capacity building of school staff

Activities:

- Regular seminars for teachers – Regular Teacher's meetings are held.
- Consultations with experts abroad by video conferencing – Consultants, experts in the US, and in Australia have visited and taught the teachers and are available for consultations as needed.
- Participation in research – Vanderbilt University in the US conducted research with Ichche Dana as a unique example of inclusive education. There are more plans for research.
- Reviews of news and new ideas in Education, Inclusion, and Disability – Teachers regularly review and discuss new ideas and approaches in education.

Objective 6: Provide culturally competent experiences reflective of Indian culture, values and identity.

Activities:

- Participate in national and local holidays.
- Advocate for rights of those with disabilities – take part in public events related to disabilities.
- Participate in family rituals of friends and neighbors, and celebrate at home
- Study traditional Indian dance and music
- Understand history of India and West Bengal. – by curriculum, visits to museums, including State Archeological Museum in Behala.

- Bengali studies and language as well as English in the School. – curriculum in Bengali as well as English. First five years was focus on Bengali.
- Classes in Human Rights, Children’s Rights, Girls’ Rights in India – Volunteer political scientist has come weekly for last five years meeting with the girls about rights, government structures and political processes.

21. Brief description of the type of education provided and teaching techniques employed (syllabus,vocational training etc.)

Inclusive & Need Based Education:
(also refer to the response to the previous question)

We have a huge variety of needs at Shishur Sevay, because of the huge range of abilities and disabilities. The biggest challenge has been to form a plan for each and every individual especially when formal schools have not worked for them. In the outside schools they were facing discrimination, were learning little, and giving up with all the unnecessary pressure and fear. In December 2013 we started Ichche Dana Learning Center for the girls at Shishur Sevay. Ichche Dana is an inclusive school providing a supportive environment with cutting edge technology and creative teaching methods.

-Teaching methods that take the pressure off while letting curiosity to prosper are used. We are constantly learning, adjusting and upgrading our methods according to the needs of the children. The children often do presentations on trips they have been on and once we decided that we wouldn’t have that requirement and the trip will be for pure fun. We took the children to Mondormani, a sea beach, and there they themselves expressed interest in trying to get salt from sea water, which they themselves collected in a bottle and brought back home. Back at Shishur Sevay the learnt about evaporation condensation and also saw how salt deposits were left behind in the pan.

-The girls do a formal presentation once a month on whatever they are learning in class or on some event or trip they went on. This has helped them grow in confidence while learning the skill of presenting their ideas in front of an audience.

-Two of the girls with cerebral palsy are learning to use Tobii PCEyeGo, an eye tracker technology, for communicating and participating in class. It will take some time for them to become adept at using it but they are already using it to communicate some of their needs and feelings and also to answer some questions in class. We acquired a second tobii in 2016 and this would help the two children eventually not only communicate with us more but also with each other

-We try to link their interests and strengths and build it into their learning and literacy. One of the girls is really good at art and is getting art classes from an artist who comes three times a week at Shishur Sevay. She also attends his art academy, Aankiye. She has worked on illustrating one of Dr. Harrison's mythical children's story which has also been made into a dance drama. She has also written a fairytale and illustrated it herself. We have plans of publishing both the illustrated stories.

-Two of the girls, who are not very academically inclined, are getting trained to be assistants to special educators and in the care of children with disabilities. We plan to create a certificate program for this purpose as well. We see potential for employment in it.

-One of the girls with some learning disability finds it difficult to remember alphabets but she does really well with pictures. She has used Widgit, a software used for assistive communication that uses symbols and pictures.

-Assistive apps on iPads are used which help in improving cognitive and fine motor skills.

-We have an inclusive dance and movement program three times a week and singing and tabla classes twice a week.

-Five of the big girls are in their fifth year at Udayan, a dance academy started by famous dancer Mamata Shankar, once a week. Our four year old also started at Udayan in 2016.

22. Parental involvement in school operations (setting school syllabus etc.)

NA

23. Future education/employment possibilities of children in your school(s) and the related involvement of your group.

Two of the girls are academically inclined and we hope they will go on to attend college. For one of the girls who is interested in art we hope she will finish her school through NIOS with art as a subject and could go on to become an artist and an art teacher. For the big girls who are not academically inclined, they are being trained to help teachers for special needs children and we will start to have them in the office helping out in various chores. For the girl who is back in our care and wants to eventually do an office job we'll find avenues for her and train her accordingly. Our English teacher also has a lot of experience in training people with diction and proper presentation and other soft skill and he has been working with the children in improving their pronunciation and presentation. He also teaches them music and has been very creative in mixing ideas and helping them improve their reading, comprehension and giving them skills that would help them in the future with interviews and in their work environment in general.

The children with severe disabilities would never be independent, because they need help even with basic needs like eating and cleaning themselves. The plan is to make sure that there are people to take care of them and meet their needs, while improving their communication skills.

For two of the children with cerebral palsy we are hoping that with time their ability to use assistive software and applications to communicate would improve. One of them is the most eager, among the girls, to learn. Given her enthusiasm the possibilities are large, but there are immense challenges and Shishur Sevay would provide whatever support possible to make the most of the opportunities.

24. Source of your motivation to be involved in the project.

Dr. Michelle Harrison is a doctor, educator, and writer but first and foremost she is a mother. In 1984 she adopted a baby girl from Kolkata and brought her up in the US. She came to India in 2000 to reconnect with her daughters roots.

In her long medical career in obstetrics, gynaecology and psychiatry, in the US, she has trained with pioneers and been a pioneer herself in many fields. Her academic associations include a long list of top medical schools in the US. She has worked as the Director of Medical Affairs with Johnson and Johnson in their consumer division and then Executive Director of the Johnson & Johnson Institute for Children, an initiative of their Corporate Social Responsibility.

Dr. Harrison was often unsure whether the philanthropic money was going to where it was intended. She had also wondered what happens to the orphans who are not adopted. She wanted to show that if she could give them some of the opportunities that she could give her daughter in the US, while being rooted in their heritage, they would flourish. She lives with the kids and is totally committed to the cause. She is also building a team that shares her vision and is prepared to take over if necessary. She is creating a strong infrastructure for a strong and sustainable organization.

25. Funds required and duration. Itemized description of proposed use of funds (please provide a budget).

Please see attached budget.

26. Amount requested from Asha and details of proposed use (Item/Amount/One time-or-Annual/Duration).

Please see attached budget . Budget heads requested from Asha marked in yellow.

27. Other sources of funds for the project. Please specify any usage restrictions on these funds.

Check answer number five.

28. Other organizations which have been approached with the same project proposal.

We haven't approached them this year yet but will be sending it to them
Asha for Education, Cornell
Asha for Education, Delaware.

29. Details of how you plan to sustain the project in the long term.

The aim is to diversify our funding and build a strong and dedicated donor base here and abroad. As for "sustainability" in terms of generating income within the program, we do not see that happening as we are providing services to children without resources. Friends of Shishur Sevay, a 501 (c) (3) organization, was established in 2012 to help with fundraising in the US. We are slowly beginning to expand our Indian donor base.

We do have a plan to make handicrafts and clothing items with handprints and artwork done by the girls (including the differently abled children) but that will be a small scale project, not something that could sustain us.

Suggested supplementary details:

30. Attendance records with the names of children and their parents. Please include the level of education of parents.

The girls all live here.

Your comments (optional):

Do you have any suggestions on how Asha can be a positive influence in changing the education scenario in India?

Shishur Sevay represents a small variety of the conditions in children that can go unaddressed due to a complicated mix of political apathy, lack of awareness and financial constraints in India. The same children would have had access to better facilities and teaching resources in the US as compared to here. The facilities here in India need more money and increased exchange of ideas and advancement in technology. The core of Asha is providing financial support, which is much needed, but they can also get more involved with projects to improve access to other resources and realising that just 'uplifting' the children to a minimum level of existence should not be the acceptable norm when they can do much better.

Asha's support of right to education, and the belief that poor and disenfranchised children can succeed is critical for the social and cultural changes to improve opportunities.