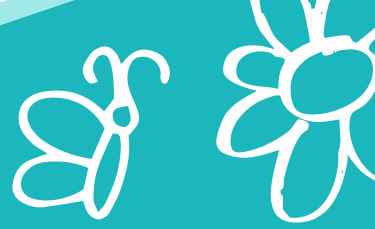
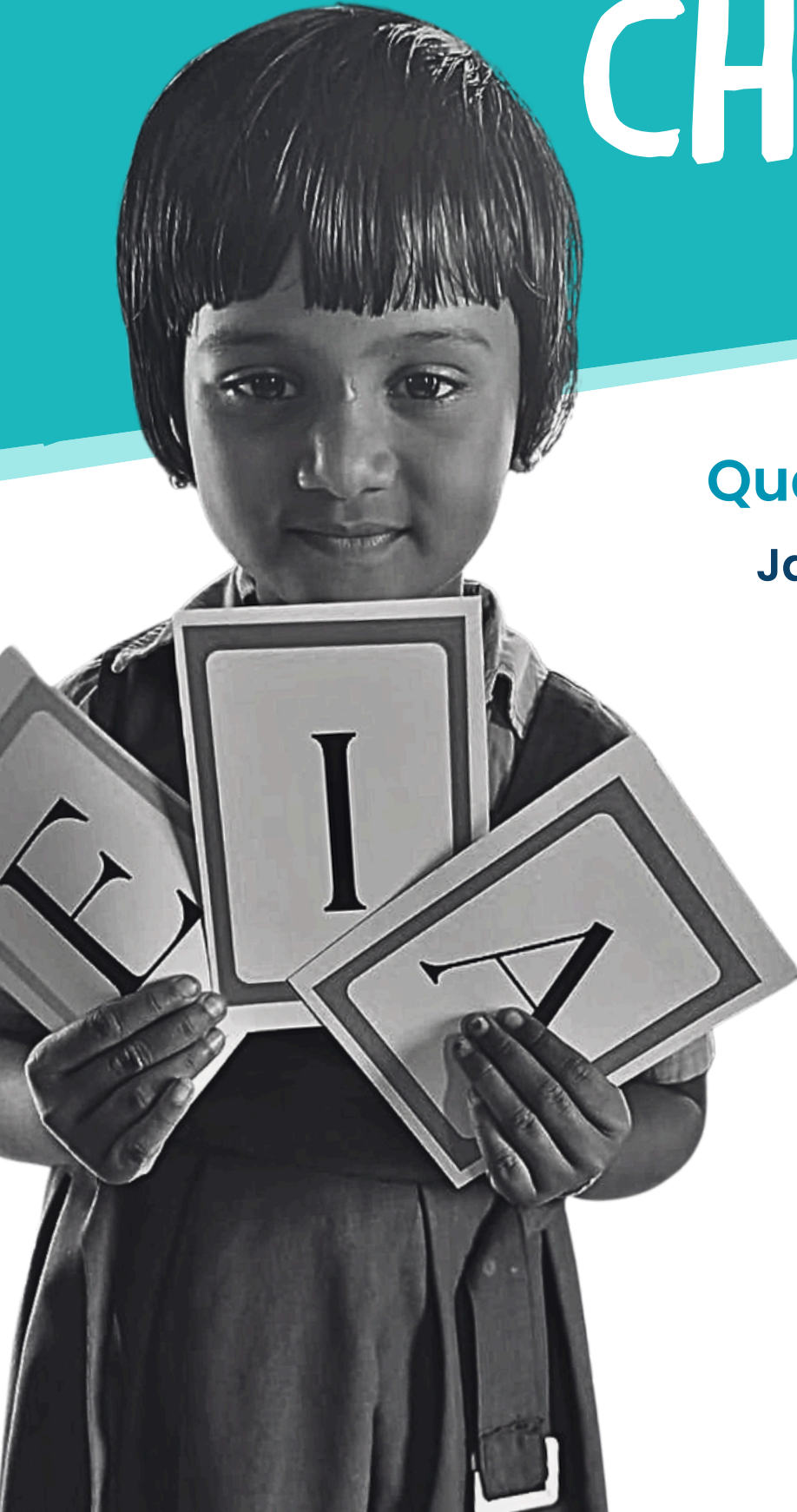




Antahin Abha
FOUNDATION



FOOTPRINTS OF CHANGE



Quarterly Newsletter

January - March, 2026



The first five
years shape
the next fifty.

We can't
afford to get
them wrong.





NOTES FROM THE FIELD



The auto rickshaw ride from Lakshmikantapur station to our field office in Milanmore, Dakshin Raypur, offers, in many ways, a parallel to the early childhood education infrastructure that we went to visit. There are a fair number of bumps, but there are also moments of incredible hope and beauty – just like the sudden appearance of lush fields during the auto ride or shrubs of bright wildflowers that do not care for tending.

The lines between home and school are often blurred here. A teacher's toddler son sits in class with older students, a mother takes a quick peek into her daughter's class on her way back from the fields. Early childhood education in south Bengal is fluid, like the rivers that dot the landscape.

We went to get a closer look at the Shishu Shiksha Kendra (SSK) ecosystem so that our program is able to address not only their specific challenges but also deliver our content in the most effective way. For the many gaps in infrastructure and resources that we encountered, we also saw first-hand how the complexion of a classroom changed when an activity was conducted by our team. As the SSK program gets ready to roll, we are sure of one thing – some of our youngest learners will find new outlets for their curiosity, and their resource-strapped teachers will get help where they need it the most.

– **Sreyashi Dastidar**
Newsletter editor





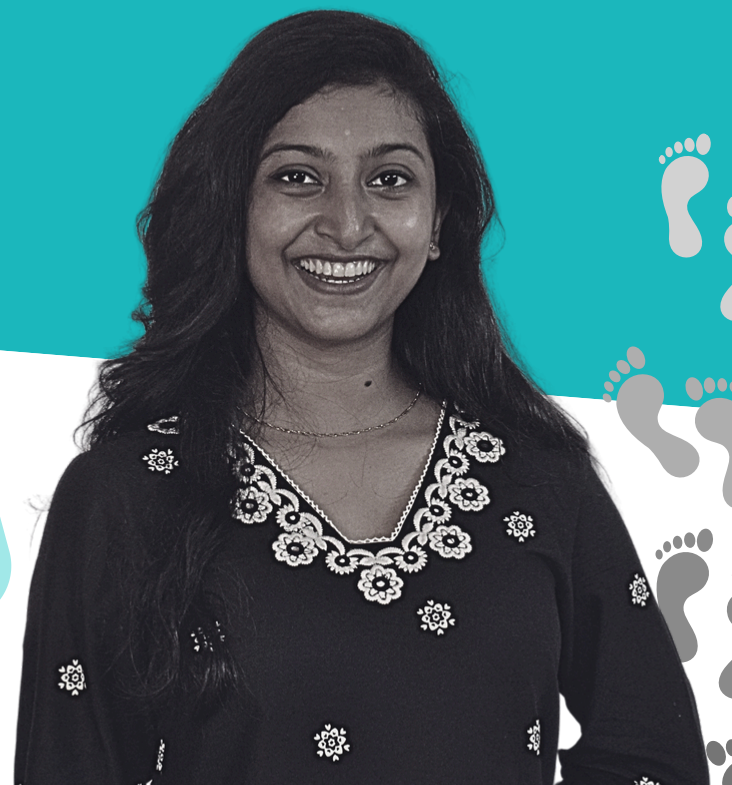
LESSONS ALONG THE WAY

If there's one lesson that working in the field has taught me, it is the importance of staying flexible while not losing focus of the end goal. No matter how well a plan is designed, real classroom contexts, student responses, and on-ground challenges often require constant adjustment.

A key experience that shaped this understanding was my visit to SSK schools. While our activities were thoughtfully designed in alignment with the curriculum, the ground reality of limited teaching resources meant that many children between 6 and 10 years lacked even basic letter recognition and foundational English knowledge. In other words, they would first need to be brought up to speed. We subsequently modified our program design to deliver the program through Abha trainers.

The lesson to draw from this is that effective learning solutions must go beyond content design. They need to account for the ecosystem in which they are implemented, especially the level of human support available. True impact comes from combining thoughtful resources with active facilitation, continuous feedback, and adaptability to the learners' actual needs.

– **Sneha Ghosh**
Project Lead





QUARTER IN REVIEW

NRICH ECCE ROLLOUT IN ICDS CENTERS

The pre-primary program of NRich ECCE was rolled out across 64 ICDS (Anganwadi) centers in Patharpratima block this January. Our team of 5 field facilitators are helping 50 teachers introduce activity-based learning to around 650 children.



Within a few weeks, we observed improved student engagement, enthusiastic participation from teachers, and also, deep curiosity among parents. To smoothen every aspect of the implementation, our field facilitators are conducting school visits every week for in-person training, mentoring and progress tracking.

Over the next few quarters, we will continue to conduct additional training workshops for facilitators, and teachers to strengthen quality of classroom delivery.





QUARTER IN REVIEW

PRIVATE PRIMARY SCHOOLS ADOPT NRICH ECCE

NRich ECCE's primary program, designed in alignment with the school curriculum, has been introduced across 4 private schools in South 24 Parganas and 2 schools in Howrah district, reaching approximately 2,000 students.



Two more schools are scheduled to onboard the program in May. Our facilitators will conduct baseline assessments at each school to evaluate the areas of strength and weakness.

The ABC of implementation:

- **Activities at the core:** Workshops to give teachers a walk-through of our activities, facilitator visits to each school to demonstrate teaching techniques and classroom management strategies.
- **Baseline assessment:** For measuring readiness of each school, and tailoring the program for greater effectiveness.
- **Chatbot-enabled guidance:** Orientation sessions with teachers to familiarize them with the Glific chatbot interface and how to get activities on demand via WhatsApp.





QUARTER IN REVIEW

MPOWER-ING TOMORROW'S WORKFORCE

In the Jan-Mar 2026 quarter, the Patharpratima Government ITI College batch of 82 students completed their course under MPower, our career guidance program aimed at enhancing digital and communication skills among rural youth.



Since starting the partnership in 2024, MPower has trained **205 students in 12 batches** at the Patharpratima Government ITI College. The current batch is gearing up for their evaluation and certification in May.

The MPower program started in 2023 at our **Milanmore Center**, where **11 batches** have been trained so far. The current batch started classes in the Jan-Mar quarter under our trainers Sontu Mandal and Pintu Baidya.



As reported in the Jul-Sep 2025 newsletter, a significant number of our MPower trainees have received job offers via placement drives at Patharpratima ITI.



QUARTER IN REVIEW

PROMOTING DIGITAL LITERACY FROM AN EARLY AGE

Designed to introduce children to basic computer skills and digital learning engagingly and practically, the Nrich Kids Computer Course at our Milanmore Center is currently running twice a week for 2 batches of students between classes 2 and 8.



Curiosity characterizes children, and curiosity about technology is no exception. Since its launch in 2024, **6 batches** have been trained under the NRich Kids Computer Course by our trainers Susmita Haldar and Sontu Mandal.

Besides keyboard practice and MS Office apps, kids also learn basic coding. After completing the course, most kids have shown a marked confidence in using computers, picking up skills that will give them a competitive edge in future.



FROM OUR RESEARCH DESK

Only 15% of Anganwadi pre-schoolers can match basic objects; only 30% can identify larger vs. smaller, according to [this 2025 study](#). This is indicative of very low foundational learning outcomes from current Anganwadi ECCE programs, despite curriculum goals. This tells us why we need focus on foundational numeracy now more than ever.



TEAM MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

ANISHA GOLAY | TRAINER AND CONTENT DEVELOPER

Mountain baby, pet parent, rhyme wizard, ideator extraordinaire, and our in-house energy pill – that's Anisha Golay for you!

Tell us about your downhill trek from Kalimpong to Kolkata.

After finishing my boards from St. Stephen's Academy boarding school, where I was Sports Captain and Head Girl, and my 12th from Joseph's Convent, I moved to Calcutta for undergraduate studies.

A volunteering experience with Teach for India ignited my passion for education and NGO work – leading me to Antahin Abha. I began as a Trainer and now serve as a Content Developer, designing learning activities and Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs) for children.

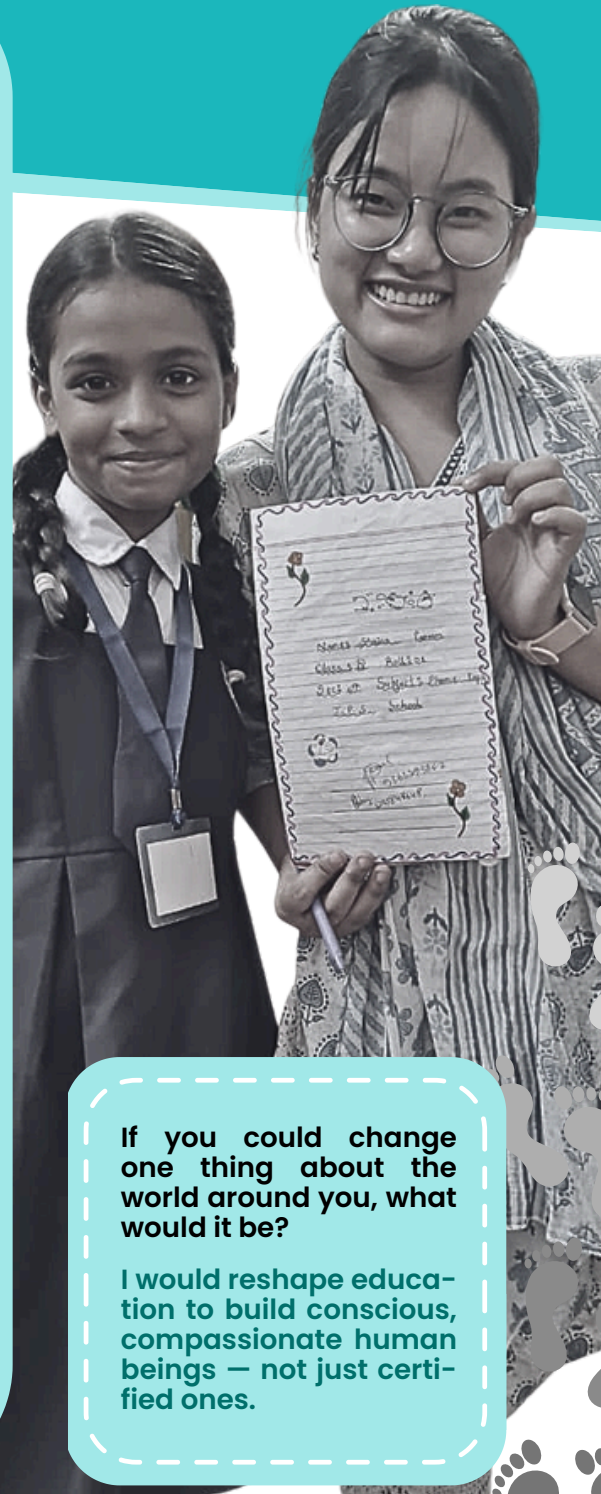
Take us through the process of creating an activity for use in a low resource classroom.

Every activity begins with a simple question I ask myself: If I were teaching in that classroom, how would I conduct it? That question naturally leads me to think about the child, the topic, and the space they learn in – and from there, the activity takes shape. I follow a "Listen-Speak-Read-Write-Understand" sequence, which helps children discover, laugh, and learn at their own rhythm.

We deliver colourful TLMs to the schools, while videos, audios, and PDFs are available for teachers on demand through Ask Abha, our WhatsApp chatbot.

Is there an experience in your work with Abha that has left a mark on you?

While visiting a low-resource school during an endline assessment, I saw students sitting on nothing but tarpaulin sheets in the sweltering heat – yet their smiles never wavered. That sight deepened my belief that every child deserves quality learning, and it continues to fuel my dedication as a content developer.



If you could change one thing about the world around you, what would it be?

I would reshape education to build conscious, compassionate human beings – not just certified ones.



IMPACT STORY

Across pre-primary classrooms in Patharpratima, early learning has often been shaped by limited resources, unstructured routines, and a reliance on rote-based practices. NRich ECCE's pre-primary program was introduced to address the gaps and help children learn more effectively through play, interaction, and exploration. We give you a glimpse of what went into the designing of the program.

For children in the area, the first steps into the world of learning do not always bring the wonder and excitement that they should. In their low-resource schools, teachers have limited support to adopt play-based, developmentally appropriate teaching methods.

So when NRich ECCE offers a structured, activity-based pedagogy that aligns with young children's preferred way of learning, the enthusiasm is evident.

The program focuses on the use of simple, low-cost Teaching Learning Materials (TLMs), guided lesson plans, and engaging classroom practices such as rhymes, storytelling, and pre-numeracy activities like sorting, matching, and counting.

Observations from classrooms indicate encouraging changes. Children are showing higher levels of participation. There is increased curiosity and engagement, and more verbal responses. Teachers are beginning to use TLMs more confidently and integrating structured activities into their daily routines.





Teachers at the ICDS centres have been our biggest pillars of support. While grappling with irregular attendance of children, varying degrees of comfort with the activity-based pedagogy, and time constraints within their schedules, their effort has been really heartening and motivates us to do more.



In the coming quarters, we will deepen classroom practices through mentoring visits, and strengthening feedback loops from the field for iterative improvement.

TEACHER IN FOCUS

“Before the NRich ECCE program was introduced, children mainly practiced writing in notebooks and memorized rhymes from their books. They were learning by rote. The difference now is remarkable. With the use of picture cards and TLMs, children can understand concepts more easily, so learning has become more meaningful.

They are able to recognize objects, classify them into groups, and connect their learning with real-life scenarios. They have also learned colours and started applying them in daily life – such as identifying a friend wearing a red dress. They enjoy doing rhymes with actions, which has increased their participation and the overall energy in my classroom.”

– **Renuka Haldar**, Teacher,
ICDS Centre No. 300, Dakshin Raypur





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TO END WITH A SILVER LINING...

According to the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) of 2024, enrolment in rural pre-primary schools rose sharply between 2018 and 2024: 77.4% of 3-year-olds (up from 68.1% in 2018) and 83.4% of 4-year-olds (up from 76.0%) were enrolled in 2024.

These large gains in pre-school enrolment mean expanding ECCE access in rural areas – making it a great time to design learning interventions for children in pre-primary stages.



GET INVOLVED!

You can make a difference—through your time, ideas, and support.

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Newsletter Team:

Research and data collection: Disha Subramaniam | **Inputs:** Narendra Middya, Sneha Ghosh, Megha Malakar, Susmita Haldar |

Design & Production: Alexander Das | **Editor:** Sreyashi Dastidar