



**EDLIV SAMANTA FOUNDATION ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24**

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Samanta foundation stands for equal - access, availability and affordability - of opportunities for all communities and strives for the enablement of communities in the areas of education, health and livelihood. We aim to achieve this through community participation, ownership and indigenous ideation.

We started working as Samanta Foundation in the year 2018. We are registered as Edliv Samanta Foundation as a not for profit under the Companies Act (2013) from 2019.

*We are 12AA, 80G and CSR-1 accredited as per Government of India rule.*

(\*do refer to Samanta Foundation and Edliv Samanta Foundation interchangeably in the document)

## **2.0 VISION, MISSION, GOALS, VALUES**

### **2.1 VISION**

Education access for all, leading to holistic development of Communities

### **2.2 MISSION**

By 2027, enable access to quality education for 10000 children through Whole school transformation in Uttarakhand

### **2.3 GOALS**

- Quality education for children through Whole School Transformation in Uttarakhand
- Youth development leading to ownership, leadership
- Girl youth empowerment

### **2.4 VALUES**

- RESPECT : All humans are equal
- INTEGRITY : Honesty in all our actions
- SERVICE : By the people for the people
- COMMUNITY : Call to action

## 2.5 OBJECTIVES

- Whole School Transformation of Public schools
  - Library Development
  - Teacher/Staff training
  - Foundational Literacy and Numeracy
  
- Develop model AWCs and curriculum
  
- Develop contextual learning resources
  - Learning Kits
  - Local storybooks
  - Local language learning material
  
- Youth fellowship program to build Rural Entrepreneurs/Edupreneurs

## 3.0 WHERE WE WORK

We work with the Forest dwelling, Tribals, Rural, Pastoral nomadic communities inhabiting areas in tribal, rural, remote geographies and ecosystems. We work across districts of Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh part of the lower Shivaliks range, near the Rajaji National Park and Tiger Reserve.



**Current Location of Projects** - Bahadradab, Muzaffarabad blocks in Lower Shivalik range adjacent to Rajaji National Park and Tiger Reserve.

#### **4.0 WHO WE WORK FOR**

Uttarakhand has more than 65% of its areas covered with Forest ecosystems which comprise of National Parks, Tiger Reserves, UNESCO World heritage etc. Tribals, Forest Dwellers, Pastoral nomads, Other Traditional Forest Dwellers and rural populations have been inhabiting these regions for centuries. These communities have formed a unique relationship with the local ecosystems traditionally which is being altered since the last couple of decades. These people face challenges around access, availability, affordability of systemic services, resources, impacts of climate change etc.

We started our work in 2018 with - Van Gujjars and Taungyas who have lived for centuries as per the community/forest department records in the forests of the Shivalik and the Himalayan ranges in Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh. Over the last few decades, Van Gujjars like many other transhumance (pastoralist) communities have had to deal with rapid changes – political, economic and social – in the world around; the prolonged systemic inequities and injustices have deprived these communities of their fundamental human rights such as the – Right to access education. Taungyas are classified as a scheduled caste community as per the government records and were settled by the colonial rulers on the periphery of the forest. This was done to enable labour for the forest department in order to implement various activities of the department as per Nusrat (2012).

The focus communities for us is on -

1. Rural
2. Tribal
3. Remote
4. Pastoral Nomadic

In addition to this we intend to create a mandate for Youth from these communities in particular especially girls.

#### **4.1 LANGUAGE**

The prominent languages/dialects in the region are Hindi, Punjabi, Urdu, Arabic, Garhwali, Gojru/Gojri. There are tribal populations - Jaunsari and Buksa, Tharu (variants of Awadhi,

Hindi and Urdu, Van Rawat/Raji (Raji). Over the years these languages have developed deeper connections with prominent regional languages like Hindi, Urdu Punjabi.

- The Van Gujjar speak 'Gojri' which is a mix of Dogri, Punjabi primarily with vocab support from Arbi and Urdu as well. There is no script to write the language and therefore can be recorded in the Devanagari script.
- The Taungyas speak Hindi (which is a local dialect) among themselves.
- Tribal dialects are spoken by communities as well - Jaunsari etc

## **4.2 REGIONAL - LIFESTYLE & LIVELIHOOD**

Uttarakhand primarily relies on

- Tourism
- Agriculture
- Horticulture, Animal husbandry
- Industrial enterprises in lower districts

Rural, Tribal, Forest dwelling people survive on agriculture, horticulture, forest produce, animal husbandry.

Taungyas inhabit the forest peripheries and engage with daily wage labour, allied activities of the forest department and create products (ropes) out of forest produce (grass). Bhoksa, Tharu, Van Raji and Jaunsari populations occupy different districts of Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and Nepal as well. Van Gujjar are pastoralists who traverse the Shivaliks from - Rajaji National Park in the lower Shivaliks - to - Bugyals in the upper reaches of middle himalayas in Uttarkashi, Almora, Sirmour, Kinnaur in Uttarakhand and Himachal. The general timelines for travel are from April-May to August-September each year.

## **4.3 CHALLENGES**

In India with over 1.5 million schools and 250 million students, the school education system is one of the largest in the world. With 84.71% of the 1.5 million schools in India being rural, remote, tribal schools, the limited quality of education and lack of access to educational resources continue to remain a huge challenge.

In Uttarakhand, more than 65% of the state is geographically under forest cover. A host of populations ranging from Forest dwelling, Tribal, Rural, Pastoral Nomadic, STs/SCs inhabit these regions. There are schools categorised as - Forest, Tribal, Government schools, NRSTs

et - to provision for elementary education for children. Rajaji Tiger Reserve and Corbett Reserve are the two national parks inhabiting wildlife and human populace in close vicinity.

Bahadrabad block is the biggest block under the aegis of Rajaji Tiger reserve comprising Pastoral nomadic, STs/SCs/OBCs, minority communities as more than 50% of total population. Out of every 10 children, 3 belong to the SC/ST community. 5 out of 10 children are living in ST villages. 88% of the total population is categorised as rural.

As per Uttarakhand government, 90% of the elementary education government schools are categorised as rural in the block. The performance grading index released by the government states that Uttarakhand stands in Akanshi -2 with a score range of 461-520 out of a maximum score of 1000. It ranks low on the domains of learning outcomes and quality of education in India. Bahadrabad block stands in the bottom 5 in the State for performance of students in school. The NAS district level data for proficiency among students subject wise stands at - English 39% - Maths 41% - Science 37% - Social Science 38% - MIL 40%.

As per the Samanta community survey, across a sample size of 372 HHs, out of 1004 children in the age group of 3-18 more than 50% of children are out of school. The sex ratio (as per census) stands at 880 per 1000 females in Uttarakhand which is on the lower side compared to national estimates. Percentage of girls who are out of school is almost double that for boys. Only 7 girls have reached higher education among all the HHS surveyed as compared to 30 boys. Young role models engaged in a livelihood due to education are missing. Instead we have girls and boys who undergo early marriage and engage disguised employment through family linked livelihood.

Out of the total HHs surveyed 20% have a person who has completed more than class VIII in the family. Only 18% of HHs have a person who is engaged in a job in an external facility like driver, dairy worker etc.

We at Samanta believe that the root of all the above-mentioned problems in the schools is lack of quality education. Samanta Fellowship led by the youth exists to create a contextual and enabled learning experience for children. Solving this will help create a generation of children who will complete K-12 education and be equipped to lead self and community

towards a new world. The youth facilitating the change would be role models for the community and children leading all to a better world.

#### 4.4.1 Education

- Education among the children from the community varies as per location though a substantial set of children from the community have no to poor access, availability and affordability of education. The access is determined by the
  - Distance to school
  - Illiteracy in community
  - Parental engagement
  - Children engaged in household chores
  - Relative economic well being,
  - Sedentarization of the community over the years,
  - Other factors - context, culture etc.
- The women from the community have had a history of minimalistic participation in the livelihood engagements of the household as well as in the decision making . This has had an impact on the –
  - Relative status of adult literacy (ability to write one’s name etc),
  - Awareness about health, education etc
  - Opportunities to generate incomes by use of traditional skills – among men and women from the community.

The women from the community are well versed in a host of skills learned orally across generations – traditional art, natural resource management, livestock etc. We have formed groups of women and introduced practices to use the traditional skills to acquire economic empowerment as a group. We intend to use this in order to introduce interventions in the areas of health of women and children in particular.

## 5.0 AREAS OF WORK

### Current Projects -

- Whole School Transformation
  - Direct engagement with State government schools to improve learning outcomes, contextual content and pedagogies.



➤ Youth development

- Engaging local youth from the community to be change agents by ownership, initiative and action.

### **Student Vision**

Our students will be - **grade appropriate learners, scientific in temperament, changemakers, responsible citizens** - for life. In the short term they will develop **educational excellence** being a **role model** for the community leading to **individual transformation**.

In the long term our students will be **role models** who have a **transformed economic and social self** due to **education excellence**.

Each student experiences school education that enables exploration, learning and confidence building agency leading to holistic development (builds agency, leadership, owners of change, changemakers, responsible citizens)

## **5.1 EDUCATION**

### A. Learner's Context

The children of the community from minority religions also have exposure to Madrasas in the area. There are children who do not go to a school but instead go to a Madrasa. The interest in elders, parents and community in general towards education is less.

### Barriers to education

1. Their distance from the mainstream schools
2. The awareness around importance of education is a major barrier to education
3. Lack of relevant learning materials. The difference in the context of a child compared to the context that is addressed in the learning materials/books.

### Alternate learning solution/ existing programming

1. Government primary and middle schools
2. Madrassas
3. NRST ( Non residential special training ) centres
4. Youth group led learning centres

## **B. Educator's Context**

1. Educators are the local youth from the community they have a minimal experience of teaching
2. Educators have been trained in teaching pedagogy, subject specific orientation etc.
3. They have been trained to execute the PBL in the school through multiple trainings as well as monthly refreshers.

### Challenges they face today.

1. Availability of library/learning space inside the school and following daily time table.
2. Difficult terrain with natural challenges such as rains, floods etc
3. Lack of access to technology or gadgets for learning.
4. Lack of global connectivity and exposure

## **Activities**

1. Enrolment drives with a special focus to bring in maximum girls inside the schools
2. Attendance of students in the school
3. Make morning assembly interesting through activities
4. Setting up the libraries
5. Contextual learning kits
6. Regular library sessions
7. Regular Parents's Teachers Meet (PTMs)
8. Focus on engagement of Girl Child (enrolment, attendance and participation)
9. Create library mapping documents
10. Residential team training: Samanta Sparks



### **Project QUEST**

Project QuEST (Quality education through school transformation) focuses on school transformation and has the following pillars for reimagining education design and delivery:

- School Leadership
- Library Development
- Community engagement

Education design -

- Library development in schools with workshops/trainings for teachers
- Enabling school staff (Headmasters and Teachers) to improve foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN)
- Local youth as role models to include contextual learning



Education delivery -

- Workshops and trainings
- Library development in schools as a learning space
- Enabling local youth
- Contextual learning

## 5.2 YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Education is a source of growth and development to shape the lives of all individuals and achieve a better society. The lack of access to opportunity has led to the sustained migration of youth from the State leaving it without youth to address its challenges.

When it comes to Youth, we believed there was a lack of space in the community for them to foster self-development and personal agency or any community-level platforms to structure their participation. There was a growing need to engage the youth through meaningful spaces to structure their dreams and garner a sense of personal agency towards action.

The Fellowship for Local Youth is a program that offers the ecosystem and structure for the youth to take up dreams they believe in to take one step at a time to make them a reality. The processes, support and mentorship offered as part of the program offers the requisite spaces for the Youth. The second batch of the fellowship was a mix with 70% females and 30% males. The experiment to include men was done to build an ecosystem of growth and learning. The results turned out to be positive and impactful. The fellows added value in the cohort and supported each other with knowledge and experience.

### **Youth fellow vision**

Our fellows will be - **aware, innovative, solution oriented and thoughtful thinkers, resilient** for the ecosystem. In the short term they will develop as **role model educators** creating - **contextual learning and engagement spaces**, materials - for children and collaborate with school and community leading **towards its transformation.**

In the long term our fellows will work towards **resolving educational challenges of -rural, tribal, forest and remote** - geographies by involving themselves in different roles, through implementation of **systemic interventions and independent initiatives.**



**Activities in the program:**

1. Youth Mobilisation
2. Getting maximum participation
3. Pre Fellowship workshop
4. Develop individual proposals
5. Create a cohort of 10 enthusiastic young girls
6. Organise Skill based workshops
7. Conduct exposure visit
8. Weekly cohort calls
9. Weekly individual mentor mentee calls

**Impact**

1. Engagement among youth towards having a dream and working on achieving it
2. Improved visibility and mobility of girls in the community
3. Community participating and sharing inputs on issues of education, health.
4. Contribution in ecosystem building
5. Financial independence for the girls has become an integral part of their lives

**“I never imagined myself going out of the house for my work except for medical reasons. But now I go out for community mobilisation, meetings and training. This makes me feel stronger,” says a Fellow**

**“My father is an auto rickshaw driver and we are 3 sisters. I now support my parents, take care of many expenses of the family. My father who was earlier not in favour of me going out and working, today he feels proud. This is my biggest achievement”, says a Fellow**

**“Never imagined that my dream of having a homestay will one day become a reality. Today not only do I have a physical space but I have a social media page as well. I organise bird watching trips, jungle safari followed by local food at my homestay” - Fellow**

## 6.2 LARGE SCALE IMPACT

- Mindset change of Community towards education and gender as more parents willing to send girls to school to complete K-12 education
- Supporting childrens' education as a lot of girls now ride a bicycle and go to middle and senior school
- The girls, women from the community are coming together to strengthen economic independence as groups and also participate in social decision making
- Tree plantation drive was organised to spread awareness around fruit trees and improve the green cover.

## 7.1 DIRECTORS/FOUNDERS

### PRASHANT ANAND



Prashant is a keen social mind with a sense of interdisciplinary approach to problem solving on challenges of people in the current social-economic milieu. He looks at the challenges of - access, availability, affordability - of schools, education, and Youth development as the root for addressing social issues.

He has been instrumental in helping Samanta build a rigour in processes and flows across projects. In addition he has been a key person to initiate partnerships and knowledge sharing with peers and the ecosystem.

Bachelor in Engineering (IT), Masters in Social Work

Experience : IBM, SunLife, Fellow@American India Foundation

## TANYA KHERA



Tanya is a creative mind that intends to engage with the strength of ownership, leadership and empathy in girls, women, children to create an alliance of communities to fuel empowerment. She looks at education as a tool of engagement to work on the intersectionality of gender, health, learning.

Tanya heads the current operations of all projects at Samanta. She is the go to person for all project related work and knowledge collaborations. She has been key for us to build our teams as we have worked towards equipping more local youth.

B A in Political Science, Master in Social Work

Experience : NRLM (Rajasthan), Himmotthan Society

## 8.2 MENTORS

The mentors for the organisation are on a year on year basis with a rotating model at times relying on the work at hand, partnership and expertise.

### **Dr Malathi Adusumalli**

Associate Professor, University of Delhi

Expertise - Tribal and Rural Development, Gender Development

### **Mr K L Mukesh**

Venture Partner

Unitus Seed Fund



**Mr Chetan Kapoor**

CEO

Tech Mahindra Foundation

**8.3 CONTRIBUTORS**

We value all interns, volunteers who have been part of our work throughout the year. Some people though have been associated with us as long term contributors -

**Mr Mandeep Attri**

MBA (IIM-C), B.E. (PEC, Chandigarh)

Digital Architect and Technology Consultant (22+ years of experience)

Author - Storytelling with Doodles

**Mr Sandeep Malhotra**

B Tech (IT)

IT Consultant (18+ years of experience)

Avid Traveller

**9.0 PARTNERSHIPS**

Over the year 2023-24 we have worked in partnership with :

1. EdumentumR
2. Education Above All - Qatar Foundation
3. ReACH - Remote collective
4. Plustrust
5. RZamba

**10.0 FINANCIALS**

EDLIV SAMANTA FOUNDATION has been accepting donations and in kind from people.

The details are shared in the Audit Report on our website.

**Social Media and Website**

LinkedIn	<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/company/28732713">https://www.linkedin.com/company/28732713</a>
Facebook	<a href="http://www.facebook.com/samantauttarakhand">www.facebook.com/samantauttarakhand</a>
Instagram	<a href="http://www.instagram.com/samantafoundation">www.instagram.com/samantafoundation</a>
Youtube	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/@samantafoundation2719">https://www.youtube.com/@samantafoundation2719</a>
Twitter	<a href="http://ww.twitter.com/samantafound2">ww.twitter.com/samantafound2</a>
Website	<a href="http://www.samanta.org.in">www.samanta.org.in</a>