



INDIA

ISRD — Enabling access to education for girls in Manipur



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Poverty and discrimination prevent many girls from realising their educational potential in India. Some stop already in primary school. Or never even start.

In Manipur, India, the district with the highest primary-school drop-out rate nationally, ISRD has set up targeted education centres to tackle the crisis and ensure that girls receive a good education, thanks to Julius Baer Foundation support.

Designed to bring local communities together in support of girls' education, the just-implemented 'Bridge Education Centres' have begun operating in four villages where 70–80% of girls fail to finish elementary school. In just two months, 200 girls who stopped or never started school have entered the programme, which aims to eliminate hurdles to school attendance and universalise completion of basic education among local girls.

Parents, teachers, local authorities, religious groups and women leaders have begun taking up the cause.

Quick facts

- Senapati District, Manipur, India
- Project support: 2023–2025
- Grant amount: CHF 50,000 per year
- Supporting children and a network of parents, teachers and local leaders to ensure local girls can attend school.
- Goal: Enabling girls who have missed or quit school to integrate back into the formal education system and succeed.

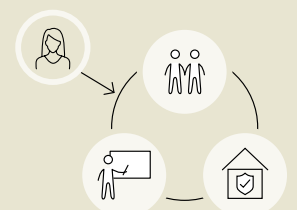
From interrupted childhoods ...

Girls in Manipur are often pressured to support their families by working in precarious jobs, acting as caregivers and marrying early rather than attending or completing school.



... to open futures.

Community-supported 'Bridge Education Centres' unite parents, teachers and local authorities in ensuring that at-risk village girls receive all the necessary support to stay in school, achieve core literacy, and realise their full potential.





“I was out of the school during the pandemic. My parents didn’t send me back. Now my older and younger brother go to school while I help in my mother’s vegetable plantation. I’m excited that I’ll be able to attend classes again starting in the summer through ISRD. My parents are also supportive of it.”

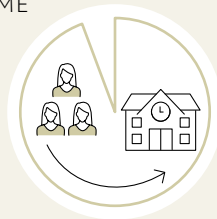
Donsalu Khumba, Age 10, schoolgirl

OUTPUT



600 girls ages 6–14 will receive support through ‘Bridge Education Centres’ in **4 villages**, including all necessary school materials and meals.

OUTCOME



90 to 100% of the girls will be reintegrated into the existing public education system to complete their primary schooling.

HIGHLIGHT



Each education centre has a **community-level committee** that identifies eligible children and assigns them educators, ensuring community ownership and monitoring of progress.

Empowering at-risk girls

- Historically, Manipur has been a male-dominated society with men holding most of the resources and decision-making power.
- In the education sector, there is serious gender imbalance due to disinvestment in girls’ education.
- The situation worsened when the economy collapsed and online learning was introduced during the pandemic, with many families opting to take their girls out of school for good.
- Girls are often given the job of caring for older relatives and younger siblings, as well as keeping house.
- They are also frequently subject to peer pressure to engage in risky activities and grow up fast.
- ISRD’s community-led approach focuses on fostering a network of relationships between parents, school staff, government officials, and religious leaders, on behalf of universal basic education for at-risk girls in affected villages.
- It seeks to empower girls, women and other marginalised groups by raising awareness of their rights, giving them access to education, and encouraging collective action on behalf of societal change.

About ISRD

The Institute of Social Research and Development (ISRD) was founded in 1992 by a group of 76 people from diverse backgrounds who were all interested in improving the welfare of society. Inclusion of community stakeholders and beneficiaries in corresponding project design, implementation and monitoring via local committees helps to ensure meaningful participation, responsibility and ownership at the grassroots level.



More information about ISRD and their project in India: isrdmanipur.org

Do you feel inspired by the ISRD project and would like to support it?

Please do not hesitate to get in touch with us! foundation@juliusbaer.com



Learn more about our mission and our projects on the Wealth Inequality Initiative platform.

Julius Baer Foundation

Established in 1965 by Walter J. Bär (1895–1970), the Julius Baer Foundation has a long history of supporting diverse philanthropic initiatives. Today, our focus is on reducing wealth inequality by convening leading thinkers and actors on the topic and supporting projects worldwide that foster collaboration between individuals, groups and organisations across the wealth spectrum to create a world of equal opportunities.

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