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Girls in High School in Andhra Pradesh. Photo: Balwant Singh

Key Dates

1

23 December: Board Meeting

2

5 January: Finance Manager Interviews

3

13-27 January: CEO visits India with Operations Manager and Strategy Consultant

4

24 January: Country Leader Interviews in Delhi

5

25 January: Strategy Day Meeting in Delhi

6

3-4 February: CEO visits UNESCO in Paris

Founders add £172 million to the endowment at Kusuma Trust UK

In December 2010, the Founders made a generous addition of £172m to the endowment at Kusuma Trust (KT UK). With this additional investment, Kusuma expects to add to its distribution reserves from the investment income and disburse approximately £6m per year for the next three years. In 2010-2011, total grants will amount to just over £2m.

MOUs were finalized with Sarvodaya Ashram for the renovation of classrooms, establishment of a science laboratory and a study visit; the Centre for Internet and Society for their Access and Accessibility to Knowledge initiative; the Akshaya Patra Foundation for providing mid-day meals to 14,000 children in government schools; and, MV Foundation and Project 511 for expansion of the mobile science laboratories and training of science teachers.

The MOU with the Indian Institute of Technology in Delhi is in its final stages of negotiation and will be finalized in January during the CEO's visit to India.

The recruitment of Kusuma Foundation's Country Leader is underway. A new Finance Manager, Suzanne Davies, has been appointed at KT UK and will join the team on 14 February.

our mission

To provide educational opportunities and improve the lives of disadvantaged children throughout India



Girls at music class in Sarvodaya Ashram School in Uttar Pradesh. Photo: Balwant Singh

Fellowships

Kusuma Ratna Fellowships Programme has been strengthened through recent visits by SIDI staff to 20 colleges to collect feedback from faculty members on academic performance of the Fellows. New educational materials have been issued to help improve fellows' annual examination scores. The second grant disbursement will be made in January 2011. The CEO and Senior Programme Officer attended the induction ceremony for the 100 new Fellows.

At **Kusuma Udayan Shalini Fellowships**, 110 fellows took part in a recent tobacco abolition campaign, 60 fellows now study English and 3 fellows have received a provisional offer to join IBM following their graduation. Udayan Care will receive 75% of its grant in January, following negotiations to agree the action plan for improving the performance of Fellows who had not done as well as expected.

The **Kusuma Young Achievers Award** continues to bring direct benefits to its Fellows, as those who have scored between 60-70% in their Class XII examinations have been admitted into professional courses and our partner, Pragathi Seva Samithi (PSS), has enabled them to secure financial support through other sources and loans. PSS has also successfully negotiated the reduction of fees for 2 engineering courses, which has helped 16 Fellows enroll.

Bridge Schools: Udaan & Pehchan

The final grant payment for the current project will be disbursed in January by Kusuma Gibraltar Charitable Trust. Teachers have been trained in the new curriculum for the Upper Primary

classes of Pehchan. The first batch of students are now in Class VIII, and the second batch are in Class VI. KT UK has approved a new grant of £14,807 for the renovation of 6 classrooms, including the Science Laboratory and Library.

Mobile Science Lab/Project 5 I I

The MSL manual will be published and distributed to 102 high schools as part of the expansion of the project. Training of government schoolteachers who are not part of the MSL project will take place in January and the government has supported MSL teachers to participate in capacity building programmes in other schools. The success of the project has seen calls for its expansion, as the Ranga Reddy District Education Officer has requested the implementation of MSL in that district. A new MOU has been signed with the partner for this year.



Girls involved in the MSL project at a school in Andhra Pradesh. Photo: Balwant Singh

Kusuma Mid Day Meals

A new MOU has been signed with the Akshaya Patra Foundation to provide 7,000 school meals daily in Orissa and another 7,000 daily in Andhra Pradesh to children in government schools. The new grant includes life skills training for 500 students. Kusuma is also planning a qualitative study in 2011 of the mid-day meal project to understand more about the outcomes it helps achieve for children and their families.

Project Saarathi

A new partner, Sadhana, has been identified as the co-ordinating agency for the roll out of the training for 1100 frontline child welfare workers in government and other agencies. The project aims to equip the frontline

workers with knowledge and skills in counselling and legal assistance. The project plan will be finalized in February and implemented in partnership with the Juvenile Justice Department and UNICEF.

Building Open Sharing Resources

Now entering its 4th year of support from KT UK, iCommons has received an offer from the University of Oxford to set up its operations in Oxford. Over 700 people attended its Open Video Project conference in October and a grant proposal to the University of Maryland has been accepted.

iPartner India

Across two Indian States, 8 new projects have been funded and a new staff member recruited to manage local fundraising. This project's final disbursement of £50,000 will be paid in January 2011.

Other News

The CEO has initiated discussions with the London School of Economics and its researchers to design an **evaluation** of the Fellowships across the three States to inform the shape and extent of Kusuma's future strategy in this area. The research will take place from February to April.

Nirmita Narasimha, from the **Centre for the Internet and Society**, was awarded the National Award for Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities from the Government of India on 3 December 2010 on the occasion of the World Disability Day.

The judging of the final four shortlisted papers in the **Kusuma Young Researcher Award** will take place in January and the results will be announced in February.



CEO with Pehchan girls at Sarvodaya Ashram in Hardoi. Photo: Sriram