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Students receiving educational and vocational training from the Pardada Pardadi Education Society in Anupshahar, Uttar Pradesh, supported by the Kusuma-funded iPartner India project. Photo: Jeremy Chu

Key Dates

1

18 February: Strategy Consultation in London

2

24/25 February: Strategy consultant visits Gibraltar

3

28 February: Evaluation of Fellowships commences

4

2-3 March: Finance Manager visits Gibraltar

5

14 March: CEO and Finance Manager visit India

Evaluation of Fellowship programmes launched in February

The design of the evaluation of the Fellowship programmes has been completed. CEO Dr Balwant Singh has commissioned Sandra Sequeira and Guo Xu from the London School of Economics to lead the evaluation. They will work with a local team of researchers to conduct fieldwork in Andhra Pradesh and Uttarakhand from late March. The evaluation will focus on the Kusuma Young Achievers' Award (KYAA) in Andhra Pradesh and the Kusuma Udayan Shalini Fellowship (KUSF) in Uttarakhand.

The grant agreement with the Indian Institute of Technology in Delhi was signed in February. Kusuma will disburse an initial £1.4 million in March for the establishment of the Kusuma School of Biological Sciences.

The Centre for the Internet and Society (CIS) in Bangalore received a grant of £120,000 on 17 February for the Accessibility and Access to Knowledge project, which runs until May 2011.

Suzanne Davies took up her post as KT's Finance Manager on 14 February. Pankaj Sharma, Kusuma Foundation's new Country Leader, joins the team on 14 March and will meet with the CEO followed by a visit to a selection of projects in Andhra Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh later this month.

our mission

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



KYAA Fellows at the International Institute of Information Technology in Adilabad, Andhra Pradesh
Photo: Arun John

Fellowships

Annual examination results of the 2009 cohort in the **Kusuma Ratna Fellowship Programme** show that 48% of students scored 60% and above, across both higher secondary (Grades 11-12) and graduate courses. The second quarterly stipend has been paid to all students in the 2009 cohort. 35 students from the 2010 Cohort took part in a 'Goal Setting' workshop on 6 February. A book collection campaign in Sambalpur distributed 30 books to needy students.

Faculty staff, from a coaching centre in Dehradun, led intensive study workshops on 6, 13, 20 and 27 February for students from the **Kusuma Udayan Shalini Fellowship** (KUSF) programme, to improve their performance in annual examinations in April. Special attention was given to Maths, Chemistry, Physics and Biology. Mentor-Mentee meetings from 16 February onwards have also helped hone study skills. Teachers in the Resource Centre now use educational CDs and computers to instruct students.

Half yearly examination marks of the 2009 Cohort in the **Kusuma Young Achievers' Award** programme, showed 30% of students scoring 75% and above. The partner, Pragathi Seva Samithi, is now matching the brightest students with coaching institutions to help them prepare for their course entrance examinations.

Bridge School Programmes: Udaan & Pehchan

Girls from both Bridge School programmes will participate in an exposure visit to Lucknow from 4 to 5 March. 12 girls from Udaan's 2008 Cohort will take their Grade 10 government examination next month. Our partner, Sarvodaya Ashram, received two disbursements (totalling £42,711) - one for the bridge school

programme and the other for the reconstruction of the classrooms.

Mobile Science Lab (MSL)

On 17 February, 87 teachers from 70 schools, took part in a MSL Manual training session at a Government High School in Aliya, in the Hyderabad District of Andhra Pradesh. In late March, science revision sessions will take place for 3,000 Grade 6 to 9 students from 10 schools in Hyderabad. Under the new grant agreement with Rajiv Vidya Mission, 4 MSL vans were purchased, to help scale up the project.



Primary school students from Monda Market School, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh
Photo: Balwant Singh

Kusuma Mid Day Meals (MDM)

AC Nielsen's Report on The Akshaya Patra Foundation's MDM programme shows encouraging results for girls' attendance and retention levels, even though enrolment has remained static for 3 years. Kusuma plans to conduct a qualitative assessment on areas like performance, governance and the role of the community. For the Orissa kitchen construction proposal, discussions are underway with KPMG to conduct a pro bono feasibility study.

Accessibility and Access to Knowledge

On 24 February, Nimrita Narasimhan, from CIS, published a detailed legal analysis of the [Working Draft of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2010](#), assessing the potential clash with other disability legislations in India.



Mid Day Meal distribution in a Government High School, Vailala, in Patancheru, Medak District, Andhra Pradesh
Photo: Balwant Singh

Building Open Sharing Resources (BOSR)

In February, iCommons' research focused on the legal barriers that impede 'scientific collaboratives' from openly sharing their work. iCommons will move the leadership of the BOSR project from New Hampshire to the University of Oxford's eResearch Centre in April.

iPartner India

Two more donors, a UK family foundation wishing to fund projects in Gujarat and an individual committing aid to tackle child trafficking in Hyderabad, pledged their support in February. Bina Rani, iPartner's CEO, will visit new projects in India in March.

Other News

A revised proposal for scaling up **Project Saarathi** will be developed by the four partners in March.

The final judging of the shortlisted research papers for the **Kusuma Young Researcher's Award 2010** is currently underway. The winner will be announced by 31 March.

On 18 and 25 February, **Strategy Consultations** took place in London and Gibraltar respectively.



Mobile Science Lab students at Monda Market High School, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh
Photo: Balwant Singh