



Delivering better education

Inspiring action and collaboration

December 2015



In less than two years, in a remote school more than 100km from the district centre in Sambalpur in Odisha, things are changing. Students are in the driving seat of their learning, leading class discussions guided by teachers who are empowered with the tools of teaching and feel supported by peers and mentors. Head teachers are drawing together community members, harnessing their resourcefulness to make decisions, agree priorities and mobilise support for their schools. State and district education departments are playing their part in releasing funds to support these schools. There

is a sense of excitement about the changes that are beginning to unfold.

We are seeing a transformation that will chart a brighter future for young people and their communities based on better education in terms of access, quality and outcomes. This requires an understanding of local contexts, time, commitment and perseverance – qualities the human spirit is capable of and thrives on. The Kusuma Trust UK has stayed the course and will continue to do so, as we believe in the transformational power of better education.



Kusuma Trust UK
Mezzanine Level
48-49 St James's Street
London SW1A 1JT
Tel: 020 7569 1920
info@kusumatrust.org
www.kusumatrust.org

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Leading the Trust over the last five years, I have been inspired and motivated by the many teachers, students, parents, community groups, government education officials and partner organisations I have met. With limited support from us, they are taking ownership to bring about lasting change in education for this and future generations of young people who will develop as active and productive citizens in their communities.

On behalf of the Trust, I take this opportunity to thank the young people, parents, Head teachers, teachers, community groups, government departments, partner organisations and many others who are bringing about this transformation in education, and wish everyone a successful and exciting 2016!

Dr Balwant Singh, Chief Executive

Our mission is to facilitate and increase access to education and other life opportunities for children and young people

Call to action

We call on a wide range of stakeholders – from teachers and parents to government departments and other donors – to support communities and their schools deliver better education for young people. In 2016, our commitments in Odisha and Uttar Pradesh in India will continue and we will commence new grants in England, focusing on coalfield communities. The stories on the following pages are examples of how people are transforming education across schools we support.



Teachers who inspire

Seemerani Shaseni teaches Science at Mahupali Government High School in a remote part of Sambalpur. Her classrooms are lively, crowded but well managed. Seemerani realised that students learn best when they are engaged as active learners with hands-on practical experience in a subject such as Science.

Seemerani had not always taught Science in an interactive way, or had such motivated students. It was only after participating in teacher training supported by Kusuma and learning from her peers that she is able to engage her students in the classroom so well.

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“As a teacher, I feel my work is now more meaningful. The classes are more interesting for the students. The training and support I have received, combined with better resources for teaching Science, mean that I now use interactive methods and students work in groups to discover and understand concepts for themselves.”

The Kusuma Trust UK supports teachers like Seemerani with training, onsite mentoring and teaching resources. We aim to improve teaching quality and encourage students to become active and engaged learners. In less than two years we are beginning to see positive changes in behaviour, motivation and teaching standards in our partner schools in Sambalpur and Hardoi.

Students making huge strides

Pranshu often struggled at school. A Class 9 student at Government High School Chhaccheta in Hardoi, Uttar Pradesh, his learning level was at Class 5 in English and Hindi before he started secondary school. Following participation in Kusuma's Secondary School Readiness Programme he began to believe that he was capable of much more. Pranshu took part in a summer foundation camp to help improve his understanding of both subjects. He received intensive tuition and supported learning with peers and soon developed a 'can do' approach.

In a recent assessment of his progress, he attained Class 9 competency in English and Hindi in many areas. He increased his vocabulary, understands texts in both languages and can express himself better

when writing. Pranshu is better prepared for secondary school. He will continue to build on the progress made and will receive ongoing support. After just four months he has made huge strides in his learning and confidence.

“Before, I was not able to learn as fast as others and that made me upset and frustrated. After participating in the Secondary School Readiness Programme I have gained belief in my own abilities, I have improved my language skills and am now able to keep up with my peers.”

In 2015, the Kusuma Secondary School Readiness Programme delivered accelerated learning to 5,466 young people to take them to the standard required for secondary school.

Leaders taking charge

Mr Rebat Mohan Dalbehera is Head teacher at PM Government High School in Naktideul in a remote hilly region of Sambalpur district, more than 100km from the closest town. It has not always been easy with limited resources and a lack of teachers. With Kusuma's support, he has started to see positive changes – the Class 10 pass rate has increased, more teachers have meant smaller class sizes, three of his Class 9 and 10 students were recently awarded mathematics scholarships and the school now has a functioning library, science and computer laboratories and separate toilets for boys and girls. This year, the school became a satellite Kusuma Resource Centre for the local community, offering English language and computing courses for other nearby schools. Mr Dalbehera now believes that his school can be a model school in the area.



“I like mathematics very much because the teachers use games. For example, some teachers make us sit in a group and they give us a ball to pass around. When the ball stops at a particular student, then she has to solve the question. We enjoy this way of teaching and we learn a lot. Previously, I was hesitant about saying anything to others, even my mother. But now I am very confident and I speak without fear. I feel that I can become something in my life. This world is not only for boys. Even girls can get ahead in life and compete with them in every aspect of life.”

Radhika, 12 years old, who dropped out of school five years ago and then through Kusuma's accelerated learning programme came first in Classes 8 and 9.