

**Kusuma project
Schools in Sambalpur**

- 983 students passed their Board exams in 2013 compared to 673 in 2012
- The overall annual Board exam pass percentage rate went up from 64% to 71%
- 812 students passed their Science exams in 2013, an increase of 368 students from 2012

High Performing Students

Kusuma projects contribute to improved exam performance

Students in Kusuma Trust (The Trust) funded projects in the two focus districts of Sambalpur in Odisha and Hardoi in Uttar Pradesh achieved high results in their recent Board examinations.

In a project implemented by Agranee Jana Kalyan Aunsthan (AJKA), the average annual Board examination pass mark for 25 project schools in Science increased from 64% in 2012 to 75% in 2013 compared to 25 control schools whose average Science pass mark only increased from 64% to 66%. AJKA provides Science kits to schools and teacher training to improve the performance of students in Science across 25 secondary schools in Sambalpur, Odisha.

Since July 2012, AJKA has converted 25 classrooms in the 25 schools into fully functioning science laboratories. Each of these schools has been provided with 400 Science kits to enable students to carry out practical experiments and 50 Science teachers have been trained to deliver practical Science lessons. In addition, AJKA has secured further funding from the State Government for materials, equipment and infrastructure to ensure the project's sustainability. As a result, interest in Science has increased with both teachers and students reporting higher levels of motivation for Science classes.

In Hardoi, Uttar Pradesh, 100% of girls in the Pehchaan¹ programme have passed their Class X State Board examinations. A total of 40 girls from the first cohort passed the examinations, with 20 girls achieving pass marks of over 80% and the highest scoring 87%. This is an important achievement for the programme as this group of 40 girls who had dropped out of school in 2009-2010 are the first cohort of students in the programme to have entered and passed mainstream examinations. The Trust funds Pehchaan, a residential education programme implemented by Sarvodoya Ashram, for girls who have dropped out of mainstream education.

¹ Pehchaan means identity



Girls from the Pehchaan programme preparing for their examinations. Photo: Sam Strickland

Understanding Access to Education

Pratham

Building on work carried out in a pilot study on the status of education in two villages in the Hardoi district of Uttar Pradesh in 2012, The Trust is providing funding to the ASER Centre at Pratham to expand the study district-wide in Hardoi and in Sambalpur, Odisha. The study to be completed in April 2015 aims to better understand the provision and status of post-primary and secondary schooling within each district. This will include an assessment of factors that lead to transition from upper primary to secondary school in the two districts. The in-depth study will consist of GPS mapping of all educational institutions, a sample-based survey of schools that contain Standard VIII² classes and a sample-based survey of students in Standard VIII classes.

The research aims to ultimately contribute to and positively inform the successful implementation of the Government of India's national scheme Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) for improving the quality of Secondary Education.

² Class VIII students are 14 years old

School Cabinet Training

Centre for Youth and Social Development (CYSD)

The RMSA project in Sambalpur, Odisha, aims to improve the quality of secondary education through an effective system of educational management and governance by forming and strengthening School Management and Development Committees (SMDCs). As part of the project, CYSD has been working with schools to improve student involvement in school decision making by establishing student school cabinets that have a presence at SMDC meetings.

In June, a total of 99 selected school cabinet representatives from 23 schools in the district attended a training programme on leadership and civic awareness. The training enabled the cabinet representatives to counsel other students, represent the student community and find ways to encourage student retention at secondary school level.



Portfolio	Name of Student	Class
Chief Minister	Om Kumar Nayak	X
Education Minister	Sampada Nath	X
Sports & Culture Minister	Jyoti Bhandari	IX
Food Minister	Hridyanshu Choudhary	X
Environment Minister	Nisha Kumari	IX
Health & Hygiene Minister	Sourav Biswal	X
Science & Technology Minister		

School Cabinet members from a school in Sambalpur.
Photo: Kusuma Trust

Science Museum delivers the Launchbox

Science Museum

The Science Museum's learning project funded by the Trust aims to provide practical learning experiences to students, their families and teachers. This month the project delivered its 'launchboxes' to 65 primary schools in the London boroughs of Westminster and Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. The Science Museum 'launchbox' is a practical classroom Science kit designed to support exploration of themes such as light and sound in the classroom and in after-school Science clubs. Feedback from teachers has been positive and students have indicated that they "cannot wait" to start using the launchboxes.

In addition to supporting primary schools, the Science Museum learning project has also developed learning resources for secondary schools. 15 secondary schools have received 'News and Views Kits' that aim to help students learn more about Science in the media. In September, six Special schools will receive 'Mystery boxes', a complete lesson that helps teachers deliver key elements of 'How Science Works' through practical activities.



The Science Museum's Launchbox and its contents. Photo: The Science Museum