Raising standards, expanding impact
Annual Review 2016-2017
Raising standards, expanding impact

Vision
The Kusuma Trust UK believes that every child and young person has the potential to transform and improve their life and should have opportunities to grow and develop as active and productive citizens in their communities.

Mission
Our mission is to facilitate and increase access to quality education and other life opportunities for young people, with a focus on the disadvantaged. The Trust enables young people to realise their potential and prosper.

We believe that all young people have the right to quality education and career opportunities no matter what their background. Working directly with partner organisations and with governments, we are turning this belief into a reality.

We work in the UK, India and Gibraltar to achieve our mission. The education systems in these countries are different but the issues facing young people from disadvantaged backgrounds are similar. Many young people start school behind their wealthier peers and this gap continues to grow as they progress through school.

In India, we partner with the Kusuma Foundation and started by providing intensive support to 50 schools in 2013. We now partner with the government to reach almost 2,000 schools and over 100,000 students. Our programmes have been identified by the government for scale up across districts and the States of Uttar Pradesh and Odisha to impact even more young people.

In the UK, our work in former coal mining regions with the Sutton Trust and the Coalfields Regeneration Trust reaches many students, with new cohorts joining programmes each year. We launched a small grants programme, supporting smaller charities working to improve education and employment opportunities for young people. Our UK programmes have reached 1,367 young people who now have improved chances in further education and their careers. Our community grants have supported young people to connect with nature and two hospitals to improve medical equipment and facilities.

In Gibraltar, we continue to develop our partnership with the Kusuma Trust Gibraltar. Priorities this year included scaling up the Computer Coding Week to reach more students and training teachers to introduce coding in classrooms. We continued to support community initiatives and charities to increase their reach and impact.

Our work is underpinned by research and evaluation. We commissioned new qualitative research into factors that influence student performance and continued our five-year evaluation of the Kusuma Excellence Fellowships in partnership with London School of Economics researchers. A study to track children’s transition from primary to secondary school was also completed.

Over the last seven years our grants have raised education standards, widened reach, expanded impact on more young people, and deepened our relationship with key stakeholders. In 2017-2018, we will work with the Odisha State Government in India to scale up programmes in nine districts, expand our small grants programme in the UK to help even more young people into education and employment, and define a new strategic direction for our work in Gibraltar.

Anurag Dikshit, Chairman
Dr Balwant Singh, Chief Executive
“Education is vital for social and economic transformation and promoting active citizenship. We have expanded the reach of our initiatives to enhance access to quality education for more young people from disadvantaged backgrounds in India, the UK and Gibraltar.”
Gibraltar

Over the last year, 3,476 students reviewed our grant-making priorities. We continue to work with charities and projects and working with charities to achieve greater impact. Our community grants aimed to make a positive contribution to the lives of those in Gibraltar. Our grants benefited 105,309 young people aged 11 to 13 from 18 schools. Our Pathways to STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) grant supported 283 students and Computer Coding programmes. Science, Maths and Computer Coding help young people understand the importance of these subjects and how they can apply to their lives. Science, Maths and Computer Coding help young people understand the importance of these subjects and how they can apply to their lives.

Research

UK

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India

- 529 districts in India reached by our programmes: 75 in Uttar Pradesh and three in Odisha
- 70% of students who could do well don’t learn at the age of 11
- 1,988 students supported
- 2,923 students in higher education
- 105,309 students benefited from interactive learning sessions and resources to reach age-appropriate learning levels
- 935 teachers supported with teaching manuals, training, and mentoring
- 1,988 schools supported
- 2,923 teachers and head teachers trained
- 105,309 students benefited
- 600 young people from disadvantaged backgrounds introduced to university opportunities

UK

- 631,000 young people in the UK are unemployed
- 283 young people motivated to realize STEM career options
- 13,933 students benefited
- 22% fewer people in disadvantaged areas apply to university than those living in the most advantaged areas
- 30% increase in students applying to university from disadvantaged areas
- 600 young people from disadvantaged backgrounds introduced to university opportunities
- 600 young people from disadvantaged backgrounds introduced to university opportunities
- 25% of young people accredited through our Young Upstarts grant
- 32 charities received training, coaching, and grant funding to enable them to work more effectively

Gibraltar

- 89 young people admitted through our Young Upstarts grant
- 3,476 students benefited
- 22 individuals supported
- 18 schools signposted to university courses and post-school options through our Science, Maths, and computer coding workshops and university and career talks
- 8 individuals funded for professional development courses that will directly benefit Gibraltar
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Donations and grants

- £1,760,111 donations to charitable organisations in 2016-2017
- 15 grants awarded
- 1,760,111
- 20% of young people in India drop out of school before the age of 15
- 70% of young people in India drop out of school before the age of 15
- 70%
Research findings

Access to education

The study showed that a decline in the availability of schools at secondary level has a negative impact on students. Three in 10 children who completed primary school did not progress to secondary school. Low learning levels, marriage, poverty and status as Scheduled Caste negatively influence children’s enrolment in education beyond primary school.

Remedial education

Evaluation of the Secondary School Readiness Programme found a marked improvement in average test scores between baseline and endline assessments. Increases were highest for language: average test scores increased by 13 percentage points for Hindi and by more than 9 percentage points for Odia. Gains in average test scores were lowest for Science in Sambalpur (1.2 percentage points) and Environmental Studies in Hardoi (3 percentage points). There was positive correlation between test score gains and participation in the programme, particularly for Mathematics. Findings will inform a more rigorous evaluation using experimental research methods.

Kusuma Fellowships

Fellows spend less time on domestic chores, more time on academic studies and are more likely to use private tuition compared with unsuccessful applicants. At the end of the first year of the evaluation, Fellows and unsuccessful applicants performed equally well in Class 11 examinations. Next year, the research will assess the impact of the fellowship on student performance in Class 12 Board examinations and track student transition from secondary to higher or further education.

Student attainment

This study showed that a variety of factors influence student attainment, including the distance students travel to school, teacher vacancies and absenteeism, engagement in Kusuma’s teacher professional development programme by teachers, variability in how remedial education programmes are implemented, and use of private tuition. Students reported that school libraries helped them to learn, particularly when teacher vacancies or poor quality teaching affected their learning.
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