

# KUSUMA RATNA FELLOWSHIP

PROJECT DESCRIPTION – FEBRUARY 2012

<b>Partner:</b>	Sambalpur Integrated Development Institute (SIDI)
<b>Location:</b>	Sambalpur, Orissa, India
<b>Target Group:</b>	Teenagers and young people aged 16 – 21 years from Sambalpur
<b>Number of Beneficiaries:</b>	300 Students
<b>Grant Period:</b>	1 April 2009 to 31 March 2013
<b>Grant Amount:</b>	£174,719 (4 years)



## Objectives

- To increase access to higher education for bright students from underprivileged backgrounds.
- To provide a stipend and academic support to bright students from underprivileged backgrounds.

## Description

The programme supports 300 bright secondary school students from disadvantaged and underprivileged backgrounds, enabling them to complete Classes 11 and 12 and gain entry into higher education and professional courses. Eligibility is based on a minimum score of 60 per cent in the Class 10 examination and an annual family income of not more than £1,100. There are three cohorts, each made up of 100 students.

Each student is supported to develop an individual plan of action which included academic goals and goals for personal development and life skills. A group of highly motivated mentors provide mentoring to the students, to help develop self-confidence and improve academic performance.

## Progress and Results

### Cohort One

These 100 students were inducted in 2009, made up of 63 male students and 37 female students. In March 2011, 67 students took the Class 12 examination and passed; and 32 students enrolled in higher education courses, including Bachelor of Arts, Science, Commerce and Technology degrees.

### Cohort Two

These 100 students were inducted in 2010, made up of 49 male students and 51 female students. In March 2011, 82 students took the Class 12 examination and passed; and 18 students enrolled in higher education courses, including

Bachelor of Arts, Science, Commerce Medicine and Technology degrees.

### Cohort Three

In September 2011, a cohort of 100 new students were selected for the programme. 85 students will be supported for Classes 11 and 12, based on an average Class 10 examination mark of 80 per cent. 15 students will be supported to pursue higher and professional courses, based on an average Class 12 examination mark of 67 per cent.

## Challenges

- Selecting bright students from within the specified economic criteria.
- Identifying and managing mentors in different locations of the district.
- Tracking the performance of Class 11 students, exacerbated by the absence of a uniform examination system at state level.
- Difficulties in initiating the training programmes due to government employees striking as part of the State's political agitations.

## New Development

On 26 December, 18 mentors and 187 mentees attended an annual review meeting, which focused on streamlining mentoring meetings and addressing the academic challenges the mentees face.

A needs assessment was conducted to identify the additional support required to improve students' examination results. Following this, the partner will now provide short-term remedial classes in English and Science during the summer vacation.



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