

DREAM CATCHERS



Collectives for Integrated Livelihood Initiatives

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Stories of Change from
School and Community Based Quality Improvement Program,
Jharkhand
by Collectives for Integrated Livelihood Initiatives (CInI)

Acknowledgement

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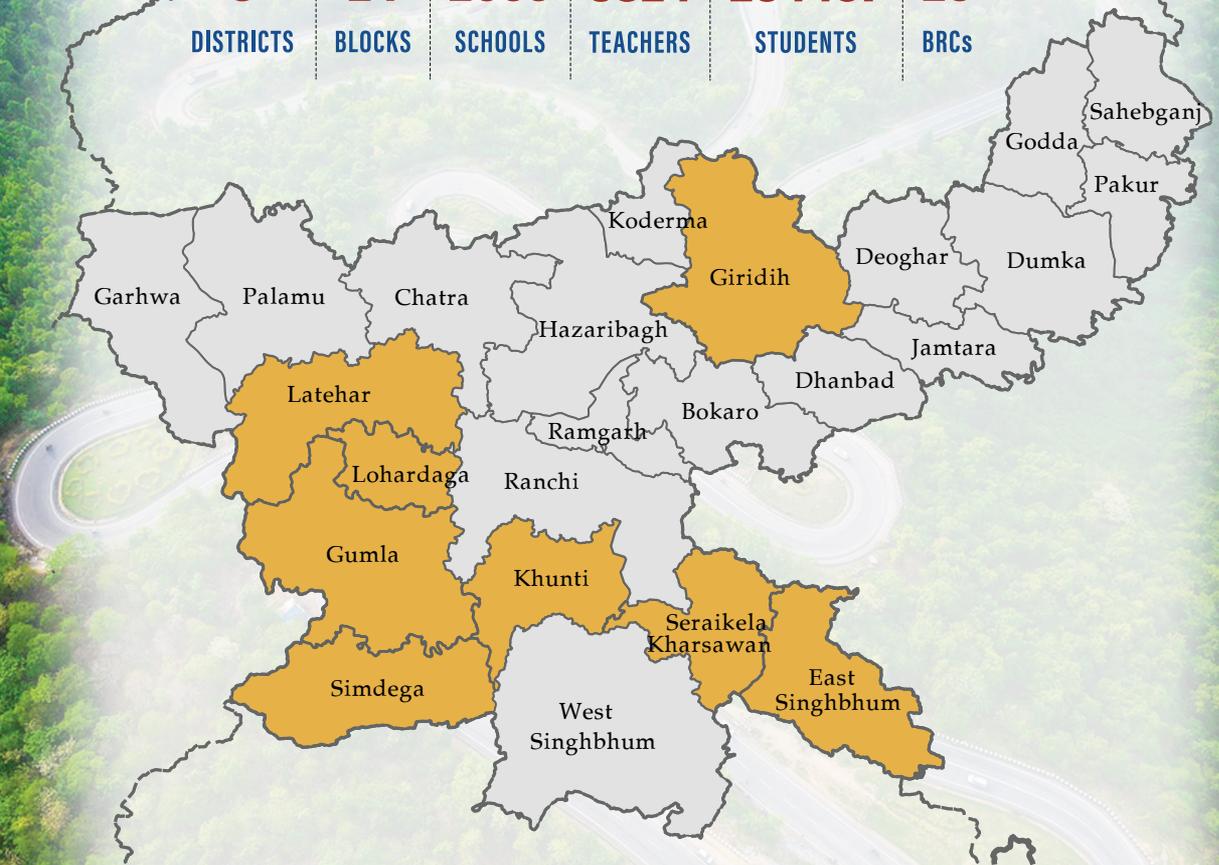
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OUR FOOTPRINTS

JHARKHAND STATE

8	24	2669	3824	234457	25
DISTRICTS	BLOCKS	SCHOOLS	TEACHERS	STUDENTS	BRCs



FOREWORD

It is with great pride and a deep sense of purpose that we present Dream Catchers –Stories of Change from School and Community Based Quality Improvement Program, Jharkhand, as a testament to the unwavering dedication of Collectives for Integrated Livelihood Initiatives (CInI) in shaping the educational landscape of rural and tribal communities in Jharkhand. Each story encapsulated in the booklet is a vibrant reflection of how CInI is positively helping the children of Jharkhand enhance their learning levels within an enabling school environment, empowering school management committees to create an environment that fosters growth, knowledge, and endless possibilities for education.



Our holistic approach to education extends far beyond the confines of a classroom. It is about igniting curiosity, nurturing imagination, and fostering a sense of community involvement. We strive to make education a beacon of hope and a catalyst for change.

The pandemic presented unprecedented challenges overall, especially in education. Yet, it also brought forth the power of collective effort. Our local volunteer-driven initiatives during the pandemic earned us the prestigious I-Volunteer Awards 2022, a recognition of resilience and determination of the volunteers, our teams and the communities we serve.

For us, education has a direct connect to the overall wellbeing of the communities. We have seen that with increased income, the first thing the parent thinks of is improving education of their children. Through these case studies, we celebrate the journey of children, teachers, our stakeholders and colleagues whose potential shine brighter each day. They are tomorrow's leaders, and we are honoured to be part of their dream.

As you turn the pages of this booklet, may you be inspired by the stories of courage, resilience, and hope, and join us in our mission to create a lasting impact through the power of education.

Ganesh Neelam
Executive Director
CInI



NOT OUT



Cricket is his favourite sport and he idolises Mahindra Singh Dhoni, the Indian cricket superstar from his home state of Jharkhand.

But he could not dream of pursuing his passion. Raj Behra of Board MS School Ghatshila dropped out of school after class 8. His father is a rickshaw puller and his elder brother is in and out of job. Hence he is expected to join hands in earning for the family. The ceiling of their small 2 room house may come crashing any day.

So, ironically, Raj started working in a sports gear shop where he could not buy anything for himself. He worked 12

hours from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM.

The school headmistress Vimla Sekunda, who was updating the *shishu panji* realized that Raj has not been admitted to any school after passing out from her school. She informed CInI field coordinator, who tracked down Raj immediately, spoke to the parents and convinced them to get Raj admitted to school. He urged Raj to find time for school. He also facilitated the process of admission with the help of the headmistress. Raj is now admitted to Marwadi +2 HS, Ghatsila and attends school regularly.

He is still working in the shop outside school hours, but finds a couple of hours to do his study at home. He is confident that he can appear for his boards and, who knows, someday he may get some professional training in his preferred sport.

“CInI’s education program has steadily grown over the years, currently reaching out to 2000+ schools operational across 8 districts in Jharkhand and bringing meaningful change at the community level. By enhancing school environments and strengthening library resources, it has contributed to improving children’s learning experiences. Its focus on community engagement has helped reach more families, fostering aspirations for education. Through a collaborative approach with the education department, the program continues to support a stronger and more inclusive learning ecosystem.”

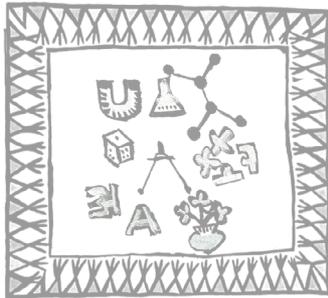


SIRSHENDU PAUL, Team Leader, CInI, Jharkhand.





CORNER STONE



Amit Kumar has always shared with his mother the stories he encounters while working in the Department. He tells her how he finds small children struggling to get the bare necessities like education.

He comes from Godda district of Jharkhand, and people say that Godda has a good reputation of producing young crop of able officers. Amit Kumar himself is the subdivisional education officer at a very young age. His mother is very proud of him and trusts that he will surely and significantly bring about changes in the lives of the children he works for.

“Family matters! I invited my teachers when I got through my service exams. They are my family too.”

So, he expects that teachers of Jharkhand would come together as guiding members of a family to build the future of the children who need it the most. Because many children come from very poor families of farmers and daily wage earners and often they drop out easily because of economic pressure. To retain them is most important.

So when CInI approached him with the proposal of building a resource centre at the DIET, he was excited and granted permission immediately. Other officials in the department came forward and expedited the process. The center is now all set and equipped with various teaching learning materials starting from those which encourages functional literacy and numeracy, science learning along with other school subjects. The teachers and trainers come together regularly to train and share knowledge making it a functional Resource Center.

Amit Kumar encourages teachers to learn well and employ the strategies in their classrooms. He believes that if teachers see how Maths, Science, Language corners can be built and are inspired to do the same in their own schools, the schools would become a very interesting place for children. It would surely arrest dropout rate.

“Changes need not always be big. Even small changes may lead to big reforms...”, says Amit Kumar.



MATH

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FINDING VOICE



Sini is the youngest of 6 children in her family, and the parents did not have enough time to take care of her. As a result, she missed school regularly. If ever she went to school, she could not catch up with her missed studies and fell short of her age appropriate level. Failure made her upset.

Her teacher Sonamati Dhan, from GMS Sadigaon, decided to bring her to school regularly. Sini ran far away into the forest whenever her teacher, and her friends from *prayas dal** at school came looking for her. If she was caught unawares, she would scream and scratch, refusing to go to school. Sonamati spoke to the family and ensured that Sini



HAT-TRICK



Ask anyone in Okra village, and they would vouch that Ranthu and Anuj are the naughtiest. Ranthu is in class 1 and Anuj in class 4.

Their parents found it difficult to keep them at home or make them study during the vacations. They ran about playing with cycle tyres the entire day. And when the school resumed, it was impossible to bring them back to studies.

So, when, during the holidays, CInI proposed *Gram Siksha Sangam* for kids, all parents were relieved. The intention was to keep children engaged with meaningful learning tasks. However, the parents of Anuj and Ranthu

were not sure. Would they ever attend?

They were surprised when they found their naughty ones listening to stories, drawing pictures from stories, making paper boats or enjoying other crafts, observing 'magic' science experiments, acting in plays in the open air learning space facilitated by CInI. The jhola library of pocket boards full of simple and pictorial story books, the hanging charts and posters made the space fetching. The kids even refused to go for animal herding every morning, as they did not want to miss the fun. They were even allowed to take the books home, which they handled responsibly.

Soon the parents were also drawn by the activities at the open learning centres. They started to learn small things—identifying names from cards, making small crafts and experimenting with low cost no cost materials. The idea was so successful, that CInI continued it during other school breaks like summer vacations.

These days, Anuj and Ranthu, both attend the *Gram Siksha Sangam* with their parents and it's difficult to tell who enjoy the classes most— the parents or the children.

CInI has been doing good work. During summer vacation they organised Gram Siksha Sangam which yielded good results. The children were connected to learning even during vacation.

NALINI RANJAN,
Ex-ADPO
Khunti





NOT ALONE



Sunita Tamera has been a teacher for 20 years at Government Primary School, Mundo. She had always wanted to be a teacher, as she was inspired by hers. But for last 2 years she has been a single teacher, managing 70 plus kids. This was very difficult. How would she be able to manage multiple levels?

When CInI stepped in, she learnt how even children can assist her in managing classes. Children's Parliament was activated and they actively took responsibility of managing lower classes, as she taught higher classes. The FLN strategies helped in self learning and peer learning, giving her more time to spend with those who needed more

attention. She prepares all TLMs at home, so that there is no time wasted during class hours.

But the most helpful strategy was to activate the SMC in assisting her in class, as suggested by CInI. Madhu Oraon, the SMC Vice President, a mother of two kids who study in the same school, comes daily to teach.

Sunita feels thankful and is no longer stressed out. "Children could not do money transactions earlier. The FLN methods have made them confident enough and they know exactly how much change they would get back from shopkeepers."

Language Development Activities	
Vocabulary building	Picture reading
Decoding	Read Aloud
Blending of words	Shared reading
Labeling of objects around	Independent reading
Sentence Formation	Peer reading
Rhymes	

Numeracy Activities
Number games
Number identification, counting, sorting, organising with tools
Understanding quantity, shapes, patterns, with the use of pebbles, sticks, dienes block, mathemat, place value kits





UNDER HIS WINGS



Coming from a lower caste, Dharmendra Kumar Ram had struggled for social acceptance in his village. He is a musician to the core. He is the most enthusiastic member of his musical band, which plays banjo, casio and piano on various occasions. He also has a cycle repair shop from where he makes his living.

But that alone is not enough for him. He feels that his knowledge should pass on to the next generation.

Dharmendra was voted as the SMC President of Upgraded Government School, Jalim, Karmahi Dakshin, Latehar in 2023 because of his sheer enthusiasm. The

village recognized his potential and his caste did not matter any longer. Like many other schools, this school also has two teachers, who are struggling to manage all students, especially on days when they both have government duties.

Dharmendra helped the school to get the child parliament together, who share the responsibilities. He comes everyday to school and conducts classes. Children love his classes. He has acquired the skills which CInI has imparted to the teachers—ensuring FLN or using the library to develop language skills. But what he excels at is training children in music and dance, which the children enjoy so much.

So, on occasions like Independence Day or Teachers' Day, the school compound turns into a colourful space where children perform dance and music taught by their favourite teacher.

Parents play a very significant role in the education experience of children. In the program, the field team closely engages with the community by discussing aspects pertaining to student attendance, learning and also continuity of the schooling process. Along with that, school management committees are enabled in each of the intervention schools. The SMC members are identified and taken through a training session, post which they are guided to participate in the school meetings in an effective manner.



DIVYA JYOTI TIRKEY
CInI





LIBRARY OF DREAMS



When Agnes Rita Lakra tells the story ‘*nav pe gaon*’ (Village on a boat) from the Big Book she grabbed from the school library, children are transfixed. Sometimes the little ones want her to repeat the same story over and over again. And she would oblige.

Earlier, the books in the library were placed inside the cupboards and were rarely used so much. Students’ reading habit was poor. Since CInI came to the school with loads of colourful, simply written picture books for class as well as school libraries, the scenario changed. Classroom turned colourful with books in all nooks and corners. Students could pick up books from the *jhola* or pocket library and

read them on their own (individual and independent reading), or with friends (shared reading). The language teachers exactly know how to use the books effectively for language learning as they have picked up tips from CInI's training.

CInI has also ensured that there is an Book Issue Register where children could enter the books they choose. A Library Committee was formed who would monitor the use of the library.

The school is a happy reading space now.

NEP 2020 has also given importance to school and community libraries to enhance the reading abilities among children. Teachers in the intervention schools are oriented about the library component. The aim of the orientation is to give a historical and theoretical grounding on the role of children's literature in their development and also on setting up a library section to run it effectively. Along with training, the schools are provided with a set of children's literature that is suitable to their age and context. This set of books complement the already available set of books given by the school education department. Library space is prepared in the school and library component is initiated in a way such that it becomes an integral part of the school life.



MAMURA KHAN
CInI



CInI has instilled reading habit in the most reluctant children. Just what we needed the most.

Birenda Prasad,

Headmaster
Upgraded Primary,
Udaypura





FIRM FENCE



A pathway to the river Karkari passed through the school compound of Government Upgraded High School, Doria. There was no fence around the school, so community members took the route during school hours, which disturbed and distracted the students. The cows and goats grazed within the campus. Also the school garden could not be maintained as the goats would chew on the new saplings planted by children.

The headmaster and the teachers were worried. In a meeting, which was facilitated by the CInI team, SMC members suggested that, as the letter to the government awaited response, they could start putting up the fence.

The SMC rose up to the challenge and contributed the materials and volunteered labour. They agreed on *Shram daan*.

The Head Master Bandhu Tuti contributed 100 bamboos and the community contributed 40. 200 pieces of stumps were contributed by community and the school contributed the nails and wire needed.

The community sprung up in action within no time. In the one week that it took to construct the fence, the parents and students, the teachers and CInI field facilitators took turns to measure, plan, dig holes, cut bamboos and place them around the school. They also constructed a shaded cycle stand where students and teachers can park their bicycles and bikes guarded from the sun and the rain.

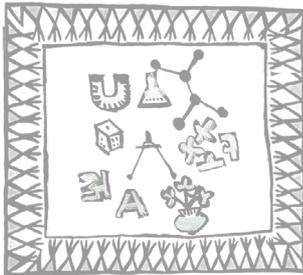
The students have grown a beautiful garden now, blooming with bougainvilleas and chrysanthemums. Their kitchen garden patch has aubergines and tomatoes, papayas and leafy vegetables.

It was a celebration of voluntary community contribution which everyone takes pride in.





RIGHT RESOURCES



Pratima Kumari of Government Primary School, Barwatoli, felt a need to have a space where she could meet other teachers and trainers where she could share the stories of her classroom and look for solutions when faced with teaching learning challenges. Her prayers were heard.

CInI applied for the Special Central Assistance fund of Ministry of Social Development and to build upon the resources of a Block Resource Centre. The proposal was strong and the budget was found very reasonable. So, CInI was granted the project for the years 2020-2022 to make the BRC resource rich in Lohardaga and Senha and set up school libraries in the district.

CInI committed to provide human resource while all materials were to be acquired from the department.

The day Pratima walked into the new resource room of Kisko block of Lohardaga district, she was excited beyond words. The big room was full of books, science equipment, charts and posters, Teaching Learning Materials and indoor games materials. There were corners set up where students could play with legos or jig saws in Maths corner, or learn English words in English corner, flip through Big Books in Hindi corner or look through a Telescope in Science corner. It was really inspiring. She went ahead and set up subject corners in her own school very soon. The students now enjoy the corner activities.

The BRC gradually developed into a space where the teachers were trained by CInI Resource persons regularly on topics like Foundational Literacy and Numeracy, Use of Teaching Learning Materials, Science Pedagogy and *Shishu Panji* update. Teachers were oriented on Special Training Centres for out of School children (as per directives from the state), and Project Impact (as per directives from state). Review and planning meetings with block and district level departments are conducted along with trainings of active SMC members. Even the students come regularly to use the wonderful TLMs and it's difficult to send them home after their engagements. Children's events are also conducted.

Beyond the project years, CInI continued to work in Kisko district.

Pratima wants such resource centres in all blocks so that every child gets the benefit which her students does.





GROW A GARDEN



It's a papaya curry for MDM on one day, and plantain curry the next day. Some students prefer to have mixed vegetables with Tomato, Cauliflower, Beans and Pumpkin for MDM. It's just like home food. Sometimes even better. All of these grow in the school kitchen garden in Upgraded Middle School, Choira. But this is not all. Apart from the seasonal vegetables, the school has also planted a small orchard which has Mango, Gooseberry, Guava, Jackfruit, Orange trees. There are Sal and Mahua trees as well.

All the 3 teachers and students are engaged in garden activity for an hour every day. They all love gardening and know the ins and outs—composting, preparing the soil, digging furrows,

planting saplings, taking care, treating pests or harvesting. Also, the physical activity has kept them healthy and inculcated the habit of team work.

Assistant Teacher Tushar Kant Pandit joined the school 8 years back and since then he took great interest in school garden. Luckily for him,

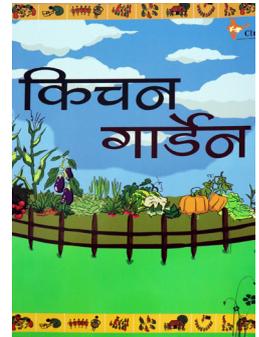


CInI stepped in around the same time. The CInI Field Coordinator provided guidance on setting up the school garden based on what to grow in which season,

and how to mobilise resources, etc. He also personally bought 60-65 plants for the school garden. CInI also activated the SMC which provides seeds, saplings and even tractor full of compost in times of need.

Tushar Kant came across the CInI resource book (in comics format) on Kitchen Garden which has a list of Science and Math activities across each grade. He studied them well and started applying them in his Science classes. Children love to observe, hypothesize, experiment in his class. The lessons are more engaging and hands on.

Today, the seasonal kitchen garden initiative is active in 548 government schools across programme area.



School and Community Based Quality Improvement Program SCQuIP

In the year 2008, an operational framework was developed based on the study conducted by the East India office of the Institute for Human Development, New Delhi.

Based on the study, CInI initiated direct implementation through RIP in the year 2011 in Khunti, Murhu, Torpa blocks of Khunti District. It aimed at improving reading skills among 600 students studying in elementary grades (II to V) in selected 30 schools. The impact assessment showed that against the planned target of 600 children, 862 children from classes II to V accessed quality education and exhibited positive improvement in reading skills across 36 government schools in 3 blocks.

Getting inspiration from the success of RIP, CInI aspired to work on a holistic school improvement programme. Consequently, in June 2012, the Trusts supported CInI through a grant towards a three year project titled “School and Community based Quality Improvement Programme (SCQuIP) for Primary and Secondary level Education in Khunti District, Jharkhand”.

The third-party evaluation report revealed some major outcomes of the

programme like: Matriculation result of remedial coaching classes for the year 2013 was 87% against the district average of 64%. The SCQuIP centres helped the children in easy, effective and speedy transition from their home language (Mundari and Sadri) to the school language (Hindi) and made them more articulate, bold and confident. Significant improvement was observed across all subjects in the case of 1300 students from classes II to III as against a planned target of 1000 students. English scores increased from 6% at baseline to 28%, Maths scores were up from 9% in baseline to 39% and Hindi scores increased from 20% in baseline to 42%.

Intensive community participation, increase in enrollment and retention in the project schools and visible impact in the learning levels of children in SCQuIP generated a lot of excitement and enthusiasm among the adjacent schools/ villages. CInI received requests from the government school teachers and from villagers to expand this program in their villages and schools. Hence SCQuIP program was expanded to another 25 schools. The impact study report 2015,

revealed that there was a positive trend in the learning levels of students. It also revealed that – School Improvement Program was successful in bringing about positive changes in the learning outcomes of the students as compared to the baseline tests; the students' scores in English and Hindi languages had improved; besides, non-cognitive skills such as punctuality, discipline, love for learning, regularity, respect for elders, self-confidence and leadership skills had also developed; there was a growing involvement of the parents and community members in the educational process; the program had also positively impacted the government and para-teachers

Taking learning from the previous years, a project implementation plan 2015-20 was developed with a goal of providing access to quality education to around 70,000 children studying in 487 government schools in three blocks of Khunti district viz. Khunti, Murhu and Torpa in Jharkhand. The strategy was to implement the school improvement activities in close coordination with the School Management Committee Members and the community. The components included

- a. Enhancing Student Learning
- b. Mobilising and Strengthening the community and
- c. Developing models and building institutional capacity

The work flowed through all BRCs

wherein strategy was to capacitate the government teachers, Cluster Resource Persons and Block Resource Persons. Simultaneously support at the field was provided for better implementation.

The work was further replicated in another two districts Hazaribagh and East Singhbhum, which were also livelihood clusters of CInI. In the year 2022, work was started in Lohardaga district with support from the department. Thus, CInI has worked towards strengthening 10 Block Resource Centres along with education department in 4 districts (Khunti, Hazaribagh, East Singhbhum and Lohardaga) of Jharkhand.

The Longitudinal Study (2020) mentions that students in intervention schools have scored a higher percentage of marks when compared to students in control schools. The reports have also mentioned about improvement of confidence of students, increased awareness of parents and establishment of a learning community. A strong community connection has been built in the schools. Further State and District Departments have also partnered with CInI to scale the work.

Due to Covid situation in 2019-20 and 2020-21, the team had to change the strategy from working in schools to working with children either online or at the village level. Because the extent of digital divide was large the work mostly happened through volunteers and team members directly reaching the children and community at the

village level. Community Libraries, Mini Libraries were set up in villages and Jhola library was also implemented by the team.

The Jharkhand State Education Project Council (JEPC) has also partnered with CInI to strengthen the School Management Committees of 80 leader schools across 24 districts in Jharkhand. A partnership is also done with JEPC to scale the Phase 2 of Education Program in 8 districts of Jharkhand with the objectives to:

1. Improve teaching-learning processes in classroom towards better FLN and science and math education.
2. Enhance learning environment in schools to create conducive atmosphere.
3. Strengthen school systems and systemic leadership.
4. Strengthen SMCs and the local community towards ownership in school

List of Abbreviations:

CInI:	Collectives for Integrated Livelihood Initiatives
SCQuIP:	School and Community based Quality Improvement Programme
JEPC:	Jharkhand Education Project Council
GMS:	Government Middle School
HS:	High School
DIET:	District Institute of Educational Training
FLN:	Functional Literacy and Numeracy
TLM:	Teaching Learning Material
SMC:	School Management Committee
BRC:	Block Resource Centre
MDM:	Mid Day Meal
RIP:	Reading Improvement Programme

About Us

Since 2007, Collectives for Integrated Livelihood Initiatives (CInI) has worked to enhance the well-being of rural and tribal communities in the Central Indian belt. By focusing on sustainable income growth and improved quality of life, CInI empowers tribal and rural households through holistic, scalable programs in agriculture-based livelihoods, education, water and sanitation, and primary healthcare.

Our flagship initiative, "**Lakhpati Kisan**" has enabled over 100,000 small and marginal tribal and rural families to move on the Lakhpati pathway by addressing economic, social, and environmental security. With the focus on understanding the communities and enabling them to meet their aspirations, the activities are targeted to strengthen the education, health, water and sanitation aspects from the perspective of the families.

CInI prioritizes the ecosystem based approach, wherein the community institutions are the core and the stakeholders such as Government, Market, Finance Institutions, Technology Players, Private Players, and others engage as partners, providers, and financial institutions.

