



# **SOWING DREAMS**

**Collectives for Integrated Livelihood Initiatives (CInI)**

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Stories of Hope from  
School and Community Based Quality Improvement  
Program, ODISHA

by

Collectives for Integrated Livelihood Initiatives (CInI)

## Acknowledgement

CInI acknowledges the support of Tata Trusts, District Institute of Education and Training (DIETs), District Education Officers (DEOs), Block Education Officers (BEOs), Child Development Program Officers (CDPOs), Head Teachers, Teachers, Supervisors, Anganwadi Workers involved in the project in Rayagada, Kandhamal, and Kalahandi districts. This Case Study Booklet would not have been possible without the help of community members, parents and students.

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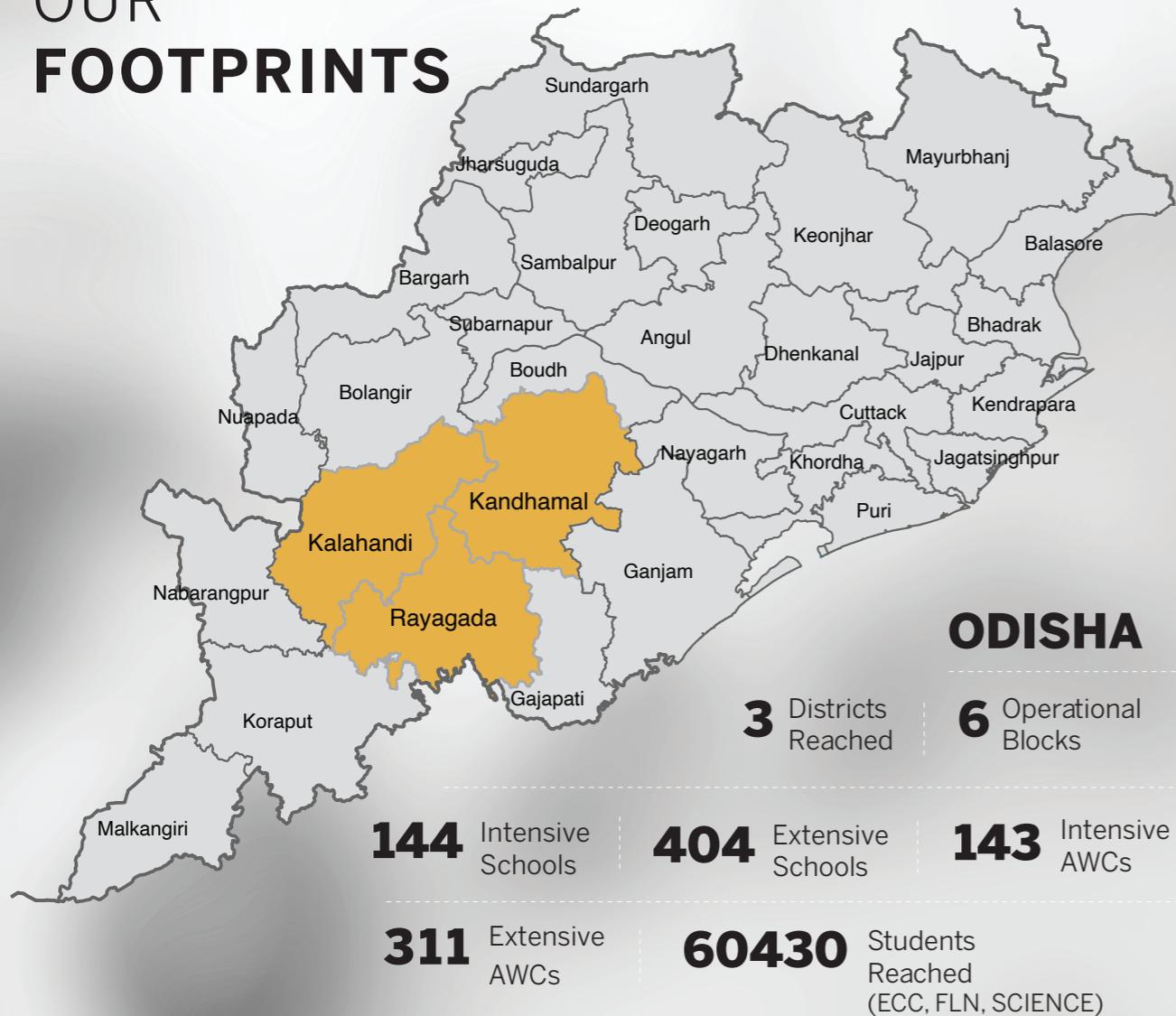
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# OUR FOOTPRINTS



# FOREWORD

Education is not merely about textbooks and classrooms—it is about transforming lives, shaping minds, and building a future grounded in curiosity, understanding, and empowerment. At CInI, we believe that when education reaches beyond its conventional boundaries, it has the power to inspire not just students, but entire communities.



This booklet brings together stories from the field—of students, school teachers, School Management Committee (SMC) members, government officials, and community members—whose lives have been touched by CInI’s education initiatives in Odisha. These narratives reflect the deep and lasting impact of our work, not just within school walls, but in the hearts and minds of people.

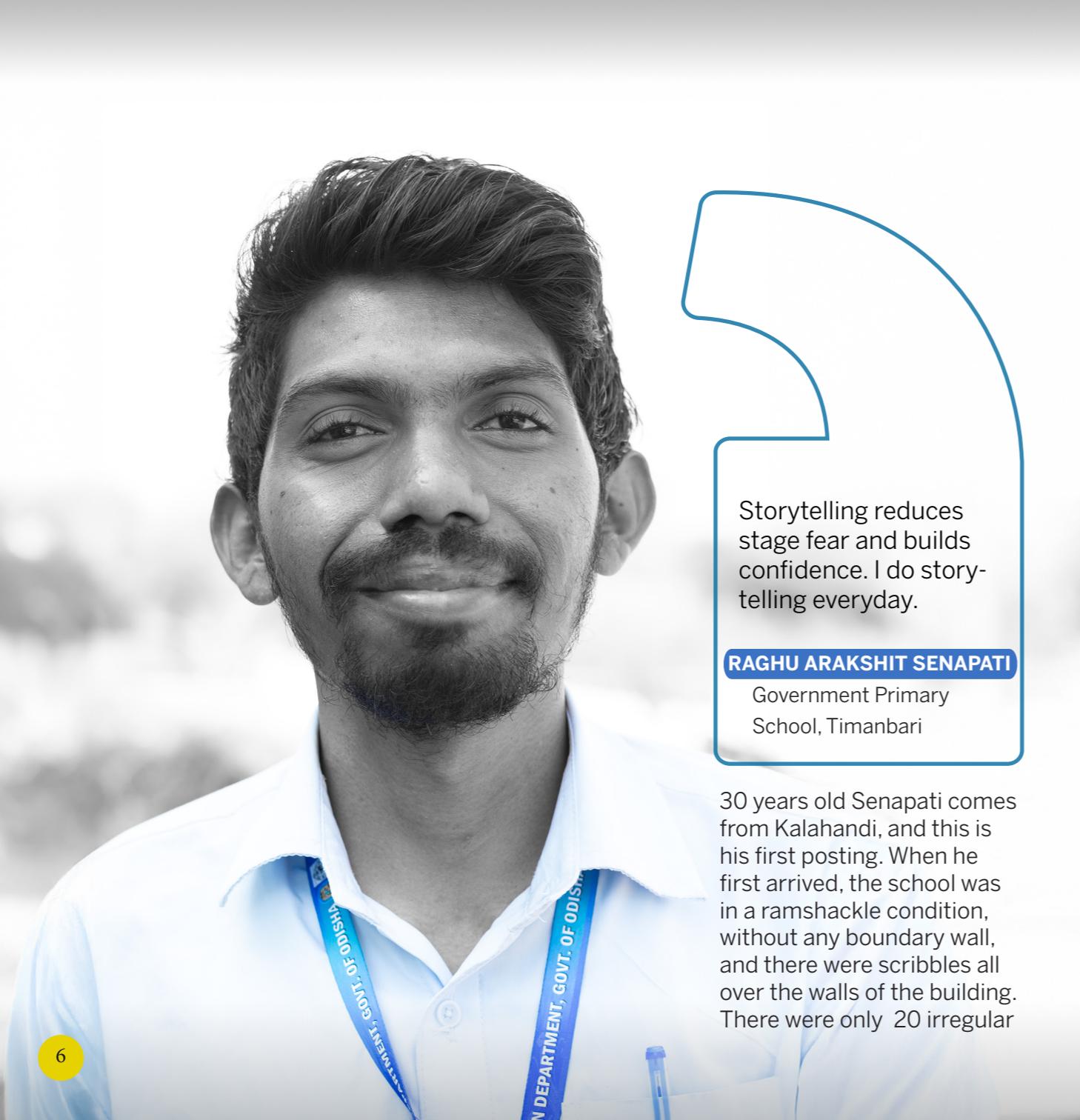
Through innovative tools like Jhola Libraries, we have seen how access to books can ignite a love for reading even among adults, such as a village tailor who found joy and purpose in literature. Storytelling sessions, learning through poems, and creative teaching methods are not only helping children grasp concepts better but are also encouraging them to take knowledge home—sharing it with their mothers and family members, thus creating ripples of learning in their households.

These stories are more than just individual journeys—they are powerful testaments to a shift in how education is perceived and practised. They show us that when communities are engaged, and when learning is made joyful and relevant, education becomes a movement.

For us at CInI, seeing these changes is deeply rewarding. It gives us hope that we are moving in the right direction—helping to make education more meaningful, and slowly but surely, changing the way people think and learn together.

We hope these stories will touch your heart just as they have touched ours.

*Ganesh Neelam*  
**Ganesh Neelam**  
 Executive Director  
 CInI

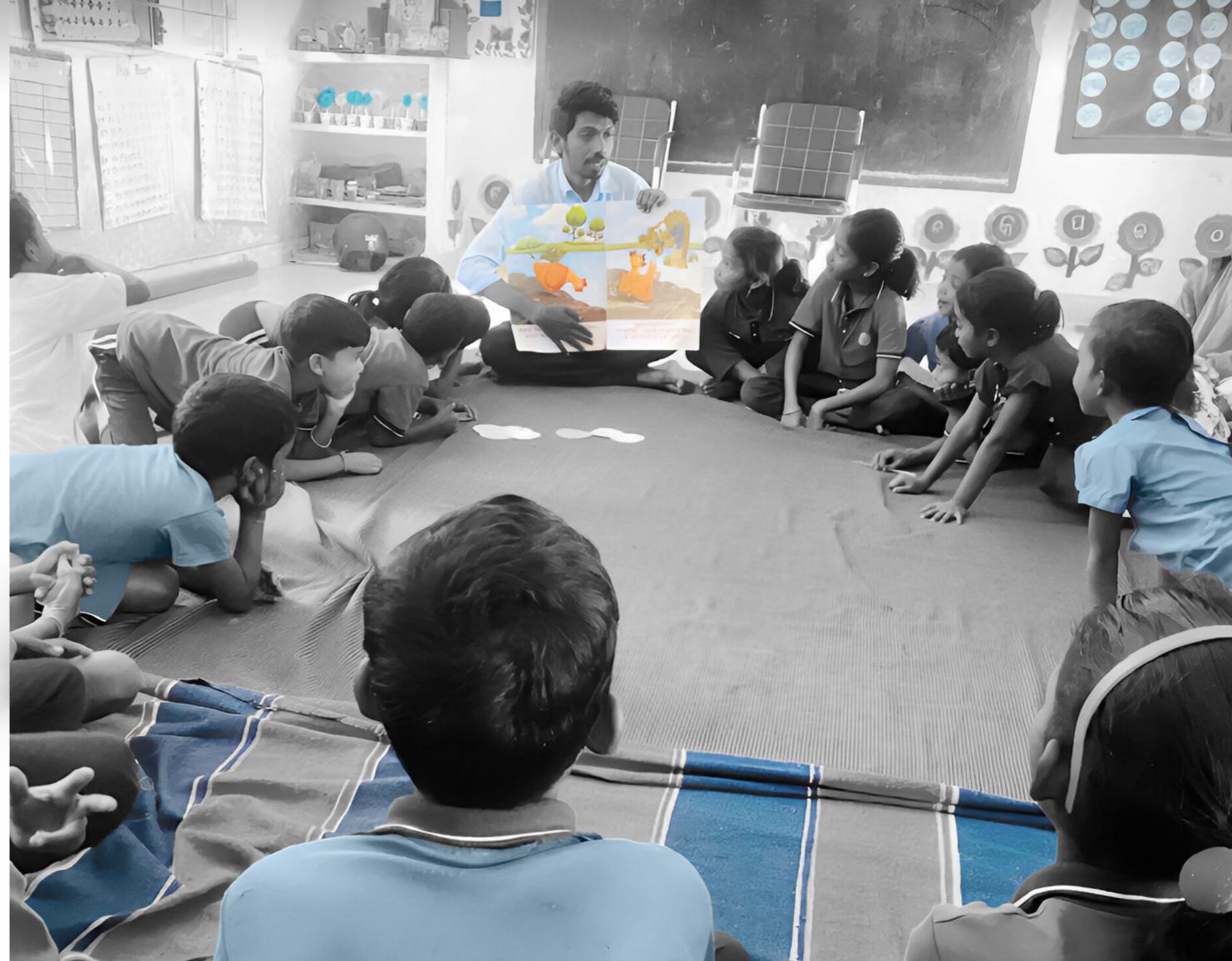


Storytelling reduces stage fear and builds confidence. I do storytelling everyday.

**RAGHU ARAKSHIT SENAPATI**

Government Primary School, Timanbari

30 years old Senapati comes from Kalahandi, and this is his first posting. When he first arrived, the school was in a ramshackle condition, without any boundary wall, and there were scribbles all over the walls of the building. There were only 20 irregular



children. He made up his mind to turn the condition around and started working extra hours to make the school fetching for the students. It helped a lot when CInI trained teachers on FLN and library, and he found the story telling activity most interesting and engaging. He tells stories every day, thus developing confidence, building vocabulary, increasing comprehension, and honing listening and speaking skills of the students. Students flocked to school, parents took more care to send them regularly, and their results also improved. On this day, there are 47 enthusiastic children enrolled.



MANASI HARPAL



Manasi is in Class 3. She likes her teacher Raghu A Senapati's storytelling strategies and has picked them up. Give her any three words and she will weave a story. She employs acting and dialogues in the stories she crafts, which makes her delivery captivating. In a Block level speech competition in Kalahandi district, she stood 3rd. Her confidence and creative ideas won her a special mention.

Chandini's mother left her when she was very young. Her father remarried. She was not taken care of at home. This put a stress on her young mind and it impacted her social behaviour. She would come to the school only for food. But the engaging classroom transactions, after CInI's interventions, and her teacher's enthusiasm to help her, brought about significant changes. Now she is a regular student at school and works hard to bridge the gap. She is in class 5.



CHANDINI NAG

Chabita is from an indigenous community. Like Manasi, she is also in class 3. She lives on the top of the hills. She walks 2 KM to reach school everyday. She works hard and is also good at studies. The new books in the school library, which are accessible to all students, attract her a lot.



CHABITA MAJHI



I feel relaxed when I read books. So, I pick up any book which attracts me.

**GANDHARVA NAG**  
Community Member  
Hata Muniguda

Gandharva has studied till class 7. He could not continue because of economic constraints in a family of 7 children. There was no opportunity to read books or newspapers. He took up tailoring to support his family.



He was surprised when CINI started a community library inside the Hata Muniguda. The place looks cheerful with colourful picture books hanging. Children and others throng to pick up books and read on their own. He gathered courage and between his chores, picked up a book or two. His reading skill was enough to read the very simply written and colourfully illustrated Big Books. He enjoyed very much. Now he comes to pick up his book regularly.



Now, in the library, children know which books they have read, and which they have to read.

**SUCHISMITA DEHURY**

Teacher  
PS, Irpigura

Suchismita had always wanted to be a Police officer. But her father passed away early, and she had to take a quick decision. She decided to become a school teacher, and her first posting was in GPS Irpigura. The children



in the school come from the family of farmers and labours. She noticed that they lacked confidence and had problems in language acquisition.

With the trainings she received from CInI, Suchismita made changes in her strategies. Earlier children learnt only from books, but now they learn language through action songs, stories and multiple TLMs. Writing is introduced through sandpit activities. The change is evident. Suchismita speaks highly about CInI trainings in all forums.



I like it when children ask questions after I tell my stories. I know they had been listening.

**SURJA MAJHI**

Community Member  
Sanjamkhieju



Surja Majhi's father used to tell her bed time fantasy stories when she was young. She remembers those stories which were about the Paharia Kondh community she belongs to.

Now, as a grandmother, she comes to the school every day to fetch her grand child. Sometimes she sits with the students and tells them the story of the old couple who lived up on the hills. The students gather around her and enjoy her storytelling. Encouraged by CInI, story telling has become a regular activity in schools to entertain and foster mother language learning and reinforce traditional knowledge and values.



**PRAMESH PIDIKAKA**  
Minahala Anganwadi

Pramesh is just 5, and he is naughty, as kids of his age should be. He has two siblings- an older one and a younger one. His mother feels that he is more confident than the older child, as he has had better exposure in his Anganwadi, where CInI has trained the the anganwadi worker. After returning from Anganwadi everyday, Pramesh calls his mother and demonstrates enthusiastically all that he has learnt. He considers his teacher as his idol and would hear nothing against her. Her mother monitors his progress proudly and wants to continue his education.



**SANJAY TOIKA**

Kumbhar Dhamuni 2 Anganwadi

Sanjay Toika is also 5 and it is difficult to keep him at home. But he has regular attendance at Anganwadi. His mother wants her son to be a doctor. She attends the mothers' meetings at the Anganwadi regularly, where the teacher and the CInI facilitator have guided her on how to support her child at home. She uses the same methods at home with materials available, and has noted that her son is quick to pick up language and numeracy.



CInI's training should be imparted in all schools.

**JAGANNATH MEHER**

Principal-in-Charge  
DIET, Rayagada

In April 2024, an assessment of the schools of Rayagada showed that libraries were not functional. Jagannath Meher, who is also the library incharge, decided to focus on libraries. Meanwhile CInI conducted training on libraries too. Trained by CInI, Jagannath ensured that the schools made their libraries functional. It was presented in a state programme where there were representations from 10 districts. Rayagada's efforts to make libraries functional was much appreciated. Jagannath wishes to train all 135 CRCCs in the Library module as it has helped children in oral language development and attaining reading fluency.



Good teaching strategies will help us to overcome problems like lack of teachers.

**SUKANTA KUMAR  
DATTA RAY**

CRCC, Durgapanga

Datta Ray has 17 years of teaching experience and has been District Resource Person for 11 years. He had always liked academic work and aspires for positive changes. CInI's trainings have further strengthened his resolve to support the teachers of his cluster by providing innovative strategies of classroom transaction. He has built an FLN park, a very exciting space for both teachers and students to teach and learn language and numeracy. He has also started his own school and is employing the same strategies like pre writing exercises, use of sand pits and FLN activities which he has picked up from CInI.



If they read now,  
they will have a  
bright future ahead.

**MAMATA KUSULIYA**

Community member  
Gram Siksha  
Samrudhi program,  
Kiribiri



CInI has started Gram Siksha Samrudhi program in Kiribiri village. It is an open air community space of interaction and learning, not only for the children, but also for the community members, who facilitate the learning for children and also engage in book reading, science and other activities facilitated by CInI.

Often children perform poems and plays, which they have read at school, or, from books in the library. The proud parents cheer them. Even the community members tales stories of their childhood, which the children enjoy immensely.



Children love to harvest the vegetables they grow.

**MINAKHI BEHERA**

Head Mistress  
Govt Primary School,  
Sinaguda

Minakhi had been attending the monthly cluster sharing meetings at Radiguma Upper Primary School regularly.



She noticed that the school has a bountiful kitchen garden which was promoted by CInI. The students get vegetables from the garden, which add to the nutrition of their midday meal. Inspired, she started a kitchen garden in her school with the help of Assistant Teacher Susamarani Sahoo and the students. The community also took interest and provided them with seeds and also constructed a scaffold. The garden blooms with flowers and the vegetables they grow are enough to make the midday meal tastier and healthier.

## Odisha's Tribal Heartland: A Focus on Education in Underserved Regions

Odisha is one of India's states renowned for its rich tribal diversity. Many of its districts—particularly those in the southern belt—are home to a wide range of indigenous communities. Among these, the districts of Rayagada, Kandhamal, and Kalahandi stand out due to their substantial tribal populations.

### Rayagada District (Bissamcuttack & Muniguda Blocks)

These blocks are predominantly inhabited by tribal communities, particularly the Dongria Kondh, a group classified as a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG). Residing in remote, hilly terrain, they rely heavily on forest resources for their livelihood. The region faces significant challenges related to education and infrastructure, marked by low literacy rates and limited access to basic services.

### Kandhamal District (Kotagarh & Tumudibandh Blocks)

Kotagarh and Tumudibandh are among the most underdeveloped blocks in Kandhamal. They are home to the Kutia Kondh, another PVTG. The challenging geography severely restricts transportation and access to government services. While some development has occurred in recent years, much remains to be done.

### Kalahandi District (Lanjigarh & Thuamul Rampur Blocks)

These blocks also host a significant tribal population and face similar issues of underdevelopment. Basic amenities such as transport, healthcare, and education remain inadequate, contributing to ongoing socio-economic hardships.

### Educational Landscape and Cultural Identity

Primary and pre-school education across these tribal blocks has historically been weak, with low student attendance and high dropout rates. In recent years, however, there has been a focused effort to improve access to quality of education through targeted interventions.

Despite the challenges, these tribal communities have preserved their unique customs, languages, and traditional practices. Celebrations such as Niyamraja Parab, Chaiti Parab, and Nua Khai are integral to their cultural identity. Most communities live in closely-knit villages with mud-and-thatch houses and practice nature-based worship.

### Educational Interventions by CInI and Tata Trusts

In response to the ongoing challenges, CInI, with support from the Tata Trusts, launched a comprehensive educational initiative across key blocks including Bissamcuttack, Kotagarh, Lanjigarh and Thuamul Rampur in South Odisha.

### Key Focus Areas of the Program

- Improving Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) skills of children
- Enhancing School environment
- System strengthening
- Empowerment of School Management Committees (SMCs) and ensuring community engagement
- Library development and engaging children in library activities

## School and Community Based Quality Improvement Program (SCQuIP), Odisha

Since October 2022, the School and Community-Based Quality Improvement Program (SCQuIP) has been operational in Kandhamal, Rayagada, and Kalahandi-three of Odisha's most underserved districts with high concentrations of Adivasi (ST) and Dalit (SC) communities. These districts face persistent challenges related to poverty, low literacy, and limited access to quality education.

### Strategic Focus Areas

SCQuIP takes a holistic approach to improving education outcomes through:

- Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN): Strengthening early grade reading and numeracy using play-based, child-friendly methods.
- Teacher Capacity Building: Regular training and on-site academic support for improved pedagogy.
- Community Engagement: Active involvement of parents and School Management Committees (SMCs) to support learning.
- Library & Reading Culture: Promoting reading habits through vibrant school libraries.
- System Strengthening: Enhancing the role of Academic Resource Centres (ARCs) and Cluster Resource Centres (CRCs) to ensure continuous academic mentoring and school support.

### Context and Rationale

The districts have among the lowest literacy rates in Odisha (Rayagada: 49.76%, Kandhamal: 64.13%, Kalahandi: 59.22 – Census 2011) and a high percentage of ST and SC populations, many of whom face systemic barriers to education, including language, remoteness, and infrastructure gaps.

### Impact Approach

Implemented by Collectives for Integrated Livelihood Initiatives (CINI), SCQuIP combines classroom innovation, teacher development, community participation, and system-level support. The program is designed not only to improve learning outcomes but also to enable long-term, inclusive development through education.



### **List of Abbreviations:**

CInI:	Collectives for Integrated Livelihood Initiatives
CRCC:	Cluster Resource Center Coordinator
SCQuIP:	Schooland Community based Quality Improvement Programme
GPS:	Government Primary School
DIET:	District Institute of Education and Training
FLN:	Foundational Literacy and Numeracy
TLM:	Teaching Learning Material



## 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.