Centurion University
Shaping Lives...
Empowering Communities...

Community Anti-Poverty Programmes

Institutional Participation in Policy Development and Advocacy for Poverty Alleviation at Local, Regional, National and Global Levels

Centurion University of Technology and Management (CUTM) participates in the ongoing **planning, implementation and monitoring of government and government-linked programmes addressing poverty and economic vulnerability**. Engagement is particularly focused on **Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe communities, below-poverty-line households, rural communities and economically vulnerable young people in Odisha**.

CUTM contributes through **community-based evidence, technical expertise, programme design, skills development, assessment and certification, agricultural and fisheries extension, and implementation of targeted development initiatives**. These activities connect community needs with district, state and national programmes addressing housing and basic services, livelihoods, employability, agricultural and fisheries entrepreneurship, and resilience.

CUTM's case studies below demonstrate engagement **across the government policy and programme cycle, from identified need and community evidence through programme design and collaboration to implementation and monitoring**.

1. Local Poverty-Reduction Planning: Climate-Resilient Tribal Habitation, Gajapati District

CUTM participates in local poverty-reduction planning and programme implementation through a climate-resilient tribal habitation initiative in **Alajhola, Gayaljuba and Rashika Rajpur villages, Gajapati district, Odisha**. The initiative supports **below-poverty-line tribal households** experiencing inadequate housing and access to essential services.

Identifying poverty-related needs

CUTM conducted village surveys to identify household priorities, including deficits in **secure housing, safe drinking water and public lighting**. These findings provided the evidence base for programme design.

Planning and programme design

As implementing agency for the LTIMindtree Foundation, CUTM's architecture and civil-engineering teams developed an integrated response combining **climate-resilient housing, rainwater harvesting, solar street lighting, community solar facilities and solar-powered borewells for drinking water**.

Government engagement and implementation

The initiative is implemented with the **Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA)** and **District Rural Development Agency (DRDA), Gajapati**, in alignment with district tribal-development planning. Through this collaboration, CUTM contributes community-level evidence and technical expertise to **local planning and programme implementation addressing multidimensional poverty**.

Measurable outcome

₹42.0 million was committed for FY 2025–26 for housing and associated village infrastructure across the three participating villages.

Contribution to SDG 1: The initiative addresses poverty through improved access to housing and basic services while strengthening the resilience of economically vulnerable tribal communities, contributing particularly to **SDG Targets 1.4 and 1.5**.

Supporting evidence: LTIMindtree Foundation: tribal housing project with CUTM

2. State Government Programme Implementation and Monitoring: OSFDC

Odisha is a state with the third-largest population of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in India. CUTM participates in the implementation and monitoring of a **Government of Odisha skills programme for Scheduled Caste youth**, connecting skills assessment and recognised certification with improved employment opportunities for an economically and socially disadvantaged group. On **16 August 2025**, CUTM signed a three-year Memorandum of Understanding with the **Odisha Scheduled Castes & Scheduled Tribes Development Finance Cooperative Corporation (OSFDC)**, under which CUTM was designated as an **Assessment and Certification Body** for trainees participating in OSFDC Skill Development Training Programmes.

Programme implementation

CUTM conducts competency-based assessments and certifies successful trainees in accordance with programme requirements, providing participants with recognised evidence of their skills.

Monitoring and assessment

CUTM reports assessment results within OSFDC's prescribed processes and timelines, providing evidence through which trainee competency and training outcomes can be monitored.

Programme coordination

Continuing coordination between CUTM and OSFDC provides a mechanism for reviewing implementation and assessment processes.

This work draws on CUTM's wider institutional experience in skills and livelihood development through **Gram Tarang**, supporting the University's capacity to engage with large-scale employment and skills programmes.

Contribution to SDG 1: By participating directly in the implementation, assessment and monitoring of a government skills programme targeting Scheduled Caste youth, CUTM contributes to pathways from economic vulnerability towards **skills recognition, employment and sustainable livelihoods**.

3. State and Regional Engagement in Agricultural Livelihoods and Entrepreneurship

CUTM also works with Government of Odisha agencies and development organisations on programmes that strengthen **agricultural livelihoods, enterprise development and income-generation opportunities in rural communities**.

Its engagement includes programmes involving **APICOL, the Odisha Livelihoods Mission, Startup Odisha and agricultural and fisheries extension networks**. Activities connect CUTM's agricultural, fisheries and entrepreneurship expertise with farmers, rural entrepreneurs, Self-Help Groups and government agencies.

Platforms including **Utkal Krishi Mela and the Centurion Agri-Clinic** provide opportunities for farmers, extension personnel, public agencies and University specialists to exchange knowledge on agricultural production, soil health, sustainable inputs, entrepreneurship, market opportunities and access to institutional support.

CUTM's engagement with **APICOL's Agri Entrepreneurship Promotion Scheme** further connects University expertise and training with the Government of Odisha's support for agricultural entrepreneurship.

Contribution to SDG 1: These initiatives support poverty reduction by strengthening **livelihood skills, agricultural productivity, enterprise development and income-generating opportunities** for rural households.

4. National Engagement in Skills, Fisheries and Livelihood Development

CUTM contributes to national and government-supported initiatives addressing **skills, employability, fisheries entrepreneurship and livelihood development**.

Through its engagement with the **Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship and national apprenticeship and skills frameworks**, CUTM connects education and vocational training with employment and work-integrated learning.

CUTM also participates in fisheries entrepreneurship initiatives associated with **MANAGE-FISHub and the Department of Fisheries**, bringing University expertise in fisheries, aquaculture and entrepreneurship into programmes supporting fisheries-based livelihoods and enterprise development.

CUTM's wider fisheries engagement includes technical training and demonstrations in **Recirculating Aquaculture Systems (RAS), biofloc systems and freshwater aquaculture**, providing pathways for farmers and prospective entrepreneurs to develop water-efficient and income-generating aquaculture practices.

Contribution to SDG 1: These programmes address poverty through **employability, entrepreneurship, skills development and livelihood diversification**, particularly for young people and rural communities.

5. Community Evidence and Local Development

CUTM's poverty-reduction engagement is grounded in continuing work with vulnerable and underserved communities across Odisha. Through community surveys, household consultation and field-based programmes, CUTM identifies barriers affecting access to **basic services, health, housing, water and livelihoods**, connecting community needs with institutional expertise and development interventions.

An excellent example is CUTM's **Healthcare on Wheels** initiative, which extends essential healthcare to **underserved and remote communities where medical infrastructure is scarce or unavailable**. The mobile healthcare service provides vision screening and optical dispensing, medical consultations, pathological investigations, ECG and EMG testing, and maternal and child healthcare. It builds on CUTM's established rural health outreach, which has reached thousands of people in marginalised communities through health camps, eye screening, eyewear distribution and preventive health education.

Funded by the **LIC Golden Jubilee Foundation** and developed with Essilor and other strategic partners, Healthcare on Wheels demonstrates how CUTM translates its engagement with underserved communities into **targeted interventions that improve access to essential services**.

Evidence link [odisha.plus]

Alongside this healthcare engagement, CUTM undertakes socio-economic and household consultation and works with rural communities, panchayats and local authorities to identify infrastructure and livelihood needs. The **Gajapati climate-resilient tribal habitation initiative** provides a further

example of this pathway, with identified community needs informing an integrated response addressing housing, drinking water, renewable energy and resilience.

Contribution to SDG 1: CUTM's community-based work supports a more locally grounded approach to poverty reduction by connecting the circumstances of vulnerable communities with **programme implementation and development planning**.

6. International Knowledge Transfer for Agricultural Livelihoods: Gabon Agri-SEZ

CUTM extends its livelihood and rural-development expertise internationally through its participation in the **Gabon Agri-SEZ initiative**, where CUTM has been identified externally as a **technical and knowledge partner**. Our earlier review found that the existing external evidence was sufficient to substantiate this role without seeking additional partner validation. The initiative transfers agricultural knowledge and technical expertise into a development programme concerned with **agricultural production, food security and economic development**. CUTM's involvement builds on its experience in practical agricultural education, enterprise development and rural livelihoods. The initiative also provides a pathway through which agricultural experience developed in Odisha can contribute to an international development context.

Contribution to SDG 1: The partnership extends CUTM's work on **agricultural livelihoods, knowledge transfer and economic opportunity** beyond India, demonstrating the wider applicability of its rural-development model.

Contribution to SDG 1

Together, these activities demonstrate CUTM's institutional participation in poverty-reduction programmes and policy development at **local, state, national and international levels**.

SDG 1 target alignment

Target 1.4: Equal rights to economic resources and basic services
The Gajapati tribal habitation programme addresses access to secure housing, drinking water and basic infrastructure, while skills, agricultural and fisheries programmes expand access to livelihood opportunities.

Target 1.5: Resilience of poor and vulnerable communities
Climate-resilient housing, rainwater harvesting and livelihood-development initiatives strengthen the capacity of vulnerable households and communities to withstand environmental and economic pressures.

Target 1.b: Pro-poor policy and programme frameworks
CUTM's participation in government-linked programme planning, implementation, assessment and

monitoring provides institutional mechanisms through which University expertise and community evidence can contribute to programmes addressing poverty and economic inclusion.

Multi-Level Policy Engagement & Poverty Eradication

1. Strategic Policy Partners

CUTM collaborates directly with primary institutional, state, industry and national government partners to co-design and execute pro-poor interventions:

- APICOL (Agricultural Promotion and Investment Corporation of Odisha Limited)
- Odisha Livelihood Mission (OLM) (Department of Mission Shakti, Government of Odisha)
- Startup Odisha
- Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) (Government of India)
- Department of Fisheries – Blue Revolution (Government of India)

2. Local & Regional Policy Engagement

- Agricultural & Fisheries Extension Platforms: The *Utkal Krishi Mela* and *Centurion Agri-Clinic* act as living policy platforms where farmers, extension officers, and policymakers interact. Recommendations on soil testing, sustainable inputs, and credit access are adopted by regional bodies including APICOL and OLM. Training in Recirculating Aquaculture Systems (RAS) via the School of Fisheries aligns with state Fisheries revolution objectives.
- Healthcare & Livelihood Safety Nets: Through *Healthcare on Wheels* and the *Veterinary Ambulatory Clinic*, CUTM provides emergency and preventive health services to tribal and Below Poverty Line (BPL) families. Operational information detailing disease prevalence, cost analyses, and healthcare gaps are shared with various district health, agriculture and animal husbandry authorities to inform local planning and subsidy allocations.
- Community Consultation & Primary Data for Governance: CUTM conducts socio-economic and household consultations and awareness programmes in Gajapati, Rayagada, and Koraput districts. These details are shared with local panchayat for better planning.

Case Study A – District level: Climate-Resilient Tribal Habitation, Gajapati (with ITDA and DRDA)

CUTM contributes to district poverty-reduction planning through the “Shelter to Habitation” programme in Alajhola, Gayaljuba and Rashika Rajpur villages, Gajapati district. The programme serves below-poverty-line tribal households in a cyclone-prone district who lacked secure housing, safe drinking water and public lighting.

Formal basis: CUTM signed a Memorandum of Understanding with LTIMindtree Foundation on 27 November 2024 and is the programme’s implementing agency. The project covers more than 80 all-weather houses and benefits close to 3,000 villagers.

- **Evidence of need:** CUTM conducted village surveys of participating households, identifying deficits in secure housing, drinking water and public lighting. These surveys formed the evidence base for the intervention.
- **Programme design:** CUTM’s architecture and civil-engineering teams designed an integrated habitation package of climate-resilient houses, rainwater harvesting, solar street lighting, community solar facilities and solar-powered borewells for drinking water.

- **Implementation with government:** The programme is delivered with the Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA) and District Rural Development Agency (DRDA), Gajapati, in line with district tribal-development planning. Through this channel, CUTM's household evidence and technical designs feed into how district agencies plan and deliver basic services in these villages.
- **Community participation:** Villagers take part in construction and are paid fair wages, adding income and building skills.

Measurable outcome: Funding of ₹42.0 million was committed for FY 2025–26 for housing and associated village infrastructure across the three villages.

Contribution to SDG 1: The programme addresses poverty in several dimensions at once – shelter, safe water, energy access and resilience to climate shocks (Targets 1.4 and 1.5). It shows a complete pathway: CUTM identifies needs → CUTM designs the response → district government agencies co-deliver it → a funded intervention reaches poor households.

Supporting evidence: LTIMindtree Foundation press release, 27 November 2024 – https://www.ltm.com/news-events/press-releases/2024/ltimindtree-foundation-partners-with-cutm-for-tribal-housing-project

Case Study B – State level: Odisha SC & ST Development Finance Cooperative Corporation (OSFDC), Government of Odisha

CUTM participates in the implementation and monitoring of the Government of Odisha's skill development programme for Scheduled Caste youth, a group facing higher risk of poverty and exclusion from decent work.

Formal basis: On 16 August 2025, CUTM signed a three-year Memorandum of Understanding with OSFDC, under which the state designated CUTM as the Assessment and Certification Body for trainees of OSFDC's Skill Development Training Programmes.

- **Programme delivery:** CUTM conducts competency-based assessments and certifies successful trainees under the programme guidelines, giving Scheduled Caste youth a recognised credential for employment.
- **Monitoring and evaluation:** CUTM publishes assessment results within OSFDC's prescribed timelines. These results form the record OSFDC uses to monitor trainee competency and the performance of training providers.
- **Programme review:** Regular coordination meetings between CUTM and OSFDC review implementation, allowing CUTM's assessment evidence to inform adjustments to the state's skill development initiatives.

Institutional capacity: The role draws on Gram Tarang, CUTM's skill development arm, which enrolled 101,586 learners in FY 2025–26 across long-term technical training, short-term skilling, vocational education in schools, and work-integrated training and apprenticeships.

Contribution to SDG 1: Recognised certification improves the employability and earning prospects of economically disadvantaged Scheduled Caste youth. By supplying the assessment evidence the state uses to monitor and improve the programme, CUTM helps shape how a government poverty and inclusion programme is delivered (Target 1.4; also SDGs 4, 8, 10 and 17).

Supporting evidence: Memorandum of Understanding between CUTM and OSFDC, Government of Odisha, dated 16 August 2025.

3. National Policy Collaboration

At the national level, CUTM acts as an implementing partner and knowledge contributor to government schemes:

- Implementation of National Welfare & Financial Protection Schemes: CUTM operationalizes state and national scholarship policies, including the Post-Matric Scholarships (PMS), Prime Minister's Scholarship Scheme, and Bihar Student Credit Card Scheme. The University Financial Aid Cell compiles beneficiary and disbursement reports submitted to state and central ministries to optimize scholarship delivery policies.
- Evidence-Based Research & Policy Dissemination: Faculty conduct applied research on health equity, inclusive education, agri-value chains and rural entrepreneurship, published in Scopus-indexed journals. Findings are shared with state departments, NITI Aayog working groups, Skill India and Startup Odisha strategies.

4. Global & Cross-Border Policy Engagement

CUTM extends its rural development model internationally through government-endorsed knowledge transfer:

- Gabon Agri-SEZ Project ("Gajapati to Gabon"): Endorsed by India's Ministry of Education and Ministry of Skill Development, this project transfers CUTM's agri-entrepreneurship model to Libreville, Gabon. Implemented in partnership with AOM Group, it deploys trainees, including farmers and students from Gajapati district, as technical agri-consultants supporting Gabon's food security objectives.

Alignment Table: UN SDG 1 Targets & Institutional Impact

UN Target	CUTM Policy Engagement / Programme	Concrete Institutional Impact
Target 1.4: Ensure equal rights to economic resources and basic services	Gajapati tribal habitation programme with ITDA and DRDA; OSFDC skill development programme; Post-Matric and national scholarship schemes	Secure housing, safe drinking water and solar energy for below-poverty-line tribal households in three villages (₹42.0 million committed, FY 2025–26); recognised certification for Scheduled Caste youth; scholarship beneficiary reporting to state and central ministries.
Target 1.5: Build resilience of the poor to shocks	Climate-resilient habitation, Gajapati; Healthcare on Wheels; Agri-Clinics	All-weather housing and rainwater harvesting for cyclone-prone tribal villages; health and livelihood data shared with district authorities in Gajapati, Rayagada and Koraput.
Target 1.b: Create pro-poor policy frameworks	OSFDC assessment and monitoring; APICOL and OLM extension platforms; Gabon Agri-SEZ project	CUTM assessment results used by OSFDC to monitor state skill programmes; farmer recommendations shared with regional bodies; CUTM's rural development model transferred to Gabon.