



महाराष्ट्र शासन

EdelGive
Foundation

An Edelweiss Initiative



The School Transformation Programme Report (2016- 2020)

The Collaborators for Transforming Education

Supported by



TATA TRUSTS



Implementing Partners



Abbreviations

BEO	Block Education Officer
BRG	Block Resource Group
CRG	Cluster Resource Group
CTE	Collaborators for Transforming Education Programme
CWAP	Child Wise Action Plan
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
DEO	District Education Officer
DSES	Department of School Education and Sports
DIET	District Institute of Education and Training
DRG	District Resource Group
DTP	District Transformation Programme
EO	Education Officer
GoM	Government of Maharashtra
GPs	Gram Panchayats
HM	Head Master
HT	Head Teachers
KP	Kendra Pramukh
NPOs	Nonprofit organisation
PRIs	Panchayati Raj Institutions
PSM	Pragat Shaikshanik Maharashtra
RP	Resource Persons
RtE Act	Right to Education Act
SARAL	Systematic Administrative Reforms for Achieving & Learning by Students.
SDP	School Development Plan
SFDs	Special Focus Districts
SMC	School Management Committees
SP	Shikshan Parishad
SSA	Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan
STP	School Transformation Programme
TLM	Teaching-Learning Materials

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Preface

At EdelGive Foundation, we believe that every child has the right to go to school, stay in school and learn in school.

Since its inception, education has been a key focus area for the EdelGive Foundation, which supports a diversity of programme offerings within the Education domain. This includes Primary & Secondary School, Early Childhood Care Education, and Remedial Programmes, Life skill Development, and Research and Advocacy.

Geographically, EdelGive has broken down barriers reaching out to rural, tribal, and urban complexes. After spending over ten years in the social development space and working with multiple organizations and given that we come from a rich background of systems management, governance, accountability, trackability, we thought, why not create ecosystems where multiple stakeholders can work together. With this thought in 2016-17, EdelGive put together 'The Collaborators for Transforming Education' as a Public-private partnership (PPP) model to support the Quality Education Programme of Maharashtra; earlier known as Pragat Shikshanik Maharashtra. EdelGive mobilized a consortium of key donors, and two experienced and highly respected NGO partners - Gyan Prakash Foundation (GPF) and Kaivalya Education Foundation (KEF), who work within the government's education machinery and the local community to transform last-mile delivery of education. The pilot was launched in four special-focus-areas in 2016 through the School Transformation Programme (STP), which has helped identify best practices that are scalable and sustainable.

Around 250 government officials (district and block level) have been engaged with and have provided support to work at the block and cluster levels. A continuous capacity building support has focused on improving coaching and facilitation skills, strengthening Shikshan Parishad meetings, understanding assessment data analysis, data-based planning, and decision-making abilities have been provided to all 37 Kendra Pramukhs (KPs). Over 270 Headmasters (HMs) have undergone training in coaching and data analysis, which has gradually shifted their focus from pure administration management to student academic performance improvement. Focused interventions have also been conducted for 990 teachers by intervention schools to help improve classroom processes and pedagogy skills. Proceeding as per the Right to Education Act (RTE) compliance, 100% of School Management Committees (SMCs) were reconstituted and oriented on their roles and responsibilities. Agenda-based SMC meetings have been reinforced, with a focus on academic-centric discussions on infrastructure development.

The Collaborators programme model has demonstrated a strong connection with all the functionaries at the district, block, and cluster-levels, thereby creating a supportive environment for all stakeholders enabling change at the ground level with a focus on developing ownership and accountability. Some of its best practices have been acknowledged and adopted at the State and the National levels.

The programme has overcome significant challenges and today stands as a promising example of how a successfully driven collaborative can be set up and run with the support of multiple stakeholders which also includes the extensive support from the Government.

Naghma Mulla

President and COO
EdelGive Foundation



GOVERNMENT OF MAHARASHTRA

FOREWORD

The School Education Department, Government of Maharashtra and EdelGive Foundation collaborated and jointly worked towards achieving sustainable improvement in learning outcomes of students in Maharashtra, by providing technical support in selected districts focused on strengthening teacher capacity, academic support structures, performance and review mechanisms.

The "Collaborators for Transforming Education" program ensured alignment meaningfully contributed with the Quality Education Program of the Government. Its support and facilitation at district, block and cluster levels has been very helpful in building capacities of officials to work as facilitators. The Collaborators also contributed to strengthening of School Management Committees and the Shikshan Parishads. Their engagement with government functionaries at all levels has been very supportive. We look forward to strengthening this engagement to institutionalise best practices and improve overall quality of education in the state.

I take this opportunity to congratulate all these functionaries, and hope that this document will be used as a reference book by all who are interested in the Education sector.

Place: Mumbai
Dated: 3rd December, 2020

(Vandana Krishna I.A.S.)
Additional Chief Secretary,
School Education & Sports Department,
Government of Maharashtra


MESSAGE

The Collaborators for Transforming Education program provided strong support to the government machinery at the ground level to connect and strategize a suitable solution for better implementation at scale. The effort has helped to bring significant change in utilizing government forums for decision making prioritizing education and focusing on children, motivating and building the capacity of teachers for improving classroom methodology, and connecting schools with the community through SMCs and PRI members, facilitating the preparation of a school development plan, creating a supportive network of leaders from within teachers/ head masters to share ideas, discuss challenges, and develop localized solutions in a collaborative manner.

The Collaborators for Transforming Education program has showcased educational innovation within the government ecosystem, and that inspires teachers and officers and partners and Project have achieved results while facing the same conditions and constraints as other government schools in Maharashtra.

This book is a Land mark for the success of the collaborators program in future and will show brighter path for the students at all the levels of elementary cycle. The facts and figures in this booklet will show innovative and visionary way for the universalization of elementary Education. I am thankful and congratulate to all those who have taken active participation in the successful implementation of this program.

Place: Pune
Dated: 4th December, 2020


(Vishal Solanki I.A.S.)
Commissioner (Education)
Maharashtra State

Introduction

Over the past decade, the government of Maharashtra has successfully implemented different kinds of initiatives to improve access and equity in government schools. In the past few years, the state has achieved almost universal enrolment, but problems of retention and low quality of education persist.

Access to education is challenging and literacy levels fell further in Maharashtra's remote districts which have greater poverty, difficult topography, and higher number of tribal populations that speak different dialects. The Ministry of HRD, under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), together with Ministries of Tribal Affairs and Minority, identified Special Focus Districts (SFDs) based on indicators such as availability of infrastructure, the concentration of Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) populations and minorities, out of school children, the gender gap in literacy in 2014-15 in Maharashtra. These regions lack basic infrastructures, such as roads, mobile, internet, and electricity. The number of teaching staff is scarce, and they are often not from the region; hence, the medium of instruction is not adapted to the local language. Children from tribal communities often report finding school education irrelevant and foreign to their lives, both culturally and academically. Livelihood-led seasonal migration leads to many children from dropping out mid-term, causing a cycle of interrupted education, poor literacy levels, and diminished socioeconomic outcomes. The absence of parental involvement in their child's education, coupled with archaic institutional structures and practices in the system makes it a challenge of broken structures.

Before the Collaborators for Transforming Education Programme (CTE), previous programmes that aimed at improving learning outcomes have been siloed in focus with fragmented stakeholder engagement or were unable to demonstrate state-wide scalability or sustainability. Despite significant funds invested by Government, Philanthropic Institutions and CSR, the situation of poor learning outcomes persisted, as funds were not targeted at broadening and deepening interventions that addressed system gaps. There was a lack of integration and alignment between the different arms of the government's education delivery infrastructure: a lack of ownership, trust and recognition for teachers and functionaries, almost non-existent communication between various academic and administrative institutions responsible for curriculum, training, assessment and field delivery (such as State Council of Education Research and Training, District Institute(s) for Education and Training, District Education Officers and Cluster-Heads) have contributed to apathy and inability to effectively improve quality of education.

Through a well-developed understanding of the structures, institutions, motivations, and behaviour-change incentives of key stakeholders, the CTE's systems change approach aimed to bring alignment, collaboration, cross-learning, and a platform for adoption at scale. The programme was designed to cater to the urgent need of re-engineering academic, supervisory and organisational management structure for achieving the state goal of providing quality education. From 2016 until 2020, STP was implemented successfully, and the changes obtained from the programme intervention have been well recognized and validated by both State and Central Government in various platforms. As per the plan, the robust programme model with a scaffolding approach of three-phased intervention from cluster to block, block to the district, and district to state, the first phase of STP ended in 2020. As the key processes got institutionalized at cluster and block level through a phased manner, the team exited the programme.

This report documents the four years of the School Transformation Programme (STP) of the CTE. It particularly focuses on the learnings, challenges as well as the successful processes which were followed through 4 years of extensive intervention.

I. Objectives and Structure of the CTE:

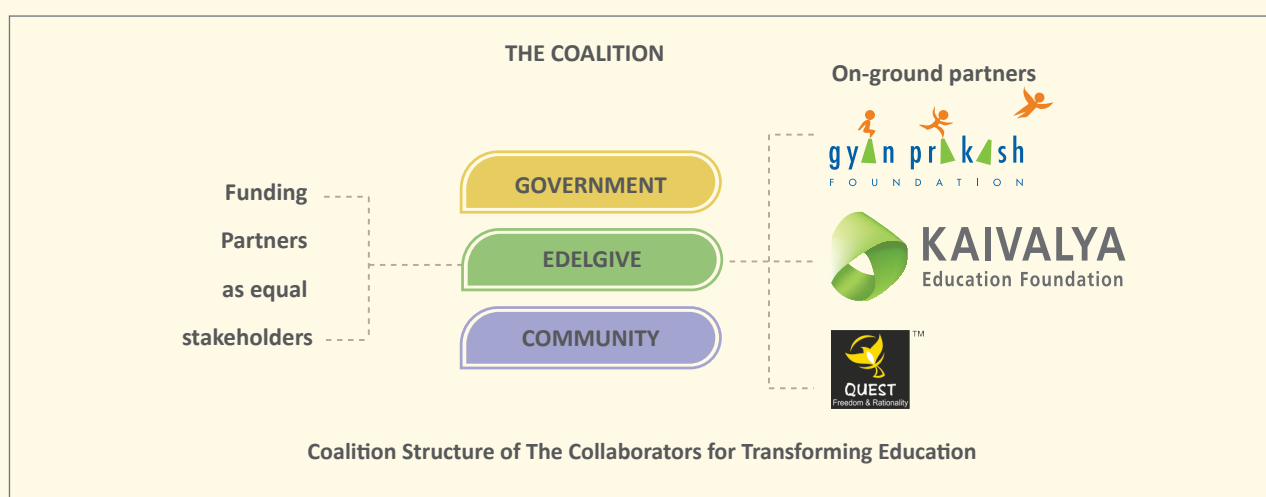
The Collaborators for Transforming Education (CTE) was born out of the realization that given the sheer size of the problem, private philanthropy can only make a dent through collective intelligent financial and intellectual investments over a prolonged period of time. With a modest beginning in 4 of 36 districts in Maharashtra, *The CTE* has since expanded to seven districts, with seven funders and three Non-profit organizations (NPOs), namely Gyan Prakash Foundation (GPF), Kaivalya Education Foundation (KEF) and Quality Education Support Trust (QUEST) by reaching over 1.4 million children in 4 years. It has earned the Indian Government's recognition for being among the best practices in CSR and is also acknowledged as a “*Bold Philanthropic Initiative*” by Bridgespan Group:

The robust programme model, with a three-phased intervention plan* (clusters to block, blocks to districts, and districts to state), focused on the following objectives:

- Enhancement in learning outcomes of children
- Support to the education system by conducting capacity building of educational functionaries at multiple levels
- Improve community engagement for sustainability

Embedded in the model itself is the programme's exit plan. The agenda is that with their capacities built, teachers, communities, and government functionaries become effective implementers of Quality Education Programme, and *the CTE* phases out; and starts to focus on another district for intervention. The structure of the Coalition consists of:

- A group of experienced implementing partners devoted bringing sustainable change by reaching to each child across the state.
- The pool of funders who invest capital and intellectual effort for a collectively envisaged idea of ‘impact’, through mutually agreed outcomes and deliverables.
- A Secretariat for stakeholder management, with a robust, governance structure, ensuring effective flow of information and funds, tracks progress while maintaining transparency and accountability.



* Three-phased intervention plan

1) Phase I. School Transformation Programme (STP)
2) Phase II. District Transformation Programme (DTP)
3) Phase III. State Transformation Programme (STTP)

II. The Approach: System Change key to Collaborators' success

In the last four years, the programme focused on identifying capacity gaps of key stakeholders - Teachers, Supervisory Cadres, Communities and Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) – the approach was to keep the child at the centre; then addressing gaps in system capacity through restructuring and transforming existing processes and platforms through a scaffolding approach.

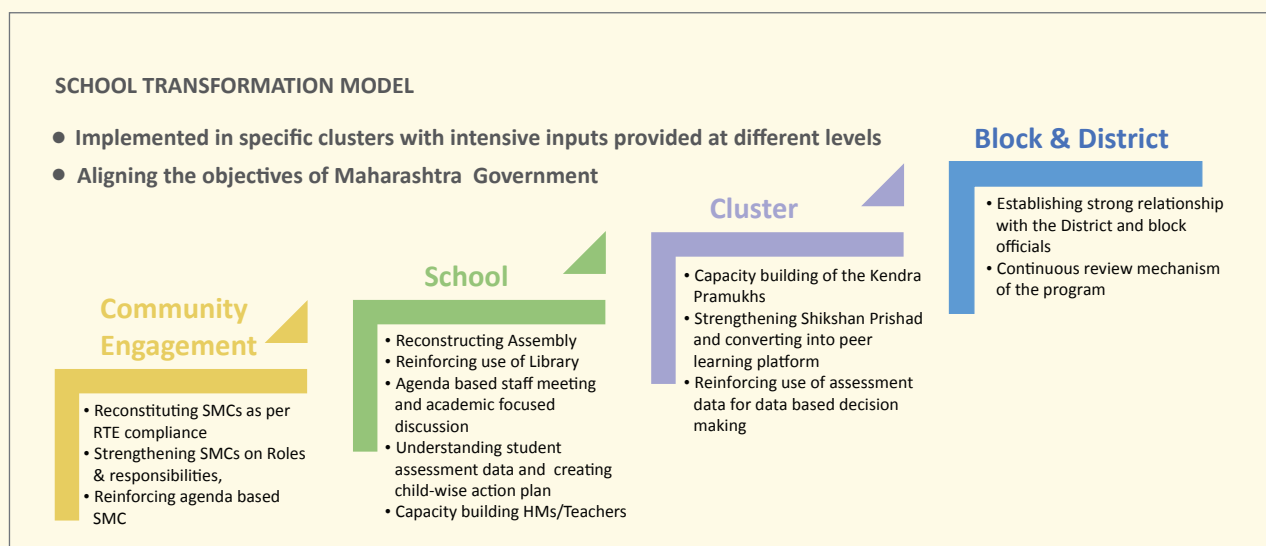
Two phases of the programme are being implemented and the 3rd phase is yet to begin for the entire state, it has identified levers for key stakeholder groups:

- For Teachers- recording and analysing child-wise/concept-wise data, leading to better teaching learning experience and, rethinking the role and efficacy of Shikshan Parishad (a state-instituted peer-learning platform to fulfil the pedagogy-related needs of teachers) as a platform for demonstration, motivation and leadership.
- For cluster/block/district-level functionaries (the supervisory cadre) - building leadership & facilitation skills; re-imagining their role from being inspectors to enablers and mentors.
- For communities - building stronger School Management Committees (SMC); involving them in understanding their child's experience of learning in school.
- Engagement with PRIs (local self-governance bodies) - at every level to ensure the sustainability of the intervention.

The programme intrinsically focused on motivating and supporting system stakeholders to find solutions for challenges they encountered in their respective contexts, leading to increased leadership capabilities and a sense of ownership and accountability to ensure quality education for every child. It also offered every stakeholder from community to a policy maker an equal voice thus making them an innate part of its overall success and sustainability.

Beginning at the cluster and block-level at Phase I through STP, the District Transformation (Phase-II) focuses on covering entire districts to:

- Institutionalise and transform processes which being identified through STP
- Activate and build skills of middle management cadres to facilitate on-ground execution
- Build linkages with PRIs across the district to prioritise quality education for sustainability.



¹The third phase of State Transformation Program will start once the District transformation starts showing results.

III. Guiding Principles of STP

Keeping childrens' learning at the centre of the intervention, School Transformation Programme (STP) started with the objective to showcase how by using Government resources and processes, schools can transform. From the very beginning to ensure sustainability, the programme followed specific principles such as:

- Designing a comprehensive programme focusing on both the administrative and academic units of the education department of the government which focuses on capacity building of both the supply and demand side of the system to bring sustained change.
- Complete alignment with Government programmes, schemes, plans, processes where no parallel processes or systems been encouraged.
- Engagement with the system and processes as facilitators, to develop ownership of the processes by the functionaries from the first day.
- Encouraging the system to drive the transformation with alignment, recognition and optimum use of existing structure and platforms.
- Through STP, the aim was to develop a deeper understanding of the dynamics of the system hierarchy, grassroots realities, and constraints under which teachers and the officials work. Looking at how recognition is as important as any other efforts to push for results.

After the initial relationship building and partial understanding of the ground realities, both implementing partners designed strategies covering multiple levels of the system and by following a scaffolding approach. While keeping the strategy and objectives intact, the partners also designed different activities in their respective geographical areas. EdelGive Foundation which holds the secretariat, not only acknowledged the differences but has also given the flexibility to both organizations to implement an intervention.

Under STP, the key activities were designed at four levels to achieve the programme objectives of system strengthening approach for improving the learning outcomes and building sustainability by engaging with the community to sustain the processes which contribute to better learning outcomes.

1) **At School Level:**

With schools being the unit of change, the programme focussed on capacity building of Head Teachers and Teachers along with improving school and classroom processes.

2) **At Community Level:**

Community and parents are key stakeholders of school processes through SMC. Therefore, the programme focused on capacity building and process improvement of School Management Committee members and by forming and institutionalising the process of formation/constitution of SMCs and its right functioning.

3) **At the Cluster level:**

After school level, the Cluster is the administrative unit of the Education Department of the Government, which includes 8 to 15 schools. The Cluster Head is known as Kendra Pramukh (KP) in Maharashtra, who heads each cluster. Therefore, the capacity building of KP and helping him to strengthen the processes became the key approach under our programme.

4) **At the Block and District level:**

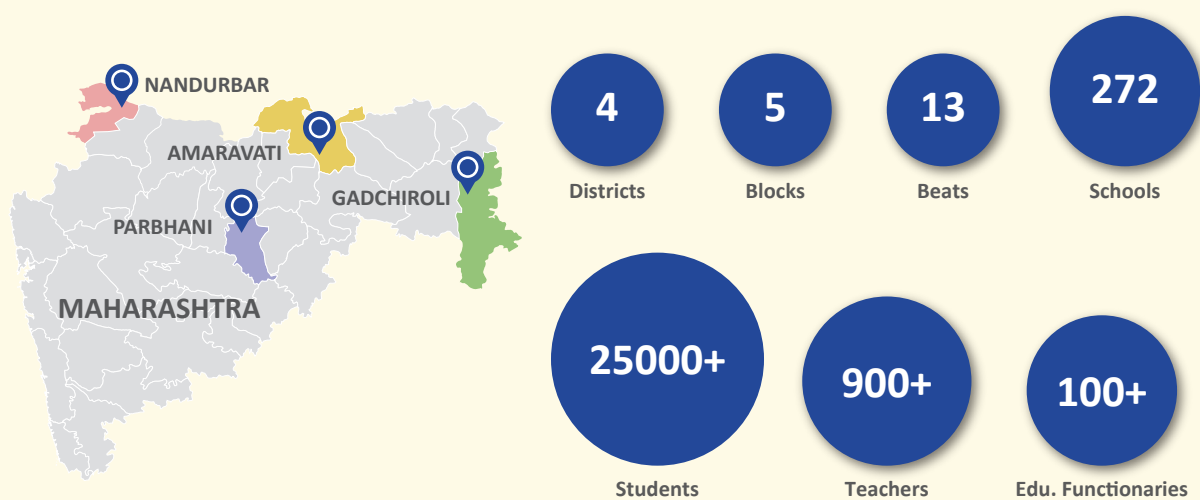
Relationship building with district and block officials, and with officials of District Institute of Education and Training (DIET) became an important approach to work with the schools. Understanding, supporting, and facilitating their processes also become key elements for the programme to gain a wider impact.

IV. Coverage

The Coverage of the programme is mentioned below (2016-17 to 2019-20):

	Amravati	Gadchiroli	Nandurbar	Parbhani
Government Functionaries	45	42	22	41
Students	4,781	7,065	4,164	9,828
Teachers	203	269	162	356
Schools	53	100	48	71

Intervention Coverage: 2016-20 (Phase-I)



V. Programme Processes: 2016-17 to 2019-20

The CTE's ultimate ambition is to institutionalize effective and collaborative processes that enable the system to function efficiently in order to improve children's learning. Secondly, engaging, and empowering communities to serve as equal partners to the system will help sustained change over time. *Every child in school-Every child with grade-level competencies* defines success for us. However, this cannot be achieved unless the State has a robust accountability system that facilitates the delivery of quality education and informed communities evolve as equal partners to sustain it.

A. Building a strong ground:

The purpose of the School Transformation Programme (STP) has been to demonstrate the evidence-based systemic change in education. During its first year of implementation (2016-17), the partners conducted a situation analysis and built connect with stakeholders at the district, block, and cluster levels. This was done through analysis of data and interaction with individual stakeholders and in few cases group discussions to understand the local context, successful initiatives, strengths, and challenges in quality education. During the initial interactions with the stakeholders, partners refrained from criticizing the systemic processes and avoided giving any advice or suggestions for improvement. The idea was to allow stakeholders to openly share challenges, successes, and jointly work for possible solutions to improve education and keeping ownership of change with them. This approach has been empowering and helps in building trust and connection with the system.

Once initial connect was built with the district and block officials, partners spent considerable time (around six months) to build good connections with the Kendra Pramukhs (Cluster Heads) and teachers and started work on mapping the status of schools and child learning process in each of the selected clusters. It was clarified to all stakeholders that the CTE did not have a separate agenda or activities other than the activities and plans of the state and district education department. The formal MoU with the Government of Maharashtra was also useful in getting access to data and information. The initial support was in data entry and analysis of PSM baseline data by using a data analysis tool, which was a critical value add for teachers as they later developed Child Wise Action Plan (CWAP). Another support was in conducting agenda-based SMC meetings and the reconstitution of SMC as per the RtE Act. The system alignment and connections were possible due to a non-prescriptive and definite value add to critical areas on implementation.

In 2017-18, the team worked more closely with KPs/Block Education Officers (BEOs) on streamlining processes, with a focus on KP leadership, in providing suggestions to address gaps in the processes, and strengthen review and planning mechanisms at the block and district level. In 2018-19, partners supported stakeholders on improving and tracking quality of processes based on data by introducing trackers for processes maturity, improving classroom processes, strengthening SMC and Gram Panchayats' role in education, analysis of NAS assessment, etc. In 2019-20, they supported government stakeholders in further strengthening and achieving maturity of processes and analysis of NAS assessment in demonstration of blocks particularly at Manwat in Parbhani and Nandurbar block in Nandurbar district.

The key activities that helped partners in building connection and alignment with stakeholders include:

- Individual meetings and interactions with government officials
- School visits and feedback by the team to KPs and BEOs
- School visits with KPs to support classroom processes
- Providing support and inputs in the planning and implementation of BRGs/DRGs
- Support in planning and implementation of Shikshan Parishad
- Support in implementation and analysis of PSM baseline – end line assessments
- Teams active support to HM/KPs for SMC formation and strengthening SMC processes
- Sharing of best practices/success stories from the field.

B. Identifying key Stakeholders and Processes/ Platforms and Initiating change:

In the last four years under STP, it has been observed that two key processes are essential across all four levels of the programme, which include:

1. Capacity Building of key stakeholders at each level.
2. Strengthening the pre-existing platforms and processes.

Over this time period, at the levels of the School, Cluster, Block, District, and Community, the programme identified key stakeholders, as well as processes and platforms, who/which can act as a catalyst for the transformation process.

1. At School Level:

The programme identified Teachers and Headmasters as key stakeholders at the school level to bring changes in school and classroom processes, in turn, they could influence the learning outcomes of the children. Therefore, the capacity building of these key stakeholders and strengthening of these processes becomes key at the school level.

a. Capacity building of Teachers

Based on available student assessment data and field visit observations of KPs, the training needs of the teachers were identified. Through the programme, teachers were trained to understand assessment data and create Child Wise Action Plan (CWAP). Partners also developed MIS so that the teachers could enter the data easily and get the analysis immediately. This was considered to be a significant shift because the teachers only reported data, never used it and there was no possibility of a simple format of analysis that was meant for the teacher rather than administration, to understand her classroom better. Partners also facilitated teachers to interpret the data, to create and implement CWAP along with guidelines on how to use the Teaching-Learning Materials (TLM) and classroom processes.

The steps taken to help the system and with the facilitation of the processes by the programme teams, the DIET has addressed the teacher's needs with help of the analysis of the assessment data in the intervention area. The academic inputs provided by DIET in the Shikshan Parishad (SP) has created a more positive and comfortable environment for teachers to participate in and learn from existing government forums. Cluster Resource Group (CRGs) were encouraged to collaborate with DIET to participate in SP and provide academic inputs to teachers. This process has improved teacher training methodology due to the incorporation of data-based and evidence-based decision making. The teacher capacity-building mechanism has transformed the instructional methodology of the teachers and they have started focusing on providing the hands-on learning experience for the children. Additionally, the training on competency-based learning allowed teachers to identify and work on the competency gap of children in their classroom by applying different innovative methods. As a result, children's participation in the classroom has improved which led to further improvement in student learning outcomes.

b. Capacity Building of HMs/HTs

Through the CTE programme, Headmasters/headteachers are now geared towards enabling school leaders to improve school processes, giving feedback on pedagogy to teachers, and facilitating School Management Committees that create a learning environment for children. The majority of Headmasters/headteachers did not have any formal training with regard to school management and team management. As a result, they often struggled to manage their work that impacted the school. Through the CTE programme, implementing partners provided leadership training to Headmasters/headteachers. The leadership training focused on four areas of leadership; personal leadership, institutional leadership, instructional leadership, and social leadership.

In personal leadership training, HMs/HTs were trained to reflect and understand themselves, learn non-violent communication which is an essential component to connect with people and influence without authority. At the Institution leadership level, HMs/HTs were trained to manage an institution and steps on how they could emerge as a leader, by supporting and understanding the staff by providing constructive feedback which could help improve their work. Under instructional leadership, they get trained on the technical aspect of pedagogy which helps with evaluation of teachers' work and provide suitable support to them. Community is a vital element of the school, HMS/HTs responsibility is to bridge the gap between school and community; under social leadership, HMs/HTs were trained to facilitate large forum meetings with the community and solve problems.

c. Strengthening School processes

Specific measures have been taken under STP to improve school processes such as, morning assembly, libraries, Bal Sansad, and simplifying the assessment results for parents to understand. These processes are important aspects of the school experience and enable the school to serve as a facilitator of learning and growth.

Morning Assembly –

Under the programme across schools, the importance of morning assemblies has been reorganized. Implementing partners introduced innovative practices in these schools such as recitation, storytelling, extempore, etc. to increase student engagement. As a result, students from all grades (Std. I onwards) shared this platform equally, which also saw an improvement in a greater gender balance. The teachers and HMs appreciated restructured assemblies and found much value in it. The innovative and child-centric activities conducted in the assembly has increased the enrolment and participation of children significantly.

Libraries –

The library is a key component of any school; it provides learning space for children and ensures that all members of the school community have equitable access to books and reading. Before the implementation of the STP programme, libraries merely existed in schools but were not accessible to children. Some schools did not have a separate room assigned for the library; books were kept at the HM/ Headteachers offices. The implementing partners made school libraries more accessible which enhanced the students' language and comprehension skills. Implementing partners, HMs, teachers, and SMC members jointly activated libraries across intervention schools. These libraries are functional, easily accessible, and now have age, genre, and class-appropriate books for all children.

Bal Sansad -

Bal Sansad is an initiative by the Government of India, it is a student parliament where children learn about democracy and responsibility. Under STP, considerable efforts have been taken by implementing partners to make Bal Sansad sustainable, with a focus on encouraging students to take ownership of the challenges they face and helping them resolve these issues on their own. Over the past four years with the support of implementing partners, across schools Bal Sansad have been activated and members of Bal Sansad are now leading school level processes such as the assembly, mid-day meals, school cleanliness drives, and library maintenance. These members also help teachers on improving student attendance by conducting home visit of the absentees. Bal Sansad meetings are conducted weekly, during which representatives give feedback on issues like the quality of the mid-day meal, assembly planning, and other issues at the school. Through this initiative, children have become more self-reliant and confident.

Strengthening school staff meeting -

As the leader of the school, the HMs are responsible to guide and motivate their team to take action for institutional improvement. Many government interventions such as “Shala Siddhi” a national school programme by NCERT are also in practice for the self-evaluation and self-improvement of the HMs as a leader of the school. Thus, during the first and second year of intervention, the team strived to start staff meetings in intervention schools to achieve the following objectives:

- Supporting teachers with their School Development Plan (SDP) for the forthcoming semesters
- Supporting HMs & teachers restructure assembly.
- Facilitating discussions on mainstreaming the out-of-school & irregular children.
- Achieving the goals set for examinations.
- Tracking and discussing records of student progress.
- Assessment as per PSM guidelines.
- Compliance of school development as per government guidelines for Shala Siddhi and SARAL.

During the first two years of intervention, the team worked with the school staff and helped to conduct staff meetings in more than 68 schools. Through these meetings, the schools started focusing on the planning and execution by creating a school development plan. Under this plan, the staff engaged in key areas of school intervention such as assembly, learning environment for classes 3 and 5, library, SMC, and Bal Sansad.

During the third and fourth years of interventions, these meetings were regularised and were being conducted on a fortnightly & monthly basis and with a higher focus on academics. As a result of these regular meetings in 2018-19, 147 migrated children were brought back in schools in Gadchiroli and Amravati location.

Kitchen Garden -

Kitchen gardens have been established across the schools to provide nutritious, locally grown produce as a part of the mid-day meal for children. This practice is also being used as a learning platform for the students to experientially learn about plant growth. Vegetables such as brinjals, tomatoes, etc. are grown within the school compound. Additionally, students from the Bal Sansad have been given the responsibility to manage the garden, thus making it a student-owned process. Community members who are a part of the SMC have also supported children.

d. Strengthening Classroom processes

Providing intensive support to teachers for understanding assessment data and creating child wise action plan – Capacity building of teachers on understanding the student assessment data and its use for creating child wise action plans has helped to improve the classroom processes like lesson planning, activity planning which are more relevant for each child. Adhyan Star Nischiti (ASN) is an initiative by the state government started in October 2017, where teachers assess children, based on age-appropriate basic numeracy and literacy skills and create child-wise action plans for their development. On the ground, through the continuous support of the implementing partners’ detailed understanding of competency-based students’ achievements have been developed for teachers in order to create Child Wise Action Plan. Over the last four years, this process has helped a 100% of teachers at intervention schools to create child wise action plan and facilitate learning opportunities for children.

In 2019-20, Adhyan Star Nischiti transformed into Adhyan Star Nishpatti. It is an assessment process initiated by the Government of Maharashtra to assess and ensure the minimum level of language and numeracy skills of the children. Last year, two summative assessments were conducted. Implementing partners have encouraged government officials to use student assessment data for decision making. The outcomes of the process enable Block Education Officer (BEOs) and KPs to help teachers to enter child wise data as a tool. Under the guidance of the implementing partners, the government officials have analyzed the data and reinforced the need to create a child-wise action plan.

Supporting teachers for conducting innovative teaching practices by using Teaching-Learning Materials (TLM) - Understanding classroom processes and providing inputs based on experience leads to improvement in student learning outcomes. The application of constructivism is an important component of a quality education programme. According to Government Resolution 2015-16, all teachers are supposed to use constructivism as a practice in the classroom. Implementing partners helped teachers for creating concept-based innovative teaching-learning materials and apply them in class. Over the past four years with the support of the implementing partners, all the intervention schools have incorporated innovative teaching-learning methodology to improve classroom transactions.

Facilitating simplified assessment results for parents by helping teachers – The simplification of assessment results by implementing partners have not only improved the classroom process but also improved parent engagement. The simplified assessment results were shared in SMC meetings to drive student-centric conversation and creating awareness about the student learning level. The entire process has involved parents and the community to develop an understanding regarding the status of children learning and getting involved in their holistic development.

e. Creation of Multilingual dictionary

In some parts of the four districts, the tribal students speak Korku or Madia dialects, which is their mother tongue. As a result, classroom instructions in Marathi becomes a challenge for them to understand and for the teachers to teach. Thus, to overcome this, partners worked with the block officials to develop a Korku-Hindi word dictionary in Chilkaldhara block and a Madia-Marathi dictionary in the Bhamragarh block. This has helped to ensure an effective reading and understanding of the textbook in the classrooms.

2. At Cluster Level:

As per of the School Transformation Programme, we have evolved processes to build synergies between different layers of the education administration (cluster, block, district, and state) and community representatives (SMCs and PRIs) to improve child learning outcomes.

At the cluster level, the programme identified a Cluster Head or KP as the most important stakeholder who represented both administrative and academic units of the education system; it is the KP, who aligns schools with block and district plans, as well as takes grassroots challenges and achievements to block and district level. The most crucial learning of STP is identifying KPs as the changemakers and clusters as units of change for scaling up of the programme; along with that STP also identified Shikshan Parishad and Cluster Resource Groups (CRGs) as two key platforms to build a learning environment across the cluster to influence the movement towards bringing about change.

As a result, all efforts must converge at the cluster level and review and planning process at block and district levels should also be done cluster-wise. Hence, the role of block and district platforms is to support cluster transformation to bring the larger change in the block/ district.

a. Capacity building of KPs

Kendra Pramukh led Shikshan Parishad has become the key process of improving learning outcomes for children. Hence the capacity building of KPs becomes a critical component of system strengthening. It was observed that the KPs needed support in performing both administrative and academic roles. The training conducted by the state were more ad-hoc and there was no follow up support for KPs in case they had any queries or doubts in performing their role. Moreover, the cadre of KPs, in spite of having huge potential to impact child learning processes was not fully utilised.

In the year 2016-17, the programme initiated connect and alignment with KPs across clusters. Partners conducted 'Training Needs Assessment' and identified gaps in KP leadership and cluster level processes in the selected clusters as mentioned below:

- Shikshan Parishads were not regularly held. The ones that were conducted lacked an agenda and failed to appoint a leader to facilitate the discussion.
- Attendance and active participation of the teachers was also a concern, and a discussion on pedagogy was missing from the agenda.
- At most times, cluster level interactions convened on data collection and administrative purposes.
- Action plans if developed were ad-hoc decisions and not based on available data.
- Child Learning Assessment data and analysis were submitted to KPs, however these were not used by teachers to improve the child learning outcomes.
- KPs were not willing to implement this activity as there was no budget allotted specifically to conduct Shikshan Parishad,
- The number of field presence i.e. school visits by KPs, were inadequate, which rarely focused on academic support to the teacher.
- KPs lacked leadership and facilitation skills.

The partners have been working closely with KPs to build leadership qualities which included following activities:

- Individual meetings with KPs to assess strengths and weakness of the cluster and implementation plans for improvement.
- Supporting school visits with KPs, to understand challenges and issues faced by the teachers and plans to address them.
- Supporting KPs to use data in their planning and review, during Shikshan Parishad.
- Supporting KPs in SP facilitation and data management.
- Support with the CRG formation and meetings.
- Provide critical feedback and observations from the field.
- Support KPs in SMC formation and strengthening processes.
- Conducting exposure visits to model schools for KPs.

During the programme period, KPs have shown evident improvement in their performance, which are mentioned below:

- Effective planning and implementation of SPs by KPs.
- KP led Shikshan Parishad with focus on academic discussion.
- The number of school visits by KPs have substantially increased with the focus shifted from administrator to mentor.
- KPs are now involving Resource Persons from DIET along with them to give inputs to teachers at the School level.
- Teachers are now appreciating the KPs school visits, as the focus is to support them on academic challenges rather than administrative concerns.
- KPs along with CRG, are now planning for the preparation of Teaching-learning materials (TLM) at class level to meet the gaps found in child learning assessment.
- KPs are taking feedback from teachers while preparing the agenda for Shikshan Parishads. Teachers are also involved for the planning of any activity at the Cluster level.
- With the initiative of KPs, SMC meetings at each school is streamlined.
- KPs have initiated preparation of the Annual Cluster Plan.

b. Strengthening Shikshan Parishad as a peer learning platform

Shikshan Parishad is a monthly cluster-level meeting platform, for school teachers of the cluster, conducted by the Kendra Pramukh (KP) (Cluster Head). These meetings are mandated by the government with the aim to establish a learning community for teachers, which is supposed to serve as a peer learning platform. Before an intervention, the Shikshan Parishads were irregular and focused on administrative issues due to a lack of skill sets and initiative by KPs.

It has also been identified that across the level, there was no platform for appreciation and recognition of people's efforts. Implementing partners identified this platform which can serve both the purposes and build the momentum for change.

Even before the partners supported the teachers to implement a data-based child-wise action plan, the programme team initiated the Shikshan Parishads at the STP clusters. The team worked with the Kendra Pramukhs before the meeting to set the agenda for the meeting, selecting different schools each time, for conducting Shikshan Parishads. They enabled the KPs to understand the status of their schools to prepare for the Shikshan Parishads.

Following are some of the guiding principles that partners followed to activate and strengthen the Shikshan Parishad:-

- **Building capacity within the system rather than outside it-** The aim was to work with Kendra Pramukhs and teachers for facilitating Shikshan Parishads, instead of depending on bringing other experts.
- **The focus of the discussion was focused on- 'How each child can learn'**- Shifting from administrative tasks to discussions on teaching-learning processes.
- **Use of learning- levels data for planning activities of the classroom-** Focusing on the learning competency and achievement of the child and planning required to reach this goal. Reviewing the cluster level data as well as school wise progress.
- **Sharing of successes, challenges of the classroom, and recognition of best practices-** The leadership of Kendra Pramukhs and the active participation of each teacher was essential for focusing on learning outcomes and the principles of learning. This approach has been the key to the success of Shikshan Parishad.

The team established the evidence for 'Shikshan Parishad' as the most effective platform for teacher empowerment through cluster transformation; this was also recognised by the State Education Department. Our experience showed that it provided space and opportunity for teachers and schools to showcase the practices and processes that impact a child's learning. It also allowed them to create a joint vision for the cluster through discussions, decisions, and action plans for the transformation of the cluster. The SPs have moved from meetings that were fully facilitated by the implementing team to self-sustained, motivated platforms of sharing, and learning over time.

c. Streamlining Cluster Resource Group

Cluster Resource Group is a group of like-minded, motivated teachers who are willing to take initiative in school and cluster transformation, and have the potential to share their practices, which will guide, and motivate other teachers in their cluster. As per the government mandate of forming CRGs at the cluster level (GR- IET4516/(40/16)/Training), the CRGs were formed in all nine selected clusters of Parbhani and Nandurbar districts in 2017.

It has been observed that each cluster consists of teachers who have had a good exposure to the outside world; for example, they have attended training at the state level and are more updated than the others. Some teachers have a readiness to keep learning, therefore they are open to try new ideas in the classroom. Such a group of teachers, are formally known as Cluster Resource Group, which acts as a guide and facilitator to the cluster development process. Relying on the existing resources in the cluster improves the pace of change and more importantly brings ownership of change.

Partners have been aligned with the system, in terms of how a CRG is set up, which teachers should become a part of it and how should a CRG function. Besides, partners have also helped create guidelines for setting up CRGs as there was no government guideline available regarding its operations. Partners have supported the system in setting up CRGs across clusters in STP, since 2018. It has been observed that CRG acted as a support to the KPs in the academic domain as the CRG members were specifically selected based on their subject expertise. CRG meetings are chaired by KPs and result in a collective decision about the focus areas for the upcoming month. The team ensured that CRG meetings were always conducted before the Shikshan Parishad every month.

CRG members have taken up the following agenda in the last two years with the implementing partners support on data and status of schools in the cluster:

- Data-based child wise action plan.
- Demonstration of best practices.
- The right use of teaching-learning materials.
- Use of technology to support learning.
- Competency-based activities.
- Discipline vs punishment.

The key processes like Shikshan Parishads, CRG meetings have been institutionalized across districts. They have been conducted every month consistently.

3. At Block/District level:

One of the key objectives of the capacity building of education functionaries is to strengthen existing government planning and review platforms that go beyond basic numeracy and literacy of children. Our focus has been on building a systemic vision and facilitate plans that aim to achieve grade-level learning outcomes and competencies for each child in the programme. At the block and district levels under the STP programme, three platforms/ processes were identified - District Institute of Education and Training (DIET), District Resource Groups (DRGs), and Block Resource Groups (BRGs).

a. Collaboration with DIET for capacity building of teachers

District Institute of Education and Training (DIET) is an important institution in the education system, mainly established for capacity building of teachers and officials on pedagogy, curriculum, research and to provide academic guidance and support to teachers in the district.

Since the beginning , the School Transformation Programme has been closely working with the District Institute of Education and Training (DIET) in respective districts. Through a series of meetings, the team was able to align DIET on the CTE approach and the importance of Shikshan Parishad to address teacher needs at the cluster level, and the role of DIETs to address those needs. The team has used the analysis of learning data (PSM/NAS) to influence DIET to address the competency gaps through their intervention at school and cluster levels.

Between the years 2018-20, the team engaged with DIETs continuously to meet teacher training needs, Shikshan Parishad, Cluster Resource Group, and effective use of Child Learning Data in classroom planning and implementation of Child Wise Action Plans (CWAP).

The highlights of the collaborative work with DIET include:

- The active role of DIET in planning and review of DRGs across districts fostered greater coordination and collaboration between the administrative and academic structures.
- DIET participation to support cluster and school-level activities and Child Wise Action Plans

b. Block Resource Group (BRG) /District Resource Group (DRG)

The team believes that strengthening of the system at the block and district level is crucial so that demonstration of the change in selected clusters is scaled in the entire district. Strengthening Government functionaries through capacity building and support for leading educational activities at the cluster, block, and district levels have been the focus of the partners since it started work across the districts. The forums such as Block Resource Group (BRG) and District Resource Group (DRG) were formed at the block and district levels respectively to streamline the activities with proper planning from top to bottom level.

Formation of Block Resource Groups (BRG) is a government mandate with the vision of streamlining the planning and review mechanisms for achieving 100% learning levels in the district. The key role of BRG is coordination and planning and to act as a bridge between DRG and Clusters. The team facilitated the formation and activation of the Block Resource Group (BRG) in demonstration blocks in 2016.

In the intervention blocks, the BRG meetings are led by Block Education Officer (BEO) on regular basis. This has further reinforced the implementation of Teacher Capacity Building and Community participation activities. The team has aligned the District Institute of Education and Training (DIET) on addressing teacher's needs through the Shikshan Parishads and data-driven action for decision making. These collaborative efforts from district to block to cluster level have streamlined the activities at all levels.

The role of DRGs has been more effective since 2018 when the evidence of demonstration blocks has been more prominent. The key role of DRG is to develop a monthly district education plan, provide support in the execution of the plan in the blocks, conduct a monthly review of progress and support to blocks and clusters for improving quality of education, provide recognition of best practices and success stories from the field and plan strategies to replicate them in other blocks, etc. DRG meetings are conducted by CEOs/ DEOs / DIET Principals and attended by selected RPs and KPs, BEOs/EOs, DEOs, and selected NGO representatives working in the respective districts.

4. At Community Level:

Education takes place not only in schools but also within families, communities, and society. Communities must support parents and families in the upbringing, socializing and educating of their children. Schools are institutions that can prepare children to contribute to the betterment of the society in which they operate, by equipping them with skills important in society. Schools cannot and should not operate as separate entities within society. Since each group plays a different role in contributing to children's education, there should be an effort made to build a bridge between them to maximize the contributions. Education takes place most efficiently and effectively when these different groups of people collaborate.

SMC and Gram Panchayat are the two institutions that must be equipped and strengthened as they represent the community that play a role in children's education.

a. Strengthening School Management Committee (SMC)

As defined in the Right to Education Act, School Management Committees (SMCs) have a significant role to play in the management of schools. However, the formation of SMCs and ensuring that they are actively involved in school management has not received adequate attention across the country. The team has always believed that SMC, parents, and community has a crucial role to play in ensuring and enhancing quality education for children at the village level.

STP engagement with SMC is not limited to SMC strengthening but it involves broader parent and village level involvement in improving the education quality of the school. It involves:

- Democratic formation of SMCs as per Right to Education Act.
- Headmaster (HM) led the effectiveness of SMCs
- Participatory School Development Plan (SDP) by stakeholders.
- A quarterly academic review of children's performance by parents.
- Making education a village agenda in Gram Sabha meetings

Reconstitution of SMCs as per RTE -

The constitution of a School Management Committee (SMC) is an important provision of the RTE Act. While all schools must constitute SMCs, it was observed that the majority of SMC's were not formed as per the prescribed guidelines of RTE, hence the structure remains inadequate. In the very first year of the programme, the team had undertaken the task of status mapping of SMC Formation as per RTE.

Through this mapping, it was found that more than 75% of SMC's were not formed as per adequate structure or process as mentioned in RTE. This was mainly because of HMs having a limited understanding of the structure and process of SMC formation and they faced difficulty in ensuring requisite parent participation in the SMC formation.

To strengthen these SMCs and to enable their contribution to the school development, the team has taken the lead in the process of SMC reconstitution as per RTE. Both the districts, blocks, and district officials have accepted SMC strengthening as a significant need and took block-level efforts for ensuring SMC formation as per RTE. Implementing partners have played a vital role in the reconstitution of all these SMCs across districts.

Ensuring the Role of HM in SMC Strengthening

As per RTE, the Headmaster (HM) is a member secretary of the School Management Committee. It is the HM's responsibility to constitute SMC and facilitate its working for school improvement. However, it was observed that the HMs participation in all these processes was virtually non-existent. To play their role effectively, HMs need clarity on their roles and skills to deliver effectively. While HMs come from an academic background, they may lack skills in community mobilization, and social leadership to name a few. HMs carry the potential as secretaries of SMCs to play a key role in SMC Effectiveness and such efforts have the possibility to scale. As a result, under STP, the team has built capacities of HMs for leading SMC effectiveness processes. Implementing Partners' intervention in HMs capacity building is encouraging. HMs across various schools have started to take lead and become an active participant in SMC activities. They not only ensure that SMC meetings are conducted under their guidance but also proactively align SMC members about their role and responsibility in the overall school development.

Participatory School Development Plan (SDP) by stakeholders

Team's engagement with SMC is not just limited to SMC strengthening through SMC reconstitution, however, efforts are also directed towards promoting and enabling HMs, SMC members, Gram Panchayat members to organize Educational Gram Sabha and prepare School Development Plan (SDP) in improving education quality of the school.

As defined in RTE Act, SDP plays a significant role in developing schools and providing quality education to children. With the vision of aligning our intervention with the government's mandate, since 2016 the team has taken initiative to promote preparing of SDP in the select school of the clusters. This was made possible because of the orientation done with HMs on SDP preparation with the involvement of SMC and Community members, by holding regular SMC meetings and organizing SMC exposure visits, which has helped to create awareness among SMC members regarding their role in school activities and student's development.

Prior to starting the actual SDP process, demos of SDP meetings were conducted in some schools in selected clusters to acquaint HMs on the SDP processes which enabled them to conduct SDP meetings in their schools. They were oriented on various components of SDP preparation such as village resource map, identification of school needs and issues, prioritization, action plan, and allocating responsibility.

During the SDP meetings, the needs and issues of the school were identified, prioritized, responsibilities were allocated through participatory discussion, and an action plan was prepared to address the needs and issues of the school in a time-bound manner.

Due to these SDP processes, the important development work including building handwash stations, compound walls & classrooms, buying e-learning tools and setting up e-learning classrooms, setting up libraries, clean drinking water facility, starting night study groups, cleanliness of the schools was carried out at schools. The process did not end at the school level, it was also taken up at the Gram Sabha level.

At Nandurbar, this process has resulted in a two-fold outcome, one is of course the infrastructural needs of schools are catered to. Secondly, the community's participation, especially women's participation in school activities increased, this is important as it is a tribal district. One of the achievements of SDP is that night study groups have been started at the village level in almost all schools in the Manvat block of Parbhani district with the participation of SMC and community members where students regularly study in these groups. The SMC and community members have taken the responsibility of providing basic amenities such as site, drinking water, and electricity for sustaining these night study groups.

a. Quarterly Academic review of Children by Parents

Quality Education is the right of every child. It has been long proven that children learn better when allowed to learn in different ways. Children, parents, schools, teachers and all involved in the schooling venture must be able to determine the difference between learning and performing well and to realize that the best students are often those who are allowed to explore. This calls for learning beyond textbooks at schools. The reason someone wants to learn something is that it may be interesting, important, or relevant and contextual. At this point, parents and the community can play a role in enhancing a child's learning capabilities.

Parents can have a positive effect on children's learning by being involved in their schooling and by regular interaction with the teachers at the school. To achieve all the learning outcomes as per the class or age of the child, there must be coordination and interaction between teachers and parents regarding their child's education. One of the partners have been piloting this process as 'Parent Academic Review' in selected schools of STP. The process is SMC-led and formally accepted by the HMs and KPs and will be streamlined across all the schools through the system. The prerequisites for this review was that teachers must have Child Wise Action Plan (CWAP), a portfolio of each child and should have mapped human resources from the village who could contribute to the child's learning in different ways. For example, children can be taken for an exposure visit to the post office, where the postman can demonstrate the functioning of the post office.

There is common and individual planning among teachers and parents during the review process. The learning gaps of each child must be discussed with each of the parent and planning should be done accordingly.

b. Gram Sabha- Education as a Village Agenda

Panchayati Raj Institutions can play an important role in ensuring quality education to all children as they have the responsibility and powers to mobilize funds both from government and community. After the RtE enactment, educational responsibility was divided between SMCs and Gram Panchayats. Both SMCs and GPs need to work together to bring education as a top agenda at the village level. Gram Sabha is a platform that brings key stakeholders together at the Panchayat level on participatory decision making on village development and implementation of government schemes. Maharashtra Village Panchayat Act, 1958 also has a provision to conduct special Gram Sabha on Education.

The team facilitated Education Gram Sabhas at the village level to build community ownership in the school and both demand and contribute to child learning outcomes. This platform is also used to align parents and the community on their vision for education and the larger purpose of education. Under the STP, the team has developed a process of conducting Education Gram Sabha by involving all key stakeholders, those who can take decisions for the school and on child's learning at the village. Initially, when this process piloted in selected GPs in Nandurbar and Manvat block, during the academic year of 2018, the process was not mandatory to the system, but after proper implementation of this process and the desired results at block and district level; many officials at the cluster and block demanded this activity and sought support from the implementing partner.

The Nandurbar CEO recognized this activity as one of the important ones, for the implementation of the School Development Plan (SDP). Mr. Walekar, BDO, Navapur block of Nandurbar district, made it compulsory for each of the GP in the block and indicated that all GPs must integrate the Gram Sabha action plan in the Village Development Plan VPD. Implementing partners have developed a tool to monitor the progress of the actions taken during each of the Gram Sabhas. Through this data, it is learnt that most of the actions, even though, they required funds were completed by the villagers, either through local funds or from the funds allocated through 14th Finance Commission Grant and "The Provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996" (PESA). Most of the actions did not require funds but were pending for a long time. These tasks were also completed when people came together and discussed the issues for the sake of the children.



Workshop for School Management Committees (SMC) members



Kendra Pramukh workshop at Gadchiroli

VI. Achievements:

The work done in STP is certainly considered as a model by the system and there is a noticeable change in teachers and government functionaries in terms of their knowledge about child learning processes, articulation of what works and what doesn't work in the clusters, what their vision is for the cluster and the role the community and SMCs play in education. It has also concentrated on gaining a deep understanding of ground realities, establishing a good working rapport with government staff, creating demonstration/experimentation units, and crafting strong examples of transforming schools. Thus, STP has focused on ensuring that the idea of school transformation is possible, as well as sustainable, and paved the way for district transformation.

We, at EdelGive, believe system change takes time and patience, but the last four years has helped us build trust and confidence with Government's Education Department, inspite of changes in key functionaries including at the Principal Secretary level. With an initial start at only four districts, the new MoU signed with the Government and EdelGive gives us the ability to work with all districts in the state. There is a growing request from various District-CEOs to adopt their districts next. A third-party impact study was conducted at the end of the 3rd year by IMPACT and at the end of the 4th year by iFactor. This has not only helped validate key elements of the programme but also shows early signs of the success of the approach.

EdelGive as a secretariat has tracked progress by:

- Review and monitoring - Quarterly field visits, quarterly and annual reviews with implementation and funding partners to track progress and course correct. Legacy funders like Tata Trusts bring in immense insight through their experience.
- Third-Party Evaluation: Periodic third-party assessments to validate the success of the programme, document challenges, and learnings for future planning.
- Cross-learning: Six-weekly meetings with NPOs and donors enable sharing of ground realities, implementation challenges, and success stories which consequently guide programme strategy.
- Joint Review and Reflection with Government: Through quarterly meetings with Principal Secretary- Education, GoM, and her team, joint assessments of progress and learnings are done. This also helps build trust and transparency.

Behind the early success of the programme is our team comprising of experts in the field of education, economics, statistics, and population studies, with previous experience of working in the development sector, corporate, government, and understanding of the context of Maharashtra. Our NPO partner, Kaivalya Education Foundation are education experts with a pan-India presence while Gyan Prakash Foundation works extensively towards systemic change in education through a capability-based approach. Our diverse group of funders adds to the number of years of experience with grassroots, contributes positive learnings and insights to the programme.

A. Coverage at Scale:

Owing to government's positive responsiveness and STPs early success the programme has rapidly scaled from:

- five blocks in four districts to all 70 blocks in seven districts
- from 25,000 children to 1.4 million children, 272 schools to 12,718 schools, 990 teachers to 49,388 teachers, 150 Govt functionaries to 1,182 Govt functionaries

B. Outcome at the grassroot level

(As assessed by EdelGive through Third-party evaluators- IMPACT and iFactor):

Learning level

- An average of **70%** students have achieved grade level competency
- Students performance in four pilot blocks have been observed to be higher than the more advanced blocks, with overall learning outcomes increasing by **14%**

Under the programme processes, a separate qualitative study shows:

- Increased focus on skill development of teachers and Headmasters.
- Regularization and effective facilitation of the Shikshan Parishad (Cluster-wise Teachers' Meet), School Management Committee meetings and Education Gram Sabha.
- Data driven decision making leading to better planning and implementation of processes at all levels.
- Institutionalization of processes like Shikshan Parishad, Kitchen Gardens, SMCs by GoM through gazette notification.
- The Government of Maharashtra has showcased best practices from the programme to the Government of India, World Bank and UNICEF.
- In the last four years, an extensive intervention was conducted with 150 government officials, as a result of which 100% of the officials are oriented/updated/trained about various aspects of the programme.
- Over the years, an average of more than 80% of Shikshan Parishad have been regularized and are agenda based.
- In 2016, CRGs were found to be inactive; with structured intervention all the 100% intervention clusters were able to form CRGs.
- Year on year, 100% of teachers were trained on understanding student assessment data, creating child wise action plan and innovative teaching methodology.
- At the time of inception, only 12% of teachers used to create child wise action plan but over the years after the extensive intervention, 100% of teachers started creating child wise action plan by using assessment data.
- In 2016, only 12% SMCs were constituted as per RTE compliance but after rigorous support and orientation regarding roles and responsibilities 98% SMCs were reconstituted as per RTE compliance.
- Over the years, an average of 91%, SMCs were conducting regular agenda-based SMC meetings.

C. Acknowledgement and Adoption of Best practices:

In the last four years, the program has been reviewed by earlier PSs and ACSs, and State Education Teams regularly and has received appreciations for its comprehensive efforts.

- Use of child-wise learning level data to strengthen classroom processes.
- A document on "Strengthening Shikshan Parishad" for state-wide implementation.
- Process of conducting agenda-based SMC meetings.
- District newsletters to celebrate the successes from the grassroots level.
- Use of technology in classroom processes.
- CTE programme selected as a unique intervention to be showcased at Shikshanachi Wari.
- SMC & PRIs mobilization.
- Capacity building of academic institutions.
- Documentation and dissemination of best practices.
- Youth and ECO club.
- Across Amravati and Gadchiroli district with the support of implementing partners around a 100% of intervention schools have developed Kitchen Gardens.

D. Sustainability of the Programme:

To address sustainability, early efforts to engage with the village community and PRIs (local governance bodies) for prioritizing Education, have resulted in a sizable number of villages conducting village level meetings, specially dedicated to enhancing the quality of education. Enhanced community engagement has also helped to resolve problems like child labor during the harvesting season, seasonal migration, and dropout and low enrolment in schools; at the local level in some villages to a good extent.

The programme objectives also intersect with the objectives of the New Education Policy 2020, Shala Siddhi (framework to assess the quality of school), and Performance Grade Index (framework to overall Education System's performance).



Teaching-learning process for mathematical concepts in ZP School, Dhamdod



Library set up in the school

VII. Programme Learnings and Challenges:

A. Learnings at stakeholder level

- Teachers are more open to new ideas if the approach is empowering and non-threatening. Most of them want to do better but they want to be heard, respected, and recognized.
- The new policies or mandates create confusion in teachers' minds therefore they tend to continue with the old practices while staying in their comfort zones. The new changes have to be made simple for them in a manner that is practical and relevant for their classroom transactions.
- Not all teachers across the cluster begin to change at the same time, the ones who are willing and capable, take the lead and others follow in due course. The time each teacher takes for changing his/her practice must be respected.
- Data analysis of learning levels has the most influence on mindset and behavioral change in the teachers. • KP leadership is the key for cluster transformation.
- District leadership team can play a crucial role in improving the quality of education.

B. Learnings at process/platform level

- One of the important factors of the success of the School Transformation Programme is the acceptance and trust in implementing partners by government functionaries which were built through a non-prescriptive approach, state policy aligned interventions, and recognition of the change-makers within the system.
- Working with the government system is the key for scaling the change in larger geographies.
- Acting as a catalyst and not replacing systemic stakeholders in implementation helps in establishing a good working relationship and avoiding conflicts.
- Shikshan Parishads or any such platform can truly transform the traditional practices if implemented effectively.
- The change in the classrooms, schools, and clusters must be owned by the teachers and Kendra Pramukhs (KPs).
- DIET involvement and support in planning and implementation is crucial.
- SMC can contribute, influence, and sustain the child learning process even if there is frequent change in system stakeholders
- SMC can play an important role in the mobilization of the resources for school development and child learning processes through the systematic implementation of the School Development Plan.
- SMC reconstitution is itself a capacity-building process of SMC members, which enables them with roles and responsibilities

C. Challenges:

- Frequent changes in the district/block leadership affect the pace and quality of work.
- DIET as an academic authority at the district level which works independently and is relatively connected with education administration which sometimes poses a serious challenge in value add to the need-based support of the teachers.
- Frequent changes in the Government policies of assessment, creates confusion at the ground level that sometimes impacts the pace of the processes.
- Initially, SMC strengthening was not the priority of the system, it took more time to align HMs and officials during the initial phase of the programme.
- Some components of the SMC reconstitution process were not clear in the policy, it took time to convince some HMs during the process of reconstitution. (e.g. Can one GP member be the part of SMC in more than two schools, where there are multiple schools in the same GP).
- Women participation in SMC meetings need to be encouraged.

VIII. Learnings as Secretariat

Over the last four years, it has been an incredible journey for EdelGive, substantial changes have been observed at the school level including improvement of student learning outcomes, capacity building of teachers and KPs, and increased community engagement. In 2018-19, the District Transformation Programme (DTP) started its intervention - in the districts of Amravati , Gadchiroli, Parbhani and Nandurbar as a scale-up process of STP. The initial success of the intervention encouraged the programme to spread its intervention in the other two districts in 2019. In this course of time, the major learnings as secretariat are:

1. Conviction towards objectives of the Coalition: The conviction of the Partners' towards the CTE' objectives, particularly when there were challenges made the journey a success. Through small achievements as well as failures the strong belief towards the objectives has helped the Coalition to overcome trials.

2. Strong backend system to hold the collaborative together helps for efficient delivery: a strong backend system which managed liaisoning with government, compliance issues, tracking progress and disseminating learnings worked very well for the efficient functioning of the Coalition. The secretariat provides implementing partners support to completely concentrate on the programme and give their best without spending their energy towards administrative, compliance issues, or fundraising. The funding partners are also assured of compliance issues and programme impact through regular updates from the secretariat.

3. Transparency and Accountability of each partners role: From the very beginning of the CTE, each partners role was defined and agreed upon. The role clarity and accountability towards each other helped the coalition to deliver the programme efficiently and seamlessly. Also, the set governance processes helped cross learning not only between implementing partners but the experience of the funding partners also enriched the programme processes.

4. Defining the Impact helps to define achievements: A standardized measurement matrix has been created and agreed upon to measure the outcome of the intervention year on year to track the progress of the programme which ultimately helps to articulate the success and challenges in each component of the programme, which ultimately helps year on year to improve the programme processes.



DEO participation in one day HM led SMC workshop at GPF office

IX. Perspective: Government Stakeholders

Over the past four years, the programme has worked in alignment with government policies and collaboration with the government. In the time few suggestions have emerged out from government officials who have helped the programme perform effectively. The recommendations are as follows:

- The government officials have appreciated the effort of the field staff and their approach to providing on-field support. The government recognized that the success of the field activities are the results of the joint effort of the implementing partners and government functionaries and teachers.
- The collaboration of government functionaries and teachers with implementing partners at every level kept all of them updated about the progress of the district and challenges on the ground. This made it possible to take necessary actions to overcome hurdles and create an environment of learning.
- Implementing partners are promoters of fear-free environment and they demonstrated this to the teachers on their field visits by interacting with the children and through the processes of songs and dance. As a result, the teachers were motivated and were able to adopt similar tactics to interact with children and involve them in the learning process.
- It is not a one-way learning process, both implementing partners and government officials are learning from each other and have established a culture of sharing innovative ideas and learnings.
- Across all the levels, they have appreciated the capacity-building support provided as per need and requirement.
- It has also been advised that as a part of pre-service training for field staff, pedagogical knowledge should be provided as they start working with teachers and participate in classroom intervention. This will save time and increase the span of the programme.
- There were also suggestions that since government officials have a huge burden of administrative work and sometimes they must submit the same data multiple times because of which they cannot focus on the academic part. It would be helpful if certain technical inputs are provided for tabulating data and management which would ease their work and they would be able to devote more time for academic improvement.

X. Perspectives: Funding Partners

Over the past years, the CTE programme has emerged as a strong coalition. A lot of the credit goes to all the partners, especially the funding partners, who strongly believed in the objectives of CTE and provided not only strong financial support but also strengthened the program through their valuable inputs. We have always experienced a high level of engagement and encouragement from all of them.

Another key feature about CTE is the way in which the EdelGive team, as the secretariat, has effectively engaged through its well-devised governance structure with all the stakeholders transparently– the government, funding partners, NGO partners and the direct stakeholders of the project. This is a considerable achievement, in the backdrop of other collaborative projects that often hit roadblocks, primarily due to differences in the priorities of the stakeholders.

Donors Speak:

“SDMC Trust has been associated with the CTE project since inception and had the privilege of interacting with different stakeholders across the entire spectrum during our field visit. We have encountered highly motivated Kendra Pramukhs, Resource Persons and outstanding teachers who pass on the capacity building activities through peer learning across all the districts.” - Subhamay Chattopadhyay, CSR Advisor, SDMCT

“One distinct feature about the CTE project is the ‘collective enthusiasm’ it has created across the stakeholders - government, community/ parents, children and the school authorities. STP has succeeded because it could create this ‘shared consciousness’ wherein everyone involved has a single point agenda of strengthening the quality of teaching-learning experience and have taken ownership. The scale and depth at which this has been achieved makes STP unique.” - Unnikrishnan TS, Project Head, Great Eastern CSR Foundation

XI. Conclusion

The continuous support in the intervention areas has created a strong impact across all levels of the education system. The programme has been able to establish itself as a model of demonstration, driving changes from top to bottom. The strong connection with all the functionaries in the district and state has helped mobilize strong support for the intervention. The model has proven to be a replicable, scalable, and sustainable with KP-led cluster transformation even in the most difficult geographies of Maharashtra. Building the KPs' capabilities for cluster development has led to the creation of a supportive environment for teachers. The intervention has brought about a notable change in classroom processes, with teachers creating an energized, open and child-friendly atmosphere, and using learning-conducive teaching methods. All these have created a momentum in the system. Streamlining SMC meetings in all the clusters and creating a child-centric agenda has helped to further support and strengthen programme achievements. The collaboration with and between the district, block, and cluster-level officials have helped to speed up the programme and percolate change across the levels. Thus, recognition from the system for teacher capability and community participation has scaled the impact in all the intervention districts.



Classroom process-child seating teaching-learning conducted by Mrs. Bhavsar in ZP School, Lahan Shahada



School Assembly, Gadchiroli

Appendix: Stories from the field

Story I: Learning beyond Classroom

The Z. P. School, Varul (Shinde Cluster of Nandurbar Block) is almost 20 kms from the district place of Nandurbar (Maharashtra). It is a small tribal village with a population of not more than 1000, mostly consisting of farmers and farm laborers. The school has two teachers and a total student strength of 60. Majority of the students are from the tribal community.

The teachers Shri Anil Mali and Dayanand Jadhav, teach all the classes, and both are very determined and believe in experiential learning for the children. The teachers have their own plan for all the children. They believe that, a classroom is not sufficient for the children to achieve the expected learning outcomes. Children must be taken outside the class to get the practical experience by which they can observe, experience, explore and express their views and ideas. Both the teachers have maintained a portfolio for each of the children which has evidence that children are getting enough exposure outside the school. The assessments conducted by DIET in September, 2019 showed significant growth in learning levels of students.

When Gyan Prakash Foundation (GPF) analysed the data of Endline assessment during the last academic year, the School Report Card was shared and facilitated with both the teachers. The learning needs of the children were identified. GPF supported both the teachers for the preparation of child wise action plan (CWAP). The KP, Mr. Wankhede Sir also contributed during the preparation of this plan and supported regularly whenever teachers demanded. The KP continued visiting the school and provided support to the teachers in understanding the learning needs of his students.

Both the teachers mapped the Human Resource available at the village. In one of the SMC meetings, they discussed their plan with all the SMC members to seek the support from the selected parents, those who can contribute in the learning of the children. The regular interaction with the parents resulted in active participation in the various activities of the school. Even, parents had plans to take children for exposure visits in the field, bank, fabrication workshop, railway station, weekly bazar and to the river too. Different learning projects like water conservation, waste management, preparation of food, etc. was also explored with the help of parents. The role of teachers is to implement the plan and support parents wherever needed.

The school has its own Library and all the children have access to the books whenever they needed. During the breaks, any children can get the book according to his / her interest.

Today, children are able to write meaningful stories based on their exposure visits, discussions with parents and teachers and pictures given to them. More than 90% of the children in class 3 & 4 can write meaningful small stories in their own words.

One year back, migration of the students along with their parents was the major issue. In the current year, not a single child has migrated, and the average attendance of the students has reached to 96%.

Other teachers in different schools of the cluster have also adopted some of the practices that were used effectively at this school. Mr. Jadhav has now become a member of the Cluster Resource Group and continues to support other teachers from the cluster with concerns related to learning of the children.



Story II: A journey of school Library from 50 books to 450 books

In one of the school named Z.P.U.P Hattighat in Chikhaldara block, the teachers had the mind-set that starting a library would bring excess burden in the regular flow of work. Pratim Chatterji, a Gandhi fellow of Kaivalya Education Foundation (KEF) who was looking after this school, was determined to build the perspective of teachers towards the importance of library for student's learning enhancement. The teachers believed that library development was not aligned with their target of the Government programme of Pragat Shaikshanik Maharashtra. Thus, after these refusals, through one-on-ones with teachers, Pratim Chatterji could build their perspective towards revamping the process of library. Along with the support of Headmaster, he established the Library in the school.

While segregating books, Pratim found out that they were not according to the learning level of children and even very less in quantity (almost a total of 50 books). Along with the Headmaster Mr. Prashant Panchpod, Pratim Chatterji approached the Gram Sevak to generate some funds through "The Provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996" (PESA). He said that the budgetary planning for the year was already done, so he would be unable to provide any new fund to the school. Mr. Pratim motivated the Headmaster to convince the Gram Sevak by making him understand the need for a library at school. A small donation of Rs. 4900 was approved and allocated to school's library development. With that, the school HM & Mr. Pratim bought 400 books for the school library which were mostly bilingual (English and Marathi/Hindi). Students gained an interest to read these books and their active participation in library period is now quite visible. Teachers are incorporating these books in the lesson executions at the classroom.





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