



Knowledge hub
-
Collection of best practices

Summary of the best practice

1. Title of the best practice (e.g. name of policy, programme, project, etc.) *

Strengthening Supportive Supervision and Academic Leadership- The Kendra Pramukh Academic Leadership Programme (KPALP)

2. Country or countries where the practice is implemented *

India

3. Please select the **most relevant** Action Track(s) the best practice applies to *

- Action Track 1. Inclusive, equitable, safe, and healthy schools
- Action Track 2. Learning and skills for life, work, and sustainable development
- Action Track 3. Teachers, teaching and the teaching profession
- Action Track 4. Digital learning and transformation
- Action Track 5. Financing of education

4. Implementation lead/partner organization(s) *

UNICEF with implementation partner agency, Centre for Equality and Quality in Universal Education (CEQUE) and government of Maharashtra, India

5. Key words (5-15 words): Please add key descriptive words around aims, modalities, target groups etc. *

- Strengthening Cluster Resource Persons;
- Supportive Supervision or Teacher academic on-site support;
- Improvement in classroom practices

6. What makes it a best practice? *

The Kendra Pramukh Academic Leadership Programme (KPALP) was successful in demonstrating an improvement in the skill levels of cluster resource coordinators (CRCs), which were tracked on a skill matrix. The programme was implemented at scale, across the state of Maharashtra, exclusively through government functionaries, helping to change the perception of the CRC cadre within the education system. The KPALP has been one of the few programmes that has been consistently being implemented in the state and this can be attributed to the programme's inherent capacity to effectively respond to changes in environment, including the COVID-19 pandemic school closures. KPALP has also been recognized as a best practice at the national level and the state KPALP team, including UNICEF, was invited to participate in a consultation for the formulation of new national guidelines related to cluster resource coordinators.

Description of the best practice

7. Introduction (350-400 words)

This section should ideally provide the context of, and justification for, the practice and address the following issues:

- i) Which population was affected?
- ii) What was the problem that needed to be addressed?
- iii) Which approach was taken and what objectives were achieved? *

In 2014-15, UNICEF conducted a study on the teacher education system in the state of Maharashtra. Among other findings, this report highlighted the urgent need to develop the capacities of teacher educators, including the cluster resource coordinators (Kendra Pramukhs), to support improvement in teacher instruction. In the following year, UNICEF in consultation with the state drafted a Vision document for re-vitalizing in-service teacher education.

At the same time, the state's own perspective towards education was undergoing a change; it had thus far focussed on ensuring basic infrastructural facilities in schools and was now gearing up to shift its focus to the learning outcomes of children. A landmark government resolution, was passed by the state of Maharashtra in July 2015 reflecting the state's commitment towards improvement in the learning outcomes, including strengthening of teacher educators, including the cluster resource coordinators (CRCs) .

However, although the state accepted the need for working with teacher educators, the perception of the cadre on the field was poor. Years of neglect of this cadre (reflected in the lack of investment in training specifically for their professional development prior to 2015) had led the cluster resource coordinators to be more of an administrative support system than a part of the academic support system. These officials lacked the skills required to become teacher coaches and were therefore not comfortable in visiting classrooms to guide teachers . This challenge was addressed by the KPALP as it included inputs for coaching teachers through classroom observation and identification of student learning gaps.

The programme pilot was conducted in 2016-17 in three districts of Maharashtra with 93 CRCs. At the end of the pilot, data indicated an improvement in the skill level of 63% of the participants. This was significant in influencing the state's decision to scale the programme across the state. Capacity development of the CRCs focused around the following three main themes-

- i. Data analysis;
- ii. Classroom observation and effective feedback;
- iii. Cluster development planning

In the course of the programme, modules related to these skills were also adapted to suit specific needs of tribal blocks and urban sites.

8. Implementation (350-450 words)

Please describe the implementation modalities or processes, where possible in relation to:

- i) What are the main activities carried out?
- ii) When and where the activities were carried out (including the start date and whether it is ongoing)?
- iii) Who were the key implementation actors and collaborators? (civil society organizations, private sector, foundations, coalitions, networks etc.)?
- iv) What were the resources needed (budget and sources) for the implementation? *

The programme was officially launched for scale-up by the state Minister of School Education in October 2018, and a commitment was made by the state to implement the programme for five years (2018-2022), reaching all CRCs and CRC equivalent cadres in the state. The launch event was significant, as it was for the first time that an education-related intervention had received such attention and saw participation of CRRs, district education officials, senior state officials, including officials from the state education department.

For the first phase of the programme scale-up, the programme was implemented in the lowest performing block (based on the Language Assessment of 2017) from each of the 34 districts in the state. This was called the KPALP Basic (module). Simultaneously, KPALP Advanced was offered to those CRCs who were previously in the KPALP pilot programme (between July 2016-Aug 2017). In addition to this, one tribal block and two urban blocks in across the state were selected to adapt KPALP to suit the needs of the tribal and urban sites.

To support implementation of the KPALP across the state, a State Resource Persons Group was formed with 34 Master Facilitators (MFs) and 71 Coaches, selected from the District Institutes for Education and Training (DIET) across the state. The MFs received direct input from experts, who in turn facilitated workshops with the coaches. The coaches were then expected to implement the programme with the KPs on the field. The implementation was led and monitored by the Continuous Professional Development (CPD) Department at the State Council for Education Research and Training (SCERT).

The first batch of 17 MFs was handpicked by SCERT and received input from experts for a duration of almost 6 months. These MFs have been instrumental in building the capacities of other MFs, and coaches. Currently, the 100 MFs and Coaches have been brought together to form one team of KPALP State Resource Persons and a KPALP Core Team has been identified to support the design and implementation of the programme. The formation of the Core Team was undertaken to support SCERT and promote ownership of the programme within the government system.

The programme includes inputs given through workshops, followed by field assignments for practice and on-site coaching. Each workshop was focussed on one of the three themes of the KPALP as mentioned above.

9. Results – outputs and outcomes (250-350 words)

To the extent possible, please reply to the questions below:

- i) How was the practice identified as transformative? (e.g., impact on policies, impact on management processes, impact on delivery arrangements or education monitoring, impact on teachers, learners and beneficiary communities etc.);
- ii) What were the concrete results achieved with regard to outputs and outcomes?
- iii) Has an assessment of the practice been carried out? If yes, what were the results? *

The programme has been successful in drawing attention to the potential of the Cluster Resource Coordinators (CRCs), in their role as academic leaders. This has been crucial, as although the cadre of the Clusters Resource Coordinators was created in 1994 to provide academic support in classrooms, due to lack of capacity building opportunities, the cadre soon began to function as administrative support to the district.

Learnings from the programme and the challenges faced by the CRCs in dispensing their duties, were regularly shared with the state. This has led to a review and revision in the job description of the CRCs and is pending a final approval from the Department of Education. Currently, the programme has been integrated with a larger state supported programme titled the 'Academic Leadership Programme' (ALP), which aims at applying the KPALP inputs to not only the CRCs but the block-level resource coordinators and school leaders as well. UNICEF is now working closely with a third-party to assess the impact of the KPALP and to draw out learnings for further policy decisions.

10. Lessons learnt (300 words)

To the extent possible, please reply to the following questions:

- i) What were the key triggers for transformation?
- ii) What worked really well – what facilitated this?
- iii) What did not work – why did it not work? *

Key triggers for transformation:

- a) Conducive policy environment: KPALP was conceived based on UNICEF research that underlined the importance for strengthening teacher educators. The policy environment at the time of the study encouraged action on this research, which was one of the main reasons that the programme could be initiated.
- b) Visibility in results: as the programme was able to demonstrate results on a skill matrix, that helped to capture the subjective skills, results were quantifiable. This helped propel the programme to scale, as it convinced the decision makers that the programme was benefitting on the field. The programme used several artefacts to provide evidence for such quantifiable results. For example, the written feedback to teachers by the CRC, was analyzed pre and post the workshop/ assignment and a positive difference was noted. This helped CRCs themselves to trust the programme more.
- c) Perception of the CRCs- as KPALP was one of the first programmes of its kind that catered exclusively to the CRCs, the CRCs themselves supported it.

What has worked well:

- a) Government partnership and system support- One of the main reasons for the success of the programme was that it was implemented over the course of five years, allowing it to gradually take root within the system. This is significant as most programmes are implemented for a short duration, before a change is brought about by the political leadership. To safeguard KPALP against this, since the very inception of the programme, one of the main strategies was to ensure that decisions regarding the design, monitoring and operationalization of the programme was in partnership with government KPALP representatives at the state and district levels. Currently, a core group of 13 members are being continually consulted to strengthen programme implementation and monitoring.
- b) Implementation model- The integration of workshop with a field-practice component and on-site coaching has helped CRCs with better skill acquisition. The state and district-level programme resource persons were also required to complete the field component, which helped them gain a better perspective into the functioning of the CRCs, making them more empathetic and sensitive to their needs. This was also reflected in the way they coached their CRCs on the field.

What has not worked well:

The programme could not be scaled-up to reach all the CRCs in the same manner as envisioned. Except for the first batch of the scale-up that included 340 CRCs, other CRCs were not able to complete the field practice component and provided only the workshop input. This was due to the many implementation delays caused by budgetary restrictions at the state level and competing programme priorities at the field level.

11. Conclusions (250 words)

Please describe why may this intervention be considered a “best practice”. What recommendations can be made for those intending to adopt the documented “best practice” or how can it help people working on the same issue(s)? *

The KPALP has garnered much attention from the state of Maharashtra and at the National level. It was studied to draw learnings for a new policy with regards to CRCs in the country. The following makes the programme a best practice and easily replicable in other similar contexts-

- a. Effective strategies and relevance to the system needs- the programme design and implementation strategies are responsive to local needs and can be adapted to changing environments.
- b. Collaboration and partnerships- the programme focuses on collaboration with the government system as well as the CRCs themselves, who regularly contributed to workshop/ module discussions.
- c. Measurable results- KPALP includes tools for measurement and monitoring, to help understand the impact of the programme more clearly and objectively.
- d. Sustainability of efforts- through government involvement

12. Further reading

Please provide a list and URLs of key reference documents for additional information on the “best practice” for those who may be interested in knowing how the results benefited the beneficiary group/s. *

Video film on KPALP: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M1-ObH5rfyw&t=4s>

Story on ECM: <https://unicef.sharepoint.com/sites/IND-COVID19/SitePages/Kee.aspx>

Documentation of Case Stories: https://unicef-my.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/personal/ragarwal_unicef_org/EYcvjCSED-JNvhzabDNDzkABYgwECKwAG-b2NoS1txMWPw?e=fVQQ7e