

## Monthly Updates-June 2026

# Quality & Universal Access to Early Childhood Care & Education through Systemic Transformation (QUEST)

## Overview

CRISP's Centre for **Quality & Universal Access to Early Childhood Care & Education through Systemic Transformation (QUEST)**, with support from **Gates Foundation** is driven by the belief that every child in India deserves quality pre-primary education, achievable through the transformation and convergence of nutrition and education systems. QUEST adopts a low-cost, high-impact approach, and works to empower Anganwadi workers, align curriculum and pedagogy, improve infrastructure, and strengthen governance and community involvement, bridging the gap between policy and grassroots implementation in 11 partner states. QUEST's aim is to ensure universal access to quality Early Childhood Care & Education for all 3–6-year-old children in India through systemic transformation and strengthened public delivery systems.

## Project Goal

To enhance the quality of pre-primary education for **14 million** underserved children across 11 states by transforming Anganwadi Centres into vibrant **early learning centres** and ensuring access to quality Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) for all children under six. This includes the physical and functional co-location of Anganwadi Centres with primary schools **ensure smooth transition** to formal education, and improve learning continuity.

## Strategy

Creating a strong ECE foundation requires an integrated approach combining safe, engaging learning environments, an age-appropriate curriculum, skilled Anganwadi workers, regular monitoring, active community involvement, and coordinated institutional support to ensure consistent, high-quality delivery.

## Key Pillars



Capacity Building



Community Engagement



Monitoring Indicators



Robust Learning Environment



Curriculum Alignment



Institutional Strengthening

## Photos



## Progress this Month

### Key Highlights

- **Leadership Transition:** Successfully onboarded new Project Lead; completed a seamless transition from the outgoing leadership.
- **ACCHA Project Implementation:** Organized the Technical Partners' Workshop with participation from Sodhana, RIVER, Rocket Learning, Bal Raksha Bharat, and Pratham to align implementation and convergence strategies
- **Governance & Structure:**
  - Secured formal acceptance of the MoU signing file by WDCW.
  - Signed Memorandum of Understanding with NATCO Trust for implementation of Aadharshila trainings for ECE Leaders in 26 ICDS Projects in Andhra Pradesh.
  - Constituted the State Project Monitoring Unit (SPMU) and District Project Monitoring Units (DPMU).
  - Coordinated comprehensive planning for the Training of Trainers (ToT) and DPMU orientation.
- **Human Resources:** Finalized the selection and appointment of Field Coordinators to support project implementation.
- **Training & Curriculum:** Prepared ToT modules in English and Telugu, aligned with Aadharshila. Content development included child-friendly Anganwadi activities, activity block approach featuring integrated, QR-coded audio-visual learning resources.

### Central Office

- **Evaluation:** Finalized the Poshan Bhi Padhai Bhi cross-state analysis and final report, currently ready for submission.
- **Strategic Expansion:** Finalized the Odisha field visit plan for developing proposed interventions; developed the Maharashtra intervention proposal for pitching to the state ICDS department for a district-wide pilot (Gates Foundation partnership).

### Key Learnings

Regular **field engagement, systematic documentation of discussions and action points**, and collaboration with technical partners are essential for aligning implementation with ground realities, improving training quality, and strengthening stakeholder ownership.

### Way Forward

- Roll out **capacity-building initiatives, including ToTs, SPMU/DPMU trainings, ECE Leader programmes, and continued development** of training modules for Supervisors and Field Coordinators.
- Strengthen project implementation by issuing **technical partner work orders, streamlining sector meeting structures, and advancing field visits** and project grounding activities in Maharashtra and Odisha.
- Complete and submit key **project deliverables, including the merged Anganwadi Centre study, guidelines, and midline report** for the 104 pilot Anganwadis.