

Monthly Updates-May 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

Andhra Pradesh

ACCHA Project: The Andhra lo Chinnarula Chaduvulu (ACCHA) project was formally launched in Andhra Pradesh in partnership with the Department of Women Development & Child Welfare. The project aims to strengthen Early Childhood Education (ECE) across the state through structured capacity-building initiatives for Anganwadi Workers. In preparation for the launch, key project documents, including training modules, operational guidelines, and project notes, were developed and printed.

Vidya Vedika Calendar: Calendars for the fortnightly Vidya Vedika meetings were developed in alignment with the Academic Calendar.

Guidelines for Merged Anganwadis in AP: Field visits to all sampled Anganwadi Centres (AWCs), except six centres in Tirupati, were completed. Findings are currently being synthesised to develop draft guidelines for strengthening the functioning of merged centres across the state.

Sujana Excellence Awards: The team supported the development of assessment criteria and documentation processes for recognising high-performing Anganwadi Workers. Data collection has been completed and submitted to the constituency team for award declaration in June.

Central Office

Midline Report of Pilot Interventions: A midline study was conducted across 104 pilot Anganwadi Centres to assess the impact of interventions and generate insights to inform future programme design and implementation.

CRISP's Group Tool for Learning Outcomes Evaluation: Version 8 of the tool has been finalised and is ready for field piloting following the summer break in Anganwadi Centres. Work also continued on refining the tool, including strengthening the socio-emotional learning assessment battery.

Poshan Bhi Padhai Bhi: The Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan reports are currently being finalised.

Key Learnings

The launch of the ACCHA project highlighted the **importance of close coordination between government departments, NGOs, and funding partners for building salience around ECE** and ensuring alignment in project implementation.

Way Forward

- Commence training of trainers, SPMU, DPMU teams, and the first batch of ECE Leaders.
- Finalise and operationalise the Vidya Vedika implementation framework.
- Submit the overall PBPB report for internal review.
- Finalise the unified curriculum framework and package for PP1, PP2, and PP3 in Meghalaya.
- Complete fieldwork and draft guidelines for strengthening 1,322 merged Anganwadi Centres in Andhra Pradesh.
- Submit the midline survey report for 104 pilot Anganwadi Centres in Vijayawada West Constituency.
- Complete the repository of audio-visual materials to support Aadharshila implementation in AWCs.