CRISP
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Centre for Research in Schemes and Policies

Monthly Updates-September 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 Environmer
- Curriculum Alignment
- Institutional Strengthening

Photos





Progress this Month

Central Office

- **Learning Outcomes Tool:** Retested Version 8 across 16 AWCs with 50 children and compared the findings with the IDELA tool based on expert inputs.
- **Training Planning:** Developed the regional ToT plan and coordinated on participants, trainers, venues, residential arrangements, training dates and budgets.
- **Training Modules:** Revised the English and Telugu ECE Leader modules based on Department feedback and coordinated the review and finalisation of Aadharshila activity videos.
- **Department Coordination:** Presented the ACCHA implementation approach to the Principal Secretary and Department leadership and discussed training, district readiness and implementation requirements.

ACCHA Project

- **MoU Addendum:** The MoU addendum was signed by the Director, Women Development and Child Welfare, on 25 September 2026.
- **Teachers' Day:** Celebrated on 8 September 2026 with the support of Sujana Foundation under the VijayaDEEPAM Project. The event brought together 95 AWWs and 2 Supervisors. The team shared midline findings from 104 AWCs, introduced the ACCHA Project and ECE Leader role, and recognised community champions and active mothers.
- **ECE Leader Selection:** Finalised ECE Leader selections in NTR, Guntur, Bapatla and Vizianagaram. DPMU orders were issued in NTR, Guntur and Vizianagaram.
- **Field Preparation:** Conducted ECE Leader centre visits across the four pilot districts and supported district-level orientations and Vidya Vedika arrangements.
- **District Training Preparation:** Identified residential venues and coordinated with districts and partners on training readiness, participants and logistics.

Key Learnings

- Early coordination with **local designers, internal quality checks before Department review, and adequate time for finalisation** and printing can reduce corrections and delays. For multi-stakeholder trainings, budgets, cost responsibilities, logistics, trainer arrangements, and dates should be jointly agreed in advance.
- Regular internal planning meetings and a single consolidated tracker for approvals, **materials, training dates, venues, budgets, responsibilities, and district readiness** can help teams align early, identify bottlenecks, and communicate with districts and partners more effectively.

Way Forward

- Organise the Guntur launch with the Director, WDCW, Granules team and District Collector.
- Onboard the RELA Consultant and finalise the Learning Outcomes Tool and mobile app for data collection, with expert consultation.
- After approval from WDCW, print 1,200 copies of the modules for the ToT training.
- Conduct three ToTs in Krishna, Vizianagaram and Kurnool.
- Conduct ECE Leader training in the four pilot districts – NTR, Guntur, Bapatla and Vizianagaram.