

CRISP

March 2024 Edition

MAASAM

Monthly Account of Achievements, Successes and Memories

Content

WeSpeak

Higher Education Funding Analysis: Budget 2024-25

Mr. Adapureddy Nagesh Babu

The Anti-Cheating Law: Creating Solutions Without Addressing Root Causes

Arjoma Moulick (Fellow- CRISP Central Office)

FellowSpeak

Major Developments in CRISP

CRISP in Action



Higher Education Funding Analysis: Budget 2024-25



Adapureddy Nagesh Babu

Consultant-CRISP Telangana Team

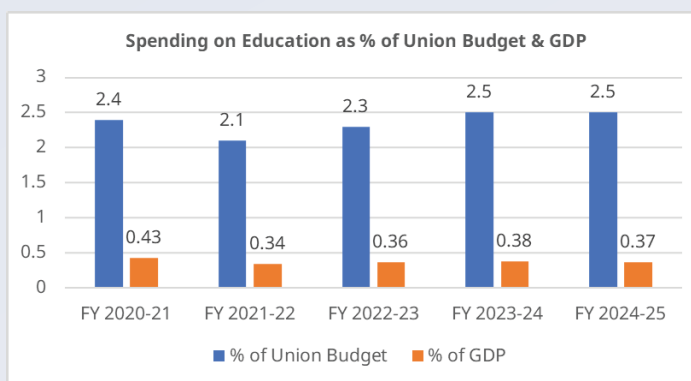
The interim budget 2024-25 was released amidst extremely high expectations, given that it is the budget before the upcoming Lok Sabha elections 2024. The projection of 'Viksit Bharat' in the budget is a welcome idea, but the question is whether that idea will translate into reality. Though fiscal prudence is welcome, greater emphasis on this might adversely affect sectors such as education, health, and nutrition, that are still grappling with the pandemic effect, negatively impacting the most vulnerable populations of the nation. This is the fourth budget after the roll out of NEP in 2020 and the education sector received ₹ 1,20,628 crores. Although the education budget has increased in absolute numbers, the overall education budget as a % of GDP has decreased.

Education Budget

Despite the recommendation of various committees, and NEP 2020's aspired 6% of GDP allocation to education, it is disappointing to witness the declining share of the education budget. This raises questions on the government's financial commitment towards the implementation of NEP 2020, given the need for government funding to fulfil the vision of NEP 2020.

Financial Year	Education Budget (in crores)	Higher Education Budget (in crores)
FY 2020-21	₹ 99,300	₹ 39,466.52
FY 2021-22	₹ 93,224.31	₹ 38,350.65
FY 2022-23	₹ 1,04,277.72	₹ 40,828.35
FY 2023-24	₹ 1,12,899.47	₹ 44,094.62
FY 2024-25	₹1,20,627.87	₹ 47,619.77

The above table displays an increase in spending on education by the Union Govt. in absolute numbers, but the spending on education as % of Union Budget and GDP is worrying.



The spending on education reflects a mixed picture, with both gains and losses in funding across various segments. Though the budget for overall education has increased by 6.4% compared to the previous year, higher education funding has witnessed a decline in absolute terms from ₹ 57,244 crores in 2023-24 (RE) to ₹ 47,620 crores in 2024-25 (BE), down by a sharp ₹ 9,600 crore (16.8%). Despite marginal increases in research, innovation, and grants to institutions; financial aid for students has seen a slight reduction, signalling potential challenges in ensuring equitable access to education.

Grants for UGC?

The budgetary landscape of higher education presents significant challenges, particularly with regard to institutional funding. While central institutions have received a substantial increase in funding, concerns arise over the significant drop in allocation to regulatory bodies like the University Grants Commission (UGC). The budget allocation for central universities has shown a substantial increase, with ₹ 15,928 crores allocated in 2024-25 compared to ₹ 11,528.90 crores in 2023-24. The budget allocation for IITs has seen a moderate increase, with ₹ 10,324.50 crores allocated in 2024-25 compared to ₹ 9,361.50 crores in 2023-24. The budget allocation for NITs and IIEST has shown a steady increase, reaching ₹ 5,040 crores in 2024-25. In contrast to the trend observed in technical institutions, the budget allocation for IIMs has declined, with ₹ 212.12 crores allocated in 2024-25 compared to ₹ 300 crores in 2023-24.



The allocation for the UGC, slashed by 61%, is the largest ever cut in at least five years. The allocation was cut from a revised estimate of ₹ 6,409 crores in 2023-24 to ₹ 2,500 crores in 2024-25. This drastic cut poses questions about the potential implications for institutional autonomy and quality assurance. Rajesh Jha, an assistant professor at Delhi University said, "The drastic cut in UGC fund has deleted G (Grants) and reduced it to merely a regulatory agency. This will further encourage universities to start more self-financing courses which will be an additional burden on students. It will also make universities more dependent on loans from Higher Education Financing Agency (HEFA)."

Faculty Development and Research & Innovation

In the budget, notable emphasis was placed on the initiatives aimed at faculty development and promoting research & innovation. The substantial increase in funding for the PMMMNMTT underscores the government's commitment to strengthen the capacities of teachers and improve teaching quality. The budget for Impacting Research Innovation and Technology (IMPRINT), a pan-IIT and Indian Institute of Science (IISc) joint research initiative, has seen its budget double to ₹10 crores. But the parallel scheme for pushing social science research has been all but scrapped, receiving no allocation for the second year in a row.



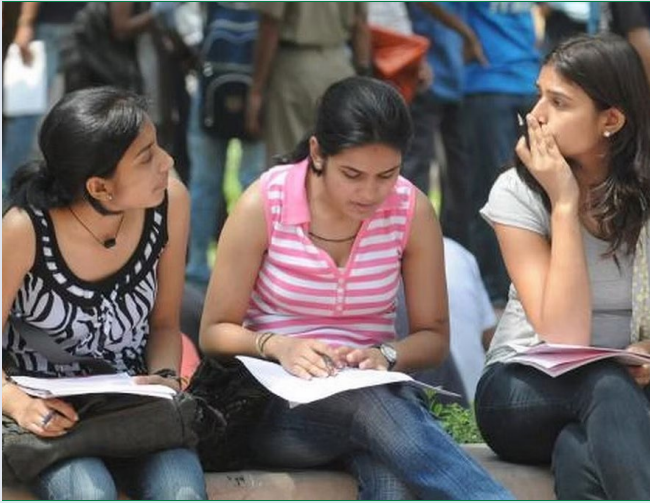
Investments in research schemes, such as IMPRINT, SPARC, and STARS, that play a key role in driving knowledge creation and technological advancement, is a much-awaited step. MERITE scheme saw an allocation rise from ₹ 2 crores in 2023-24 to ₹ 100 crores in 2024-25. This signals a renewed emphasis on fostering research spirit among the HEIs. With a focus on vocational and skill education, the NATS has been allocated ₹ 600 crores—an increase from ₹ 440 crores in 2023-24 budget. PM-USHA has been allocated ₹ 1,815 crores in 2024-25, up from RUSA's ₹ 500 crores.



Digital Learning

The allocation of ₹ 255 crores to Artificial Intelligence for setting up three 'Centres of Excellence' implies the government's recognition of the transformative potential of emerging technologies in driving innovation and economic growth. The National Digital University has also been allocated ₹ 100 crores. On the digital initiatives front, under the Digital India e-learning component, National Mission in Education through ICT, a Central Scheme aimed at learning from higher education institutions through e-learning portals and Home TV Channels, has seen an increase of 20 per cent in allocation in 2024-25 (I)(BE) as compared to the previous year i.e., increase to ₹ 505 crores as against ₹ 420 crores in 2023-24 budget.

However, the pedagogy shift enabled by digital initiatives requires trained teachers to facilitate effective learning. As per TeamLease EdTech Survey, 31% teachers in India are still not proficient with digital tools and 79% are still undergoing training. Only 15% can manage virtual labs. The report also highlights that nearly 75% of educators feel that students tend to lose interest during online classes and 45% of teachers feel that both students and teachers are still uncomfortable with digital integration. 65% of teachers also feel that internet connectivity is still a challenge and 50% of them think that there's a shortage of laptops/smartphones among students. Digital learning is here to stay and with a continual increase in the integration of digital learning with conventional learning, a renewed focus on continuous upskilling and reskilling the teaching community becomes the key.



Student Financial Aid and Scholarships

Challenges continue in ensuring adequate financial support to students, especially in terms of aid and scholarships. The scholarships for marginalised communities witnessed a cut in funding. The allocation for student financial aid has witnessed a slight reduction, with ₹ 1,908 crores allocated in 2024-25 compared to ₹ 1,954 crores in 2023-24. This marginal decrease raises concerns about access to higher education for socially and economically disadvantaged students (SEDGs). The fund allocation to PM Research Fellowship has dropped to ₹ 350 crores in 2024-25 from ₹ 400 crores in 2023-24, indicating challenges in supporting research scholars and fostering a culture of inquiry. It is very surprising to note that, on the one hand, the funding for research & innovation schemes has increased, and on the other hand, funding for students' aid, scholarships and fellowships has decreased.

Schemes	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Student Financial Aid	2316	2482	2077.85	1954	1908
IMPRINT	50	25	10	5	10
SPARC	40	10	74	50	100
STARS	50	25	25	25	30
NATS 1	75	500	nil	440	600

Conclusion

The analysis of union budget 2024-25 provides valuable insights into the allocation and distribution of funds in the education sector, particularly in higher education. While increased investments in central institutions and research & innovation schemes reflect strategic priorities of the government, challenges remain in addressing the resource constraints, ensuring equitable access to education, and supporting student welfare. Equitable education financing becomes indispensable in strengthening the education system for the inclusion of all students, especially from the marginalized backgrounds. It is also essential to have a financial roadmap, in letter and in spirit, for the implementation of NEP 2020. Education sector was terribly affected in the pandemic years, and we must make it a priority for recovery of the sector so that students gain back the pre-pandemic levels of learning outcomes. While this article aimed to serve as an analysis of the interim budget, the expectation remains that the complete budget for 2024-25 will fulfill the anticipated requirements for social welfare schemes and the development sector, with a particular emphasis on the education sector.



The Anti-Cheating Law: Creating Solutions Without Addressing Root Causes



Arjoma Moulick

Fellow- CRISP Central Office

The Anti-Cheating bill, which was recently passed by the Lok Sabha on January 6, 2024, addresses issues about cheating in Public Service Commission exams. The fundamental goal of the measure is to improve transparency and trust in public examination processes. The Public Examinations Prevention of Unfair Means Bill of 2024 was introduced by the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievance, and Pension to prohibit unfair means in examinations punishable by law. At the same time, the bill aims to effectively and legally prevent a person engaged in unfair tactics that negatively damage the public examination system by utilising monetary or wrongful means.

What does the law state?

The law covers all the exams conducted by the Union Public Service Commission, Staff Selection Commission, Railway Recruitment Board, Institute of Banking Personnel Selection, Ministries or Departments of the Central Government and their attached and subordinate offices for recruitment of staff. The notifiable agency in this case will be the National Testing Agency. The law covers all kinds of punishable offences such as

Question paper or answer key leaks, collusion, accessing or tampering possession of question papers, providing solutions, assisting candidates, altering assessments, violating Central Government norms and standards, tampering with documents for short-listing or finalizing merit, deliberate violation of security measures, tampering with computer networks, resources, and systems, manipulation of seating arrangements, dates, and shifts for candidates, creating fake websites, and tampering with computer networks, resources, or systems are all examples of cheating in public examinations. Fake examinations, admit cards, and offer letters are also used to cheat or gain money. According to the legislation, all offences are cognizable, non-bailable, and non-compoundable. Any individual found guilty of employing unfair means and offences would be penalised and imprisoned for a time of not less than three years and extendable up to five years, as well as a fine of ₹10 lakh. Failure to pay will result in an extra penalty. The exam service provider will face a fine of up to ₹1 crore, and the equivalent cost of the examination would be recovered from them. Furthermore, persons found guilty by the service provider shall be prevented from being allocated additional responsibility for the administration of any public examination for a period of four years. The draft bill



also states that if the investigation reveals that the offence was committed with the consent or connivance of the director/senior management or the person in charge of the service provider, the gilding person will face imprisonment for at least three years and up to ten years, as well as a fine of ₹10 crore. For any collective or organised offence, the jail term shall be 5 years, extendable to 10 years, with a fine of ₹1 crore.

The Gujarat and Uttarakhand anti-cheating legislation feature relatively harsh prohibitions for cheating. In Andhra Pradesh, the minimum prison term is three years. One crucial element of the Uttarakhand Act prohibits students from participating in state competitive examinations for a period of two to five years. This prevents the examinee from delivering an examination, even if they are innocent and will be convicted under the law, undermining the presumption of innocence for accused candidates. The scope of the regulation also varies. In Uttarakhand and Rajasthan, the laws only apply to competitive tests such as public service commission exams, whereas in other states, the laws apply to examinations given by educational institutions to grant educational qualifications such as diploma degrees. This raises moral concerns about whether it is appropriate to have similar penalties for tests in educational institutions and exams for recruitment into

government posts, which have distinct stakes. There are many concerns about such laws, including the fact that the "Act" makes no distinction between unfair measures, which might result in disproportionate punishments for examinees. Furthermore, if an examinee is innocent but being prosecuted, they may be refused the opportunity to sit the exam, which could jeopardise their presumption of innocence. A potential candidate's imprisonment can have a significant impact on their mental health and job opportunities, also affecting their chances of rehabilitation. The desperation for government positions is quite strong in a country like India, which does not guarantee security of job prospects in other private industries. Without sufficient background checks and conditions, imposing harsh treatment on the candidate is not justifiable.



Is there any sociological solution to this?

According to Weber, the state has the ultimate power to employ coercive tools of power. Weber's theory for creating a just society stems from the concept of instilling dread in citizens, forcing them to hesitate before committing a crime. In such a case, where a student's career is at stake, the state must ensure that those who work hard to succeed are rewarded and not lost in the midst of corruption. However, it is critical to implement a variety of additional measures to strengthen our system from inside in order to lessen the likelihood that our parliament will pass such legislation. Firstly, strengthening the National Testing Agency, which will be in charge: As a third-party agency, it is critical to have an independent ombudsman who is not influenced by department or politics. Establishing adequate checks and balances among agencies is crucial to ensure the accuracy of investigation reports submitted to the National Testing Agency. One such example that the NTA can follow is the model of establishing the NIA-National Intelligence Agency, which imposes swift penalties on offenders. Secondly, the widespread use of technology is becoming a major concern for government competitive tests, particularly the use of generative AI, which has raised fears about the possibility

of creating fraudulent identities. Such circumstances must be considered before putting an examinee on trial. Alternative methods, such as ethical education and support systems, must be established to combat cheating while ensuring fairness and opportunities for redemption; however, organised group crimes that contribute to illegally occupying seats of hardworking candidates should be punished and brought under the jurisdiction of law enforcement. Thirdly, policymakers must work to deglamorize government jobs and create more diverse opportunities for young people based on their skill set. Providing a minimum wage and safe working conditions for young people to grow in the private sector and gain access to global opportunities requires improvement. For this reason, young people must be trained in marketable skills while also improving Indian institutes to produce world-class students. Curriculum development is another aspect in which students must be trained in hard skill sets such as Python, R, and so on. Fourthly, the examination pattern used by the Public Service Commission should be changed. It should aim to create exams that are more scientific in nature rather than relying on rote learning and memory power. It should test the examinee's analytical skills by asking them to "think and write" rather than writing from memory or following a predetermined pattern of answers. The frequency of such examinations should be increased from once a year to twice a year or more, similar to defence exams such as the Air Force Common Entrance Test and Common Defence Service Exam and admission exams such as IIT-JEE. This will help in reducing the pressure of clearing the exams in one-go, and allow for better chances of selection. It might also lessen the occurrence of cheating.

Additionally, public service commission exams should switch from selecting candidates solely on the basis of the written exam to the IIM-Indian Institute of Management model of considering a student's academic trajectory and qualifications, along with a personal interview and written exam.

In the end, Weber's policy of creating the state as the ultimate source of coercive power by using such restrictive and stringent laws are effective in instilling fear in aspiring candidates and organised crime groups. But without a proper check and balance system, it may jeopardise the careers of many young candidates. Ethical education, fines (monetary punishment), and the establishment of a free and fair system for conducting exams by boards and commissions are all civic responsibilities that should be inherent. It is the commission's/government's responsibility to reward those candidates who have worked hard to realise their dreams.

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FellowSpeak



Working at CRISP helped me to grow professionally and broaden my past experience in academics planning and policy making. It provided a unique opportunity to delve into the social sector of planning, gaining insights into the workings of government departments especially the UP Higher Education Department, governance, and public policy. Working here is akin to preparing a comprehensive development plan, engaging in every stage of the process from understanding the study area, to designing, planning, on-site execution, and monitoring. Each step presents unique challenges that provide invaluable practical learning experiences, fostering a depth of understanding that is hard to replicate elsewhere.

Working on the PEHLE-UP project facilitated my engagement with stakeholders at all levels, from Chief Secretaries and Vice-Chancellors at the apex level to Principals and teachers at the grassroots level. I developed a deep understanding of key educational frameworks including the National Education Policy 2020, Accreditations, Ranking and gained insights into the academic landscape at large. We've learned the art of turning the tables, shifting from being overlooked to collaborating effectively with others, all while cultivating healthy and productive networks. Personally, my confidence has boasted especially with capacity building workshops across state connecting with 200+ institutions. I am developing skills such as public speaking, communication, documentation, and research.

I feel fortunate to share a working platform with distinguished mentors and state leads who provide their lifelong practical working experience, offering valuable learning opportunities. CRISP's organizational ethos allows for autonomy in project handling while facilitating access to high-level stakeholders. Its impact in a short span is commendable. I am enjoying my work, especially in capacity building workshops under the guidance of state lead. I wish to continue working and grow along with the organization, delving deeper into the intricacies of public policy.

Divya Malakar

Consultant - CRISP Uttar Pradesh Team



The past 13 months as a CRISP Fellow have been transformative. Being part of the first cohort of the fellowship has allowed me to witness what it takes to build an organization that is passionate about and committed to its vision and mission. I have had the fortune of working with the Department of School Education and the Department of Women Development and Child Welfare in Andhra Pradesh, to strengthen early childhood education and foundational learning in the state. This provided me a unique opportunity to learn the functioning of the administrative system of two departments, understand the complexities and nuances of solving large-scale problems that involve multiple stakeholders, and learn how to work within the constraints of the system.

Unlearning and relearning have been an important part of my experience. Dealing with multiple stakeholders, overcoming language barriers, building relationships at the field-level and department-level, and other challenges have helped hone my problem-solving abilities. Cross-learning by engaging with my peers as well as other organisations working in a similar space has allowed me to look for solutions beyond the situation around me and broaden my horizons. The journey has been challenging and enlightening.

The fellowship has allowed me to bridge the distance between theory and practice – by designing evidence-based policies through research projects that have a tangible impact on the lives of thousands of individuals. I am grateful for the opportunity to be surrounded by dedicated individuals who are committed to guiding, mentoring, and moulding young professionals in the policy and social sector. For me, the CRISP Fellowship has been a delightful first step in a long research and policy career that will be dedicated to impacting social change at scale through evidence-based policymaking.

Neha Ashar

Fellow- CRISP Andhra Pradesh Team

CRISP and BTC Join Forces for Enhanced Governance in Bodoland Territorial Region

We are thrilled to announce the formalization of a strategic partnership between CRISP and the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) through a three-year Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). This collaboration is geared towards strengthening governance systems in the Bodoland Territorial Region, with a special emphasis on the effective implementation of social sector schemes and policies to ensure significant welfare gains for the local population. CRISP's commitment extends to supporting BTC in studying and improving the execution of various Central, State, and Council-level initiatives, along with governance strengthening and capacity building. This dynamic alliance is poised to make a lasting impact on the region's development and marks a shared vision for positive change.



CRISP Expanding Horizons to Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan

CRISP (Centre for Research in Schemes & Policies) has extended its network to include Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, underscoring its commitment to social progress. In a significant move, CRISP has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Government of Madhya Pradesh, focusing on promoting excellence in higher education and skills. This collaboration marks Madhya Pradesh as the eighth state to join hands with CRISP in the social sector in India. In Rajasthan, CRISP has initiated a campaign for skill-integrated higher education, led by a dedicated team including RS Julania, IAS (Retired), and Khemraj Choudhary, former Additional Chief Secretary. These endeavors underscore CRISP's dedication to fostering innovation and empowerment across regions. Stay tuned for more updates as CRISP continues to drive positive change through education and skill development.



CRISP Fellowship 2024: Sees Overwhelming Response

Join Us in Making a Difference!

CRISP FELLOWSHIP 2024

CRISP has been inundated with an unprecedented number of applications for its coveted Fellowship Program in 2024 and a staggering increase of 200% in applicants compared to previous recruitments, with over 4000 bright youngsters vying for the opportunity. A notable trend observed by CRISP is the remarkable dominance of female applicants, surpassing their male counterparts by a significant margin, with 2054 aspiring young women showcasing their ambition and talent. The overwhelming response to the CRISP Fellowship 2024 underscores the organization's growing influence and its commitment to nurturing the next generation of leaders and change-makers.

CRISP Team Deep Dives Into EXCEL - MP Project with Madhya Pradesh Officials

Led by Sri R.S. Julania, the CRISP team recently held detailed discussions on the EXCEL-MP plan of action with Sri Inder Singh Parmar, Honorable Minister for Higher Education, and Sri KC Gupta, Special Chief Secretary Higher Education, along with the senior team. These fruitful deliberations signify CRISP's commitment to collaborative efforts aimed at advancing educational excellence in Madhya Pradesh.



BRAC Ultra-Poor Graduation Initiative Explores Collaboration with CRISP

The esteemed team from the BRAC Ultra-Poor Graduation Initiative recently visited the CRISP Central office in Hyderabad to explore potential collaboration opportunities. Led by Shweta Banerjee, Country Lead for India, alongside Boudewijn Weijermars, Technical Advisor, and Ramesh Veluru, Program Officer India, the visit marks a fruitful partnership ahead. BRAC, recognized as the largest non-governmental development organization globally with a mission of empowering individuals and communities facing poverty, illiteracy, and social injustice, seeks to leverage CRISP's expertise and support for their initiatives. CRISP has pledged its full assistance to the team, promising a fruitful partnership ahead. Stay tuned for updates on this promising collaboration.



CRISP Join Hands with Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham for Academic Collaboration and Research



CRISP has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, encompassing the School of Social and Behavioural Sciences (SSBS), along with two esteemed research centres, AMMACHI Labs and the Center for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality. The MoU signing ceremony, attended by distinguished guests including R Subrahmanyam IAS Retd., Secretary of CRISP, and Dr. Bhavani Rao R., Dean of the School of Social and Behavioural Sciences, along with Ms. Sandhya Kanneganti, Founding Member of CRISP, marked the commencement of an exciting partnership focused on academic collaboration and research exploration. This collaboration signifies CRISP's commitment to advancing knowledge and addressing societal challenges through interdisciplinary approaches. Under the MoU, CRISP and Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham will work closely on various academic initiatives and research endeavors, leveraging the expertise and resources of both institutions.

CRISP in action

Rural Development



CRISP KA Fellow Harshita on a scoping visit to a Tribal hamlet in Chamarajanagar District, Karnataka

The CRISP-Karnataka team recently began work on a new project called the Ultra-Poor Graduation Initiative (UPGI), spearheaded by BRAC International (<https://bracupgi.org/>), in collaboration with PRADAN (www.pradan.net) and CRISP. The project aims to 'graduate' individuals and families out of ultra-poverty by providing livelihoods, training and essential services over a three-year period, creating enabling factors for the graduation out of poverty. Other elements in the program are enablement of social support ecosystems, enrollment in village collectives, and participation in decision-making processes.

BRAC International has signed an MoU with the Department of Skills, Government of Karnataka, to undertake UPGI in ten districts. The National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), Government of Karnataka, will be heading the



CRISP KA Fellow Rekha (on the right), along with a PRADAN representative, in conversation with a resident in Bellary District, Karnataka

Government's efforts on this project, and will deploy its community cadres to work with BRAC and achieve the goals of the project. PRADAN is working on developing a methodology to identify the ultra-poor in the ten districts.

CRISP KA team members travelled to various districts with the PRADAN team on scoping visits in two Taluks of each district. The objectives of the field visits were to assess and study poverty in the Karnataka context (especially in the Kalyana Karnataka region/districts, and in Chamarajanagar – home to a higher Tribal population, including the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups – PVTGs). Insights from the field visits will help PRADAN and CRISP to develop context-specific indicators (in addition to the standard socio-economic indicators used to assess and measure poverty) that will then help the program identify the ultra-poor, and enrol them in UPGI.

Real Time Monitoring of the Koosina Mane Initiative

The Department of RDPR, Karnataka has initiated 4000 Gram Panchayat (GP) level creches, referred to as *Koosina Mane (Infant's home)*, to support mothers employed in the informal sector. The CRISP team visited 17 of these creches in the month of February and engaged with various stakeholders including the Zilla Panchayat CEOs, Panchayat Development Officers, GP presidents, creche caretakers and the beneficiaries availing the creche facilities. The objective was to provide the government with firsthand insights, furnishing field level details about the overall operations of these creches and highlighting associated challenges. The real-time field insights provided to the department aim to facilitate course correction in the initial stages of the program, ensuring a seamless execution of the scheme.



CRISP KA Fellow Daksha Jain with Panchayat officials and caretakers at Nagawala GP, Mysore District.

Establishing Library Management Committees in Rural Libraries

CRISP – Karnataka team has recently conducted visits to five Gram Panchayats (GPs) in Yadgir and Kalaburagi districts. The visits were aimed at setting up library management committees and attending inaugural meetings where committees were formed in January 2024. Led by the GP President and consisting of residents from various backgrounds, these committees are responsible for monitoring library operations and implementing measures to enhance the quality of library services.

While inaugural meetings occurred from February 12th to 14th in Ramasamudra, Mudnal (Yadgir District), and Taj Sultanpur GPs (Kalaburagi district), new committees were formed in Nalwar and Ladlapura GPs (Kalaburagi District) on January 16th. Key decisions taken include book distribution to schools in villages distant from the library, conducting awareness campaigns and installing book suggestion boxes. Taj Sultanpur GP has decided to expedite the construction of a new library building and open it to the public in two weeks. Progress on these decisions will be reviewed in upcoming committee meetings.

Gram Panchayats Library Management Committees will give a voice to the community in the running of the library, and enable the GP and the villagers to give inputs to the librarian, as well as make him/her accountable to making the GP library a more effective vehicle of learning and knowledge.



Librarian briefing the committee members about the need for the Library Management Committee in Nalwar GP, Kalaburagi District. CRISP KA Fellow Hashir P.V is on the right.

Higher Education

In line with the MoU signed with the Govt. of Telangana on Heading for Excellence Globally in Higher Education in Telangana State (HEIGHTS) Project, the following activities were conducted by the CRISP Telangana Team in the last month.

Quality Assurance

Working towards a quality culture and excellence in higher education in Telangana, CRISP facilitated 25 colleges to submit their National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) applications for 2024 rankings. Further, working on the Assessment and Accreditation (A&A) of the colleges, a workshop on National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) was conducted at KV Ranga Reddy College on 24th January 2024, where more than 25 participants were oriented on the A&A process. Further, CRISP supported the Government City College, RBVRR Womens College, Anwarul Uloom College and Bhavan's Vivekananda College in their efforts towards building a quality culture and excellence.

Working on the implementation of National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, CRISP engaged in discussions and deliberations under the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) / University Grants Commission (UGC) supported discussion forum on NEP 2020 15th & 16th February 2024 at St. Joseph's UG and PG College, Hyderabad wherein several experts from

academia and industry participated. This helped to create an awareness of the latest reforms in higher education among the participating autonomous colleges.



Dr. K. Rama, State Lead, CRISP Telangana attending ICSSR conference on NEP 2020 on 15th February 2024 at St. Joseph's Degree and PG (A), Hyderabad.

On request of the Government of Telangana, 'A Note on the Performance of Higher Education in the State of Telangana and the Reform Agenda for Enhancing Quality of the System' was prepared. This was expected to support the Higher Education Department, Govt. of Telangana to take various policy decisions for improving the quality of higher education in the state. As an initiative towards enhancing the quality of the higher education ecosystem in the state, a desk review was conducted and a concept note was prepared on 'Linking Affiliation Status and Accreditation of Colleges: A Step towards Graded Autonomy.' Working on the sustainability of various initiatives through strategic planning for continuous improvement, CRISP initiated the process of developing the Institutional Development Plan (IDP) which is also a requirement for the new reform agenda.

Apprenticeship Embedded Degree Programs (AEDPs)

Reviewing the interim budget and analyzing its impact on Higher Education, several deliberations were held internally as well as with external stakeholders. As observed from the interim budget, the skilling part has been given a significance, criss-crossing various departments. Accordingly, activities were conducted to take forward the implementation of AEDPs in the state. MoUs were signed between the representatives of the Healthcare Sector Skill Council (HSSC) and 04 colleges implementing the BBA Healthcare Management on 15th February 2024 at Andhra Mahila Sabha Arts & Science College for Women (A), Hyderabad. The signing of MoUs was followed by the Faculty Training conducted by Ms. Anshu Verma and Ms. Pooja Fuloria from HSSC on 15th & 16th February 2024 where 20+ faculty attended the training program that included group activities, role plays and mock teaching sessions.

To upscale the implementation of AEDPs in Telangana from AY 2024-25, CRISP conducted a virtual meeting with Mr. B. Venkatesham, Principal Secretary, Education Department, Govt. of Telangana on 17th February 2024. The meeting was attended by the officials of Sector Skill Councils (SSCs), Telangana State Council of Higher Education (TSCHE) and Commissionerate of Collegiate Education (CCE), and 50+ Principals of the Government and Aided Degree Colleges. A decision was taken by the state government to shortlist the colleges for upscaling AEDPs by the end of February 2024.



Faculty attending Training conducted by Healthcare SSC on 15th and 16th February 2024 at Andhra Mahila Sabha Arts & Science College for Women (A), Hyderabad.



Signing of MoUs between the representatives of Healthcare SSC and 04 Colleges on 15.02.2024 at Andhra Mahila Sabha Arts & Science College for Women (A), Hyderabad.

Visit to Directorate of Higher Education, UP, Prayagraj

Ms. Divya recently visited Prayagraj to engage in a meeting with the key stakeholders at the Directorate of Uttar Pradesh Higher Education. This included discussions with Mr. Brahma Dev, Director, Joint Director Dr. K.C. Verma, and Assistant Director Jai Singh. The Key areas of discussion was research, E-Park utilization, Student-Teacher Ratio, Student Enrolment, and participation in NAAC and NIRF. A crucial part of the discussion revolved around budget allocation, challenges associated with grants to government colleges, and the need for a uniform data collection system.



Ms. Divya visited Prayagraj to have a meeting with the Director of Uttar Pradesh Higher Education Directorate

Strategies for upgradation of the Government institutions

Engaged in discussions with the IQAC team Hemwati Nandan Bahuguna Government Degree College in Prayagraj of as part of our study of Government Colleges to push them towards becoming centre of excellence.



Meeting with the Principal Secretary of Higher Education, UP

The CRISP UP team consisting of Professor Balraj Chauhan (State Lead, CRISP), along with Mr. Rahul Abrol and Ms. Divya, met with the Principal Secretary of Higher Education at his office in Vidhan Bhawan, Lucknow. The key highlights were that the Principal Secretary has agreed to potentially organize workshops in Lucknow for Principals and IIQAC members from 766 UP HED institutions on PEHLE-UP Project, pending decisions on budget, venue, and date. CRISP's efforts, were lauded for their contributions to improving NIRF registration and NAAC awareness within HEIs. It was agreed upon to conduct a pilot project to elevate Government colleges towards achieving Centre of Excellence status. Additionally, there were discussions regarding the Hon'ble Chief Minister's proposal to introduce Skill Development Programs (SDPs) tied to the One District One Product (ODOP) initiative, with suggestions to involve relevant stakeholders in curriculum design. He welcomed proposals to upgrade the existing websites of the UP Higher Education Department as suggested by CRISP.



Workshop at Chhatrapati Shahu Ji Maharaj University, Kanpur

Prof. Balraj Chauhan contacted Prof. Vinay Pathak, Vice-Chancellor of the University, ensuring full support. Workshops district-wise will be organized, where CRISP will actively participate.

Global Investor's Meet

Prof. Balraj Chauhan is part of the Chief Minister Expert Committee for making Uttar Pradesh a 1 trillion Dollar Economy by 2027. He also participated in the Prime Minister's groundbreaking ceremony.

Tech Driven Education

Discussions regarding Swayam courses were held with the coordinators of the Visits Integral University and Harcourt Butler Technical University local chapters. Challenges regarding the implementation of courses were discussed and their suggestions for other universities were duly noted.

HBTU's Atal Incubation Hub: The visit to the incubation hub, helped us understand an ideal innovation ecosystem, along with the funding opportunities available to the students, both on and off campus.

CRISP's Methodology Sought for Higher Education Transformation in Technical Sector

The Principal Secretary of Technical Education called a meeting with CRISP along with the members of Deloitte to understand our methodology of functioning with the Department of Higher Education for the transformation of higher education so that they may imitate it in technical education.



प्रदेश में युवाओं को रोजगार के मौके दिखाएगी मुख्यमंत्री की विशेष टीम

वैश्विक निवेशक सम्मेलन और भूमि पूजन समारोह से बड़ी संख्या में पैदा होंगे रोजगार के अवसर
अमर उजाला व्यूरो



लखनऊ। मुख्यमंत्री योगी आदित्यनाथ ने कहा कि वैश्विक निवेशक सम्मेलन और भूमि पूजन समारोह का महत्त्व प्रदेश के युवाओं का हित है। उद्योग लगने तो रोजगार के अवसर खुलेंगे। इस समारोह से होने वाले फायदे की जानकारी युवाओं तक पहुँचाने के लिए संगम ने सेवानिवृत्त अधिकारियों और शिक्षिकों की 42 सदस्यीय टीम बनाई है। इसमें 12 सेवानिवृत्त आईएएस, 4 आईएफएस, 7 आइएफएस व 19 शिक्षिक शामिल हैं। भूमि पूजन से पहले से वे लगे श्रमिक व शिल्पकार को विश्वविद्यालयों व महाविद्यालयों में युवाओं से सहायक करेंगे।

टीम में 12 सेवानिवृत्त आईएएस, 4 आईपीएस, 7 आइएफएस व 19 शिक्षिक

सरकार, इंडस्ट्री व संस्थाओं में संवाद जरूरी
सोएम ने कहा योगाना को सफलता के लिए सबसे जरूरी यह है कि योगाना जिसके लिए बनाई गई है, उसे उसकी जानकारी हो। अच्छी योजनाएं जागरूकता के अभाव में विफल हो जाती हैं। इसलिए सरकार, इंडस्ट्री और शिक्षण संस्थाओं के बीच संवाद महत्वपूर्ण है। इसने सरकार अपने अनुभवी अधिकारियों और शिक्षिकों को मदद दे रही है। कंपनी ने टीम से कहा कि युवाओं से सहायक करते हुए सरकार को नौकरियों और उनके जरूरी अपने बने युवाओं को जानकारी दें।
अध्यक्ष्यता भी प्रज्वल करती हैं अमित : एक रिपोर्ट का उल्लेख देते हुए सोएम ने कहा कि लखनऊ से 60 हजार टेम्पेटाइड श्रमिक बाजार घुसी लौटें हैं। प्रदेश में सुदूर भविष्य को संभंधना देखाकर ही उन्होंने लौटने का फैसला किया। ये श्रमिक केवल फैक्ट्री में काम ही नहीं करते हैं, बल्कि प्रदेश की

यसमें वैश्विक निवेशक सम्मेलन के जरूरी प्रदेश की सफलता के गवाह रहे हैं। भारत एक साल के अंदर 10 लाख करोड़ के एमओयू जमीन पर उतरने जा रहे हैं। यह सम्मेलन केवल

Early Childhood Education in Meghalaya



As the state of Meghalaya is relentlessly working to improve the Human Development Index (HDI), one of the top priorities is to Strengthen Early Childhood Education. In this pursuit, CRISP has been invited to reinforce the existing system by collaborating with different players and agencies to deliver quality outcomes in preschool education. While staying focused on supporting the ECCE component, CRISP will undertake concurrent evaluations of the Anganwadi Centres and Anganwadi Workers (AWCs & AWWs), facilitate in setting of an M&E Unit at the Directorate of Social Welfare, and strengthen training institutes of the SWD.

This development was derived after undertaking extensive field visits in different districts of Meghalaya. Based on the meticulous study done by the CRISP Meghalaya team, subsequent meetings were held with Sri. Sampath Kumar, IAS, Principal Secretary, Sri P. Bakshi, IAS, Commissioner – Social Welfare Department, Director – SWD, along with multiple teams and partners to chart out a plan for engagement.

Anganwadi Worker Time-Use Study: Training of Research Enumerators



As part of the project on improving foundational learning in Andhra Pradesh, CRISP is conducting a time-use study of Anganwadi Workers (AWW). Under the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS), the Anganwadi Workers provide several health, nutrition and community-based services, usually targeted towards women and children. The study aims to document the exact roles, responsibilities and duties that the AWW undertake, and the time they spend on each of these activities. The broader objective of the study is to understand whether 3-4 hours can be dedicated exclusively to early childhood education activities and whether any duties that are currently performed by the AWW can be offset to some other field functionary. 30 Anganwadi Centres across the state were selected through stratified random sampling. 30 bright and exceptional students from

the District Institute of Education and Training (DIETs) across the state were chosen to be research observers.

A 3-day training for these 30 students was conducted from 16th-18th February, at YES-J Centre, Loyola College, Vijayawada. The students interacted with Ms. Sandhya Kanneganti, Founder and Mentor, of CRISP AP, and Mrs. Usha Kumari, State Lead – of CRISP AP, who briefed them about the objectives of the study and how it could contribute to the improvement of ECE in the entire state. The context of the study was set for the students, in the larger landscape of CRISP's work at the national and the state level.

Dr. Vijaya Raghavan, Senior Manager briefed the students about research methodologies, qualitative and quantitative research. The team explained the objectives, questionnaires and the observation tool in detail.

Dr. Nagaraju from the University of Hyderabad took the students through qualitative research methodologies in the social sciences, specifically anthropology, and situated the study in the larger context of qualitative social research. They learned about the different types of observation in research, their importance, and how to conduct observation in the field.



Ms. Udaya Lakshmi from the Department of Women Development and Child Welfare, Government of Andhra Pradesh took the research observers through the functioning of the WD&CW Department, the objectives and working of the ICDS scheme, how Anganwadi Centres function, and roles and duties the Anganwadi Worker performs.



Ms. Chandrika, Joint Director (Elementary Education), Department of School Education also interacted with the students during their field visit, highlighting the importance of the opportunity that they are a part of, and how it would contribute to their learning.

Prof. Madhavilata Maganti, Associate Professor, School of Interwoven Arts and Sciences, Krea University spoke about early childhood development – the crucial role that this stage plays in one's life, the different domains of development, and the importance of stimulation. She also highlighted the importance of assessment – how learning outcomes can be measured, and why assessing them is important for early interventions.

The students were also taken to a co-located Foundational School - where they could familiarise themselves with the functioning of an Anganwadi Worker, and understand the potential challenges they may face in the field.

A well-rounded training was provided to the students - addressing not only the knowledge and skills they would require as research observers for this study but also instilling a profound understanding of how their contribution can positively impact the realms of education and child development.



Empowering Educators: The Journey to Crafting Structured Lesson Plans in Andhra Pradesh



On February 22nd, 2024, Shri Botsa Satyanarayana, the esteemed Minister of Education for Andhra Pradesh, released the Structured Lesson Plan Resource Book, unveiling a significant milestone for CRISP as well as the State. This occasion stands as a testament to the yearlong efforts at instilling rigour and excellence within the 1000 recently affiliated CBSE schools across the state.

At the heart of this initiative lies the profound vision of the National Education Policy of 2020 (NEP), emphasizing the critical importance of a well-defined curriculum and structured pedagogy. Such foundational elements are deemed essential for fostering holistic, integrated, and captivating learning

experiences for students. In alignment with this vision, the collaborative efforts between the Government of Andhra Pradesh and CRISP, as outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), paved the way for the adoption of structured pedagogy and the development of meticulously crafted lesson plans for Grades 8 and above within the newly affiliated CBSE schools.

To facilitate this, CRISP organized three capacity-building workshops in July, October, and November, for 60 selected teachers. The training was led by academicians from the Azim Premji Foundation and supported by experts from the Central Square Foundation. Delving into the intricacies of Structured Pedagogy, the NCERT Learning Outcomes Framework for the Secondary Stage, and the National Curriculum Framework-School Education 2023, the workshops empowered educators with invaluable insights and methodologies. Guided by professors from APU, the teachers embarked on the arduous task of crafting structured lesson plans tailored for Grades 9 and 10. Spanning a spectrum of subjects including English, Mathematics, Social Science, Biology, Physics, and Chemistry, these plans were carefully developed to optimize student engagement and comprehension. Before finalizing, they were further vetted by the AP SCERT Subject Experts. Set to be disseminated to over 10,000 teachers across all 1000 CBSE schools, these resource books symbolize a beacon of innovation and excellence in the realm of education, promising to ignite a transformative wave of learning and growth across the educational landscape of Andhra Pradesh.

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