MICRO INNOVATIONS AWARD

A CELEBRATION OF INNOVATIONS IN SCHOOLS

A Case Study of State conducting an event to celebrate & share stories of school micro improvements

INTRODUCTION

This case study captures the journey of **Andhra Pradesh Social Welfare Residential Educational Institutions Society (APSWREIS)** department, that had seen several micro-innovations being taken up by the schools to connect with the students & provide continuous learning even during the times of pandemic.

An act of improvement begins with an action. An action that has certain **objectives** to bring in the desired changes in any process. One of the major learnings while designing any improvements for a state is to ensure that we create a **platform to celebrate the milestones** reached and provide a blueprint of practices for other schools to learn from.

In this case study, we explore how APSWREIS conducted a micro-innovation program to celebrate the efforts of school leaders. The micro-innovations award was held at APSWREIS, catering to **189 schools across the 13 districts** of Andhra Pradesh on September 2020.

NEED

Schools are a hub of innovative practices - small ideas that solve a plethora of issues within the school. In a school's transformational journey, these innovative practices help schools move closer to creating lasting and sustainable improvements - be it **Teaching-Learning Practices, School Environment, Community Engagement, or more recently conceived pandemic-specific activities**.

Generally, these innovations that play out in a number of government schools go undocumented, unnoticed, and unrecognized resulting in the lack of ideas being shared or transferred.

Secondly, innovations and best practices often end up getting limited to the source school and do not scale because of the lack of proper channels for sharing best practices across the system.

> " *...Education has become like a block box, whatever we do inside the classroom is not discussed outside or the knowledge is not shared outside. It is important to document these solutions to test its transferability & adaptability in other contexts....*"
> * *Monisha Datta, Jury, Micro-Innovations Award*

> " *...I feel documentation becomes important as it helps keep track of the progress, whatever is documented can be picked by anybody and contextualized for their school...*"
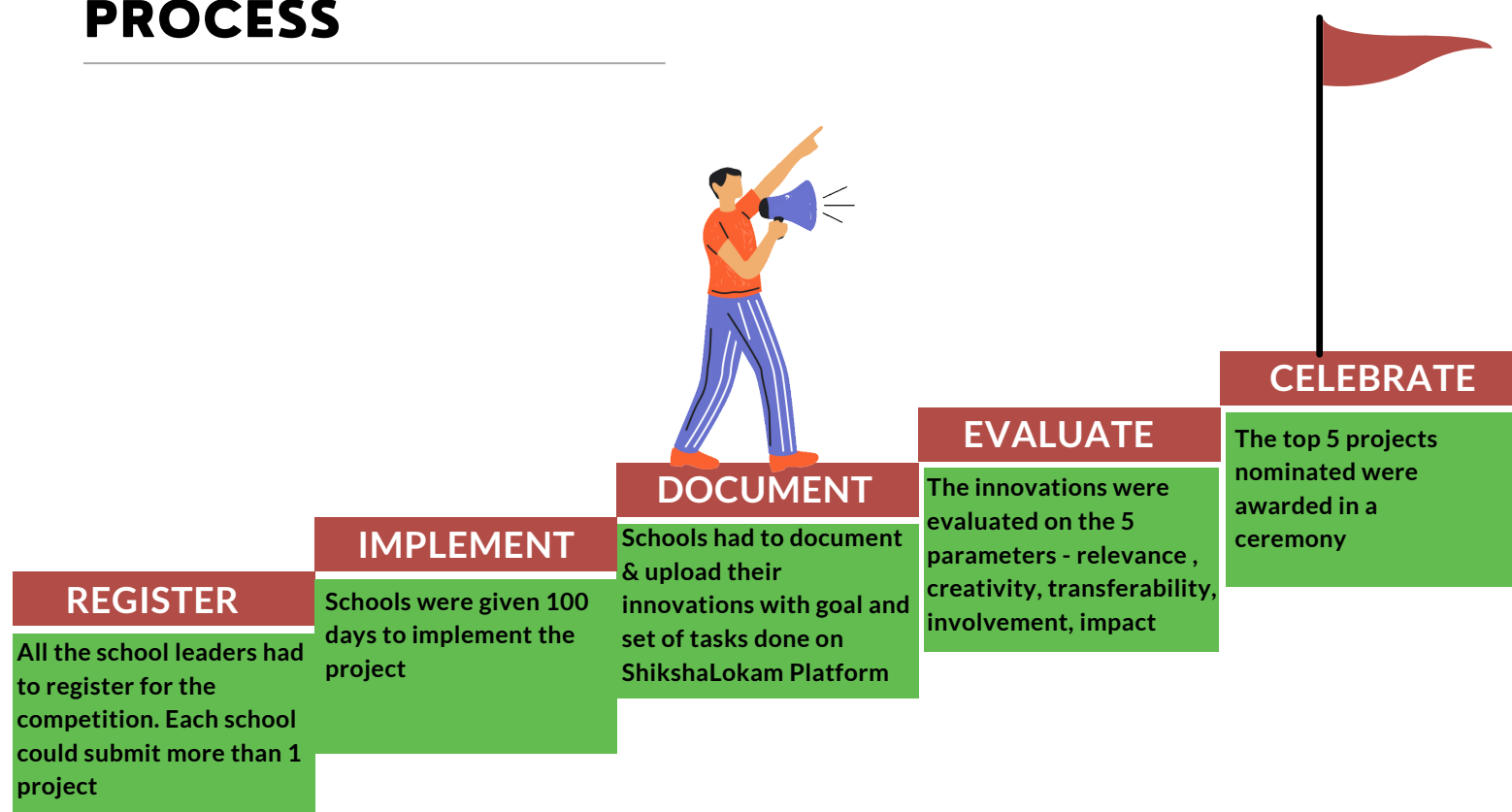> * *School Leader, Micro-Innovations Award Nominee*

OBJECTIVE

To aid this documentation and create a pool of best practices that aid the school improvement journey, the **APSWREIS** department and **Mantra4Change** hosted the **Micro Innovation Awards 2020** - a Celebration of Innovations in Schools. The campaign was conceptualized by **leveraging the micro-improvements approach**.
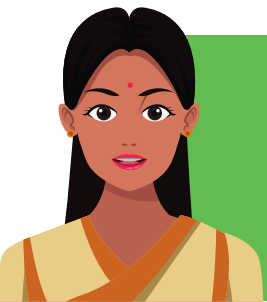
The program aimed to create a platform to celebrate the unique stories of improvement of school leaders and in turn catalyze their desire to embark on a journey of improvement with utmost motivation.

PROCESS

REGISTER
All the school leaders had to register for the competition. Each school could submit more than 1 project

IMPLEMENT
Schools were given 100 days to implement the project

DOCUMENT
Schools had to document & upload their innovations with goal and set of tasks done on ShikshaLokam Platform

EVALUATE
The innovations were evaluated on the 5 parameters - relevance , creativity, transferability, involvement, impact

CELEBRATE
The top 5 projects nominated were awarded in a ceremony

HIGHLIGHTS

- The projects created mainly explored areas of teaching-learning and student development, especially techniques and strategies that are beneficial to navigate through during/post-Covid period.

- The project implementation led to the participation of all the stakeholders like school leaders, teachers, parents, students & community members.

" ...Our APSWREIS society's vision is education not just for livelihood but for life, so me and my team together with parents tried to make it a reality..."
- Manikya, Winner, Micro-innovations Award

" ... I could see the diversity of thoughts and the agile leadership that made spaces for the people to collaborate, in addition to learning the projects focused on mental well being & health of the students..."
- Purna Mukesh, Judge, Micro-innovations Award

" For my project's success, I played the role of a facilitator. I supported them and guided them all the way. I feel giving freedom to my team to take their own decisions triggered great innovations. Our goal was to reach out to 70% students through phone but after completion of the project we almost reached 90% of the students. ...."
- C Santhi, Winner, Micro-innovations Award

IMPACT

- Around 80+ schools participated in the activity with 166+ project entries.
- Stakeholders created 71% of projects while only 29% were imported from the already existing library*.

" ...The beauty of these projects in that in times like COVID when everybody was feeling lost, all these school leaders were able to think beyond themselves, reach out to the children and involve the community around. NEP 2020, talks about inclusion & innovation, these projects are the best examples for it..."
- Monisha Datta, Judge, Micro-innovations Award

CHALLENGES

- Multiple priorities made it difficult for some of the school leaders to participate in the program actively
- The initial buy-in to use the platform for uploading projects was difficult as the users found it difficult to navigate the application
- In the rural geographies, accessibility to the internet was a big a challenge.

LEARNINGS FOR OTHER STATES

Ques. How can states with larger number of schools take it up efficiently ?

Ans.

- The answer lies in setting up an efficient governance structure. The roles and responsibilities should be clearly defined and conveyed to all the officials at each level - school, cluster, block, district and state.

CONVENOR	FACILITATOR	DOER
This stakeholder convenes/curates the campaign, plans the event, sets guidelines, venue, logistics etc	This stakeholder motivates his/her schools, sends them necessary information, pushes them to do projects, has meaningful conversations to explore the scope of ideas.	The school HMs, teachers and SMCs meet regularly to plan micro-innovations, effectively implement and share them.

- One can set up channel of continuous engagement at each phase of the program through whatsapp, videos, media channels, you tube lives etc. These frequent nudges and support structures will help the doer implement the innovations effectively.
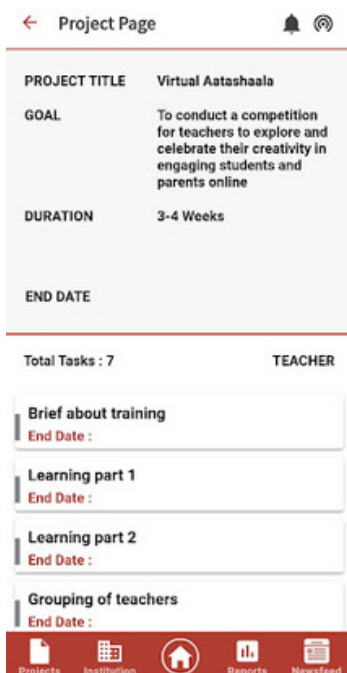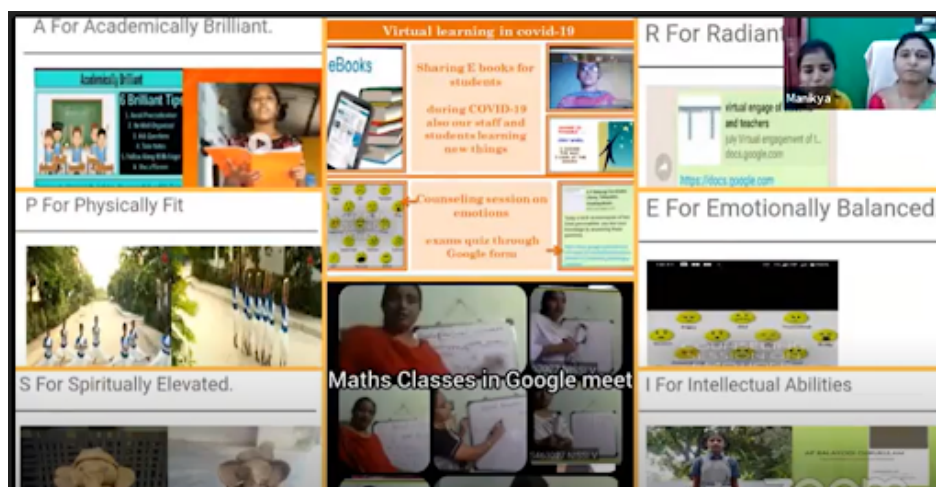
GLOSSARY

Balyogi school implementing their project called Operation Village Circle

Screenshot of the main event

Screenshot of schools uploading their innovations on the application

Screenshot of one of the winners presenting their work during the micro-innovations event