



# CHANDRA KANTH'S STORY

Mysuru district, Karnataka

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My name is Chandra Kanth and I am a Senior Lecturer at the District Institute of Education and Training (DIET) in Mysuru district, Karnataka. Since childhood, I always wanted to join the education system and contribute to society. My teachers also motivated me to choose a career in academia. As a result, I became the first person from my village to pass the Karnataka Education Services (KES) exam. As a KES officer, I had the opportunity to work in different roles across the district. I also led multiple projects such as the District Primary Education Programme, alongside my colleagues in the education department. Later I was posted to Mysuru district (Nanjangudu block) as a Block Education Officer (BEO), where I had the opportunity to lead both administrative and academic tasks at various levels.



### ABOUT MY ROLE

In my current role as a Senior Lecturer at Mysuru DIET, I am responsible for planning, conducting and implementing training sessions for teachers and officials in the district. I'm also responsible for monitoring the quality of this training at district, block and school level.

In 2018, the STiR Education programme was introduced in Mysuru district. Due to my previous work experience, I was chosen to be the 'District Champion' for the STiR programme by the DIET Principal. STiR introduced the concept of sharing meetings for teachers, which are conducted monthly. I felt that the sharing meetings gave an opportunity for teachers to come together to discuss their best practices, challenges and also to recognise and appreciate each other. It also gave me an opportunity to interact with the teachers. The sharing meetings contributed to the overall development of teachers and officials as these meetings promoted peer learning.

### MY CHALLENGE

One of the major challenges in the district was that the teachers and officials were not regularly recognised and appreciated for their efforts, which in turn led to their demotivation. District officials seldom appreciated the teachers through WhatsApp or during training. Even where appreciation was taking place, it was not consistent across all levels and most teachers and officials had not been recognised or appreciated for their contributions.

STiR Education extended their support to mitigate this challenge. They introduced two innovative techniques "Making It Attractive" and "Making It Social" which were a part of the programme delivery. These techniques were specifically designed to identify and appreciate unrecognised teachers and officials in the district. "Making It Attractive" used brochures, posters and certificates to appreciate teachers in an innovative way, while "Making It Social" discussed various techniques that could be used to showcase the great work of teachers and officials online. A YouTube channel was created where teachers talked about their best practices. I have worked with the STiR team to ensure that these techniques are adapted by officials and teachers in every block.

When I visit sharing meetings, I ensure that the skills are being effectively implemented by the officials to appreciate teachers and peers. The STiR team also extended their support in planning visits across various blocks and helped me create a tentative field visit plan keeping in mind all the other programmes and training I was leading. This helped me to plan my activities and avoid overlaps, and I was able to do a greater number of visits to schools and sharing meetings across all blocks.

## THE CHANGE

After STiR's intervention in the district, I observed that teachers were more proactive and they started sharing a lot of positive messages, videos, photos and also shared appreciation messages on WhatsApp groups about the sharing meetings and classroom observations. They were being continuously recognised for their hard work and efforts. Some of the officials also shared best practices implemented by the teachers on their YouTube channels which provided immense encouragement and motivation to the teachers. Personally, I also felt proud when teachers extended their gratitude towards me for being a part of the sharing meetings and schools. This motivated me to plan more field visits and provide more support to the teachers.

I also ensured that I collected feedback on STiR's activities during my visits. It was an overwhelmingly positive response from the teachers about the skills, techniques and strategies introduced in the sharing meetings. The STiR training was quite different to other training sessions for them. The introduction of ideas including energisers, community agreements and appreciation techniques by STiR was novel, as these had never been practiced before. They also shared that the strategies and skills were simple to use and had a huge impact on student learning.



## COVID 19 UPDATE

The last few months have been really challenging because of the pandemic. It was challenging for us to conduct training in the district. A nationwide lockdown was imposed and it was very hard to think of the next steps. During this extremely difficult situation, the STiR team extended their support through checking the emotional wellbeing of district and block officials, which was highly motivating for us. In July 2020, they introduced a new training module focused on "preparedness for remote learning", with the objective to orient officials on effective usage of relevant technology tools and virtual facilitation for remote engagement.

Now, I am able to contribute and provide feedback on designing modules for virtual facilitation. I have been able to extend my support in joining the sessions conducted over Google Meet and provide developmental feedback to Block Resource Persons across my district on effective facilitation. The virtual facilitation training has helped officials and teachers at all levels. A huge thanks to the STiR programme for their continuous support in these challenging times.