

Educate Girls

Ensuring capacity building of the team during the COVID-19 Lockdown

Educate Girls partnered with Million Sparks Foundation to help introduce Child Protection and the best practises and the policy to be adopted during the COVID-19 lockdown. The solution enabled Educate Girls to provide these training faster, with better quality, no loss of messaging, across Educate Girls staff stationed in the remotest corners of India in a way - at a pace and at a cost - not possible before

About Educate Girls

Educate Girls is a non-profit that focuses on mobilizing communities for girls' education. Educate Girls works in India's rural and educationally backward areas.

The Challenge

Educate Girls (EG) wanted to train their 2500+ staff and 15,000+ team balikas on Child Protection with a focus on their own policy in an extremely limited time to ensure compliance. Their staff is distributed across four states. So planning and conducting such a training at one centralized location or a few locations was a challenge and was expected to take a long time, and would have involved significant cost.. With a lot of initial apprehension, they decided to take their program online - they had never undertaken an online training program at such scale, many of their team members were not very comfortable with technology and were from rural areas where network connectivity was not intermittently available.

They evaluated various options and finally decided to use ChalkLit, the mobile application platform developed by Million Sparks Foundation for delivering their program. The final decision to go ahead was made post the start of the COVID lockdown and the EG team was extremely apprehensive.

Million Sparks Foundations Approach

Post a couple of early initial meetings with the EG team following observations were made

- In the organization, the leadership (10% of the staff) was comfortable in English, while the ground staff members (90% of the staff) were comfortable in Hindi
- The staff members were spread across 4 states (UP, MP, Maharashtra, and Rajasthan)
- The organization had a clear structure where on an average 100 staff members report to one Human Resource Officer (HRO) who in turn reports to the HR team in Maharashtra. All of the ground staff are connected to their respective HRO via whatsapp groups and are quite responsive.
- An apprehension was that the ground staff having executed the program physically for many years might have some bias against online training and might not take them seriously.

Content Development

The MSF team has prior experience of creating a few trainings on a similar topic and the team worked with the EG team to better understand their objectives and expected learning outcomes. The focus was to provide knowledge and provide actionable points that could be used during interactions especially with the girl students. The content was curated from open educational resources and from EG's Child Protection Policy (CPP) manual from which key points were drawn into the training. The content was designed such that it can be consumed in about 7 hours.

Training Execution

Based on the detailed understanding of the EG's requirements, learning objectives, and the team structure, the following actions were taken to ensure a smooth delivery of training:

- The training was made available in both English and Hindi Language
- HROs from each district were designated as mentors for the training. A Video call was organized to introduce them to the training content and to their responsibilities during the training delivery
- A sample training was launched for HROs 2 days before the ground staff training. This allowed for them to :
 - Build an understanding of the enrollment and training process
 - Gain familiarity and confidence with the content of the training
 - Understand the role of the mentor better and be ready to support the staff
- Posters and videos in both Hindi and English were circulated via whatsapp groups to all the staff members with details of the process of enrollment and training
- A data sharing portal was created for the HROs to share live updates of the progress of staff members of their districts so as to enable focussed monitoring
- A 24*7 call support team of 4 members was created to answer queries of the ground staff raised through the inbuilt call and comments option in the app

Impact

We were able to effectively train 1608 out of 1634 targeted users (99% completion rate), who were evaluated and obtained an average score of 73%. Of these users 1213 did the training in Hindi language and the rest did the training in English language. It should be noted that of these users nearly 72% were rural users with limited smartphone usage and had undergone an online program for the first time.

The users found the training very satisfactory and a compilation of the training feedback is presented in the [detailed training report](#). Below are some of the key points from the report:

- 98% of the participants found the training relevant to their needs and practical.
- 97% said that they would recommend this training to others
- Overall satisfaction rating : 4.23/5



"Million Sparks Foundation's ChalkLit app turned out to be quite a remarkable platform for us to train over 1,600 employees in very rural, and remote villages across 4 states. Given the unprecedented COVID-19 scenario, zero mobility, and social distancing, our conventional classroom-based training was not possible. ChalkLit with its modular approach, graphic and video-rich content, and an intuitive UI, turned into quite the savior for us. The platform worked seamlessly across data-poor and hardware constrained geographies. Moreover, the regular updates and data analysis provided by the Million Sparks Foundation team not only made it easy for us to track the progress of each and every team member across the remotest of villages but also helped us provide support, resolve queries, and receive feedback in real-time. We are evaluating ChalkLit to be an integral part of our training calendar for our entire workforce." **Safeena Husain (Founder, Educate Girls)**