

Corporate Foundation Supported Government School Redevelopment In India

An Impact Evaluation Report

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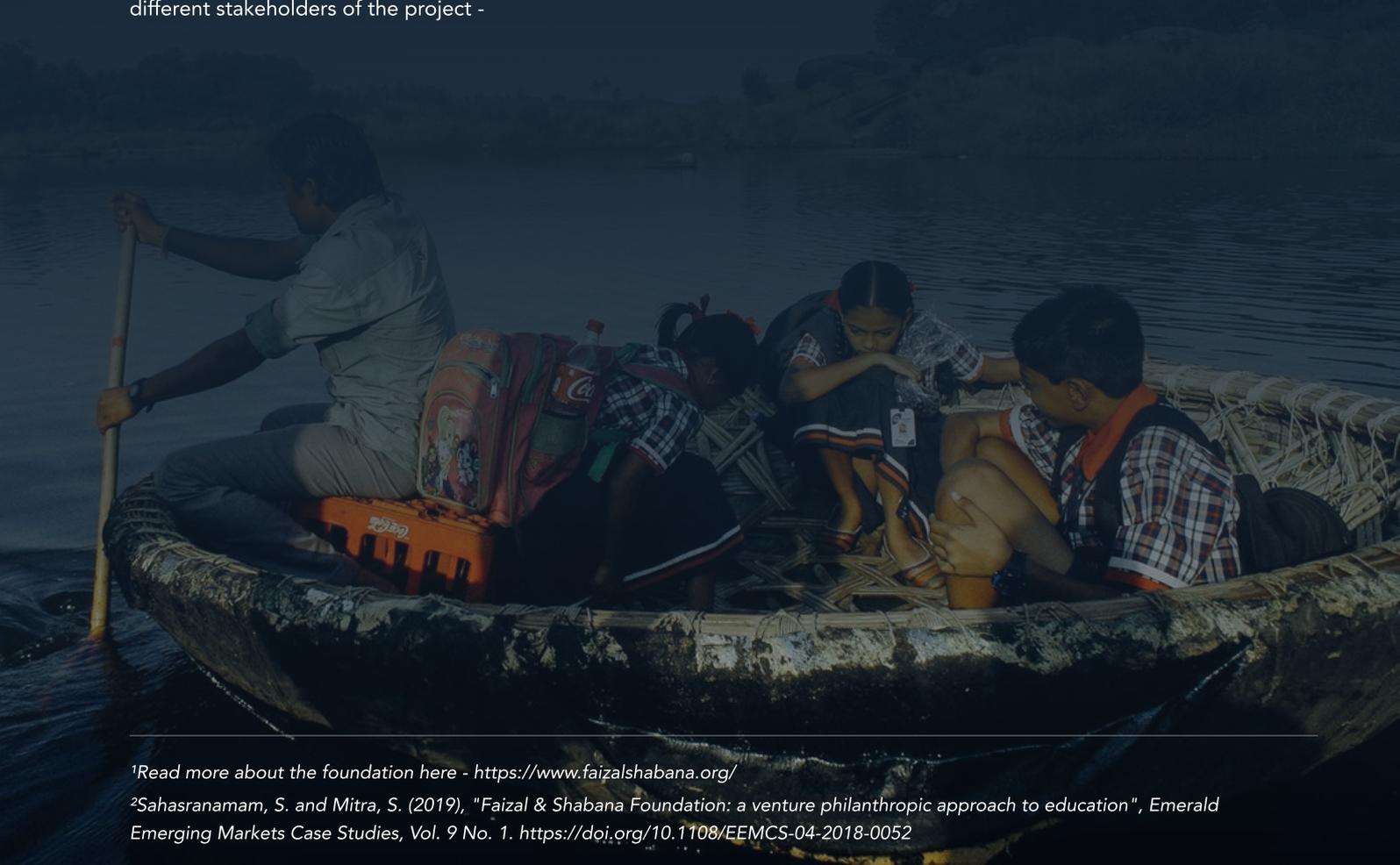
Executive Summary

Government schools in many parts of India are infamous for being ramshackle and dingy, with poor quality constructions, and limited maintenance, thus not providing the ideal atmosphere for learning.

PRISM (Promotion of Regional Schools into International Standard through Multiple Interventions) was an intervention aimed at overcoming this, starting with a pilot at the Government Vocational Higher Secondary School for Girls Nadakkavu, Kerala, India. The project started in 2008, though it gained traction in 2010. In 2012, the Faizal and Shabana Foundation¹ (F&SF), a corporate foundation of KEF Holdings, began taking an active role in this project. The 2019-2021 period was a handholding transition phase, and at the end of it the key leaders of PRISM and Faizal and Shabana Foundation (philanthropic partner) wanted to carry out an independent external impact evaluation to take stock of the PRISM as of late 2021 which include understanding the main changes observed by the different stakeholders of the project -

(e.g., teachers, students, parents, and alumni) during the intervention, including sustainable changes and to chart out the future course of action.

An impact evaluation of the PRISM project at the Government Vocational Higher Secondary School for Girls at Nadakkavu, Kerala, India, was carried out between December 2021 and March 2022. This was carried out using a combination of primary and secondary data sources. We observed a multi-layered impact achieved through PRISM intervention at the student-, faculty-, school- and ecosystem-level. The PRISM intervention not only made an individual-level impact (e.g., student- or teacher-level) but created a systems-level change (e.g., changing perception of government school education, creating a corporate-government partnership model through venture philanthropy² for replication to other schools).



¹Read more about the foundation here - <https://www.faizalshabana.org/>

²Sahasranamam, S. and Mitra, S. (2019), "Faizal & Shabana Foundation: a venture philanthropic approach to education", Emerald Emerging Markets Case Studies, Vol. 9 No. 1. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EEMCS-04-2018-0052>

Student-level impacts include:

- Improved quality of learning reflected through better grades and career outcomes
- Improved academic environment for student learning
- Remedial support for students to improve learning
- Sports infrastructure and coaching attracted new students and supported the creation of athletes of repute
- Improved health and nutrition standards
- Excelling in arts and culture
- Personality development and inculcation of 21st-century skills in students
- Improved emotional strength and confidence

Faculty-level impacts include:

- Teachers are upskilled in pedagogy and educational approaches
- Translation of good teaching and learning practices to non-PRISM schools
- Improved teacher-student relationship, including great delegation of responsibility to students
- ‘Social pressure’ among teachers to improve the quality of teaching

School- and ecosystem-level impacts include:

- Increased student enrolment in PRISM-supported government schools
- Sense of ownership of the school among the local community
- Changing the perception toward government schools broadly
- Government funding for the scale-up of the PRISM model to other schools
- Change in long-term planning within schools

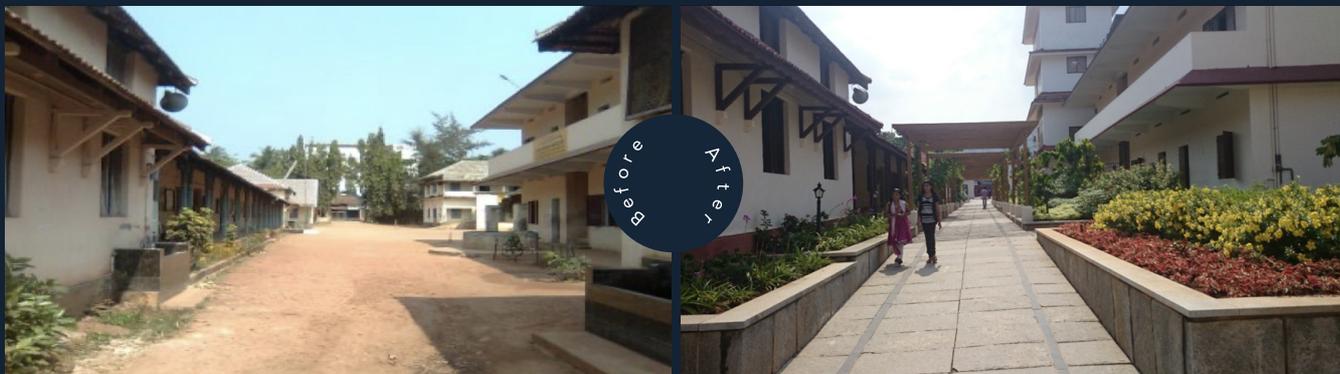
Based on the impact evaluation study, we also have some recommendations for the PRISM committee for future development:

- Infrastructure needs renovation and upgrade
- Regular training of teachers needs to continue
- Improve workload planning for new initiatives and communication about them
- Ensure financial sustainability of Nadakkavu school after F&SF exit
- Explore volunteer support of parents for maintenance of school
- Need for a structured long-term plan for the Government’s scale-up of PRISM to other schools
- Develop a talented pool of teachers to take leadership positions in new PRISM schools
- Build capacity for PRISM management and monitoring
- Create a performance appraisal mechanism for school-level PRISM staff & teachers and report to the state-level PRISM Monitoring Committee
- Setting up educational research, consulting, and training center associated with PRISM (e.g., PRISM Research and Technical Institute)

In summary, PRISM has managed to meet the objectives set in 2013 for the Government Vocational Higher Secondary School for Girls Nadakkavu including (a) being ranked as one of the top 3 schools in the country in the Education World India School Ranking in 2020-21³; (b) 47% enrolment of students in professional and vocational courses in the last decade (which is twice the set target); (c) creating a model of government-corporate partnership through venture philanthropy for emulation to other government schools in the state and across the country. Currently, the Kerala state government is adopting this model across 966 schools in the state, and this scale-up needs long-term planning, continuous feedback, and support.

³Source: <https://www.educationworld.in/gvhs-school-for-girls-nadakavvu-kozhikode/>

The genesis of the PRISM Project



Poor infrastructure along with the poor quality of education at government schools in Kozhikode was a matter of concern for Mr. Pradeep Kumar (the local MLA). He was always haunted by this visible paradox:

“Why are the government schools across the country, particularly in a highly literate State such as Kerala losing to private schools, even though the government schools are fairly equipped with well-qualified, competitive teachers and with reasonable infrastructure facilities”.

Mr. A. Pradeep Kumar, therefore, went on a consultation process with friends, colleagues, teachers, and educational experts to discover ways in which the existing scenario can be changed. He planned to initiate processes to make constructive changes in the most deserving schools of his constituency. Having been a people's representative for many years from his constituency he took it upon himself to make things better in the government schools of his constituency. From his own experience and the insights gained from consultations with others, Mr. A. Pradeep Kumar was convinced that only a sustained and multi-pronged approach could bring about the desired outcome. School authorities, teachers, students, parents of students, and philanthropists were all-important stakeholders whose interest, willingness, and cooperation were essential to making a systemic change.

“PRISM was conceived as a process aimed at systematic augmentation of structures and facilities for enhancing teaching-learning quality in a government school with the ultimate goal of obtaining sustainable outcomes of the highest possible standards that are comparable to the best internationally”.

The concept of PRISM began with a baseline study identifying the needs, problems, and strengths of government schools to create a strategic action plan. This process of developing the strategic action plan was facilitated by Prof. Saji Gopinath along with master's students at the Indian Institute of Management Kozhikode (IIM-K). These efforts resulted in the formulation of a project proposal, which was later submitted to the government for approval. Mr. A. Pradeep Kumar firmly believed that sustainable change could be achieved solely through policy-level interventions, wherein he commented: ***“There have been no strategic efforts from any government to promote our schools into the level of international standards not only in terms of facilities but in terms of academic quality, technology and holistic development of students. There should be policy-level efforts to make such things happen”.*** So it is in this context that the PRISM project emerged.

The pilot project's target for 2009-12 was to include three schools in the electoral constituency of Mr. Pradeep - Government Vocational Higher Secondary School for Girls Nadakkavu, Medical College Campus High School, and Azhchavattam Higher Secondary School. PRISM was to specifically target nine areas of each school namely school environment and ambiance, learning aids, library and laboratories, student personality development, creativity and innovation, building and physical infrastructure, teacher quality enhancement, stakeholder involvement, and school performance measurement and control system. A PRISM School Development Committee (PSDC) under the Chairmanship of the MLA was formed for monitoring the progress of the project. PRISM was conceived as a process aimed at systematic augmentation of structures and facilities for enhancing teaching-learning quality in a government school with the ultimate goal of obtaining sustainable outcomes of the highest possible standards that are comparable to the best internationally.

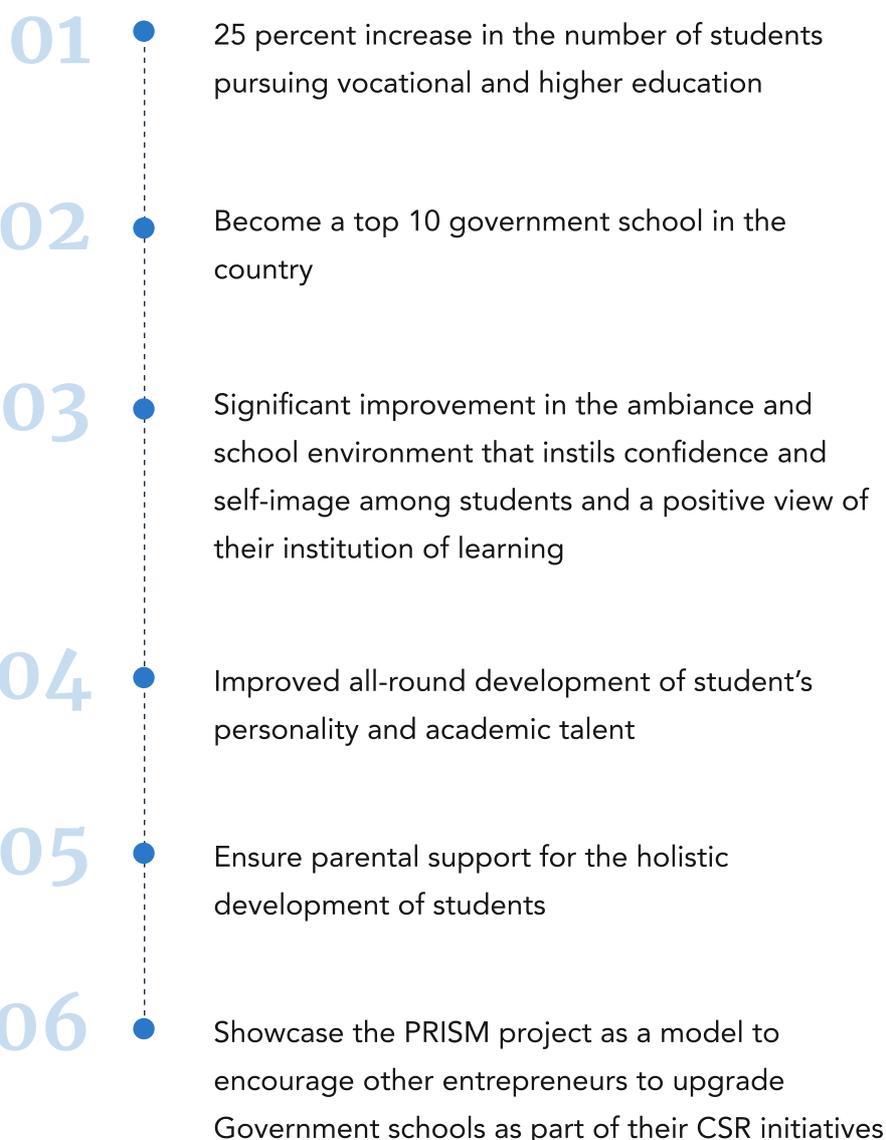
The stated goals of the project were:

- Develop physical and intellectual infrastructure in government schools to enable them to produce students who could effectively compete globally.
- Develop processes to support and facilitate learning in government schools.
- Understand the gaps existing in the schools and craft specific strategies to address each of them by mobilizing community support.
- Develop a detailed master plan for the development of these schools and source resources to realize the same.
- Develop specific performance targets for schools to monitor the effectiveness of the implementation of the schemes developed.
- Develop monitoring systems to ensure efficiency in the utilization of resources and to realize the performance targets.

A critical phase of PRISM started when, Mr. Faizal Kottikollon, a native of Kozhikode, Founder and Chairman of UAE-based KEF Holdings showed a keen interest to be involved in the project. He came to know about the PRISM project in 2012 through a journalist friend and offered the full support of his philanthropy, the Faizal & Shabana Foundation (F&SF). F&SF has been involved in several CSR activities in education and healthcare. Based on Faizal's experience in CSR initiatives, he realized that to make a long-term sustainable impact, a professional approach was needed in the school redevelopment project. Faizal subsequently chose the Government Vocational Higher Secondary School for Girls, Nadakkavu, because it was an exclusively girls' school. He firmly believed that the education of the girl child was of utmost importance as that had the maximum impact on family and community.

To set an example, he decided to make the entire financial investment needed for the project from his finances, after a due diligence process by his team. To ensure close monitoring and professional implementation, he involved his family foundation to lead the project. The initial investment by F&SF was INR 160 million. Under this partnership, the F&SF used pre-cast concrete technology to construct 13 new classrooms, a dining hall and multipurpose hall, an indoor stadium (40,000 sq. ft. approx.), and synthetic turf for football and hockey. Several training programs and workshops were organized for teachers and parents in collaboration with IIMK and many other reputed institutions in the following areas: self-awareness, purpose, goals of formal education, need for attitudinal change, motivational techniques, psychology and strategies of teaching-learning, and life-long learning.

Some of the project deliverables set by F&SF in the amended proposal of PRISM in 2013 were:

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- 01 ● 25 percent increase in the number of students pursuing vocational and higher education
 - 02 ● Become a top 10 government school in the country
 - 03 ● Significant improvement in the ambiance and school environment that instils confidence and self-image among students and a positive view of their institution of learning
 - 04 ● Improved all-round development of student's personality and academic talent
 - 05 ● Ensure parental support for the holistic development of students
 - 06 ● Showcase the PRISM project as a model to encourage other entrepreneurs to upgrade Government schools as part of their CSR initiatives
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Impact evaluation – data collection and analysis



We used a combination of primary and secondary sources of data to carry out the impact evaluation. The combinations of both sources of data offered us the possibility of triangulating the information. We began by reading through the secondary documents and having an open-ended conversation with Dr. Joseph Sebastian, the Head of F&SF. We followed that with a stakeholder mapping discussion with Roshan John, Program Officer (PRISM). This allowed us to understand the evolution of the PRISM project and helped to identify the key stakeholders involved in them. We developed a stakeholder map based on this and prepared a list of key stakeholders to be interviewed.

The primary data collection involved interviews with key stakeholders. We prepared an interview protocol (in Appendix 2) to guide the interview process. The second author conducted semi-structured interviews with different stakeholders including students, teachers, other staff at school, and people from the residential area close to the school. This resulted in 44 interviews and 1 focus group discussion as listed in Table 1. This offered approximately 35 hours of audio data. Except for two interviews which were done online, the rest of the data was collected from 6 field visits between December 2021 to March 2022. There were done either in person or over the phone.

We took a purposive sampling approach to identify the representative sample of all stakeholders involved with the project including its beneficiaries, project developers, advisors, and teachers. We continued the interview process until we reached saturation, wherein we began to receive repetitive answers. We audio-recorded the conversations with consent from the interviewees. In a couple of instances where the audio recording was not done, we took detailed notes. Most of the interviews were done in Malayalam, the local vernacular language. Both the authors are well versed in this language. We subsequently translated and transcribed the interviews for further analysis.

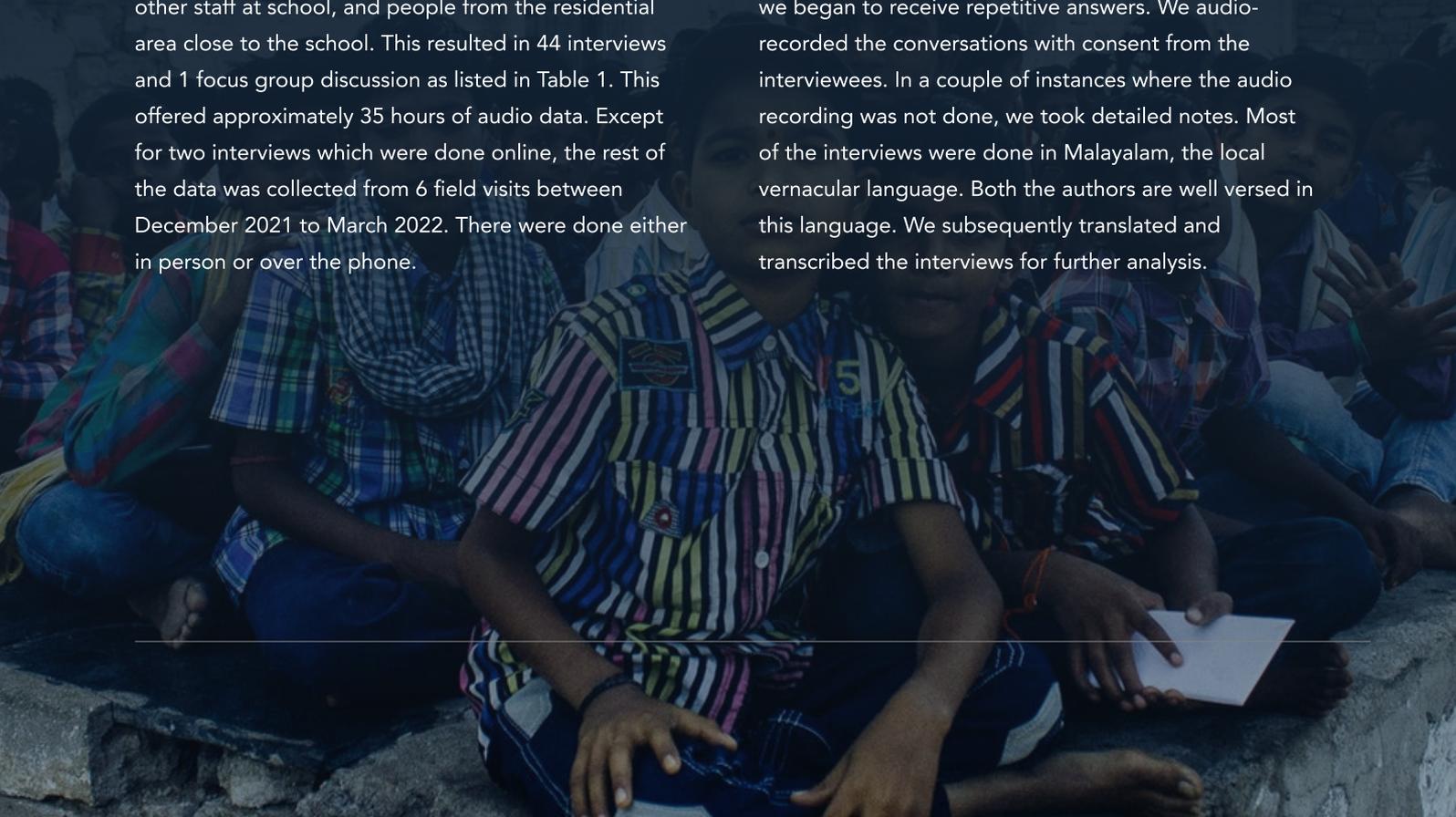


Table 1. Summary table of interviews

S. No.	Data Sources	No. of interviews
1	Current students	11
2	Alumni	2
3	Regular Teachers	7
4	Retired or transferred Teachers	3
5	PRISM Key Leaders	5
6	Teachers from other two PRISM Schools	5
7	Student Ambassadors	2
8	Parents-Teacher Association (PTA) members	4
9	Residents/Shop Keepers	3
10	FSF officials	2
11	Teachers from other school (Focus Group Discussion of 7)	1

We also analyzed multiple secondary documents such as government orders, PRISM committee reports, minutes of meetings, academic records, student achievement details, etc. An illustrative list of such documents is provided in Appendix 2.

We systematically analyzed the primary and secondary data. We developed a chronological case narrative based on this to identify key actors, events, activities, and outcomes. Subsequently, we followed established coding approaches in qualitative data analysis to categorize the data.

Findings

From our analysis, we identified three levels of impact creation - students, faculty, and school and the ecosystem around it. We highlight our findings across each of these categories below.

Student-level

The first-level impact beneficiaries from the project were the students at the Government School in Nadakkavu. It has supported their holistic development across academic, extra-curricular, and personality dimensions.

- Improved quality of learning reflected through better grades and career outcomes

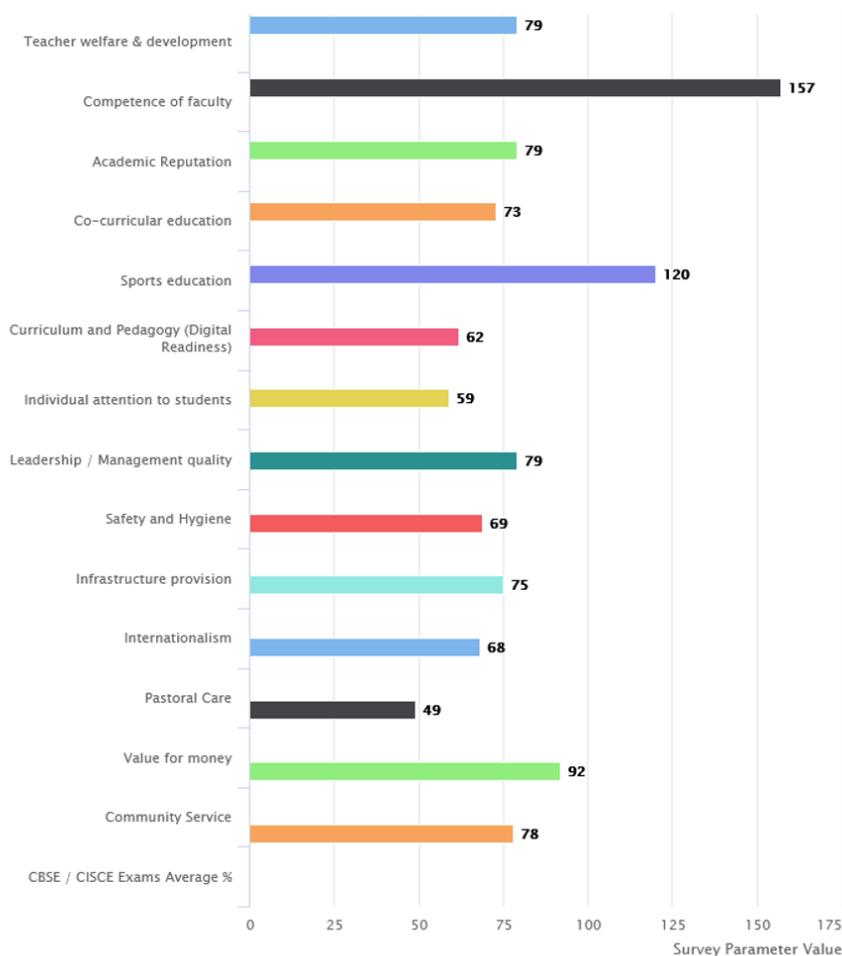
An assessment of the academic grades over the 8 years reflects a marked increase in top grades (A+) for students. From Table 2, we can see an increase from 1% to 50% in the high-school category and from 4% to 37% in the higher secondary category. From a survey PRISM had conducted with 1000 alumni students who passed out from the school in the 2011-2020 period, it was observed that 47% of them had enrolled in professional courses including medicine, engineering, nursing, and paramedical, which is nearly double the objective that was set in 2013.

Table 2. Percentage of students securing A+ grades in school completion examinations

Year		High School	Higher Secondary
Year 0	2012-13	1%	4%
Year 1	2013-14	5%	8%
Year 2	2014-15	5%	15%
Year 3	2015-16	5%	14%
Year 4	2016-17	6%	12%
Year 5	2017-18	12%	14%
Year 6	2018-19	14%	31%
Year 7	2019-20	19%	14%
Year 8	2020-21	50%	37%

The school was ranked as a top 3 school in the country in the Education World India School Ranking in 2020-21⁴, meeting one of the key objectives of the PRISM initiative. We provided details on the parameters evaluated for the ranking and the school's scores in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Education World Indian Schools ranking parameters and Nadakkavu schools score during 2020-21 evaluation
(Source: <https://www.educationworld.in/gvhs-school-for-girls-nadakavvu-kozhikode/>)



⁴Source: <https://www.educationworld.in/gvhs-school-for-girls-nadakavvu-kozhikode/>

Improved academic environment for student learning

Many teachers, students, and parents repeatedly stated during the interview that they could feel a difference when they enter the school compound. This, in turn, changed their attitude towards the school, and felt more ownership and a sense of belonging:

"I like the atmosphere, good arrangements, good classrooms, ground, and surroundings."

"Compared to other govt. schools, this school has classrooms and surroundings of international quality"

"Visual classes (using LCDs), first teachers demonstrate and show videos. Hence classes are not boring."

Multiple students viewed the pedagogical approach at school positively. It included the adoption of approaches such as peer group learning, experiential learning, comprehension over rote learning, etc. as quoted by students:

"The method of teaching is very good"

"We have peer group learning. Group leader ask questions, group leaders check the notes and then give them to the main leader and the main leader gives them to the class teacher"

"No need to copy or repeat or reproduce. Comprehension is appreciated"

"Encourage students to learn from each other"

"There is a student teacher-fellow program wherein when teachers are on leave, selected students from higher class to engage with students in a lower class, which creates a buddy system."

Remedial support for students to improve learning

Students were offered a special class to support their learning on topics they were struggling in. There was also a recording of classes to revise the content multiple times.

"After two unit tests, teachers identify students who are fast in learning and others who are not so fast, divide the class into two groups, and special classes are arranged for those who may need help."

"Sessions will be recorded and sent to those who want to listen to it again."

Sports infrastructure and coaching attracted new students and supported the creation of athletes of repute

Students from the school have become part of multiple national- and state-level sports events, as presented in Table 3. In weightlifting, one student from the school was able to appear in the National level selection camp. Multiple students spoke highly of the sports infrastructure and support offered to excel in it, particularly in Football and Hockey:

"I like to play football and Nadakkavu school has a good football team and coaching for football"

"Football team for girls- only a few schools in Kerala have football coaching camps for girls"

"Football is the main reason. I was playing football before joining Nadakkavu school & Fousia miss (late) asked me to join by seeing my performance in SEPT Club"

"There are separate coaches for football and hockey"

Table 3. Number of students selected to be part of state and national level sports team

Game	Year	No. of Students
Speak takraw state team	2020	3
	2021	1
Sub junior national football team	2019	4
	2020	4
	2021	5
National Hockey team	2019	7
	2020	4
	2021	7

Improved health and nutrition

Through the government mid-day meal program, lunch is offered to students in the school. This is offered for free for those students who come from poor economic backgrounds. Other students can get food from the canteen but at subsidized rates. F&SF complements this provisioning of food with additional nutritious options like salads, jaggery rice, etc. Multiple students also opined that they found the improved school infrastructure as a safe and healthy space.

Excelling in arts and culture

The school offered training in different arts such as music and dance which allowed the students to excel in Youth Festivals. The school was overall champion in the last three years before COVID lockdown in the State Youth Festivals. Some illustrative quotes from students in this regard:

“If you perform well in Youth Festivals, teachers will support you to prepare for the next level competitions. Besides, you will have opportunities to participate in different competitions organized by different clubs and thus improve your confidence.”



“We have different clubs – arts, science, maths, etc. for promoting talents”

“We have a music teacher and music room with all instruments - violin, guitar, drums, keyboard, and tabula”

“When you go for such competitions, you receive all facilities, support, and help from teachers”

“Even during the lockdown period, Nadakkavu school teachers organized online ‘Art festivals’ for students and family members who were also involved. This has helped students to overcome depressive feelings during the lockdown period.”



Personality development and inculcation of 21st-century skills in students

Parents and students themselves noted changes in their personality including increased confidence, personal initiative, self-efficacy, soft skills, etc. Different student training programs were delivered by external organizations on entrepreneurship, life-skill coaching, critical thinking, and leadership, as listed in Table 4. The school also encouraged students to pursue their interests and supported the personal initiative. Some thoughts of students in this regard:

“At 17, I was given a chance to organize things, hence got confidence”

“Teachers fully support whatever interests we express”

“Teachers are very helpful, they treat us with respect, involve us in decision process which was empowering”

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“Before I came, I did not have the confidence to talk. After coming here, I learned to mingle with friends, involved in sports, played in the Subroto Cup football tournament”

“School ambassadorship is an opportunity to develop leadership. School ambassadors will be responsible for organizing many programs, particularly the visit of famous personalities”

“I now have a mind to do things independently”

”

Table 4. External student training programmes summary

Topic	Date	Delivered by	Number of students trained
School student ambassador training	2016-ongoing	PRISM, F&SF, and a diverse team of experts	200
Peer learning through Student-Teacher Fellow	2019-ongoing	Teachers and F&SF	19
TIE young entrepreneurs training	2019-ongoing	The Indus Entrepreneurs Kerala	63
Sailing training	2021	Jellyfish, Calicut	15
Python programming	2020	Out of the Box, Thrissur	230

These training initiatives have spawned multiple outcomes. For example, after the sailing training, for the 'Beyepore International Water Fest', three students from Nadakkavu school (out of 14 students from across India) participated in the sailing competition held in December 2021 and bagged the first place. A student from Medical College Campus High School has started a YouTube channel teaching Python programming in Malayalam⁵. Two students from Nadakkavu school were awarded the Inspire award- MAerwNAK (Million Minds Augmenting National Aspirations and Knowledge) in 2021. After the TIE young entrepreneurs training, three teams from the school participated in follow-up training for global finals hosted by TIE Seattle and one of these teams was selected in the Top 8 globally (out of 23 participating teams).

Improved emotional strength and confidence

Students view the counselling services provided at the school to be beneficial in managing exam stress and dealing with other personal problems:

"It gives emotional support"

"It helps by giving motivation about our exams, studies, skill or any personal problems"

Many students are from economically poor local fishermen communities. It was heartening to note that simple changes such as a good uniform, offered an increased sense of confidence and positive association with the school in the minds of these students:

"The school uniform is very attractive and confident booster"

"Best ever suitable uniform"

Faculty-level

The second level of impact of PRISM was on teachers at the school.

Teachers are upskilled in pedagogy and educational approaches

Teachers were offered training on pedagogy, approaches to inculcate 21st-century skills in students, etc. The training was offered by premier academic institutions in India including the Institute of Management in Governance (IMG), and IIMK. See Table 5 for a list of training programs offered to teachers. Government initiatives such as the District Institute of Education and Training (DIET) and Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA) also supported the PRISM project. These equipped the teachers with the appropriate tools and content needed for the classes. A series of trainings and workshops conducted for teachers and parents on transformational leadership has created an impact on the participants and many teachers and PTA members have committed themselves to PRISM ideals and for the all-around development of students.



⁵YouTube Channel: Aamil World - <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJCe4FhofKTODEwt9CKbPRA>

Table 5. Teacher training programmes summary

Topic	Date	Delivered by	No. of teachers trained
Teacher training on management and leadership	March 3- 4, 2011	Institute of Management in Government (IMG), Kozhikode	93
Transformational Leadership Program for Educators	July 15-16, 2013	Indian Institute of Management, Kozhikode	40
Theme Centered Interaction	22nd to 25th August 2017 11th to 14th October 2017 27th February to 2nd March 2018 10th to 13th December 2018 17th to 20th December 2018	Diverse experts brought together by the Kerala government	132
School Leadership Team training	Over two days each month across January- March 2017	India School Leadership Institute	35
Peer learning visits to other schools	2016 - ongoing		57
Computer training for primary school teachers	2018	G-tec education	8
Paperless classroom workshop	29th July 2016	A diverse team of experts	70
Basic Life Support training	2021	A diverse team of experts	15



Translation of good practices to non-PRISM schools

The redeveloped Nadakkavu school had created a good waste disposal system inside the campus. When senior teachers were transferred to non-PRISM schools, they felt upset about the campus hygiene system there and tried to emulate some of the practices of Nadakkavu school in their new school. This suggests an indirect impact of the transfer of best practices to non-PRISM schools and evidence of behaviour changes among the PRISM teachers. There were also instances where senior teachers from Nadakkavu school were transferred to other schools as Headmaster/Principal. In such instances, they were able to make leadership level changes to follow best practices from Nadakkavu.

Improved teacher-student relationship, including great delegation of responsibility to students

We observed multiple pieces of evidence indicating an improved teacher-student relationship and teachers adopting a student-centered view. Students commented that they have a friendly relationship with teachers and are easily approachable. They also revealed that teachers fully support their interests in diverse activities. When it came to organizing events at schools, earlier, teachers were doing the bulk of the event organizing. When holistic development became the focus of PRISM, teachers realized the importance of delegation and leadership development in students, and they shifted their approach to involve students in the planning and execution of various school activities. Thus, students were given leadership opportunities in organizing events, developing their confidence. Now, even prestigious events like the visit of the Chief Minister of the state to the school are fully coordinated and executed by the students. This reflects an increased sense of delegation capability among teachers and support in developing the leadership abilities of students.

'Social pressure' among teachers to improve the quality of teaching

The high-quality infrastructure, beautiful landscaping, and the subsequent ambiance creation have increased the 'social pressure' on teachers to perform well. When the Government and other agencies spent crores of rupees to create such a beautiful campus environment, teachers started taking more responsibility and ownership of the school and its development.

School and ecosystem around it

Increased student enrolment

Nadakkavu school in 2008 was having less than 1000 students. Today, they have more than 2500 students and receive more than 5000 applications every year. This increase in demand for admission is another evidence of the school's academic quality and popularity.

Sense of ownership of the school among the local community

Changes in the infrastructure and ambiance have also brought changes in the attitude of students, teachers, parents, and the public living near the school property. Earlier, the school property was unprotected in the evenings rendering it a deserted place which led to misuse and poor upkeep of the property. Limited maintenance left the place dilapidated and undesirable for learning. Now with a security guard and maintenance system in place, the school compound looks like any other protected entity, a desirable place with a reasonably maintained garden and premises.

Changing the perception toward government schools

The PRISM project was able to change the public perception of government schools as an 'undesirable place' to a 'desirable place' for their children to study and transform their future. PRISM was successful in increasing the expectations of the public about the government school system because of the numerous curricular and extra-curricular activities. Today, parents are eager to get admission to PRISM schools. Parents now associate a lot of prestige with becoming PTA members at the Nadakkavu school.

Government funding for the scale-up

The Government of Kerala has also acknowledged the PRISM Nadakkavu model as a success and decided to replicate it in other schools. In 2015, a government order (Ref: G.O. Ms. 233/2015/G.Edn) was issued proposing to implement it in 100 schools across the state in a phased manner. In the 2016-17 state budget, INR 1000 crores were allocated to support the upgrade and redevelopment of one government school in each of the 140 constituencies in the state⁶. In 2017, F&SF was invited to partner with the government's Comprehensive Educational Rejuvenation Programme to support the development of 1000 schools by the Secretary for Government Education (Ref: No.126/Secy/2017/GED). In summary, currently, 966 schools have received a focus on redevelopment through the PRISM project.

Change in long-term planning within schools

PRISM has brought a change in the approach to education and management of government schools in Kerala. Earlier, in these schools, it was predominantly a short-term reactionary planning, rather than long-term visionary planning. There were no targeted goals, annual plans, or periodic reviews for course correction. PRISM project approach has brought more professionalism to the educational administration of Government schools.

Recommendations to PRISM committee for future development

Based on our impact evaluation study, we have some suggestions for the PRISM committee to consider for future development.

Infrastructure needs renovation and upgrade

During the time of the PRISM evaluation visit in early December 2021, it was observed that the maintenance of PRISM schools was overdue. We observed signs of degradation in physical infrastructure, facilities, synthetic turf, and the garden. One of the major reasons for this situation was the closing down of schools due to COVID lockdown for more than a year. The PRISM Monitoring Committee was aware of this and there is a need to take steps to mitigate the situation. Similarly, the number of computers in the lab is low for the number of students. This could be resourced through CSR initiatives of IT companies in Kozhikode.

Regular training of teachers needs to continue

There is also a need for continued training programs like TCI for the newly appointed teachers, PTA heads, School Heads, and Principals. Training must be given to teachers before they take up leadership positions. Management and leadership training modules need to be regularly provided. A conscious effort to groom educational leadership is important, which is currently missing.

⁶Source: <http://www.niyamasabha.org/pdfs/Revised%20Budget%20Speech%202016-17%20-English.pdf>

Improve workload planning for new initiatives and communication about them

While new initiatives have helped to increase the exposure of students and teachers, the workload planning of teachers needs to be improved. For example, for a new initiative like Atal Tinkering Lab, there was limited time and support offered to teachers to drive the initiative. Also, we noted that not a lot of the teachers were aware of the activities of the Atal Tinkering Lab, suggesting a need for better communication about such new initiatives.

Ensure financial sustainability of Nadakkavu school after F&SF exit

The Nadakkavu school continues to rely on partial financial support from F&SF for augmenting activities like canteen, maintenance, security, etc. There is a need to plan for making these self-sustaining in the long run to manage the school with the same quality after F&SF's exit. This could be done by exploring alternative revenue streams. One approach currently being done is to rent out the school premises for events outside of school time. More such events and initiatives could be explored without compromising the learning environment and atmosphere. Second, students trained through workshops on Python and entrepreneurship could plan to use the facilities of the school after regular time to engage in start-up ideas and provide a proportion of the revenue they generate towards the school. This would be valuable work experience too for students in vocational education. Third, it is important to continue building the corpus development fund through PTA and CSR investments to generate funds for the future maintenance of the school.

Explore volunteer support of parents for maintenance of school

We observed a very strong association of parents with the Nadakkavu school and many of them are trained in vocational skills. Parents could volunteer these skills in the maintenance of school when needed, in the form of volunteering their time towards plumbing, electric maintenance, canteen services, painting, etc. Parents who could afford to pay for the maintenance could do that to support the efforts.

Need for a structured long-term plan for the Government's scale-up of PRISM to other schools

The state government's move to scale-up PRISM to other government schools with an earmarked allocation in the budget is positive. However, without a structured long-term plan, the investment might not achieve its expected goals. This structured long-term plan could follow some of the best practices that F&SF adopted at the Nadakkavu school. This included clearly defined objectives (both short- and long-term), due diligence before investing, alignment of objectives between different stakeholders involved in the project, making the investment in phases with regular monitoring and feedback to meet the defined objectives, and ensuring that the school management and PRISM committee in schools are empowered to manage and maintain the upgraded school⁷. A PRISM manual and SOP documenting the process and experience of F&SF are already developed and this could act as a helpful tool for new PRISM schools to adopt.

⁷Sahasranamam, S. and Mitra, S. (2019), "Faizal & Shabana Foundation: a venture philanthropic approach to education", *Emerald Emerging Markets Case Studies*, Vol. 9 No. 1. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EEMCS-04-2018-0052>

Develop a talent pool of teachers to take leadership positions in new PRISM schools

To support the scaling-up plan of the government, it will be important to select a pool of teachers from across schools and give them management and leadership training. This could include discussions on best practices observed from existing PRISM schools. This will help create a talent pool of teachers who are aware of PRISM's history and aligned with its ideals, who are ready to take leadership positions in new PRISM schools.

Build capacity for PRISM management and monitoring

Many of the processes and management of PRISM are coordinated and led by F&SF. Over the next couple of years, there is a need for a phased de-linking of F&SF from PRISM and it is important to build capacity for its independent functioning. This could be achieved by creating an advisory and monitoring arm. The advisory arm could include representation from retired teachers from PRISM schools, F&SF representatives, former MLA Mr. Pradeep Kumar, etc. The monitoring arm could be a state-level PRISM monitoring committee that assesses the performance of PRISM schools against the set objectives through periodic reviews and offers feedback.

Create a performance appraisal mechanism for school-level PRISM staff & teachers and report to the state-level PRISM Monitoring Committee

There is a need for a standardized performance review process for PRISM staff and teachers, which is linked with the objectives of PRISM. An annual review would help understand progress and identify development needs to support staff and teachers appropriately. For each school, an aggregate report could be offered to the state-level PRISM Monitoring committee for a state-level audit and review of performance.

Setting up educational research, consulting, and training center associated with PRISM (e.g., PRISM Research and Technical Institute)

A team could be set up within PRISM to explore the possibility and value of setting up an educational research and training center. This team could be constituted of general education experts from DIET, school teachers, and administration alongside educational technology experts. Educational technologies and pedagogies are undergoing rapid changes and the pandemic has only accelerated this trend. This calls for renewed and focused research and training on new educational technologies and their effectiveness, different public educational models, and student-learning approaches. There is also scope to explore the use of an educational ERP platform in PRISM schools to reduce routine administrative and other redundant activities and to keep records of students, teachers, and staff performance and progress.

Appendix 1

Snapshot of the government order sanctioning the assistance from F&SF for Nadakkavu school

Government of Kerala

Abstract

General Education Department - Implementation of expanded PRISM Project at Govt. Girls Vocational Higher Secondary School, Nadakkavu, Kozhikode - with the assistance from Faizal & Shabana Foundation - Administrative sanction accorded - Orders issued.

General Education (M) Department		
G.O.(Rt).No. 1538/2013/G.Edn.	Dated, Thiruvananthapuram	03/04/2013

Read:

1. G.O.(MS).No.177/2008/G.Edn dated 20-10-2008
2. G.O.(Rt).No.1994/2008/PWD dated 28.11.2008
3. G.O.(Rt).No.1137/2010/G.Edn dated 15.03.2010
4. G.O.(Rt).No.1111/2011/G.Edn dated 21.03.2011
5. Proposal received from the Chairman, Faizal & Shabana Foundation, Bangalore dated 13.02.2013

ORDER

Government vide G.O. Read as 1st paper above approved a proposal submitted by Shri Pradeep Kumar, Hon'ble MLA of Kozhikode North constituency to upgrade certain physical infrastructure in some of the schools in his constituency under a project named "PRISM". Subsequently, as per the reference 2nd cited above Government issued Administrative Sanction to construct a three storied RCC building at a cost of Rs.50 lakh. Thereafter, vide references 3 & 4 above administrative sanctions for Rs.7 lakh and Rs.8 lakh for purchase of books and furniture for the library, construction of school building and modernisation of computer lab were issued.

2. In the meantime M/s. Faizal & Shabana Foundation, registered as a charitable society submitted a proposal in respect of Government Vocational Higher Secondary School (GVHSS) for Girls in Nadakkavu, Kozhikode to further improve the infrastructure quality in the school and to train the teachers in the school so that, the school is upgraded to the level of an International School. The Foundation submitted that it will invest about Rs. 10 Crores from their own funds as a charitable gesture. This proposal were endorsed and supported by Shri Pradeep Kumar, Hon'ble MLA.

Appendix 2

An illustrative list of secondary documents used

01 Government orders/documents

- List of 141 schools selected by MLA in each constituency for scaling-up PRISM initiative
- Government order sanctioning assistance from F&SF
- Government order ensuring that teachers trained under PRISM initiative are not transferred from PRISM school for 5 years

02 Document prepared by PRISM

- The initial proposal for PRISM was prepared by MLA A. Pradeep Kumar with support from IIM Kozhikode in 2008
 - Amendment proposal for PRISM prepared by F&SF – dated February 13th, 2013
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