

Initiative 7

Leading Innovative practices to mitigate Learning Gaps

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The Context

Mandal Parishath Primary School is in Kethagudipi village is a rural area of Tarlupadu Mandal, Prakasam district, Andhra Pradesh. Our school has 2 classrooms with dining area and playground. We have totally 73 students, 37 boys and 36 girls and 3 teachers as staff. The school habitation is an underdeveloped SC community area. It is a drought area in Prakasam district. The people are daily wage workers. The population of the habitation is 756 and 152 families are living there.

Challenges faced due to school Closure

- All the people living in our habitation are belongs to BPL (below poverty line). So the parents do not have the economic resources to provide gadgets.
- According to the technical gradation which is derived by the government, under categories NO TECH, LOW TECH, HIGH TECH, 54 students are LOW TECH (have basic mobiles), 15 students have smart phones but only 4 students have high speed internet data i.e. HIGH TECH. 4 Students are NO TECH (didn't have at least basic phone).
- The mobiles are available for the students only in the evening or night time.
- Online classes are the only alternate to provide classroom experiences partially. But we have only 4 students who can afford online classes and these students belong to different classes.
- Most of the students in our school are low tech and no tech students. It is difficult to connect the students to continue their learning in this period.
- Preparation of self-learning activities for low tech and no tech students.
- The teachers do not have sufficient technical skills to conduct online classes.
- Designing of activities to avoid the passiveness in online classes.
- Maintenance of COVID protocol
- Children were Facing difficulty to identify the letters of alphabet and numbers (class 1 &2), Struggle for decoding and reading. they were making mistakes in

writing words and sentences and struggling to answer the basic mathematical operations.

Innovative Practices for mitigating learning gaps Identified learning gaps:

To overcome the above challenges and learning gaps we designed 3 programs.

1. LITTLE TEACHERS (especially for low tech and no tech students)
2. FROOTS – The Next Gen Schooling (for high tech students)
3. SMART TEACHER (for transformation of teachers from traditional to technical)

Little Teachers

Little Teachers program is specially designed for low tech and no tech students. At the last day of school closure, we divided all the students into 10 groups. Each group consists of 7 students. We identified 10 little teachers who are good at academic activities among the 73 students. We assigned one little teacher for each group. After that we provided some reading material of 10 bilingual story books, list of sight words and rhymes. Then designed a 10-week schedule for one hour daily by class wise and subject wise and gave the instructions to the little teachers for proper implementation of the schedule.

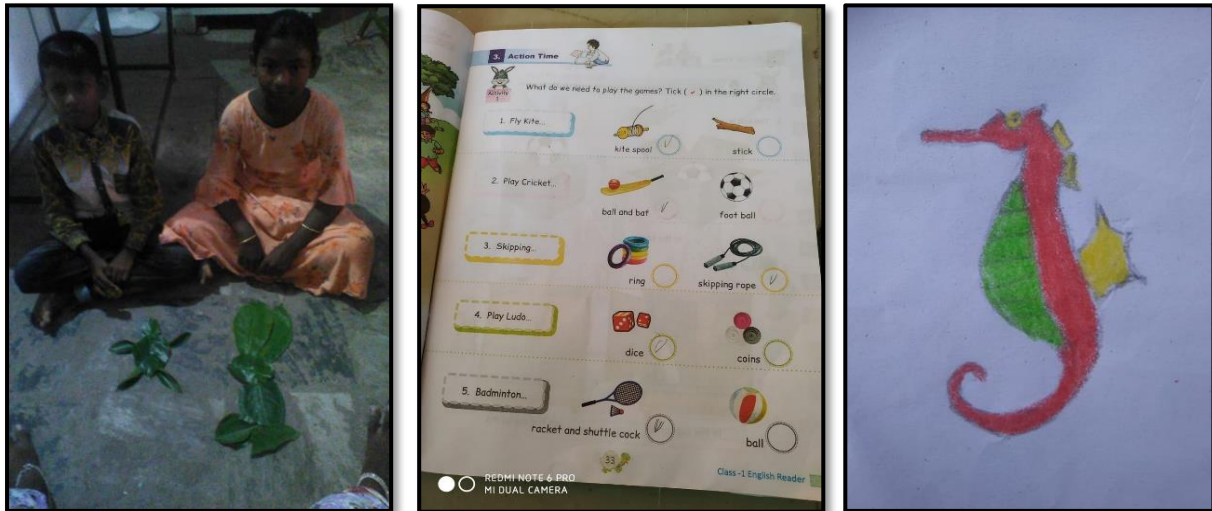
For maintaining COVID protocol we conducted a parent's meet and collected the information of mothers who are staying at home (house wives). 15 mothers were conveyed their willing to taking care of these groups for monitoring COVID protocol. We assigned one parent to each group to monitor them. We also involved the old students



of school to support these groups.

After completing this ground work we started the Little Teachers program on 3-5-2021. We interacted with little teachers and students 15 members through phone calls to clear the doubts. We also created What's app groups to send the voice instructions

about the text book-based activities which are left over the school closure time. Some students who are having smart phones were sent the photos of their completed task.



We scheduled two subjects among the three subjects (Telugu, English, Maths) and a story, drawing a picture per day and a craft based activity on Sunday, simple science based experiment per week were included in our schedule. We provided digital certificates to the students who performed their best in every week. Some students sent their voice and video recordings while reading the stories.

Froots

Through Little Teacher program we tried to engage all the students (No tech, low tech, high tech) and succeeded. But I thought that we need a better innovation for high tech students. I had only 4 students who were ready to effort online classes but these students were belong to different classes. I posed a question for myself 'why can't I collaborate with the other teachers?' Then I shared my idea with my friends and I invited the teacher community through face book and what's app. 22 teachers were responded and showed their willing to join their hands. In this process I met with many challenges.

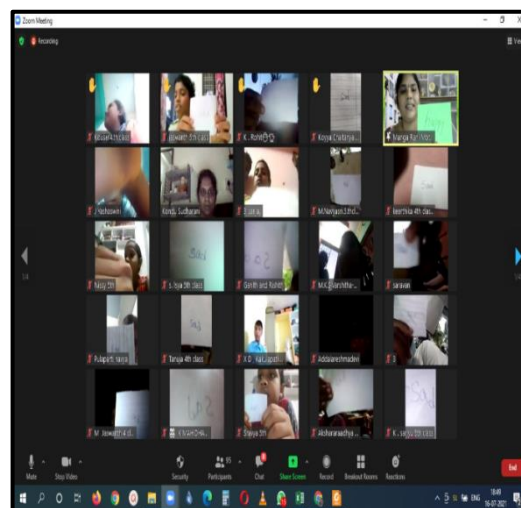
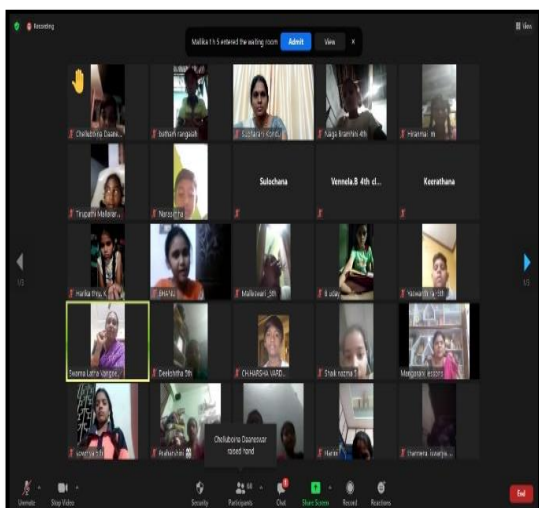
- Teachers had interest but didn't have sufficient technical knowledge.
- Orientation for the students and parents on how to attend the classes and how to give responses during the class like rising hand, mute the mikes, using chat box etc.
- Planning of schedule and allotment of teachers and syllabus mapping
- How to avoid technical issues?
- Needed to new teaching methods and techniques to handle online classes.

First we collected the information of our students who were ready to effort online classes. After that all the teachers interacted with the parents to provide the support for their children to attend the classes. Then we created What's app groups for teachers and class wise groups for students. Then we started our FROOTS journey.

What is meant by FROOTS:

- F- Foundation Literacy and Numeracy
- R- Remote teaching
- O- Online learning
- O- One platform across the state
- T- Teaching collaboratively
- S- Student interactive

After formation of Froots team first we implemented **SMART TEACHERS** program to convert our teachers from traditional to technical. In this program we received a great support from our mentors Dr. T.V.S. Ramesh (SAMGRA SIKSHA AP), C.A. Prasad (coordinator Nai Talim South India). My friends M. Manga Rani, K. Rajesh supported to train our teachers technically. We took orientation classes on ZOOM, POWER POINT for



handling the class and LIVE WORK SHEETS, PADLET, WORD WALL tools for assessment. We implemented this program for 15 days before starting the FROOTS online classes. We also conducted some sessions for teacher's capacity building on Puppetry, Storytelling, TLM making for remote teaching, Spoken English, Black board book (written by Elinor Watts).

Finally we completed all the background work and readiness of the teachers & students. We started our FROOTS (The Next Gen Schooling) classes on June 7th 2021. We scheduled the classes from 5 to 7 PM in two sessions for two levels i.e. Class 1 & 2 as LEVEL-1, Class 3, 4 & 5 as LEVEL-2. We taught totally 3 subjects (Telugu, English, Maths) and one subject per a day. We mainly focused on FLN concepts which is suggested by NEP 2020 to attain the foundational skills to cover the learning loss during the lockdown period. We started the classes with 22 teachers and 150 students from 12 districts of Andhra Pradesh, at the end of our classes we had 45 teachers and 300 students.

We used blended mode of teaching with the combination of PPT, TLM and Activities. We gave more priority to make the children active during the class for avoiding the passiveness of remote teaching. We allotted 2 teachers for one session. One teacher was for handling the class and the other teacher was an alternate for avoiding the disturbance when the technical issues raised and for providing support in planning of activities for the class.

Then what is before 8,756

WHAT IS AFTER 9,957

అయితే ఒకరోజు హఠాత్తుగా పెద్ద వాన వచ్చింది. నీళ్ళు వరదలా పారాయి. ఆ నీటికి చీమ పుట్ట కొట్టుకుపోయింది.

Arrange the following numbers in ascending order.

2 4 1 8

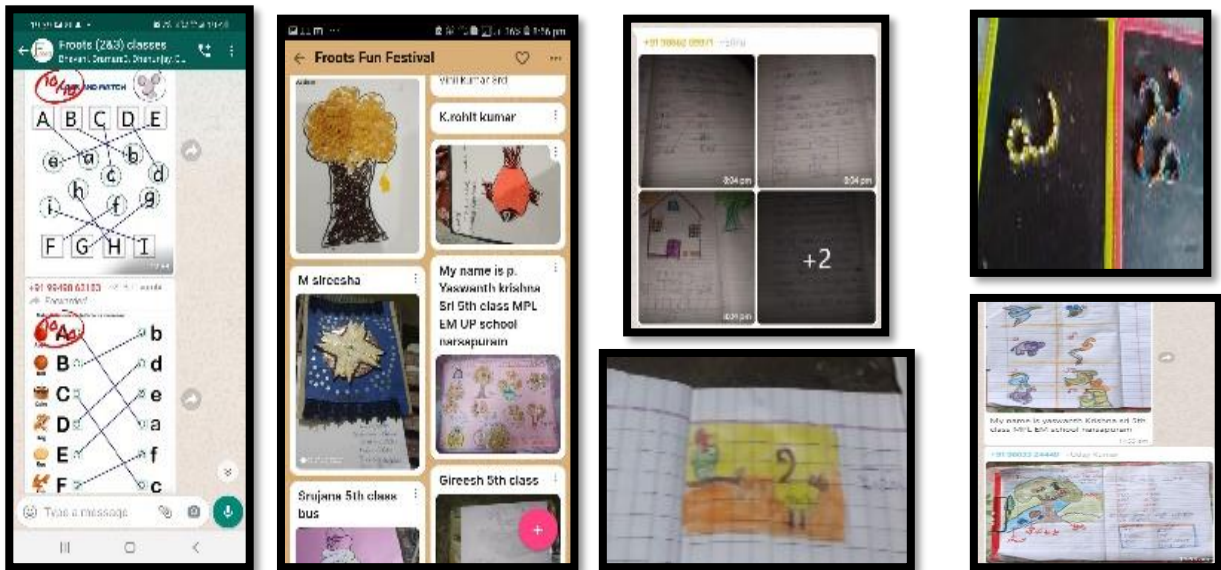
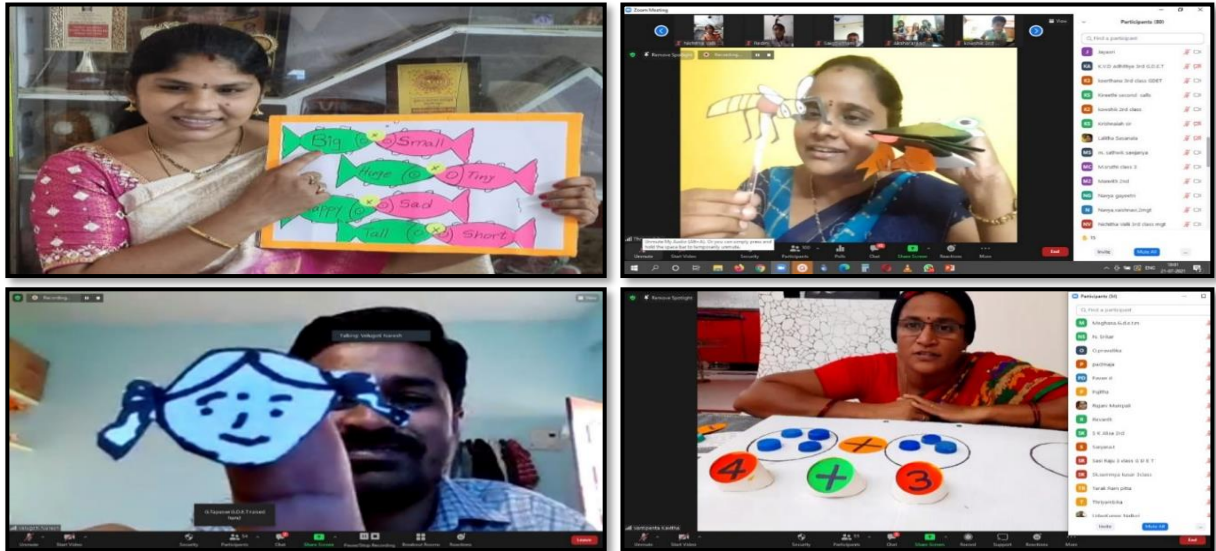
smallest

largest

Kitty kitten put the kettle for the king.

Usage of TLM and Activities to make the class lively

We conducted review meetings on Sundays to discuss the issues which we were faced in that week while taking the class and for the remedies. After that we discuss about the schedule for the next week.



Assessment of follow up activities after the class

The highlights of FROOTS

- One platform across the state – It is a good opportunity to the teachers and students to interact with the other students and teachers from various places across the state. It is a great exposure to know about the different Dialects of Telugu language for teachers and students.
- Review meetings – The active participation and suggestions of teachers in review meetings helped to overcome the challenges.
- Parent’s participation – Parent’s participation was a great experience for us in this classes. Every day the parents participated along with their kids to support them in following the class and in responding to the teachers. Actually this is not possible in our regular schools.
- Teachers Capacity Building – The orientation sessions which held on technical tools and Puppetry and Storytelling made visible changes in our teaching style and strategies.



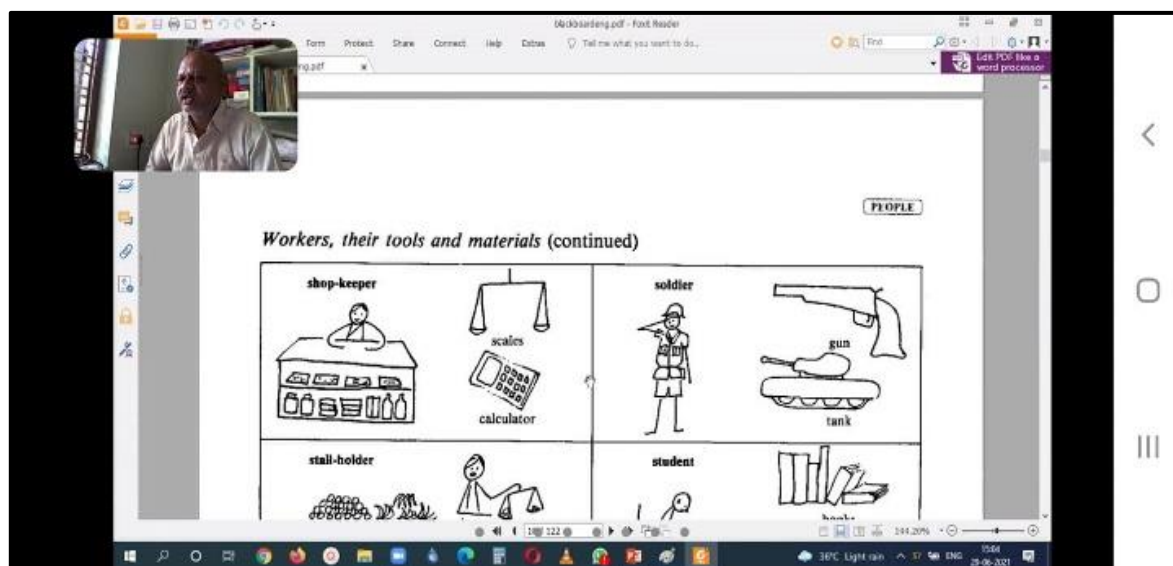
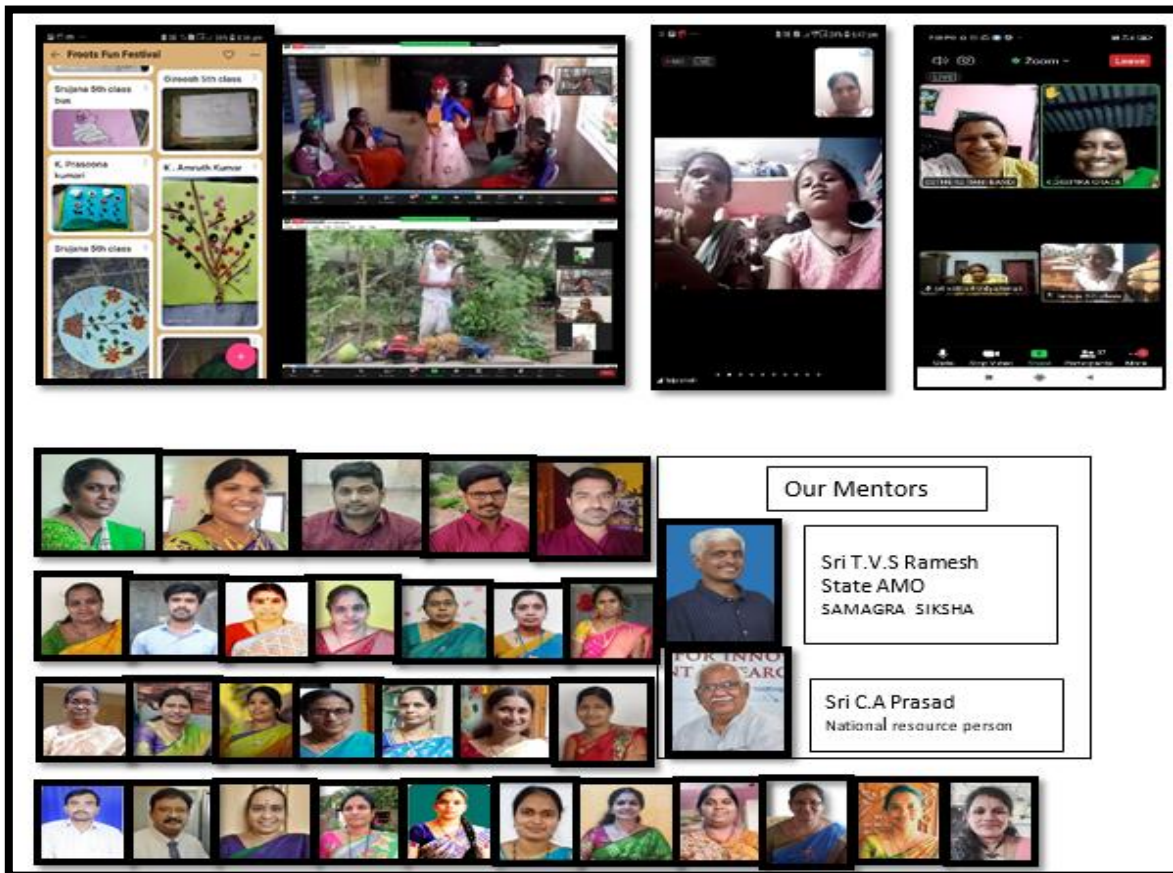
- Interactive assessment tools – We introduced the assessment tools such as Live worksheets, Padlet, Google forms, Word wall etc. to the rural area students and teachers. They helped our students to become smarter than previous in technical aspect.

Capacity Building of Teachers

FROOTS Fun Festival

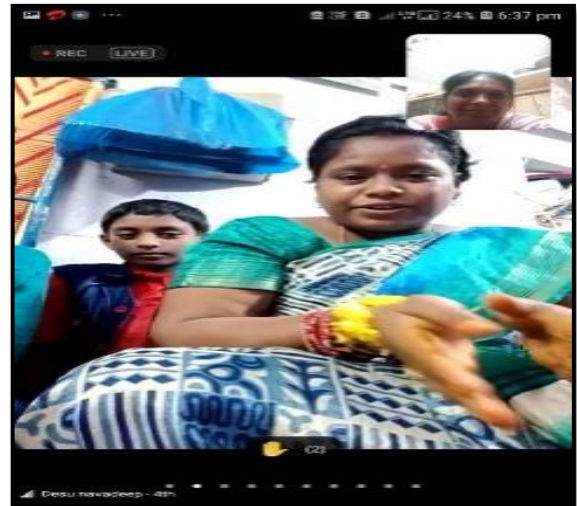
At the end of the FROOTS classes, we conducted an online children fest with different activities like collage, drawing, clay modelling, paper craft, singing, storytelling and role plays. We also included storytelling session especially for the parents. It was memorable experience to the teachers and the parents showed their gratitude towards our initiative with their kind words.

FROOTS Team



Collaboration with community and parents to ensure student learning

To implement the above initiatives I received a remarkable support from the parents. The parents played a big role for LITTLE TEACHERS program in monitoring of COVID protocol, to support the students in their learning. The participation of parents gave a huge success to the FROOTS online classes.



Sharing the views with parents

Collaboration with the teacher community played a crucial role in our success. It is not possible without team effort. All the teachers dedicated their precious time and services in the biggest critical condition which the world never faced in in the past. The teachers showed their responsibility towards the students to continue their learning during COVID pandemic situation.

FIANS INDIA
VISAKHAPATNAM FRIDAY 6 AUGUST 2021

CITY/REGION

Making digital literacy effective

- 'Froots' reaches out to government school students from Classes I to V
- Started with 150 students, the state-wide digital literacy forum now covers 300 students
- Parents keep a track of their wards' subjects through the platform

RANI DEVALLA
VISAKHAPATNAM

PAYING attention in a virtual class often turns out to be a daunting task for students. For those studying in government schools, it is even more challenging. To bridge this gap, a motley group of teachers from different parts of the state has come together to help children studying in government schools and make the concepts more comprehensible for them.

Initiated by three teachers, the two-month-old Froots (Foundation literacy and numeracy, Re-



Teachers imparting an online class as a part of the 'Froots' digital literacy forum to government school students



bile phones. Students are divided into two categories -- I to III and IV to V and lessons are imparted between 5 pm and 6 pm and again from 6 pm to 7 pm through Zoom app," says Kouleri Rajesh from MPUP School, Mentada Vizianagaram.

Ever since the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic, desirable learning outcomes have witnessed a considerable dip despite students getting promoted to the next standard. It is where the digital platform comes into picture to make digital learning effective.

By designing customised curriculum for the purpose, teachers impart lessons through collaborative teaching which aids in understanding the concepts much better.

Also, worksheets, activities and crafts form a part of the learning process. Plus, by connecting with different teachers, students get a new exposure. Next, the team intends to start a fun festival from August 9 wherein crafts, clay making and music will be added to the curriculum wherein both students and parents will take part.

sons being taught," says Kondu Sudha Rani, SGT (secondary grade teacher) at Ongole MPFS School in Kethagudipi village. She along with two other teachers initiated the foundation literacy forum.

The voluntary platform aids in making children approach teachers without any fear of being ridiculed in the class. "Normally, students feel reluctant to ask questions in a classroom. Here, we encourage them to clarify their

doubts, engage them in activities. The collaborative teaching paves the way for a student-friendly atmosphere," explains Moturi Manga Rani, another SGT from Sri Nagaraja Municipal Corporation Elementary School, Rajamahendravaram.

Teachers from various parts of the state dedicate their time in the evening for the students to take up virtual classes. "That is when the parents return from work and children will have access to mo-

Way Forward

After reopening of schools the Froots teachers converted into FROOTS NEXT GEN TEACHERS to continue our collaborative practices to cover the learning loss among the students. We are practicing different activities uniformly in our schools to attain 21st century skills among students. We are implementing weekly activities and discussing the difficulties and results in Sunday review meetings. Including these activities we are implementing reading programs and FLN activities in our schools. Now we are converting our workbook exercises into interactive work sheets.

Conference Presentation

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1NZBst7OWnL2KBSrERtdb4dqsczhspj7j/view?usp=sharing>