

NISA: Rajpura Teacher Innovation Pilot Annual Progress Report November 2014

Submitted by: National Independent Schools Alliance

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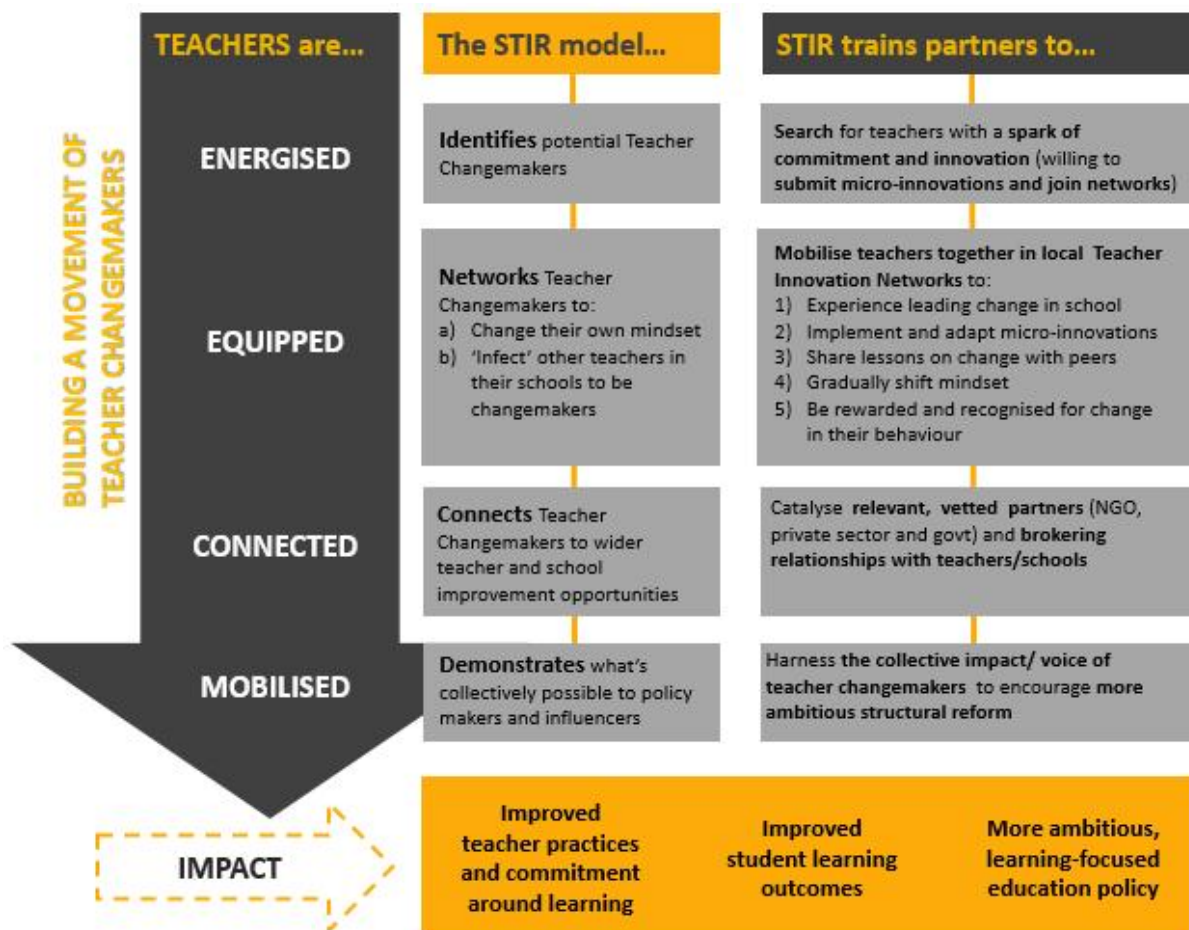
INTRODUCTION

Teacher Innovation Program was launched in 13 low budget private schools in Rajpura district, Punjab in July 2013. Punjab Private Schools Organization (PPSO) with support from National Independent Schools Alliance (NISA) initiated this program in its member schools, with a belief that one of the most effective ways to improve the quality of education is to empower teachers and principals to lead improvement in their classrooms and schools. The program seeks to help teachers develop the skills and mindset required to improve student learning.

The core aim of the Teacher Innovation Program is to create **teacher change-makers** who can come up with innovative solutions, implement effective practices, influence peers, integrate best resources and lead the movement towards improved learning. After one year of its implementation, we have observed a drastic change in teachers' confidence and motivation level, overall initiative in using innovative practices and new pedagogical methods, and most importantly increased interest of students in classroom processes.

PROGRAM MODEL

The program follows a 4-step model to empower **teacher change-makers** to improve student learning:



Program Methodology

1. Network Formation



Innovation Search Conference was conducted in September 2013. 190 teachers/principals from 70 schools across 13 districts of Punjab participated. Of these participants, 55 Teachers/principals from 13 schools were shortlisted to form Rajpura Network. These participants would collaborate for at least one year, divided into three cycles of four months each.

2. Monthly Meetings



Every month in-school meetings were organised, where education leaders met the school teachers. Every two months, a network meeting was held, where network teachers from all schools came together. The aimed to encourage teachers to collaborate. During in-school meetings and school visits, we guided teachers to identify key problem areas, to implement STIR's micro-innovations identified at the Conference, and to measure impact and refine ideas.

3. Baseline and End-line Surveys



To assess teacher motivation and evaluate impact of the STIR Pilot project in Rajpura, we conducted baseline and end-line surveys and interviews. Baseline surveys were conducted at the Innovation Search Conference in September 2013. We also conduct this survey for any new teacher who joined the network. End-line survey will be conducted in January 2015.

4. Educational Exchange Program



As a next step for the program, Educational Exchange program was conducted with Limited Resources Teachers Training (LRTT), UK. 15 trained teachers from United Kingdom travelled to Rajpura, Punjab and trained 100 Indian teachers in eight schools for three weeks in August 2014.

5. Program Conclusion



After three cycles of innovation, implementation and influencing, the first year of the program will come to a close in January 2015. Assessment will be held in January to assess how well teachers have implemented the micro innovations and on that basis, teachers will be recommended for Certification by University of Roehampton.

PROGRAM MILESTONES

- Launched the program – July 2013 – marketing collateral was created and was sent to 80 schools. About 35 schools were invited in person. Education Leader visited them and explained the program.
- Innovation Search Conference – conducted in September 2013. In total, 190 teachers/principals from 70 schools across 13 districts of Punjab participated. Participants submitted their innovations and also indicated whether they wanted to join the program.
- Shortlisted schools and teachers – from the participants of the Conference, 55 teachers/principals from 13 schools were shortlisted to form the Rajpura Network. These participants would collaborate for at least one year.
- Network launch meeting – In November 2013, shortlisted participants came together and network was formally launched.
- Innovator Award by University of Roehampton – after innovations submitted by participants were evaluated by STIR, eight participants made it to the final 100. Finally, three participants were awarded Innovator award from University of Roehampton.
- Completion of first cycle – April 2014.
- Start of second cycle – May 2014. Network Meeting was held on 10 May 2014. On the basis of experiences and learning of first cycle, few changes were made in program model – in-school meetings were introduced in place of cluster meetings.
- Education Exchange Program with LRTT – 15 trained teachers from Limited Resources Teachers Training(LRTT), United Kingdom travelled to Rajpura, Punjab and trained 100 Indian teachers in eight of these schools for three weeks in August 2014.
- Start of third cycle – October 2014.

SCHOOLS PROFILE

1. Schools

In Rajpura, we work with 14 low cost private schools. Low cost private schools are the ones which typically charge less than 500 rupees per month per child and provide affordable education to the poor. Seven of these schools are senior secondary and remaining seven are secondary schools. Five of these schools are rural, two are semi-urban and the rest are urban.

2. Students

For rural schools, students come from neighbouring villages and for urban low cost schools, students come from same city and neighbouring villages. Wherever possible, many students also travel by bicycle (in some cases 5-6 km a day) to cut transportation cost. Students generally come from low income families. Their parents are farmers, drivers, carpenters, shopkeepers, and labourers.

3. Teachers

Teachers generally come from same village/city or neighbouring villages. Most of them have done at least bachelor degree. About 40% of teachers have done B.Ed. and are trained. Out of 59 network participants, nine are principals/managers and 50 are teachers.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Teachers from the network received the Innovator Award by University of Roehampton.
- Successful Innovation Search Conference – 190 teachers/principals from 70 schools across 13 districts of Punjab participated. 120 participants expressed desire to join the program.
- Innovator Award from University of Roehampton
 - Three participants were awarded Innovator Award from University of Roehampton in April 2014
- Eight teachers/principal were chose among 100 finalists for the award
- After change in model of the program in Rajpura, participant attendance has been more than 90%
- Educational exchange program with LRTT was huge success

RECOGNITION

- 3 participants awarded Innovator award from University of Roehampton
- Educational exchange program with LRTT appreciated by media

FUTURE PLANS

1. Introduction of challenge in current cohort which would be focused on improving reading. This would lead to teachers getting champion certificate from Roehampton. The challenge will be designed by STIR Partner, Mukhtangan. The champions thus identified would also be getting training from Mukhtangan.
2. Creating a new network closer to the existing network in Rajpura (potential location – Patiala). The new network can be taken up by the current human resource or can also be supplemented by a junior based in new location.
3. STIR would strive to continue bringing next step partners such as LRTT for the new schools.

STIR's support to Education Leader:

- **Capacity:** An opportunity for EL to try their hand in the latest cutting edge approach of supporting teacher collaboration. They would be trained to lead the challenge delivered by STIR and Mukhtangan
- **Training and support from STIR Team:** Education Leaders would get training not only the methodology but also on latest understanding on teacher collaboration, creating a bottom-up movement, teacher motivation/mindsets. They would get support from the STIR staff and also networking opportunity to meet other staff members of different NGOs that STIR is partnering with.
- **Certification:** STIR believes that Education Leaders, whether our own, or partner staff or government CRC are crucial in sustaining the movement. Hence they are committed to helping develop these leaders using this approach and also certifying them. STIR has collaborated with Center for Innovation in Public Systems to certify Education Leaders who create and sustain these networks.

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

1. PPSO

Launched in 1986, **Punjab Private Schools Organization (PPSO)** is the most prominent association fighting for the voice of low-fee private schools in Punjab and creates an enabling ecosystem for them to improve accessibility, affordability and quality of education for the economically weaker sections of the society. PPSO already represents over 5,000 schools from Punjab.

2. National Independent Schools Alliance (NISA)

The National Independent Schools Alliance (NISA) is a platform that brings together budget private schools (BPS) from across the country to give them a unified voice to address their concerns about legislations and bye-laws which apply to them and to facilitate quality improvement in schools. As of today, NISA represents over 36,400 schools, from 20 state associations, which cater to the needs of ~9.35 million children at an average of ~250 children per school.

3. STiR

STIR Education is a UK based NGO that aims to build a **movement of teacher changemakers** who develop innovative micro-solutions ('micro-innovations'), implement effective practices, and influence peers and policy makers – all to improve children's learning.

4. Limited Resources Teachers Training (LRTT)

LRTT is a UK based organization that that Enables and delivers inspirational teacher training in limited resource contexts all over the world. LRTT training workshops equip teachers with innovative, modern, tested strategies to improve learning for all students.