

# Digital Technology for Youth-led Monitoring of the SDGs

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Towards the end of last year, [UNESCO-MGIEP](#) conducted field visits to rural Gujarat, India along with [4<sup>th</sup> Wheel Social Impact](#) (our partner organization in the project) that helped get an understanding of the community and the local education system. Educational institutions were identified for implementation of the project on **Youth-led Monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**.

With this general understanding of the youth target group and responses from the pilot study, we had enough information to build a prototype for the app. We partnered with [Dhwani Rural Information Systems](#) and the three organizations worked together to ideate on different aspects of the app – from content to design, user flow to the backend data saving. In about two months, the beta version of the app was ready! The app was named “**MEdAL – Monitoring Education and Learning**”.

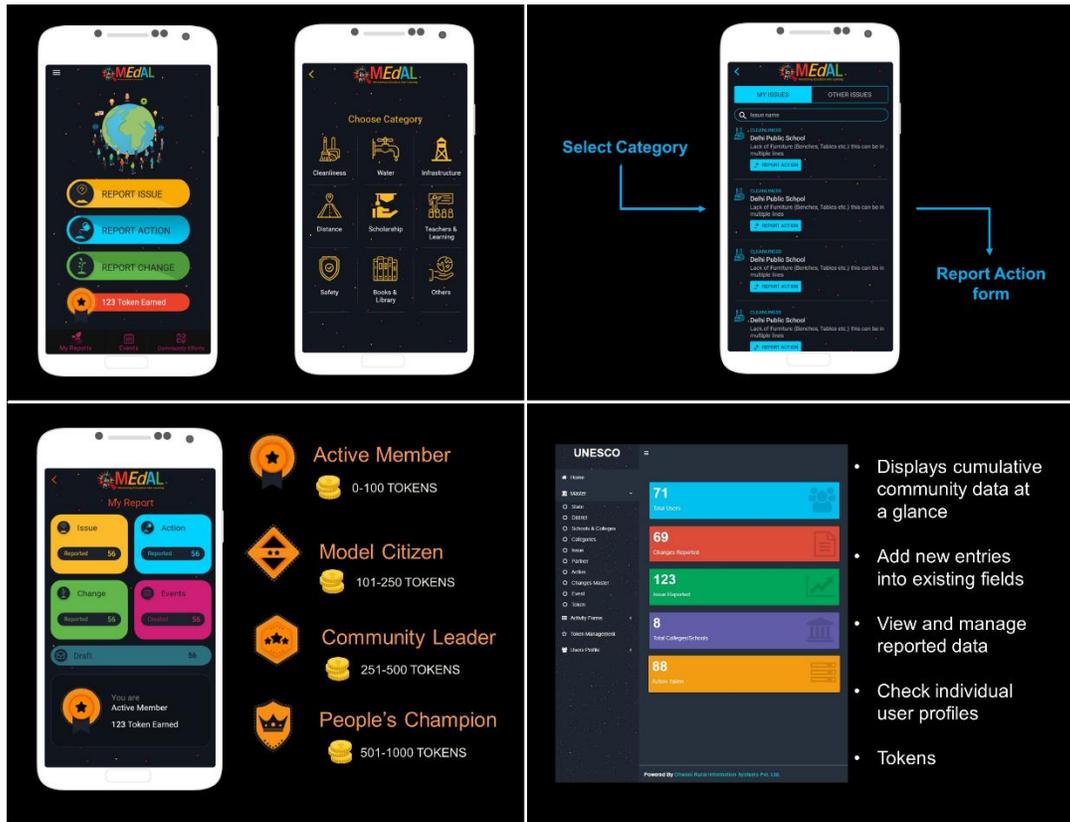
It was now time to test the usability of the digital platform and to get feedback from the end users themselves. Despite being hampered by the timing coinciding with school and college exams (February-March) followed by two months of annual holidays, we managed to schedule two workshops in Bhuj.

The workshops were conducted on two days at the Department of Social Work, Kutch University and Alfred High School for Boys. The sessions covered the main theme of the project, its potential to impact the education system, and their roles in this process of sustainable development. The two workshops provided an interesting mix of youth with one workshop addressing Master’s level students studying social work, while the other had 16-17 year old school students!



*Scene from a workshop introducing the MEdAL app to MSW students at Kutch University, Gujarat, India.*

Students participated in the workshop and downloaded the beta version of the MEDAL app onto their own phones. They were guided through the registration process and given hands-on training of the data reporting and monitoring supported by the app. The students were then encouraged to test the various reporting procedures of issues, actions and changes on their own phones. The workshops finally ended with feedback from the students on what they liked or disliked about the app, its ease of use, and their perspective on whether the app could be useful in effecting change.



*Some of the screens from the MEDAL app*

Although the workshops could address only 85 students in total, their feedback has been positive and encouraging. Another field visit is now being planned to get more students using the app. While the immediate reporting is bound to be limited by exams and the following holiday season, the next academic year beginning in June 2019 could prove to be a promising time for youth-led Monitoring of the SDGs.

A scientific paper is currently being written describing the motivation behind the study, a detailed structure of the proposed Global Monitoring Framework, and the ways in which it can contribute to transformations to sustainability.

The Android app can be downloaded from the Google Play store at:

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.dhwaniris.unesco>

For more details of the field visit and the feedback from the students, read the Stage 3 & 4 Report on the [YLM page](#)