Organization: Apni Shala Foundation
Website: www.apnishala.org

Mission

Building social and emotional competencies among individuals to constructively engage with society and have a harmonious co-existence.

Context

Apni Shala aims at building mental wellbeing frameworks in schools for developing social-emotional competencies in children and care-based ecosystems around them. The organization works with the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (MCGM) to build a public school design for mental wellbeing.

The organization provides one hour long SEL sessions each week for the whole school year or 25 weeks for all the MCGM schools. Social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.

At the start of each school year, these schools give the feasible slots for each grade (and their dividends if any) to Apni Shala. The class is then divided into various groups to provide better attention to students. Apni Shala employs many facilitators whose profiles are maintained in their database. Each facilitator is assigned 8-12 groups per week, which could be across different schools. There are different roles/levels of facilitators, for instance, a Senior Facilitator.

The facilitator assigned is based on facilitator's availability and profile which includes details like language proficiencies, current schedule etc. In addition to this, other constraints such as prioritization based on rarer language proficiencies, transition time between slots if there is considerable distance/commute between different schools, facilitator role-dependent assignment, medium of instruction at the school etc. are also factored in. There may also be other general constraints/rules that apply, such as requiring each facilitator to be assigned to at least one Grade 7 class, as an example.

At times, the schools are fickle with the slots provided by them initially and any changes in the facilitator's availability also leads to revisiting the mapping of all the groups again. This manual process creates unnecessary overhead in the team.

Challenge

Currently, the allocation of program facilitators to various schools is completely manual and hence cumbersome. The firm wants to eradicate this process and have an automated system in place which would cater to their need and make everyone's life easier.

The organization is looking for a solution which would automate these manual tasks such as allocation of facilitator to various groups based on their availability and proficiencies, and updating the facilitator's subsequent availability as well as the overall program schedule. It should also enable the Apni Shala team to access all the information and make any necessary changes if required. The platform should be user-friendly considering its target audience is not tech savvy.

Additional Considerations

- Data from schools are collected via Program Leads who schedule an appointment with the principal and get the feasible slots for all the classes.
- The Program Leads may visit schools in remote locations where connectivity is weak, with minimal internet bandwidth.

Technology Baseline

All the data from various schools are collected and is maintained in an excel sheet. Meanwhile, the dataset of facilitators is also maintained in an excel sheet and is manually mapped to each school based on various constraints.