



# UNION CHRISTIAN COLLEGE ALUVA-2



Criterion 7

SSR 5<sup>th</sup> CYCLE 2023

7.2.1 Best Practices



## BEST PRACTICES

### Best Practice 1:

**VIKAS** (Value-based Interventions for Knowledgeable Action in Society)

### Best Practice 2:

**SANKALP** (Sustainable Action for Nature, Knowledge and Accountable Life Practices)

**VIKAS** and **SANKALP** are special purpose entities dedicated to global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). **VIKAS** is aligned to SDGs 1, 4, 5, 8, 10, 12, and 16, and **SANKALP** to SDGs 3, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15. These Best Practices are committed to quality education and wholesome individual development forging a more equitable, just, and sustainable world.

## VIKAS

### Objectives

1. To foster ethical and moral values pegged to societal challenges.
2. To deliver holistic education guided by Gandhian principles, cultivating social consciousness.
3. To cultivate inclusive, service-oriented campus culture.
4. To mould responsible, compassionate individuals capable of meaningful contribution to society.

### Context

**VIKAS** springs from the conviction that education must empower students to address contemporary social challenges through informed action. Inspired by the likes of Gandhi and Tagore who visited the college during the early years, **VIKAS** seeks to foster intellectual growth, social responsibility, character development, and community transformation. Curriculum deficits are offset by a comprehensive and inclusive framework aligned to ethical principles, and the ethos of holistic development.



## Practice Highlights

- Flood Relief Camps in 2018 and 2019.
- Voluntary relief work in Wayanad.
- COVID-19 FLTC Centers, Counselling Services by faculty and students.
- Service Learning: Engaging with local schools, Special Schools, Handloom and Khadi initiatives, Kudumbashree.
- CPSD (Centre for Peace Studies and Dialogue): Volunteers developed Campus Aggression Index and redesigned and upgraded the Peace Building Course to certification level.
- CSRS (Centre for the study of Religion and Society): Interviews and Documentary
- Pain and Palliative Care Unit: Active community care.
- Centre for Value Education and Inspire: Introducing 'VIKAS' to first-year UG students
- Disaster Management Club – Flood preventive measures at Kannamali, Ernakulum district
- Kandal Club --Kandal Nursery -- Kandal Valley -- identified coastal areas in Ernakulum District to plant mangroves
- Nityadarsanam: Seminars by Guru Nityachaitanya Yati Chair.

## Evidence of Success

Commitment to community engagement matured during 2018- '19 floods, COVID-19 pandemic, and the Centenary Exhibition '*Centennial Vista*'.

- Flood Relief Camps housed over 11,000 flood victims. Recognized and awarded by neighbourhood Panchayaths, Municipalities, and the District.
- CSRS published *Ottavakkinte Muzhakkangal* and made a documentary titled *Mannu*
- Value added Course (CPSD): "Fundamentals of Peace Building "
- Anjappam Award

## Challenges and Resources

Implementing these practices has not been without challenges. Flood and Pandemic Relief involved formidable logistical complexity, resource procurement, streamlined distribution, sustained volunteer pool, and follow-up community engagement. Differentially-abled students



required specialized support and additional resources. Logistical and cultural complications had to be negotiated in coordinating International Service learning and student exchange.

VIKAS manifests unwavering dedication to values, community engagement, and producing compassionate, socially conscious individuals poised to have significant impact on society.

## SANKALP

SANKALP exemplifies holistic approach to environmental stewardship, from waste management and energy conservation to sustainable food practices and education. NCC, NSS, various clubs and cells fulfil SDGs and equip students for concrete action with a mission to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity by 2030.

**Partners:** Mahatma Gandhi University, Thanalidam, Nature Club, Kandal Club, Disaster Management Club, Ranthal Club, NSS, NCC, Works Department, Hostels, Staff Association, South Indian Bank, teaching departments, Canteen, College Students Union, Haritha Keralam Mission, Swatch Bharat Abhiyaan

### Objectives of the Practice

1. Recycling and Waste Management- separate bins with colour code- EEICHO- biofeed-composting- Plan@earth - Green Energy – solar plant and 100 % LED
2. Green Campus and organic farming
3. Water conservation, rainwater harvesting, efficient drainage, wells, water tanks implemented in phases- sprinklers for gardens- treated water for gardening
4. Environment Education- Biodiversity Register- Courses

### The Practice

- The proactive initiatives represent strong commitment to sustainability.
- Recycling efforts encompass the Eco Shop, Thrift Shop, and a government-supported startup, promoting materials' reuse.
- Energy conservation prioritized with PIR sensors in common areas, reducing energy consumption.
- Green Building Practices, Non-LED lights replaced with energy-efficient alternatives.
- Use of Solar panels
- Biodiversity documentation through a Biodiversity Register (UCC Fauna Atlas) supporting environmental research and education, monitoring species diversity



- Water conservation: Phased water pipe renewal, low-flow toilets, and sensor-equipped water tanks using treated water for irrigation.
- Sustainable food practices with on-campus organic cultivation, reduced food waste, and composting.
- Waste Management: Segregation into four categories (Bio-degradable, plastic waste, e waste and hazardous waste), supported by policy initiatives like Plan@earth
- Environment education integrated into curricula, eco-awareness through dedicated courses, workshops, and activities.
- The Kandal Club champions mangrove conservation, emphasizing their critical role in coastal protection.

### Evidence of Success

- Waste reduction through recycling
- 55000 saplings planted in the past five years including rare trees, campus garden and Gandhi mango saplings.
- Reduced energy consumption
- Utilization of solar panels (6 MV) and 95 % LED Upgrade
- Water conservation – Rain water harvesting with 1 lakh cubic ltr. capacity
  1. Patent filed for an Award winning technology by a women student for making a fertilizer from water hyacinth weed under the trade name EICCHOFERT.
  2. Value added products such as handicrafts from water hyacinth (*Eichhornia crassipes*) that chokes water bodies and accelerates flooding made by lower income group women and students.
  3. Sustainable food practices-integration of environmental education into curriculum.
  4. Implementation of colour-coded bio-waste bins, eco-friendly packaging, and green protocols
- Organic farm on campus
- Paddy cultivation by Nature Club
- Mangrove seed planting and sea wall building by Kandal Club and Disaster Management Club
- Biodiversity Register titled “Flowering plants of UCC Campus and Herbarium based tour guide for plant collection” published with ISBN number.



- Environmental Studies and Human Rights taught to all UG students
- Environmental History course offered at PG level
- All major days celebrated on campus as part of Awareness Drive

## Challenges

Logistical complexities in waste segregation and composting, upfront investments for energy-efficient technologies, and adjustments to existing infrastructure had to be negotiated. Sustaining local organic food practices, behavioral changes for reduced food waste, and faculty training for integrating environmental education required continuing endeavour. Despite these challenges, our dedication to sustainability remains steadfast and driven by innovation and novel ways of overcoming obstacles.