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A Landscape Study on In-Service Teacher Professional Development (TPD) in India

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A collaborative initiative of

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Acknowledgements

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Credits

Contributors

Research and Report Writing: Akanksha Agarwal and Aditi Hegde (Sattva)
Primary Data Collection: Ajinkya Gondane, Divyansha Sachdeva, Vaishnavi Singh, Aditi Hegde, Akanksha Agarwal, Navya Teja (Sattva)
Report Design: Divyansha Sachdeva and Aditi Hegde (Sattva)
Expert Feedback: Sreeja (IEC), Anupama Dalmia, Sumana Dalmia (SSF)
Photo Credits: SSF, IEC, Sattva, GPF, Creatnet

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About Seekho Sikhao Foundation

Seekho Sikhao Foundation (SSF) is dedicated to transforming education and empowering communities in rural India by bridging education gaps and fostering holistic development in government schools. The organisation employs a systemic approach focused on three strategic pillars: Learning, Governance, and Fellowship. SSF's work involves redefining classroom learning processes, mobilising local government and community-based structures to address school needs, and empowering rural youth with leadership skills to drive improvements in local public education.

About India Education Collective

India Education Collective (IEC) is a national-level organisation working across eight states to make government schools the first choice for education in India. The Collective focuses on facilitating systemic change by shifting the learning paradigm from memorisation to the development of essential abilities. IEC's strategic approach involves strengthening education ecosystems through Peer-led Teacher Professional Learning Communities, promoting the Decentralisation of Education Governance, and utilising Assessment for Learning practices to improve classroom outcomes and student competencies.

Attribution

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Contact Information
For any inquiries or further information about this report, please contact:

Sattva Consulting
Email: impact@sattva.co.in
Website: https://www.sattva.co.in/

Seekho Sikhao Foundation (SSF)
Email: contact@seekhosikhao.org
Website: https://seekhosikhao.org/

List of Abbreviations

ADEPTS	Advancement of Educational Performance Through Teacher Supports
ARP	Academic Resource Person
BEO	Block Education Officer
BRC	Block Resource Centre
BRP	Block Resource Person
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
CRC	Cluster Resource Centre
CRP	Cluster Resource Person
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CTE	Colleges of Teacher Education
CoE	Centre of Excellence
DEO	District Education Officer
DIET	District Institute of Education and Training
DIKSHA	Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing
DPEP	District Primary Education Programme
DRT	District Resource Team
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FLN	Foundational Literacy and Numeracy
HM	Head Master
IASE	Institute of Advanced Study in Education
IEC	India Education Collective
KII	Key Informant Interviews
KP	Kendra Pramukh
KPALP	Kendra Pramukh Academic Leadership Programme
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEO	Mandal Education Officer
MGML	Multi Grade, Multi Level
MLE	Multi-lingual Education
MT	Master Trainer
NAS	National Achievement Survey
NCERT	National Council of Educational Research and Training
NCF	National Curriculum Framework
NCFTE	National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education
NEP	National Education Policy
NIPUN	National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy
NISHTHA	National Initiative for School Heads' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement
NMM	National Mission for Mentoring

List of Abbreviations

PLC	Professional Learning Community
RSCERT	Rajasthan State Council of Educational Research and Training
SCERT	State Council of Educational Research and Training
SEL	Social Emotional Learning
SIEMAT	State Institute of Educational Management and Training
SLO	Student Learning Outcomes
SRG	State Resource Group
SSA	Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan
TNA	Teacher Needs Analysis
TPD	Teacher Professional Development
TELOS	Targeted Enhancement of Learning Outcomes through Supportive Supervision

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Foreword

Redefining the Teacher's Role for a New Era

Education in India is navigating a transformative decade. The needs of our learners have fundamentally shifted, demanding a move away from passive knowledge absorption toward deep, critical learning and ability-building. This monumental shift is championed by visionary policy notably, the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 which mandates a focus on critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity.

To realise this vision, we must first look to the heart of the system: the teacher. The teacher's role is no longer that of an instructor, but a skilled facilitator, an architect who designs rich learning environments where student inquiry and discovery can naturally flourish. Globally, the mechanism for achieving this critical transformation is clear: Teacher Professional Development (TPD).

This comprehensive research report, commissioned by Seekho Sikhao, is our commitment to understanding this vital piece of the puzzle. It serves as an urgent, data-driven evaluation of the current TPD landscape across India. We not only highlight what is succeeding and the inspiring progress achieved, but also candidly pinpoint the systemic challenges and tremendous opportunities that lie ahead.

India stands at a pivotal demographic crossroads, possessing an unmatched potential to shape the global future. This report is more than just findings; it is a clear, actionable pathway detailing how we, as a nation, can align our TPD efforts powerfully to create an empowering environment for every child to realise who they are and what they want to be.

At Seekho Sikhao, we are committed to responsibly and effectively participating in the advancement of teacher professional development in this new era.

I strongly encourage all stakeholders, policymakers, educational leaders, and practitioners to engage deeply with these insights. Let us work together with urgency and conviction to transform education, ensuring that learning becomes a continuous, joyful way of life for every student and, crucially, for every teacher.

Anupama Dalmia
Founder, Seekho Sikhao Foundation

Executive Summary

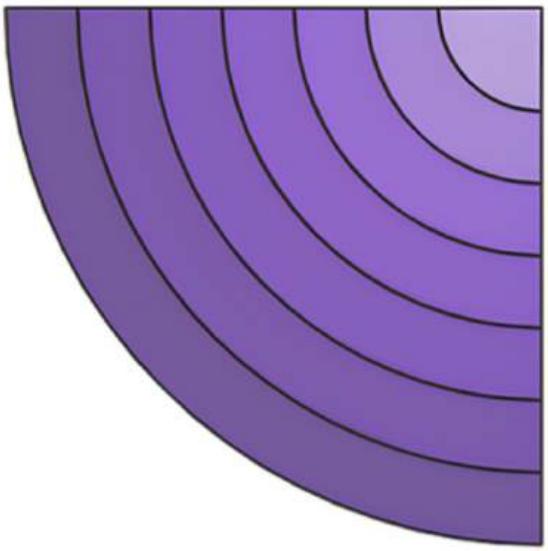
The Challenge

High-quality teacher professional development (TPD) can result in learning gains of **up to 21 percentile points** (Yoon et al., 2007), as evidenced by global research. Yet, in the context of India's primary public schools, current TPD initiatives struggle with relevance, sustainability, and impact despite decades of policy evolution and substantial public and private investment. While training design, content, and delivery have all improved over the last few decades, a lack of continuous support deprives teachers of the support they need to translate learning into practice. In particular, teachers need support in reconciling their training with the lived reality of India's primary education landscape, characterised by inadequate resources and infrastructure, as well as multigrade, multilevel (MGML) classrooms and single-teacher schools.

Research Approach

This landscape study employed a phased, mixed-methods approach across six states: **Rajasthan**, **Uttar Pradesh**, **Maharashtra**, **Andhra Pradesh**, **Jharkhand**, and **Meghalaya**. Through Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with 13 civil society organisations and stakeholders at state, district, and school levels, combined with teacher focus groups, the research examined TPD quality, relevance, and support mechanisms from policy design through classroom implementation.

Critical Findings



Barriers in Mindset

Context Matters

Gaps in Training Design & Facilitation

Untapped Power of Peer Learning

The Missing Mentoring Link

Fractured Feedback Loops

Unrealised DIET Potential

Figure i: *Critical findings from analysis*

A. Barriers in Mindset

There is a critical need for TPD to address deficit thinking prevalent among teachers, wherein the blame for low learning levels is externalised to a lack of parental support and children's learning abilities. TPD design must create safe spaces for teachers to critically examine their assumptions and reimagine their role. Moreover, ongoing opportunities for reflection are necessary to develop the skill of reflection amongst teachers.

B. Context Matters

Training content frequently reflects 'ideal' or urban classroom scenarios, rendering it irrelevant for teachers managing MGML classrooms, single-teacher schools (serving 3.3 million students), or linguistically diverse communities. Teachers value training when it provides immediately applicable and contextually grounded techniques. Programs which have focused on integrating local languages and community knowledge have been successful in improving learning environments.

C. Gaps in Training Design and Facilitation

Effective in-person, interactive training is crucial, consistently outperforming passive online modules. However, the quality and type of trainer are paramount, not just the training format itself. Currently, trainer selection is ad-hoc and largely subjective; selection is based on informal or formal observation, making standardisation infeasible. An informal selection process leads to a lack of defined qualities and capacities required for trainers at each level.

Further, specific types of trainers are needed at different administrative levels (cluster, block, district, and state) to ensure holistic and effective training delivery. It is imperative to clearly define these roles and required qualities. For example, trainers at the state and district levels require strong reflective capacities to guide overall training design, policy direction, and ensure integrated programmes connecting pedagogy, assessment, and subject knowledge. This is critical to move away from fragmented, standalone modules.

D. Untapped Power of Peer Learning

Teachers across all states identify peer learning as highly effective. They value non-hierarchical forums where they share contextual solutions, discuss challenges, and learn from each other's classroom experiences. Existing structures like monthly cluster meetings (Shikshak Sankul, School Complexes) offer potential spaces for learning, but are largely used for administrative dissemination. They need more focus on collaborative inquiry.

E. The Missing Mentoring Link

Training treated as 'one-off events' has limited sustained impact. Teachers explicitly demand ongoing, in-classroom mentoring to bridge the training-to-practice gap. Critically, the field support infrastructure already exists: roles of Block Resource Persons (BRPs) and Cluster Resource Persons (CRPs) were created for academic support. However, the role of academic support has been largely absent owing to inadequate resources, as well as competing priorities. BRPs and CRPs focus more on one-way communication, transmitting messages from the higher authorities to the teachers. Their current role of gathering monitoring data leads to hierarchical relationships and misses the need to provide on-ground support to teachers.

F. Fractured Feedback Loops

Current TPD evaluation focuses on summative metrics, rather than measuring what matters: change in teacher practices and student learning outcomes. Teacher Needs Analysis, where conducted, remains largely focused on teachers' knowledge rather than needs. Teacher feedback is treated as formality rather than driving iterative design. As a result, the system cannot definitively link TPD interventions to student learning improvements, leaving the ultimate impact unknown.

G. Unrealised DIET Potential

District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs) occupy the critical space between state policy and school implementation, possessing deep contextual knowledge of local realities. However, they function primarily as implementers of centrally developed training schedules rather than as programmatic co-designers. Where DIETs are empowered and adequately staffed, as in Parbhani's data-driven mentoring system or Ramgarh's action research, transformative results emerge. Yet, the National Education Policy, 2020's vision of DIETs as "Centres of Excellence" remains largely unrealised due to vacancies, inadequate funding, and limited autonomy.

Six Strategic Pathways for Transformation

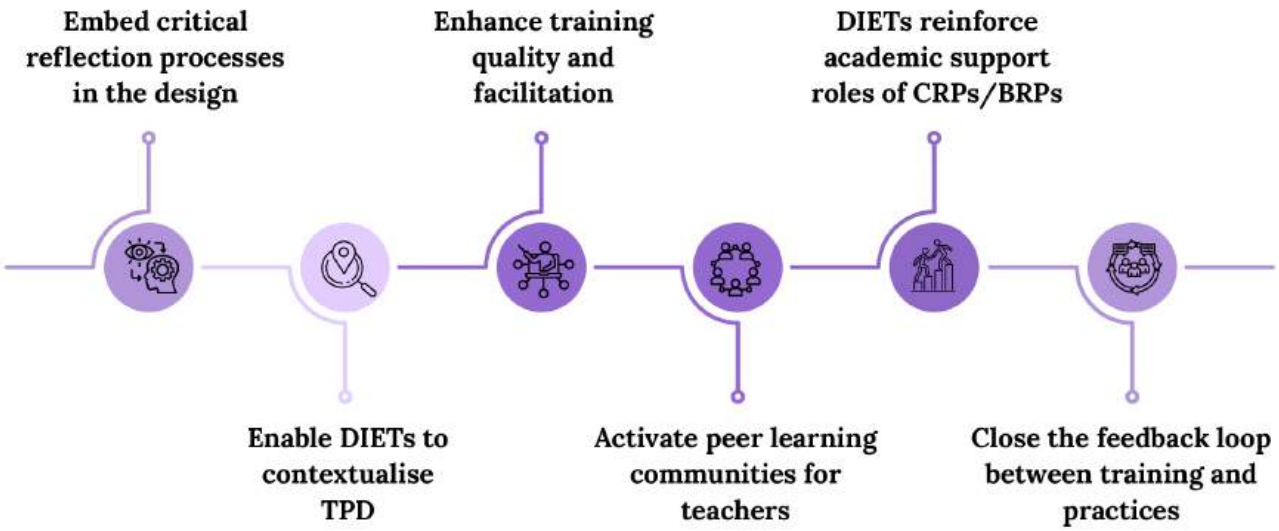


Figure ii: *Strategic pathways for transformation*

A. Embed critical reflection processes in the design

Reorient TPD to include structured sessions where teachers examine their own beliefs about student ability, parental roles, and social hierarchies that affect learning. Through the training processes, teachers should get opportunities to understand how they can ground learning content in students' lived experiences. Develop state master trainers capable of leading reflective and dialogic processes.

B. Enable DIETs to contextualise TPD

Formally redefine DIET roles from implementers of state-developed TPD processes to co-designers with autonomy to adapt state frameworks to local needs. Fill critical vacancies with permanent, qualified staff. Fund district-led action research and ongoing research based on feedback received from teachers. Involve teachers in the research and local content creation, particularly for Multi Grade Multi Level facilitation and Multi lingual education.

C. Enhance training quality and facilitation

Create a permanent, certified Master Trainer cadre through State Councils of Educational Research and Training (SCERTs). Presently, the curriculum, pedagogy and assessment are disconnected with each other, competing for both priority and resources in the public schools systems. TPD programmes that are designed to harmonise these three aspects — ensuring they are promoting, implementing and measuring the same things — will ensure a more integrated training delivery ecosystem. Replace prescriptive guides with flexible frameworks granting teachers professional autonomy to contextualise lessons.

D. Activate peer learning communities for teachers

Transform existing cluster meeting structures into teacher-led Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). Allocate formal time for collaborative inquiry, provide mentoring/coaching training for cluster resource persons, and create state-level knowledge networks linking peer communities across districts. Teachers themselves facilitating this is ideal and appreciated at the ground-level; it supports ownership and participation.

E. DIETs reinforce academic support roles of CRPs/BRPs

Clearly define academic mentoring functions for CRPs/BRPs, in addition to and separate from the administrative monitoring functions they currently perform. Provide the specialised training in facilitation, coaching, and adult learning for CRPs/BRPs to undertake this function. Engage with models of support systems (helplines, digital platforms); they should be built to complement in-person visits, transforming inspectors into facilitators.

F. Close the feedback loop between training and practices

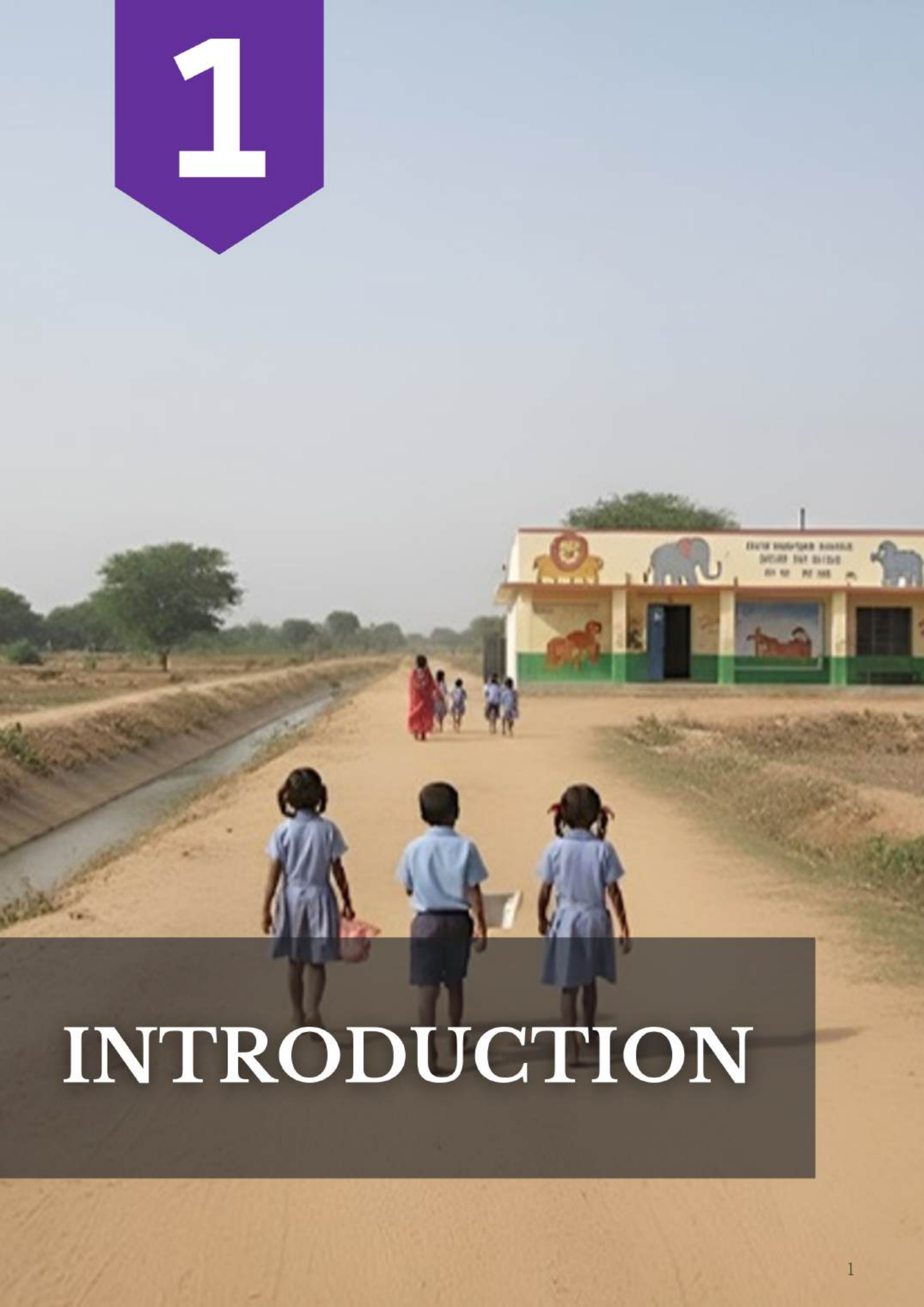
Design comprehensive Teacher Needs Analyses capturing classroom challenges and student learning data, not just subject knowledge. Monitor quality dilution in cascade training models. Pilot methodologies linking TPD interventions to student learning outcomes through better cohort tracking. Critically, transparently communicate how teacher and DIET feedback shapes TPD redesign.

The Path Forward

Bridging India's TPD implementation gap requires a systemic shift across mental models, relationships and processes. Several of the insights and recommendations emerging from this study are not new; they confirm and reiterate ideas, concepts and directions that Indian policies have reflected for decades. The most important of these visions is that of empowered and professionalised institutions to support continuous and high-quality teacher professional development. The infrastructure to do this already exists — DIETs, CRPs/BRPs, cluster meetings — but need to be reimagined to create space for contextualisation and reflection.

Sustainable change, as envisioned by this report, can emerge through continuous support, collaborative inquiry, and critical reflection, not from external training interventions alone. By empowering middle-tier institutions, closing feedback loops, and honouring teacher agency, India can fulfil the NEP's promise: translating the proven potential of high-quality TPD into measurable improvements in classroom practice and student learning outcomes at scale.

1



INTRODUCTION

“The progress of any society depends on the progress of education in that society.”

– Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

1. Introduction

India achieved near-universal physical access to primary schooling — with a government school within 1 kilometre of almost every habitation — by the end of 1990s. Staffing this vast network created one of the largest public teaching workforces in the world, with teachers present across the breadth and depth of the country. Yet scale has come with a persistent challenge: ensuring that this workforce is well-trained and consistently effective. This matters enormously: research shows that effective primary school teachers not only improve learning outcomes but shape students' future incomes, college prospects, and social-emotional well-being (Chetty et al., 2011).

This report examines how primary school teachers can be better supported to improve their practice and create quality, equitable learning environments for all students. Research points to a significant and persistent gap between training and its meaningful implementation in the classroom. TPD initiatives often struggle with relevance — failing to account for the contextual realities teachers face, from multigrade and diverse classrooms to constraints on time and infrastructure. And even relevant content will not change practice without continuous, localised mentoring to help teachers integrate new skills into their teaching.

TPD is the system of structured, intentional learning opportunities designed to enhance educator knowledge and improve instructional practice. While definitions vary, they converge on four consistent themes:


TPD consists of planned activities;


The core purpose is to enhance teacher knowledge and skills;


It is a continuous, lifelong process; and


Its ultimate goal is a tangible impact on student learning outcomes.

(Borko, 2004; Desimone, 2009)

The stakes are high — but so is the evidence for what works. Research consistently identifies high-quality TPD as one of the most significant drivers of student learning. Landmark syntheses by Hattie (2008) and Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) demonstrate that well-designed professional development produces measurable gains in classroom practice and student outcomes. The effect sizes are meaningful: students whose teachers receive sustained, high-quality TPD can achieve learning gains of up to 21 percentile points (Yoon et al., 2007). This impact operates through a well-established causal chain: effective TPD develops teachers' knowledge, which leads to demonstrable changes in their classroom practice, and ultimately results in improved student learning (Desimone, 2009).

A. Policy and Practice: A Historical View

Teacher education policies in India have been characterised by a vision for decentralised support. However, realising this vision on the ground has remained a challenge — shaped by resource constraints and institutional cultures that have tended to favour hierarchy and control over professional autonomy and knowledge

A.1. A Persistent Vision for Decentralised Support

From the 1960s, policy has recognised that TPD must be delivered locally (Singh et al., 2019). The Kothari Commission (1964-66) first proposed 'School Complexes' to organise in-service training locally. This vision was significantly expanded by the National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986, which created a decentralised institutional architecture (Mize, 2025). This included District Institutes for Education and Training (DIETs) for elementary teachers and Institutes of Advanced Study in Education (IASEs) for secondary teachers (Singh & Senapati, 2022).

This decentralised model was first operationalised at scale by the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) in the mid-1990s, which created the sub-district Block Resource Centres (BRCs) and Cluster Resource Centres (CRCs) to move training and academic support closer to the school (Singh & Gupta, 2021). The BRC and CRC framework was then adopted and scaled nationwide by the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) in 2000-01.

A.2. Gaps in Implementation

The linkages between DIET and BRC/CRC have remained weak since DPEP, as the latter were working with District Education Officers and State Project Directors. This gap has further widened and has resulted in the lack of academic guidance for BRC and CRC cadres.

These institutions have often been hampered by a lack of adequately staffed faculty, insufficient resources, and a reliance on a 'cascading' model where training content was diluted at each level. Critically, BRC and CRC coordinators are frequently diverted from their primary academic support role by overwhelming administrative burdens.

A.3. The Move from 'Ad-hoc' to 'Continuous'

For decades, in-service training remained a series of ad-hoc, short-duration workshops, often disconnected from the daily classroom realities of teachers. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) institutionalised this event-based model by mandating up to **20 days** of annual in-service training (Singh & Senapati, 2022).

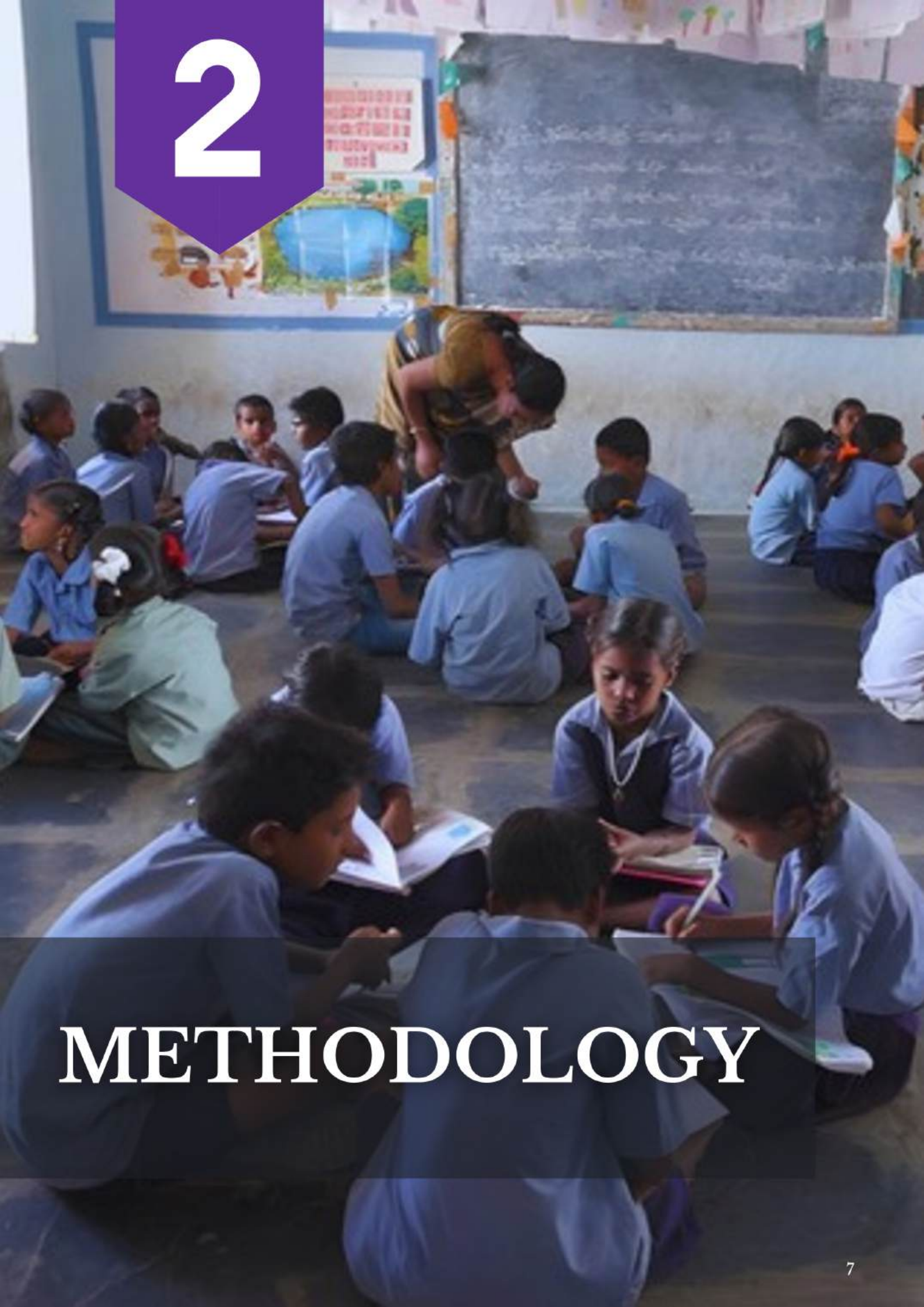
A significant pedagogical reorientation came with the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2005, which repositioned the teacher as a **facilitator** and demanded a shift to more experiential and reflective practices (Singh et al., 2019). This was conceptually solidified by the National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE), 2009, the first policy to explicitly use the term 'Continuous Professional Development' (CPD). However, this framework was later criticised for failing to outline a truly continuous system.

A.4. The Current Mandate: Bridging the Gap

NEP 2020 seeks to resolve the need for continuous training for teachers. It redefines teacher development by mandating 50 hours of annual CPD and formalising a self-directed model where educators can choose activities based on their own needs, from online modules on platforms like DIKSHA to school-based workshops and peer-learning (Singh & Senapati, 2022). This vision is operationally supported by the Samagra Shiksha and the National Mission for Mentoring (NMM) (NCTE, 2025).

> Yet a significant gap persists between policy vision and ground-level implementation — rooted in weak institutional capacity and the inability to provide teachers with continuous, contextually relevant support.

This report draws on primary research across six states — engaging teachers, DIETs, SCERTs, local administrators, and NGOs — to examine what makes teacher professional development effective or ineffective in India. It interrogates the quality, relevance, and support structures that shape whether TPD translates into meaningful classroom practice. The findings offer a concrete pathway toward realising NEP's vision of a strengthened teaching workforce and improved learning outcomes for all students.



2

METHODOLOGY

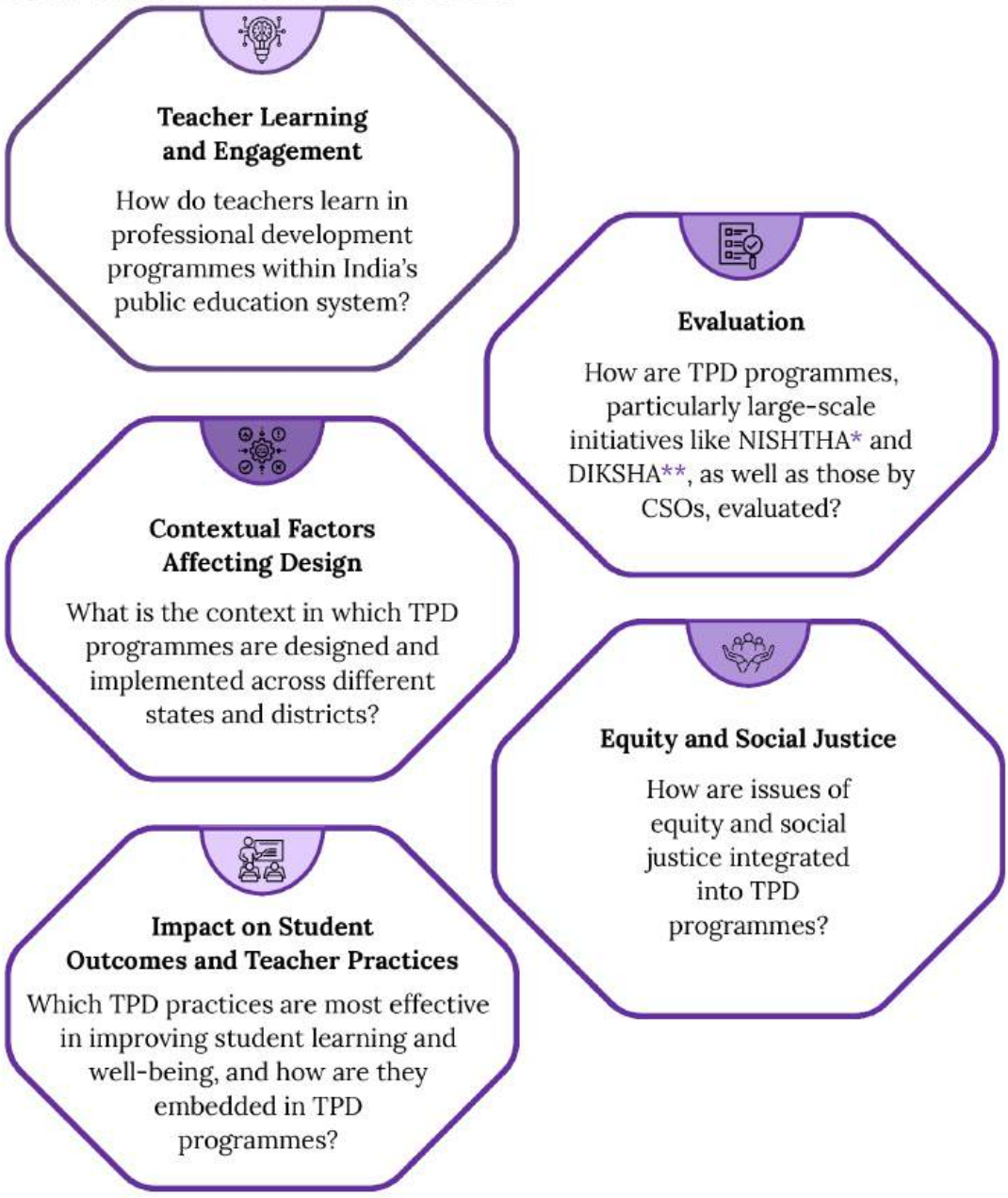
"Education is the path to liberation and empowerment."

- Savitribai Phule

2. Methodology

This landscape study employed a phased, qualitative approach to understanding the state of TPD in India. Rather than cataloguing problems alone, the methodology was designed to surface what works — drawing on contextual, ground-level perspectives and anchored in a consistent focus on classroom practice and student learning.

A. Research Framework



Note:
*NISHTHA = *National Initiative for School Heads' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement*
**DIKSHA = *Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing*

Figure 2.1: *Focus areas under the research framework*

B. Phased Research Approach

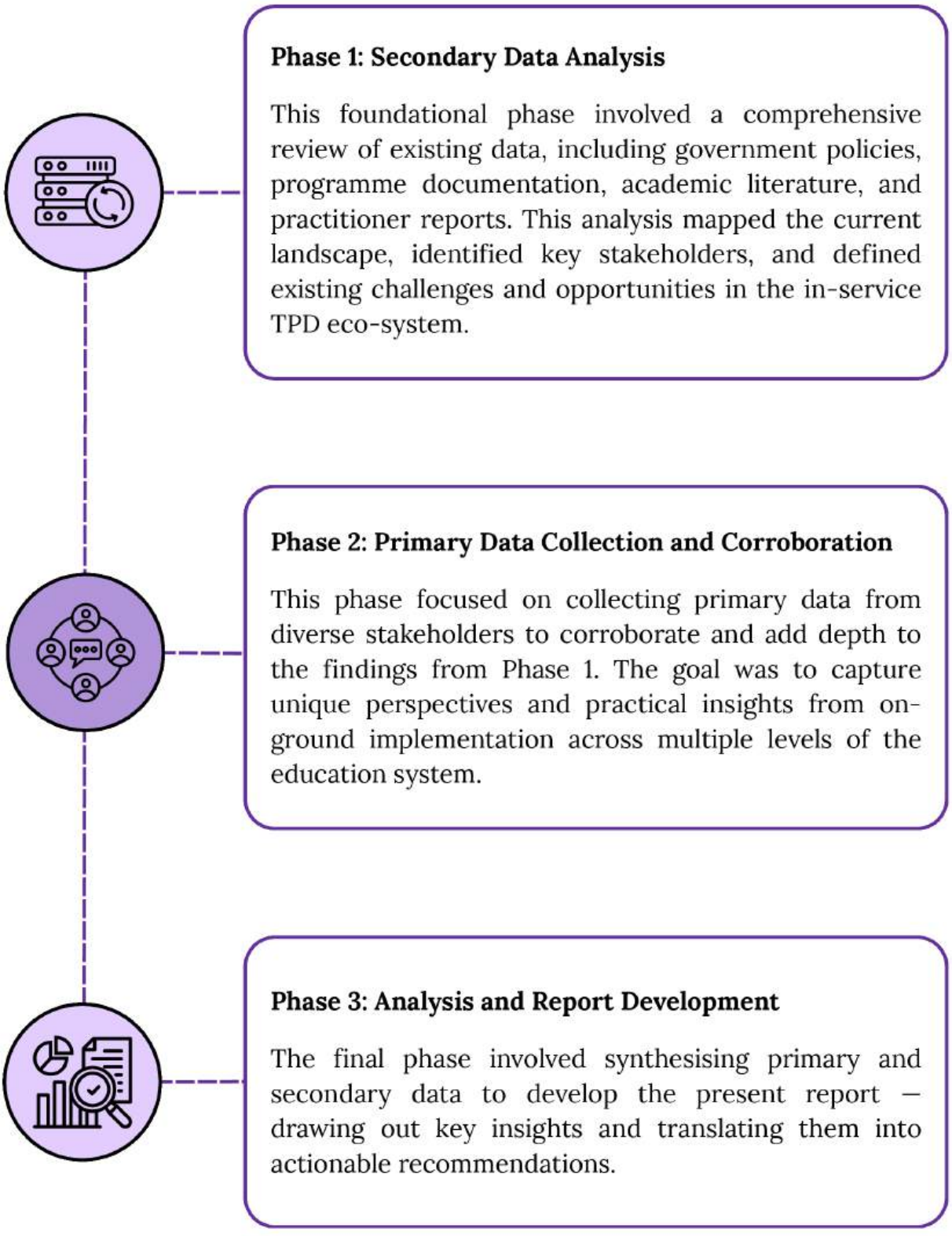


Figure 2.2: *Three phases of the research*

C. Sampling and Data Collection

A purposive sampling strategy was adopted to ensure the data collected was rich, relevant, and grounded in successful practice. This strategy was applied to the selection of geographic regions and multiple levels of expert stakeholders.

C.1. Geographic Scope

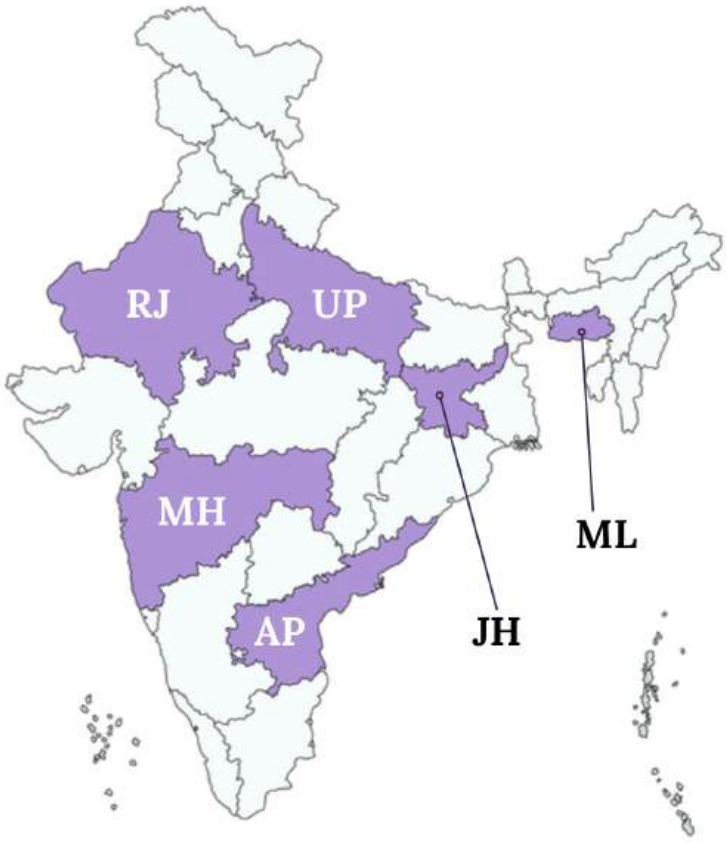


Figure 2.3: *Geographic sample consisting of Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Meghalaya, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh*

Six states were selected purposively for primary research based on two key criteria:

- Representation of diverse geographic and socio-political regions.
- Demonstrated successful TPD initiatives at scale.

Within each of these six states, the research team conducted site visits in **2-3 districts**, covering DIETs, and teachers within **2-6 schools** per state to gather localised and context-specific data.

C.2. Stakeholder Sampling and Data Collection Tools

Data collection involved a multi-pronged approach to capture diverse perspectives from civil society, state-level institutions, and school-based actors.

	Local Context	**Planning for Scale**
Policy and Design	DIET members *KIIs* and FGDs***	SCERT members KIIs
On-ground Experience	Teachers *KIIs and FGDs*	Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) KIIs

Note:
*KII = *Key Informant Interview*
**FGD = *Focus Group Discussion*

Table 2.1: *Stakeholder sample and data collection tools used*

This multi-level approach ensured that the study captured the TPD landscape from the policy design (SCERT), implementation (DIET, CSOs), and end-user (teacher) perspectives.

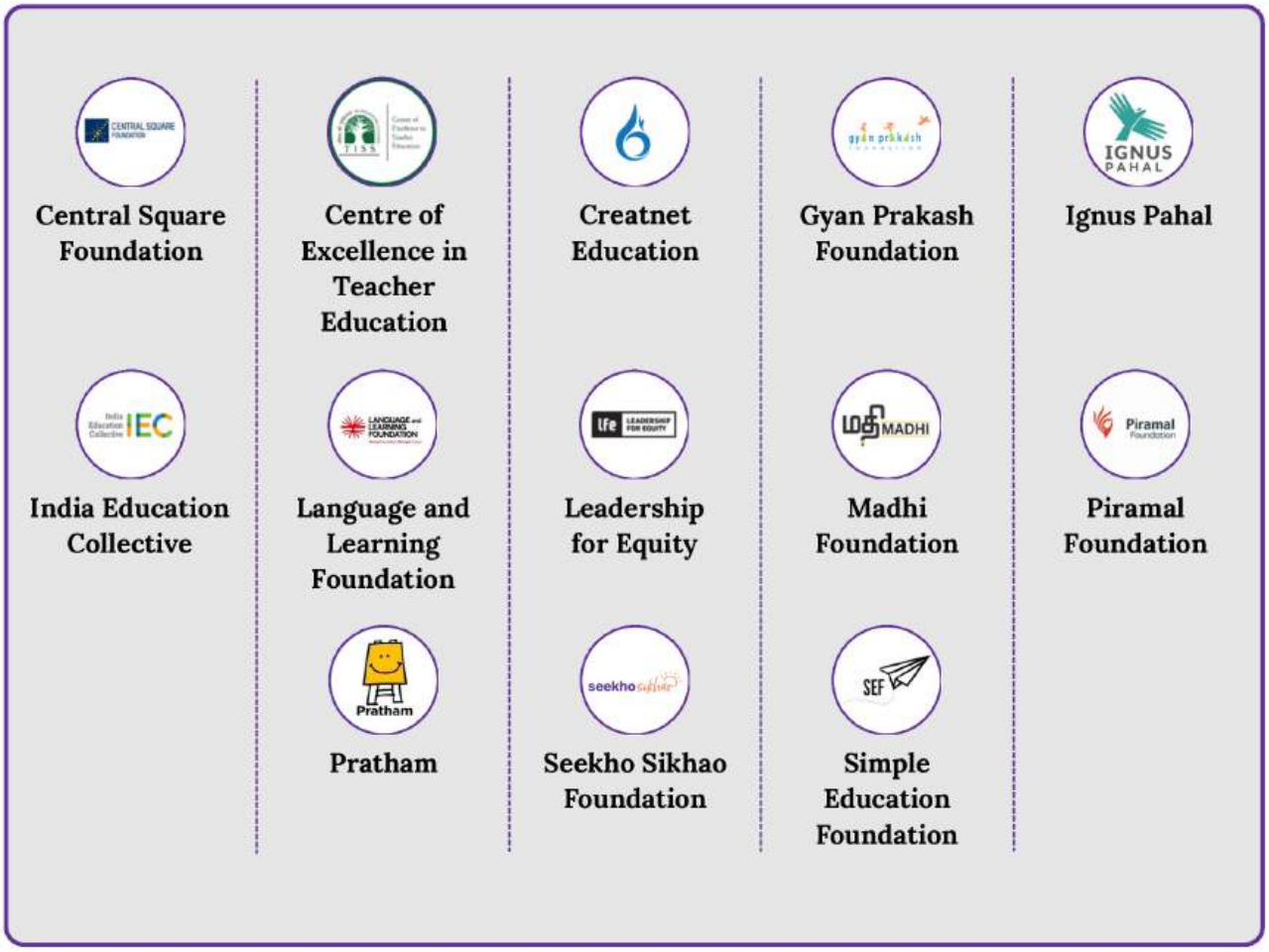


Table 2.2: *CSOs participating in this research*

D. Data Analysis

Data from both secondary analysis and primary interviews/FGDs was synthesised using thematic analysis approach. Insights were coded and organised according to the five pillars of the research framework using **Delve** software. This method allowed for the triangulation of key findings across different data sources and the mapping of unique perspectives, ensuring that generalised findings are clearly and accurately represented in the final report.

3

ANALYSIS

“Literacy in itself is no education. Literacy is not the end of education or even the beginning. By education, I mean an all-round drawing out of the best in the child and body, mind, and spirit.”

– Mahatma Gandhi

3. Analysis

This chapter presents a comprehensive analysis synthesising findings from both a secondary literature review and primary qualitative data collected from the field. The primary data was examined using thematic analysis, which revealed seven key, interconnected themes. These themes form the structure of our analysis, beginning with the internal and external challenges teachers face, moving to the interventions designed to support them, and concluding with the systemic structures that govern the TPD ecosystem. The seven themes, in order of discussion, are:

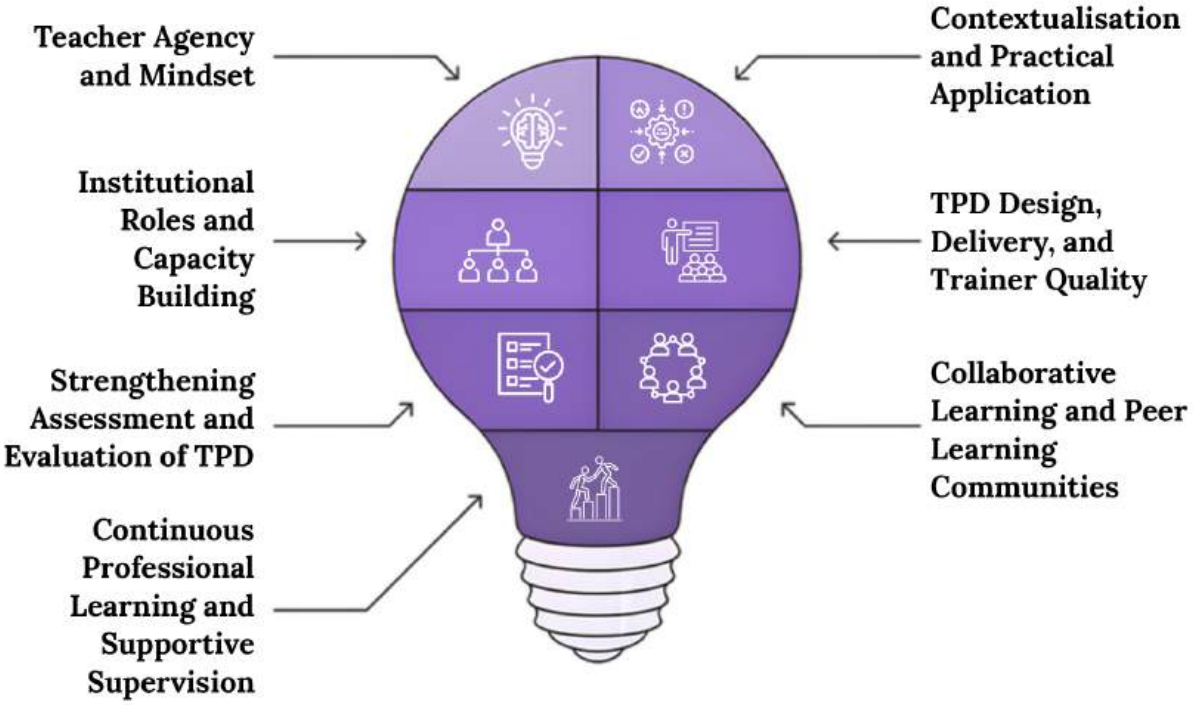


Figure 3.1: *Key emerging themes from analysis*

A. Teacher Agency and Mindset

Across states, the NISHTHA programme was cited as being effective specifically because it focused on shifting perspectives; it was designed to go beyond content delivery and actively engage with teachers' attitudes and expectations. Most current TPD programmes are designed to focus on skill development and strengthening teachers' knowledge base about learning techniques and activities for improving student learning. This leaves little space for teachers to reflect on their existing beliefs and perspectives. Across states, the analysis found that without serious engagement with teachers' beliefs and perspectives, it is challenging to bring a shift in teaching practices, as a majority of teachers tend to blame learning gaps on external issues such as demotivating work environments, a lack of parental support, and children's learning abilities.

A.1. Teachers' Perception of External Factors Affecting Teaching

Many teachers blamed the lack of parental engagement as the primary reason for the gap in learning levels in public schools. One of them shared, *"The reason for weak foundational education is something else entirely. But in the training, we are only taught how to develop the children. The real reason is something only we can tell you. Because the environment the children come from is not at all conducive to studying. Very few guardians in that environment are educated or understand the importance of education..."* Responses from teachers were similar across the six states, with them citing the lack of parental support as the primary reason for children's learning gaps. This highlights that teachers tend to form associations between children's learning abilities and their home environment. As one teacher in Andhra Pradesh shared, *"Not all children are at the same IQ or knowledge level. Some students perform well, while others struggle due to various reasons such as family circumstances or limited time to focus on studies after returning home."*

While the learning environment at home can be a struggle, redesigning learning processes in classrooms can address this challenge.

> *"We simply ask the children to do, write this, do this, write this, do this two times, three times. There is no meaning in it. So, teachers should be sensitised on how to design meaningful home tasks – teachers must contextualise content and be sensitive to student needs."*
>
> **– DIET lecturer, Andhra Pradesh**

Similarly, teachers who work in multi-grade classrooms feel demotivated as they strongly hold on to their expectation that learning can be facilitated in single-grade classrooms where most of the students are at similar learning levels. As a result, even when teachers are introduced to learning processes for MGML classrooms, there is a lot of inertia within teachers to put them into practice. A teacher from Jharkhand shared, *"They say that you can take combined classes. But it's not possible in reality; the teacher can't manage it. It's just not possible."*

A.2. Teachers as Reflective Practitioners

National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE) 2009 called out the need for creating reflective practitioners in education. SCERT and DIET officials recommend this as well, one of them shared, *"I have understood that first we need to focus on mindset shift and then focus on other things. Through training, we need to build the willingness to learn in teachers."* The analysis from the primary data highlights the need for exposure for teachers to experience learning environments wherein they can reflect on their beliefs, perspectives and existing knowledge and practices.

Reflection requires emotionally safe spaces and regular opportunities to develop the skill of reflection. And peer learning circles amongst teachers emerged in the research as an opportunity where teachers feel safe to discuss and reflect on their challenges. However, facilitators need training to create reflective experiences for teachers, and currently, that remains a challenge, as discussed further in Theme 3. DIET principals recommended the need for exposure visits for teachers to observe best practices in classrooms across their block, district, and state to enable reflection on their existing practices.

> *"Exposure is very important. At the school complex level, it is possible. At the mandal level, it is possible. At the district level, it is possible. At the state level, it is also possible. We must identify certain teachers with the help of field-level officers like DIET lecturers, MEOs, and other officers. We should give them a pat on the back and provide the opportunity for other teachers to visit such schools."*
>
> **– DIET Principal, Andhra Pradesh**

This points to the need for TPD programmes to treat teachers as thinking, reflective professionals — whose values, beliefs, and perspectives shape how they engage with training and what they carry into the classroom. When professional development focuses on skill-building in isolation from this context, it tends to meet resistance, with little meaningful change in practice as a result.

Furthermore, the research found that teachers feel a bit curtailed in trying to contextualise the textbook curriculum to the needs of their students. In the focus group discussions with teachers, it was mentioned, *"The support we need is to have a bit more freedom in strengthening and utilising our skills, rather than everything being done in an online or rigid 'mission mode' format. At present, the focus is often on quantifying how much data we fill or how many training sessions we attend, rather than on how effectively we are implementing what we have learned at the school level. More emphasis on practical application and real classroom impact would be far more useful for teachers."* This comment reflects that teachers are seeking a balance between autonomy and accountability; they want to be held accountable for their practices and processes rather than only quantitative outcomes, which neglects their efforts.

B. Contextualisation and Practical Application

B.1. Challenges in Contextualising TPD for MGML Classrooms

A significant barrier to effective TPD is the pronounced disconnect between training content and the contextual realities of the classrooms. Teachers consistently reported that they value TPD when it provides practical techniques, demonstrations, and tools that can be immediately implemented. Conversely, training that relies on 'ideal classroom scenarios' or urban contexts is often disregarded by teachers who find it unrelatable.

> *"...the designing of the books is flawed because you can't design the coursework for a village child based on a city child while sitting in a city. You absolutely cannot. You should design the syllabus, design the curriculum, according to the rural environment (where most of India's children live and learn)."*
>
> **– Teacher, Uttar Pradesh**

This highlights a critical barrier, as the relevance of the training is dependent on it being contextual. This disconnect is most evident in the context of MGML classrooms. Many teachers hold strong beliefs and perspectives that effective learning is only possible with separate teachers for each grade. This mindset, detailed earlier in Theme 1, is unfortunately reinforced by official teacher guides and training materials that reinforce separate grade-wise learning as normative and do not emphasise the strengths of MGML settings by highlighting practice-oriented MGML classroom scenarios.

Parallelly, even when TPD modules on MGML are offered, teachers frequently find the methods "impossible to implement" given their actual class sizes, number of students, and other disturbances. As one teacher in Jharkhand shared, *"In a combined class, if I teach only one set of children, then the other children will not remain engaged and will create disruptions. That's why it's very difficult to teach in a multi-grade classroom. We say that you need to provide grade-wise and subject-wise teachers; only then can all this be possible. They only tell us the programme – do this, do that, they give plans. They make us create plans. But to execute it, there should be a helping hand."*

India has **1,04,125 single-teacher schools**, catering to nearly **33,76,769 students**; spread across various grades. By approximation, an average of 34 students are enrolled in such schools. However, this number might be much higher or lower in some instances. (*UDISE Report 2024-25*)

B.2. Integrating Local Context and Language in TPD

The integration of contextual understanding enables TPD to be effective and eases its adoption by teachers. Furthermore, the study found that a focus on local languages within TPD is important. DIET faculty and teachers shared positive experiences of TPD wherein teachers were given resources to learn children's mother tongue (e.g., Mundari or Nagpuri), and they participated in modules on local community culture, history, and socio-economic backgrounds. Teachers' increased understanding of cultural context has led to improved relationships between students and teachers, and parents and teachers.

To this end, the Rajasthan State Council of Educational Research and Training (RSCERT) has piloted a project on Multi-lingual Education (MLE) in two tribal-dominated districts in the state. They have developed a 'shabdkosh' (dictionary) to help teachers use common words from tribal languages in early grades to help children feel comfortable in classrooms and express themselves more freely. They have also collected folk tales, poetry, and other cultural resources from the communities and integrated them into early-grade learning resources. RSCERT is conducting an impact study to understand the effectiveness of this intervention. In early observations, they have noticed that teachers have been able to develop stronger relationships with students.

In other states as well, both teachers and DIET faculty observed that children connect significantly better with academic content when it is delivered in their local language.

> *"...the children here had some local language terms, for instance, for 'haste', they would say 'arbaran'. The teacher wouldn't even understand. They wouldn't get what the child was saying. And for a tree, they would call it 'girwa'. So, there were many such local terms that were causing problems for the teachers. Then the teachers learned those things from the community members, asking what this means, what the child is saying. After that, a bond started to form between them, and now the children are learning in a better way."*
>
> **– DIET, Uttar Pradesh**

This highlights the critical role of content contextualisation that can be undertaken by DIETs and other ground-level institutions like Block and Cluster Resource Centres (this is further explored in Theme 7). Alongside this institutional support, peer learning communities, both online and offline, provide a parallel path. These forums offer teachers the opportunity to collaboratively adapt strategies to their unique local contexts. As teachers in Andhra Pradesh shared, *"These sessions are highly effective because they allow teachers to exchange ideas, learn from senior colleagues, and openly clarify doubts related to teaching methods or subject knowledge. They create a supportive environment where teachers can interact freely and share best practices."* This finding is reinforced by the success of programmes like Foundational Literacy and Numeracy, Multilingual Education, and Social Emotional Learning, which have all demonstrated measurable improvements in student-teacher relationships as they are designed to integrate students' lived experiences.

C. TPD Design, Delivery, and Trainer Quality

C.1. Evaluating the Effectiveness of Various TPD Formats

The design and facilitation of the TPD programme significantly influence its efficacy. The study found that in-person, offline training is consistently preferred by teachers as it facilitates interactive, activity-based learning, peer discussion, and immediate skill practice. However, in contrast, residential training received mixed feedback; while some male teachers find it effective, female teachers often do not, citing inadequate accommodation, safety concerns, and the inability to attend to family responsibilities.

Online learning is seen as a useful tool for distributing content and tracking mandatory completion, with high completion rates (97-98% in Jharkhand) achieved when modules are non-skippable and include mandated assessments. However, its utility for deep learning is questioned, as teachers report working on other tasks and being distracted during training where interaction is limited. In fact, both online and offline formats are only effective when they include two-way communication and interaction.

C.2. Teachers' Demand for Subject-Specific and Digital Literacy Training

The content of the training is equally critical. While current programmes are often planned around Foundational Literacy and Numeracy themes, teachers express a strong desire to go deeper into understanding their subjects and to focus on the holistic development of their students; this was seen in their appreciation of Social Emotional Learning-related training in Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. With respect to subject-specific training, teachers held strong, favourable views with most seeing it as an integral part of their professional development. This demand was driven by multiple factors including personal interest and perceived value of such training.

Furthermore, teachers report a lack of connection and consistency between different trainings focused on textbooks, pedagogy, and assessment. TPD programmes must be designed to see these aspects in an interconnected manner, rather than as isolated modules.

Beyond this, teachers also demand digital literacy training that goes beyond basic data entry to include tools like Excel, Word, and educational apps. There is recognition of this need at the state level.

The State Institute of Educational Management and Training (SIEMAT) team in Andhra Pradesh shared, *"There is a very big gap on usage of digital tools. Only 10% teachers are capable of using digital tools. More training is needed on use of digital tools for learning. In-person training is needed to educate on digital training. And this is needed on large scale."* According to the Unified District Information System for Education (UDISE) data, only 33% of male teachers and 42% of female teachers have been trained and are teaching using digital tools (computers). This resonated with DIET officials in Jharkhand as well who said, *"When we gave the training on using Google Sheets, teachers felt that this is a new thing, their work will become much easier. They learned it very well. In fact, many people called and asked, 'Sir, how will this be done?' When they were working, then they asked. So, they said this is very good, we can open the data on our mobile anytime and see it, get information. They liked it a lot and they worked on it."*

Even scheduling of training is a critical design factor; training that is held during periods of low workload, such as April or May, maximises participation and minimises classroom disruption. Further, planning training during periods of low attendance in classrooms due to local festivals could lead to better utilisation of teachers' time.

C.3. The Critical Role of Trainer Quality in TPD

The quality of the trainer is the most crucial factor in determining teacher learning outcomes. While some states select Master Trainers through an application process, others rely on nomination and selection based on observation.

> *"Another important aspect is the selection of facilitators. Their experience and background play a key role in how effectively they can connect with participants... We believe this needs to be monitored more closely to ensure that workshops are more interactive and impactful."*
>
> **– Teacher FGD, Andhra Pradesh**

Furthermore, since some master trainers are selected from within the teacher pool, it leads to a significant loss of teaching time, creating a new problem: hesitancy to participate among dedicated teachers. Teachers in Uttar Pradesh stated, *"The thing is, some teachers don't even want to go. They want to stay in their own school because we don't want to leave our school. That's why they pick a few selected people and mostly send them. "*

There is consensus among DIET members and teachers, across states, on what constitutes a high-quality trainer. Effective trainers must possess deep subject knowledge, an understanding of interactive methodologies, and the crucial skills of empathy, relatability (using simple language and local examples) and patience. Invariably, as reported by multiple state officials, finding resource persons who meet these high standards is a consistent challenge.

D. Collaborative Learning and Peer Learning Communities

D.1. Support for Peer Learning Processes

Across teachers, SCERT, and DIET lecturers, peer learning was consistently identified as one of the most valued forms of TPD. Its strength, they noted, lies in two qualities: the exchange of knowledge rooted in real classroom experience, and the non-hierarchical nature of peer communities — which creates the conditions for more open, reciprocal learning. This makes teachers more receptive to learning. By sharing both challenges and best practices, teachers exchange effective, context-specific solutions that are immediately relevant, such as how to teach a difficult alphabet. *"We all put forth our own points. For instance, I said I can't teach a child to write 'kha' for khargosh because it's a slightly complex letter. So I said, how do I teach this? So two teachers, from among us, are on the board... like the four of us are sitting, so this ma'am might say, 'Here ma'am, I'll show you, this is how I teach my child.' So she explained it to me on the board, 'Ma'am, do it like this, first do this, then this... the whole thing...' So then I applied that thing there with my children."*

It came across from teachers' reflections that they must interact and feel heard while they are in a learning process. They reported being more open when the facilitator is a peer who understands their reality, as one teacher shared, *"The trainers who came to teach in the training were just like us... So they would teach, and we would also share our own experiences... so we ourselves would get up and tell them that I taught my child to write 'ka' like this... I found that training to be the best."*

The format of these interactions matters. Facilitated discussions are valued, and learning programs that bring together teachers from different blocks or clusters can be particularly effective, as they help break down internal hierarchies or hesitancy to ask questions.

D.2. Existing Structures for Institutionalising Peer Learning

In the current TPD processes across the six states, opportunities to facilitate peer learning communities amongst teachers exist through the following structures/processes.

Local Name	Level	State	Responsible Officers
Shikshan Parishad	Cluster	Maharashtra	SCERT, DIET and Kendra Pramukh
Shikshak Sankul	Cluster	Uttar Pradesh	SCERT, Academic Resource Person and DIET, SCERT
School Complex Meeting	School Complex	Andhra Pradesh	SCERT, DIET and School Complex HM
Guru Goshti	Block	Jharkhand	Block Education Officer
Block-level HM Meeting	Block	Rajasthan	Block Resource Coordinator
Cluster Academic Meeting	Cluster	Meghalaya	Cluster Resource Coordinator

***Table 3.1**: Existing institutional structures for monthly meetings*

The monthly cluster academic meetings have been recommended in the national education policies since 1968. However, their implementation on ground has varied across the country, invariably impacted by the design of the national and state-level reform initiatives in education over the last four decades. However, dilution of the BRP/CRP roles and poor quality of facilitation at these meetings are important factors. This has been discussed further in Theme 5.

D.3. Potential Versus Current Focus of Cluster/School Complex Meetings

Under the National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy (NIPUN) and Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) initiatives across different states, there has been a renewed focus on the platform of cluster/school complex/block to bring together teachers for TPD processes. However, due to an array of factors, the platform is currently being used for one-way dissemination of administrative information and centralised academic plans. This approach leads to teacher disengagement and misses the critical opportunity for collective problem-solving and lesson planning. Teachers and DIET staff alike recommend that the duration of these meetings be increased from half a day to a full day to allow for meaningful discussion amongst teachers.

There are alternative approaches for utilising the cluster meetings for learning and governance purposes as well. In Parbhani district in Maharashtra, DIET principal and Kendra Pramukhs (CRPs) work together to effectively use these meetings for enabling peer learning and collective problem solving amongst teachers.

> *"The main role of DIET is to provide training based on need. If a school is lagging, we analyse why. When we visit the school, or through the data we receive, for instance, we have 200 school visits per day. We have 1,150 schools. We have 66 cluster heads, about 100 resource persons, and other extension officers, making a total of 200 people. So, we have a system where each person has adopted seven or eight schools. This allows for frequent follow-ups. If we find deficiencies when we talk to students, we identify why the required development hasn't happened. We then take up that issue in our Shikshan Parishad."*
>
> **– DIET official**

The remarkable ownership of DIET and Kendra Pramukh in this process is the result of their ability to identify local issues and make decisions towards resolving them. This contrasts sharply with some states where centralised agendas, often planned by SCERT or CSOs, are disseminated through these meetings, which might be leading to the disengagement and disempowerment of DIETs, CRPs, and teachers.

E. Continuous Professional Learning and Supportive Supervision

E.1. Need for Continuous Mentoring and Support

In the current TPD ecosystem, even though mentoring processes have been initiated, there is still a lack of structured follow-up process after teachers have attended training sessions. This causes training to be perceived as a "one-off" event rather than a continuous process. This is a critical gap, as teachers explicitly identify ongoing mentoring and coaching as a necessity to translate abstract concepts into actual classroom practice.

Where this supportive infrastructure exists, the results are clear. In regions like Parbhani, teachers report being far more confident in their abilities and appreciate the feedback they receive from a data-driven, supportive supervision system. Alternative models, such as the helpline centres in Andhra Pradesh and Kerala, provide a hybrid of on-demand support and structured, in-person classroom visits for 1:1 feedback.

Teachers' desire for support extends beyond formal programmes. While supportive leadership from Headmasters (HMs) who discuss training takeaways positively influences implementation, teachers express a profound need for open, non-hierarchical communication with all monitoring staff. They want to be able to ask for help without fear and receive specific, actionable answers.

> *"If a mentor is coming, an ARP is coming, a BEO ma'am is coming, or a DIET mentor is coming, we should feel that when they come, we should have enough questions to ask them, 'Ma'am, we are stuck here', 'Sir, we are having a problem here, what should we do?' They should have specific answers for them. If they don't, they should find them and give them to us. They should help us. This feeling and this communication, if this starts to happen, then I think the education perspective can become better."*
>
> **– Teacher, Uttar Pradesh**

E.2. The Evolution and Challenges of Field Support Roles

This collaborative ideal stands in stark contrast to the current implementation of both monitoring and mentoring processes for teachers. The intended role of field support staff, Cluster Resource Person (CRP), and Block Resource Person (BRP) was academic facilitation and collaborative problem-solving. However, this role has almost universally devolved into one of compliance monitoring. These visits, which were meant to observe and improve classroom transactions, now focus on crossing checklists, exerting pressure, and reporting. As one DIET official in Jharkhand put it, *"The CRP exists, but their job is just that of a messenger... In the name of academic support, there's nothing."*

This shift is conspicuous – during the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), the posts of Cluster Resource Person (CRP) and Block Resource Person (BRP) were introduced specifically to provide academic support. A DIET lecturer explained the original role and its decline: *"...a CRP's job was to facilitate. The CRPs who were brought in they were subject-specific... Their job was to conduct weekly meetings at the cluster level... whatever learning-related challenges they were facing... their job was to sort them out. And to lesson plan together, do peer learning, solve each other's problems... But as time went on, you know, they just became 'messengers'. This meeting stopped. After it stopped, their role was reduced to just being a messenger..."*

Often driven by a focus on administrative data collection, this absence of supportive supervision deprives teachers of the very support they need to apply new pedagogies in complex, resource-scarce environments. A potential factor leading to this gap may be the institutional design itself. Where Academic Resource Persons, CRPs, and BRPs are usually not involved in the initial training, they are unable to support teachers with demonstrations or coaching, creating a critical gap in both the skills and the intent required for genuine academic mentorship.

F. Strengthening Assessment and Evaluation of TPD

The current TPD evaluation methods predominantly focus on pre- and post-tests during training processes, but do not sufficiently capture the impact of TPD in terms of improving teacher practices and student learning. While some states conduct Teacher Needs Analysis (TNA), the data is often underutilised. This lack of targeted, individualised development leaves teachers feeling that TNAs should be more comprehensive, addressing classroom challenges and student learning levels. Effective monitoring and feedback mechanisms are essential to understand TPD effectiveness and create accountability, yet these are often missed with little evidence of meaningful changes in training design.

In some states, TNA focuses on collecting data on teachers' subject-specific competencies, while in other states, it seeks inputs from teachers on topics they would like to be addressed as part of TPD processes. However, the study found that in all these cases, the follow-up on this data with teachers and DIETs is still weak. Teachers, on their part, feel that TNAs must be more comprehensive and be inclusive of classroom challenges and student learning levels, to be relevant.

> *"For an ideal TPD system, teachers should be more actively involved alongside facilitators and government officials, working collaboratively as a team. Feedback from the ground level should be systematically collected, considered, and used to design programmes that address real needs."*
>
> **– Teachers, Andhra Pradesh**

By far, pre- and post-testing is the most common assessment method. While some states have rigorous exams for certification after teachers complete their training, these tests generally do not answer critical questions about whether the learning is sustained, adopted in the classroom, or leads to better student outcomes. In fact, student learning outcomes (SLOs) are rarely measured as a direct method of evaluating TPD effectiveness. While systemic assessments like the National Achievement Survey (NAS) and NIPUN surveys are repeated, they are one-point-in-time assessments where cohort tracking is not possible. This makes it extremely difficult to definitively measure the progress of the same group of students and, therefore, to link any improvements directly to a specific TPD intervention.

Teachers typically provide feedback via questionnaires after training. However, this is widely seen as a "mere formality", with little evidence that this feedback leads to meaningful changes in training design. As teachers shared in Uttar Pradesh, *"The FLN training is the best, I don't think there's anything wrong with it because whatever new comes, they give their best in it. Yes, but these different things they create, before that, they should take feedback from the teachers once. They should talk to them about what changes are needed here. Before introducing something new every session, you should ask the teachers once if the last year was going well or if something was lacking. So, what changes can be made here now? This should definitely be asked, because many changes are not needed every time."*

The instances of a broken feedback loop underscore the critical need for robust monitoring mechanisms within the TPD framework. Effective monitoring is distinct from the supportive supervision and mentoring discussed in Theme 5 above. It serves as a vital tool to gauge the success of TPD initiatives and ensure accountability among all stakeholders. By integrating systematic monitoring into the TPD design process, we can foster a culture of continuous improvement, where feedback is not only collected but actively used to refine and enhance TPD strategies. This iterative approach will ultimately lead to more effective professional development outcomes and a stronger, more responsive educational system.

G. Institutional Roles and Capacity Building

Within India's teacher education and professional development ecosystem, DIETs occupy a critical intermediary position between policy formulation at the state level and implementation at the school level. While SCERTs (State Councils of Educational Research and Training) hold primary responsibility for designing and approving TPD programmes, including training content, scheduling, and the preparation of master trainers, DIETs have the potential to contextualise, adapt, and operationalise these programmes within the diverse realities of India's districts.

DIET faculty possess deep contextual knowledge of schools and communities, allowing them to align training content with district-specific needs, monitor implementation, and evaluate impact. One of the DIET principals shared how they contextualise training, *"Some trainings are such that we connect them to the local context when we teach here. Even if we have been taught something else there, when we connect the dots here, we involve local elements."* Yet some of the DIET staff are frustrated in their current role as one of the members shared, *"Why is the training being conducted, I know why it is. What output is coming from it, I don't know. But training has to be done, this has to be done, the schedule is made, it has to be done this way."* Others had a more positive perspective, *"A timetable, a format, and that specific subject matter – all of that is fixed. So we have to deliver that exact same thing here. Yes, some things are common, and we might want to add our perspective, saying, 'If you do it this way...' because we and our teachers are connected to the field. So, we can and do add those things."*

Under the NEP 2020, DIETs are being revitalised through the Centres of Excellence initiative, with increased funding and adequate staffing. However, systemic challenges remain: in several states, secondary school teachers are being deputed to DIETs, they often lack experience in the primary sector, which limits the contextual relevance of training.

> *"DIETs should take more responsibility. School teachers get promoted to DIET roles on a temporary basis. We need more permanent roles and capacity building at the DIET. Permanent staff at DIET through competitive exams is needed. DIETs should conduct more research on TPD and involve pre-service teachers in the process."*
>
> **– SCERT Lecturer**

Conversely, in districts where vacancies are filled with relevant staff, mentoring systems have strengthened, DIET lecturers are conducting field visits, classroom demonstrations, and peer learning sessions that teachers find credible and practically valuable. A principal working in a DIET where vacancies were recently filled shared, *"The role of DIET is extended. We are working satisfactorily because we have sufficient hands. We are providing in-service training, we are providing support to the SCERT, we are providing support to the Samagra Shiksha, we are providing support to the DEO office, and at times we are monitoring the school system and school complexes also."* He was able to conceptualise a larger role for DIET, where it becomes a Centre of Excellence for teachers. *"Whenever the DIET stands strong, definitely, other schools also follow the DIET. So a teacher will get complete satisfaction whenever they visit the DIET. They will think, 'I am going there, and will meet excellent resource persons.' Just like if I am going to the NCERT, I feel like that. So they have excellent buildings, they have excellent professors. So, whenever you sit before a professor, you learn so many things. So, the teachers can also learn from us."*

Infrastructural investments, such as building training halls and accommodation facilities, are enabling DIETs to support sustained, residential models of TPD rather than short-term workshops. Encouragingly, some DIETs are now engaging in action research, independently or collaboratively with teachers, to identify effective practices and local challenges. Examples include Jharkhand's capacity building for action research, Rajasthan's evaluation studies on MLE, and Meghalaya's internship model, where DIET students work directly with government school teachers to demonstrate innovative pedagogy.

In states like Andhra Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, DIETs are strengthening school complexes and Shikshak Sankul structures, enabling peer learning among teachers. Regular school visits by DIET staff also help identify potential Resource Persons, ensuring that training facilitation remains grounded in classroom realities.

Collectively, these developments position DIETs as key agents for strengthening TPD programmes. Their proximity to schools, practical engagement with teachers, and growing research capacity offer a vital bridge between TPD processes and classroom practice.

4

INSIGHTS & RECOMMENDATIONS

“True education signifies empowering others and leaving the world a little better than the one we found.”

– Mahatma Jyotiba Phule

4. Insights & Recommendations

This chapter translates the key findings from the analysis into sharp, actionable insights and recommendations. The recommendations are structured around six strategic pathways for change identified in the report.

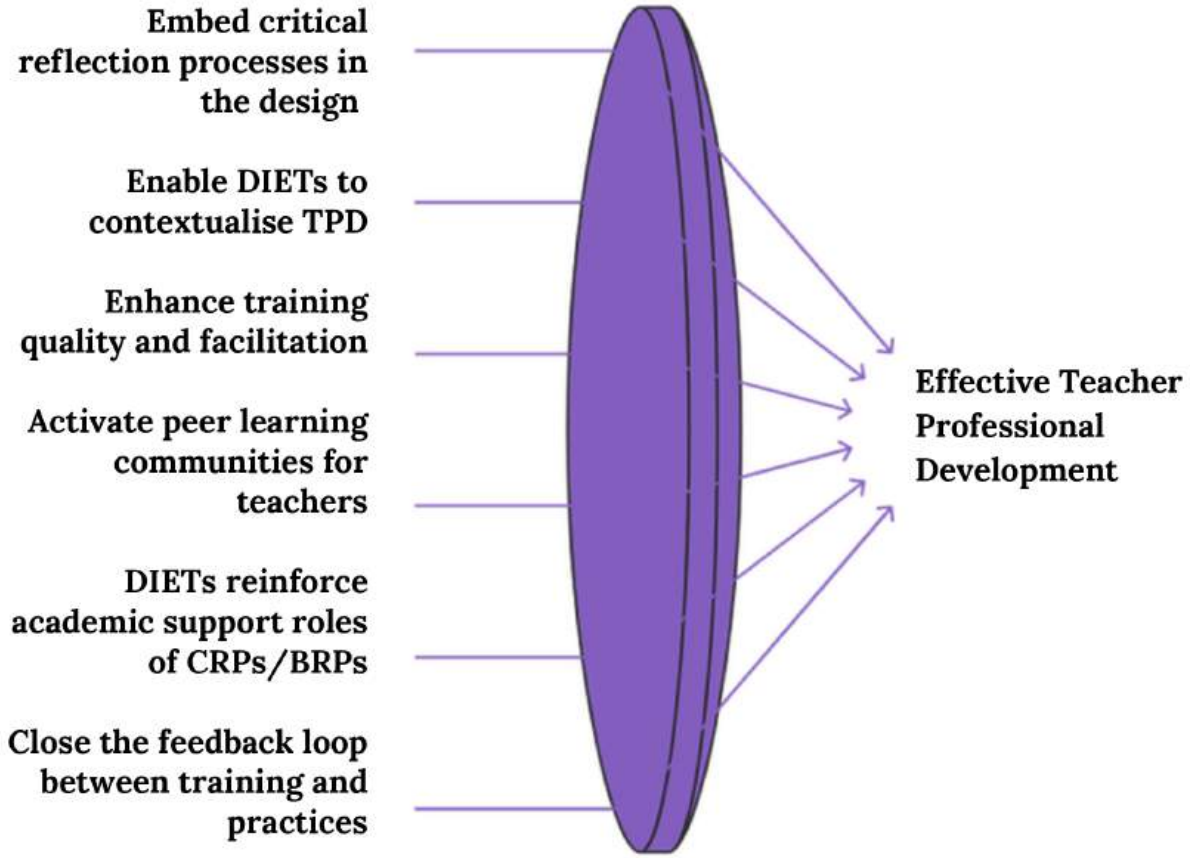


***Figure 4.1**: Strategic pathways for change*

A. Embed critical reflection processes in the design

For over six decades, Indian education policy — through frameworks such as the National Policy on Education (1986), NCFTE (2010), and NEP (2020) — has emphasised the need for teacher education rooted in social justice and inclusion. Yet, despite progressive policy intent, there is limited empirical evidence that current teacher education programmes effectively prepare teachers to engage with classroom diversity or address structural inequities in learning outcomes.

Research underscores that inequity in classrooms is often reproduced through teachers' implicit beliefs about students' abilities. De and Malik (2021) show that teachers are frequently unaware of how social hierarchies — of caste, class, and language — shape their expectations of children. Brinkmann (2018) further argues that teachers function simultaneously as victims and vehicles of inequity: they internalise socio-cultural worldviews without understanding their influence on teaching and learning practices.

Ladson-Billings's (1995) work on culturally relevant pedagogy offers a critical insight here — teacher effectiveness in diverse classrooms depends not only on pedagogical skill, but on the belief that all children can achieve, and the willingness to value and integrate students' cultural knowledge into learning processes.

This evidence highlights the need to integrate cognitive and emotional dimensions of teaching. Sustainable change lies in focusing on critical reflection as part of TPD processes — helping teachers reflect on and question their assumptions about learners and learning contexts. For instance, many teachers attribute learning gaps to external factors such as the lack of parental support or resource scarcity, both reflections of middle-class norms and beliefs. In many education systems globally, parents are not expected to contribute to their children's education by helping them revise content or introduce content at home. But in Indian middle-class homes, there is a social norm for parents to teach their children at home. And this contributes to the expectations held by teachers due to their social positionality. However, children in public schools largely belong to working-class communities. This leads to a mismatch of expectations due to the differences in the lived experiences of teachers and students.

The analysis from teacher interviews and FGDs strongly suggests that there are certain biases and perspectives that teachers hold, which become barriers in their adoption of change. Rather, they tend to shift blame on problems outside of the classroom as the primary reasons for low learning levels. Specifically, teachers' expectations of parental involvement in education and the need for grade-specific teaching-learning processes are perspectives that require critical reflection.

Therefore, TPD must go beyond instructional strategies to embed structured reflective experiences — enabling teachers to critically examine their beliefs, recognise social distance, and reimagine pedagogy through the lens of equity and inclusion.

Recommendations

- **Reorient in-service TPD programmes to include structured reflection sessions**

Include structured reflection sessions in in-service TPD programmes where teachers critically examine their beliefs, expectations, and social positionalities in relation to students.

- **Ground TPD content in the lived experiences**

Connect TPD content to the lived experiences of students rather than generic skill frameworks.

- **Develop state-level master trainers capable of leading reflective processes**

Build the capability of master trainers in leading reflective processes as part of TPD programmes using dialogic facilitation methods.

B. Enable DIETs to contextualise TPD

The analysis from this study highlights that contextualisation is a critical determinant of TPD effectiveness. It affirms a core principle of adult learning (Caffarella, 2000; Gravani, 2012): teachers are most engaged by, and connect best with, training that they perceive as directly relevant and immediately applicable to their specific classroom realities.

Our analysis reveals a significant opportunity to leverage the DIETs as the primary driver and facilitator for this contextualisation. DIET lecturers possess contextual knowledge necessary for designing effective and relevant training programmes for teachers. Due to their presence within the district and deep understanding of pedagogy and academic content, they are rightfully situated to provide academic supervision, strengthen monitoring processes, and provide overall structure to TPD at the district level.

Moreover, even global research highlights that quality improves when middle-tier institutions are empowered to adapt policy to local needs (Chapman et al., 1997). The opportunity is to evolve SCERT's role from directing training to steering and capacitating a decentralised system led by DIETs, with master trainers and CRPs/BRPs working in tandem to provide contextual, relevant training and requisite supportive supervision.

We see powerful examples of this potential in action: DIETs supporting the integration of local languages (like Mundari or Nagpuri), or the DIET-led pilot in Rajasthan developing a 'shabdkosh' (dictionary) and collecting folktales to help teachers connect with students in tribal areas. These efforts demonstrably improve student-teacher relationships and foster empathy. In areas where DIETs are capacitated to do so, faculty exhibit both confidence and interest in undertaking the exercise of contextualising the training content.

Strong and empowered DIETs can also be strategically leveraged across all TPD processes. Innovative practices are already emerging, such as DIET Parbhani's structured mentoring, DIET Ramgarh's action research, and DIET Bahraich's TNA pilots.

This is especially crucial for addressing widespread structural realities, such as single-teacher schools and the prevalence of MGML classrooms. DIETs are the ideal institution to develop and demonstrate practical MGML strategies that teachers currently find difficult to implement from standardised modules. The envisioning of DIETs as "Centres of Excellence" within the NEP 2020 aligns perfectly with empowering them to fulfill this vital, specialised role (Chaudhury & Gopal, 2024).

The opportunity, therefore, is to evolve the TPD ecosystem. Rather than constraining DIETs as mere implementers of centralised schedules, their role must be elevated to that of programmatic co-designers and primary contextualisers. This transition evolves the SCERT's role from one of directing all training to one of steering and capacitating a decentralised, responsive system led by empowered DIETs.

Making this shift a reality will require a stark change that formally grants DIETs the autonomy to adapt training content. This must be supported by sustained investment to fill vacancies with permanent, experienced staff, need-based capacity building for DIET faculty, and dedicated funding for district-led action research and local content creation.

Recommendations

- **Redefine institutional roles**

State-level institutions should adopt a more directive role rather than focusing on last-mile delivery. SCERT's role should be to set state standards, fund, and design core frameworks. DIETs' role must be formally redefined and empowered to include designing, adapting, contextualising, and implementing TPD, as well as managing the mentor cadre and cluster-level peer learning communities for teachers.

- **Promote and support contextualisation**

DIETs must be empowered and required to develop and adapt all state-level training content to fit local needs, with a specific focus on creating practical scenarios for MGML teaching and multi-lingual instruction. This policy must be backed by resources, to help teachers bridge the training-to-classroom gap.

- **Act on critical staffing gaps**

State-level institutions must advocate for filling DIET vacancies with permanent, qualified staff who possess relevant primary-school expertise.

- **Empower DIETs as action research hubs**

SCERTs and CSOs can collaboratively fund and support DIETs to conduct local action research to identify and scale best practices from the ground up, turning them from simple training delivery arms into knowledge creation hubs.

C. Enhance training quality and facilitation

Teacher trainers are the core tenet of educator standards, with their quality directly shaping the quality of teachers themselves (Abdelhay & Benabed, 2025). Considered the "most affecting factor when preparing better-organised educators" (Su & Wang, 2022), improving the quality of trainers presents a clear, high-impact opportunity. Currently, ad-hoc selection processes undermine quality and create a "loss of teaching time" that dissuades the best teachers from participating.

Beyond the trainer, teachers provide a clear mandate for TPD design: they value in-person, interactive training over passive content delivery. While online delivery of teacher training material has received a plethora of attention (Patwardhan & Abrol, 2023), such modalities require a checks-and-balances mechanism that promotes continuous teacher engagement.

The next frontier of TPD design is to move beyond fragmented, standalone modules (e.g., on pedagogy, assessment) and create holistically integrated programmes. This approach, which connects textbooks, pedagogy, and assessment, will be most effective if it also shifts from overly prescriptive guides (which limit autonomy) to flexible frameworks that empower teachers to adapt and contextualise lessons for their students. High-performing educational systems from countries like Finland and Singapore place teacher autonomy as a defining pillar within their models to great success (Raju & Veeraiah, 2025).

Even in India, organisations have evolved their TPD approach to emphasise practical application. For instance, Madhi Foundation's training in Meghalaya integrates classroom management and time management strategies directly into pedagogical discussions, rather than treating them as separate topics. This practical focus helps teachers with the real-world challenges they face in the classroom.

Recommendations

- **Professionalise the Master Trainer (MT) cadre**

SCERTs should design, fund, and certify a separate, permanent cadre of Master Trainers. This is the most critical recommendation. A professional cadre ensures high-quality, standardised facilitation and solves the systemic problem of "loss of teaching time" by no longer pulling the best teachers out of their classrooms.

- **Integrate curriculum, pedagogy and assessment in TPD design**

Future programmes must be holistically designed to demonstrate how textbooks, pedagogy, and assessment are interconnected. This portfolio must also be diversified beyond a singular focus on FLN. SCERTs must respond to clear teacher demand by funding and developing high-quality modules for deeper subject-specific knowledge and holistic development (e.g., SEL), which have been highly appreciated in states like Maharashtra, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh.

- **Teacher guides and manuals with flexible frameworks**

Teacher guides should have flexible frameworks that set clear goals and expectations but grant teachers the professional autonomy to design and contextualise lessons for their specific students.

D. Activate peer learning communities for teachers

Peer learning offers a feasible and cost-effective reform lever already embedded in the state education system. By shifting monthly cluster meetings from information dissemination to collaborative inquiry, and by empowering teachers to define and lead their professional learning, states can create a culture of continuous improvement within existing budgets. The analysis from this study finds that small structural adjustments — time allocation, facilitation, recognition mechanisms — can yield system-wide impact by transforming isolated teachers into a professional learning community.

Peer learning is not only a pedagogical technique; it is a structural necessity for TPD in India's public education system. In a context marked by isolation, hierarchical relationships, and limited opportunities for ongoing learning, collaborative engagement among teachers offers a democratic and sustainable approach to improving both teaching practices and student learning outcomes. And this comes out strongly in the analysis, where teachers across all six states mention peer learning as an effective process for them to learn.

At its core, peer learning recognises that learning is a social process — built on interaction, exchange, and mutual accountability. When teachers engage collectively in solving pedagogical challenges, they construct knowledge through dialogue rather than compliance. Divergent perspectives within a group become a source of innovation, enabling teachers to reinterpret ideas in locally relevant ways. Unlike externally delivered training, peer discussions allow teachers to explain and internalise concepts using shared language and familiar classroom realities. This shared understanding cultivates motivation and belonging, teachers feel supported, not supervised, in their pursuit of professional growth.

This rationale acquires particular significance for teachers as they often work in structurally isolating conditions. Lortie (1975) famously described this as the "egg-crate" model: teachers are confined within their individual classrooms with little opportunity for collaboration, feedback, or collective reflection. In India, where the teaching workforce is large, geographically dispersed, and diverse, this isolation is compounded by hierarchical management and limited institutional support for continuous learning. The absence of collaborative structures leaves teachers dependent on sporadic workshops that rarely address contextual challenges. At the same time, international research shows that centralised and imposed models of collaboration — where collective activities are prescribed by administration — rarely yield improvements in teacher practice or student outcomes (Hargreaves, 2000; Sahlberg, 2015).

Effective collaboration must be teacher-led, grounded in trust, and oriented towards shared goals that emerge from teachers' lived experiences. When teachers exercise agency to identify their own professional learning needs and co-construct solutions, they are more likely to implement and sustain change in their classrooms.

A democratic culture of collaboration allows teachers to use agency: to see themselves not merely as implementers of reform but as co-creators of pedagogical knowledge. Through collective problem-solving, teachers learn to connect student diversity, curriculum expectations, and community strengths. Recognising their own capacity to effect change reduces the sense of isolation and pressure that often accompanies classroom work.

Evidence from six states supports this argument. The monthly cluster and block-level meetings (institutionalised platforms such as Shikshak Sankul or School Complexes) represent a latent structure for peer learning.

However, these meetings are frequently used for one-way administrative communication, leading to disengagement. Studies such as the KPALP Impact Study (CETE, 2023) demonstrate that when these meetings are redesigned as PLCs, spaces for peer-to-peer and expert-to-peer dialogue, they can significantly enhance teacher motivation and instructional practice. Similarly, the Sitapur DIET model illustrates how empowering local institutions to facilitate peer learning can strengthen system-wide professional capacity.

India Education Collective (IEC)'s work on Teacher Collectives — cluster-level forums, which are currently operational across nine states, showcases how structured peer learning processes enable teachers to collaboratively reflect on how their students learn, share classroom experiences, and plan collectively for improvement. Facilitated by teachers themselves, these sessions promote ownership, mutual trust, and contextual relevance. Teachers report greater confidence, reduced isolation, and visible changes in classroom engagement — demonstrating that sustainable improvement emerges from within the profession, not from external training interventions.

In essence, peer learning redefines teacher professional development as a collective social practice rather than an individual technical skill. By anchoring teacher growth in dialogue, reciprocity, and shared inquiry, it nurtures both professional identity and pedagogical innovation. Strengthening and institutionalising peer learning within existing state systems represents the most feasible and empowering pathway for teachers to lead the change they wish to see in their classrooms and communities.

Recommendations

- **Transform existing structures**

Remodel existing structures, such as Shikshak Sankul or School Complex meetings, into active, teacher-led Professional Learning Communities.

- **Embed teacher agency in the design of professional development**

Allow teachers to identify their own learning goals linked to student learning.

- **Reorient resource persons from trainers to facilitators**

Shift the role of DIET faculty, BRPs, and CRPs from delivering content to enabling reflection and inquiry.

- **Allocate adequate time and recognition for peer learning**

Formally allocate time for collaborative learning as part of TPD processes.

- **Develop state-level knowledge networks to link peer learning communities**

Create digital or physical platforms to connect peer learning communities across blocks, enabling exchange of innovations and mutual support.

E. DIETs reinforce academic support roles of BRPs/CRPs

The most well-designed training programme may fail if the teacher is left without support to implement it. The analysis confirms that training, when treated as a "one-off" event, has limited sustained impact. Yet, TPD is intended to be a continuous process providing not just knowledge, but also the skills for effective delivery; the latter requires sustained engagement and support. National frameworks like ADEPTS (Advancement of Educational Performance through Teacher Supports, MHRD) have defined support structures with clear performance indicators for all stakeholders engaged in teacher professional development processes, which is critical for educational quality (MHRD & UNICEF, 2007).

The findings show teachers identify a profound need for ongoing, in-classroom mentoring to help them translate abstract TPD concepts into concrete practice. This presents a critical opportunity: to build a robust system of continuous professional learning that teachers themselves are explicitly demanding. They desire a fundamental shift from compliance-focused monitoring toward a non-hierarchical, supportive relationship, where they can request and receive actionable insights. TPD that addresses this critical request, such as with ongoing academic, classroom-based support, allows teachers to reflect on their own practices and adapt techniques more effectively (SCERT Delhi, SEF & STiR Education, 2023).

Importantly, the ideal support structure to enable this in the public system already exists. The CRP and BRP roles were originally designed for academic facilitation, as well as collaborative problem-solving and lesson planning (MHRD, 2011). However, the analysis reveals this vital academic role has been reduced into a more administrative, focused on transmitting messages and data collection. This creates a critical support gap: teachers attend training but are left largely alone during the difficult, iterative process of implementation.

The opportunity, therefore, is to reclaim and professionalise this field-support role with the goal to transform the BRP/CRP's identity from administrators to facilitators. Consequently, this creates the job-embedded, continuous support that teachers are actively asking for and that is essential to ensure the massive resources invested in TPD are utilised efficiently.

This approach is not just a conceptual direction; successful models are already in practice. The data-driven, supportive supervision system in Parbhani district in Maharashtra and the hybrid on-demand helpline centres in Andhra Pradesh and Kerala highlight that effective, non-punitive support structures are possible. Similarly, the KPALP Impact Study (CETE, 2023) found that when Kendra Pramukhs (KPs) in Maharashtra were intentionally trained in specific academic leadership skills (such as data analysis, classroom observation, and effective feedback), they successfully transitioned from inspectors to facilitators.

This, in turn, led to teachers feeling motivated, welcoming their KPs, and valuing the high-quality support they received. Uttar Pradesh's ARPs (Academic Resource Persons) are also undertaking similar roles (Pandey & Agrawal, 2025). These ARPs are situated at the block level and tasked with providing teachers with the subject expertise and tailored support needed to bridge the gap between training and classroom practice. On average, ARPs spend about half their visit on classroom observation checklists and spot assessment, while the other half is spent on teacher feedback and discussion with the headmaster/headmistress (Pandey & CSF Editorial Team, 2025).

Similarly, Pratham, as an organisation, believes that mentoring and monitoring is a core tenet of quality assurance, especially in the context of the cascade training model. In AP, they are bridging the gap between trainers and monitors by often having the same individuals who train (master trainers, or the first cascade level) also serve as mentors and monitors in the classrooms. This, they say, ensures that those observing classroom practices have the experience, knowledge and skills necessary to guide and support teachers effectively.

To facilitate such models at scale, a formal recognition of administrative monitoring and academic mentoring roles is necessary. It must also be coupled with specialised, continuous training for these resource persons in adult learning, coaching methodologies, and facilitation, equipping them with skills distinct from those of a teacher.

Recommendations

- **Demarcation of roles**

Formally recognise the 'administrative monitoring' and 'academic support' functions of the BRP/CRP. The academic role must be protected and have its own clear pedagogical, non-administrative performance indicators.

- **Specialised capacity building**

DIETs must develop specialised, ongoing training for the CRPs and BRPs to enable supportive supervision, focusing on how to facilitate adult learning, solve contextual problems, provide non-judgemental feedback, and conduct in-class demonstrations.

- **Pilot on-demand support systems**

Draw upon experience from helplines in Andhra Pradesh and Kerala to develop systems that can work in tandem with BRPs/CRPs to complement in-person visits and provide timely, needs-based assistance beyond the capacities of the field support staff.

F. Close the feedback loop between training and practices

Every teacher professional development programme represents a monumental investment of public resources in design, logistics, and execution. Yet, the analysis reveals that this system largely operates without a functional guidance system. The current process used for TPD evaluation is dominated by summative metrics that teachers widely view as a mere process formality, creating a weak feedback process that fails to capture true impact or drive improvement. To create an adaptive TPD system that justifies this investment, monitoring and evaluation must be re-imagined as a cyclical feedback loop, shifting from measuring compliance to measuring what truly matters: classroom practice, teacher voice, and student outcomes.

This process has multiple critical failure points. First is the input stage: while the adoption of TNAs is a positive step, they are often not comprehensive, failing to include the classroom challenges and student learning levels that teachers deem essential. The second is at the delivery stage: the system does not effectively monitor the "dilution effect" of quality as training cascades from state to block. This creates a major quality assurance gap, especially since the quality of the trainer is the single most important determinant, and finding a good facilitator is a consistent challenge.

Furthermore, the loop weakens at the feedback stage. Teacher feedback is treated as a formality, preventing iterative design. This is felt acutely by teachers, who believe that they can add value at both the design and delivery stages if only there were a process for their feedback to be heard. Finally, the system fails to measure the ultimate goal, i.e. Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs). These are rarely measured as a direct effect of TPD evaluation. Systemic assessments make it extremely difficult to link any improvements directly to a specific TPD intervention, leaving the system's final impact unknown.

The opportunity, therefore, is to develop and strengthen a Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning framework that shifts from compliance auditing to holistic quality monitoring by tracking the quality of the training, its application in practice, and its impact on outcomes. This is the only way to build a definitive, data-driven connection between training and classroom practice and, crucially, to build trust with teachers. This shift will require an institutional commitment to close the loop by transparently communicating to teachers and DIETs how their feedback will directly shape TPD design.

Recommendations

- **Design effective TNA processes**

TNAs must be made comprehensive. They must include teacher self-reporting on specific "classroom challenges", pedagogical needs, and analysis of student learning data, not just subject-knowledge tests. The results of this exercise must be used at multiple levels: by ARP/CRP/BRP to tailor support and supervision; by DIETs to design and facilitate contextual TPD (see key takeaway #1); and by state-level institutions to understand teacher feedback and response to past TPD programmes.

- **Reimagine the cascade model**

Develop and implement quality assurance tools to measure and mitigate "quality dilution" in the cascade training model. This must include mechanisms to evaluate the effectiveness of trainers at all levels of delivery, not just the Master Trainers.

- **Pilot TPD-SLO linkages**

Invest in and pilot methods to link TPD interventions to SLOs. This requires better cohort tracking within schools to measure student progress against specific pedagogical interventions.

Consolidating and shaping the ecosystem: How to make this happen?

To translate these recommendations into reality, the TPD ecosystem must pivot from a compliance-driven hierarchy to a robust, learning-centric support structure. The proposed Teacher Professional Development Ecosystem is visualised not as a vertical structure, but as an enabling support system centered on the ultimate goal: Student Learning and Well Being. As depicted in the diagram, the system radiates outwards from this core focus. Teacher Led Peer Learning Communities (focused on collaborative problem solving and reflective dialogue) are immediately supported by the Cluster and Block Level, which is enabled by the District Level (the knowledge hub), and anchored by the State Level (which provides policy frameworks).

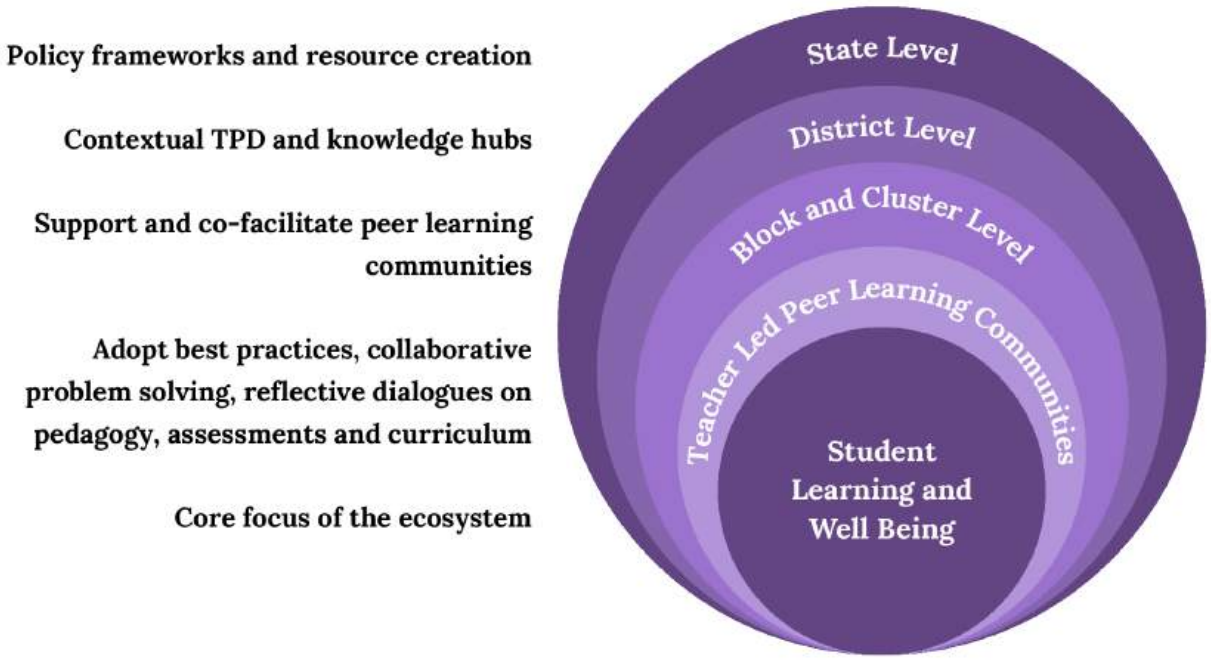


Figure 4.2: *Teacher professional development ecosystem*

This structure represents the operational shift required: a facilitative approach where data is collected on student learning outcomes, challenges within classrooms, best practices of teachers, and teacher competencies, skills and attitude to have a holistic understanding of learning needs. An iterative approach is taken to design TPD which continuously adapts to the changing needs of classrooms within a cluster, block and district. In this approach, all stakeholders work in a coordinated and supportive manner to create a learning system that focuses on improving the learning and well-being of students in all public school classrooms. This shared vision empowers each organisational level to play a specific, enabling role:

I. State Level (SCERT): The Strategic Architect

The SCERT moves beyond broad-spectrum training delivery to become the strategic architect and standard-setter for the state's academic quality.

- Develop frameworks that clearly define the objectives, purpose, and expected outcomes of professional development, ensuring alignment with the ultimate goal of student well-being.
- Create opportunities for reflection, dialogue, and critical thinking among all TPD stakeholders. This involves using data on student learning, attendance, and socio-economic factors to collaboratively understand and address challenges related to quality and equity.
- Create precise tools to define and assess the roles of stakeholders at state, district, block, and cluster levels, ensuring everyone understands how their work contributes to improving learning.
- Facilitate the co-creation of high-quality learning resources, involving voices from the district and block levels to ensure relevance.
- Design rigorous selection, recruitment, and training processes for Master Trainers, and develop quality assurance tools to measure the effectiveness of TPD processes and personnel across all levels.
- Commission and support a robust research agenda on TPD, co-creating research topics with DIETs and teachers to ensure inquiries are grounded in reality.

II. District Level (DIET): The Resource Hub for Excellence in Teaching

Empowered as centres of academic leadership, DIETs serve as the vital bridge between state goals and classroom realities.

- Use data from classrooms on learning, well-being, and relationships to design contextual TPD and create feedback loops to understand the growth and changing needs of teachers and students, allowing for the iterative improvement of TPD processes.
- Become dynamic knowledge creation hubs by conducting action research with teachers. This builds a deeper understanding of the effectiveness of reform initiatives, learning needs, and community knowledge.
- Manage and build the capacity of the mentor and facilitator cadre (BRPs/CRPs). Focus on equipping them with specialised skills in reflection, dialogic facilitation, subject expertise, and pedagogical feedback.
- Collect and analyse data on Peer Learning Communities to identify best practices and challenges.
- Organise monthly learning and planning meetings for the mentor cadre (BRC/CRC) to ensure they are prepared to support peer learning communities effectively at the cluster level.

III. Block and Cluster Level (BRP/CRP): The Partners in Practice

At the implementation level, the focus shifts to high-touch, supportive engagement that helps teachers succeed in the classroom.

- Collect and analyse data to understand the specific needs of teachers, local classroom challenges, and student learning levels. Use this insight to co-create and co-facilitate relevant peer learning sessions.
- Conduct classroom observations not for inspection, but for demonstration and support. Provide constructive feedback that directly strengthens teaching-learning practices.
- Co-facilitate peer learning communities with teachers. Focus these meetings on monthly academic planning and the use of formative assessment tools, helping teachers tailor their instruction to actual student learning levels.

5

CONCLUSION

“Real education enhances the dignity of a human being and increases his or her self-respect. If only the real sense of education could be realised by each individual and carried forward in every field of human activity, the world will be so much a better place to live in.”

– APJ Abdul Kalam

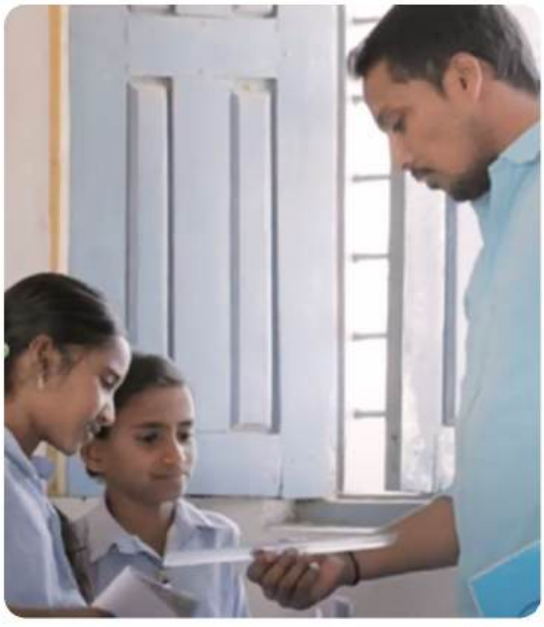
5. Conclusion

The Promise Within Reach

This landscape study on Teacher Professional Development (TPD) in India reveals the needs, challenges and potential of institutions and stakeholders working towards realising the goals of equity and quality in primary education in India. It represents a diversity of voices from across levels within the education systems and attempts to build coherence and pathways for transformation.

India's education system stands at a critical juncture. The vision articulated in NEP 2020 for continuous, self-directed professional development supported by integrated institutions and mentoring systems is both ambitious and necessary. The gap between this vision and current reality is significant but not insurmountable. This study demonstrates that teachers want to improve, institutions are capable of adaptation, and models of effective practice already exist within the system.

The question is not whether high-quality TPD can improve student learning — the global and emerging Indian evidence is unequivocal that it can. The question is whether India's education system will make the structural, institutional, and cultural shifts necessary to move from episodic training to genuine continuous professional development. Whether it will empower the institutions closest to classrooms to lead contextualisation. Whether it will reclaim the vision of supportive, academic supervision. Whether it will trust teachers as professionals capable of collective inquiry. Whether it will build the evaluative systems necessary for continuous improvement.



The children in India's public schools — particularly those in rural areas, in single-teacher schools, in multilingual classrooms, in contexts of poverty and marginalisation — deserve teachers who are not merely trained but continuously supported, professionally respected, and empowered to adapt pedagogy to their students' needs. The teachers themselves deserve a system that values their expertise, responds to their feedback, and provides the ongoing support necessary for them to succeed in the complex, challenging work they do every day.

This report offers not just an analysis of problems but a roadmap for solutions grounded in evidence and existing within reach. The promise of transformative TPD in India is not distant; it is present in the pockets of excellence documented here. The task ahead is to make excellence the norm rather than the exception — to build a TPD ecosystem that truly serves teachers so that teachers can truly serve every child. That work begins with the fundamental belief that India's teachers, when properly supported, are capable of transforming the nation's educational outcomes.

A Bottom-Up Approach Rooted in Classroom Realities

The stakeholder framework presented in this report envisions a fundamentally different approach to TPD: one that begins with data from classrooms on student learning, attendance, socio-economic factors, and teacher competencies. In this model, SCERTs design frameworks and commission research; DIETs contextualise, conduct action research, and manage support systems; and CRPs/BRPs facilitate peer learning and provide classroom-based mentoring. Each level plays a distinct, complementary role in creating a learning system focused on the well-being and development of students in every public school classroom.

This vision represents more than structural reorganisation; it is a philosophical shift from viewing teachers as implementers to recognising them as reflective practitioners and co-creators of pedagogical knowledge. It moves from episodic training to continuous learning. From compliance monitoring to supportive supervision. From centralised prescription to contextualised adaptation. From isolation to collaborative inquiry.

The Path Forward: From Evidence to Action

The evidence gathered across six states, from over thirteen CSOs, through interviews with SCERT and DIET officials, and most importantly from teachers themselves, makes clear that the components of effective TPD are known. The institutional infrastructure largely exists. Pockets of excellence demonstrate what is possible.

The path to realising the goal of equity and quality in public education requires:

Policy clarity that formally redefines institutional roles and grants DIETs the autonomy they need

Strategic investment in permanent staffing, professional trainer cadres, and action research

Quality assurance systems that monitor and course-correct throughout implementation

A fundamental shift in relationships — from hierarchical control to professional trust, from compliance to support, from prescription to empowerment

5

CASE STUDIES

"True teachers are those who help us think for ourselves."

– Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan

DIET Parbhani's Governance Model for Teacher Professional Development

Context

The DIET in Parbhani, Maharashtra, has adopted a pragmatic operational strategy, prioritising the quality of the "teaching-learning process". It focuses its resources on rigorous training delivery, high-frequency monitoring, and strategic external partnerships.

Parbhani district faces significant resource constraints and limited socio-economic development, compounded by recurring drought conditions that trigger seasonal migration and community conflicts. Caste-based discrimination remains a major challenge.

Despite these constraints, the district has witnessed transformative educational change since 2016, driven by collaborative efforts between the DIET and CSOs.

The transformation began in Manvat block led by Gyan Prakash Foundation, where two key processes were piloted and regularised: the Shikshan Parishad (SP) and School Management Committee (SMC) meetings. These processes focused on improving student academic outcomes through enhanced teacher practices and community engagement in schools.

Observing the positive impact in Manvat, DIET Parbhani scaled these efforts district-wide. The processes have now been institutionalised across all blocks, with regular data collection systems established to monitor quality and effectiveness. This systematic approach aims to strengthen teaching practices and sustain improvements in learning outcomes across Parbhani's public schools.

Model and Approaches

DIET Parbhani has restructured how it identifies trainers and delivers content to ensure quality control.

- **Merit-based Selection of Trainers**

Figure 6.1: *Process of selection of trainers by merit*

This ensures that facilitators have both practical experience and formal training.

- **Strict Protocols for Attendance and Assessment**

To address engagement issues during training, the administration has implemented strict attendance and assessment protocols. The DIET tracks teacher attendance on an hourly basis during training days. Furthermore, they have restructured the standard 60-minute training session: 50 minutes are dedicated to instruction, followed immediately by a 10-minute online test regarding the session's content. Teachers are required to score at least 50% on this test to proceed to the next module. This mechanism ensures that teachers remain mentally attentive throughout the programme.

The core of Parbhani's operational model is a high-frequency monitoring system designed to validate that training is implemented in the classroom.

Figure 6.2: *DIET Parbhani's high-frequency monitoring system*

In the last 18 months, this system allowed the administration to directly assess the learning levels of over thousands of children.

Strategic Partnerships

DIET in Parbhani has built strong partnerships with the District Education Officer and the Block Education Officers to ensure coordination and collaboration between administrative and academic teams within the district.

DIET Parbhani integrates NGOs directly into its operations rather than treating them as external vendors. The district collaborates with GPF to execute critical academic functions. The foundation supports the monthly education council (Shikshan Parishad) and funds the production of Shikshan Prabha, a quarterly academic journal. This partnership allows the DIET to distribute this journal to 1,500 schools at no cost to the government, providing a platform for teachers to share innovations. Additionally, the foundation provides the "Gooru Navigator" app to support classroom activities. Similarly, the Shantilal Muttha Foundation facilitates value education training within the district.

Conclusion

The Parbhani model offers a scalable blueprint for other resource-constrained districts. The district's success suggests that educational quality can be improved without waiting for infrastructure investments by shifting the focus to process rigour. Specifically, the mandate of daily school visits serves as a replicable operational standard that generates actionable data rather than passive reports.

Furthermore, the model highlights that accountability needs to be practised across levels; when senior leadership (like the CEO) engages in random, high-frequency monitoring, it enforces a culture of seriousness that permeates the entire teaching workforce.

Implications for Policy

This case study highlights the recommendation on leveraging DIETs and transforming them as 'Centres of Excellence' (COE) for Teacher Education at district level. The ownership of DIET Parbhani in scaling and institutionalising best practices from within the district has resulted in a culture of accountability and establishment of learning systems across schools, cluster and block resource centres. The teachers feel supported in classrooms and learning challenges faced in the classroom are resolved in a collaborative manner.

Therefore, this can serve as a model for giving more autonomy and responsibility to DIETs, and institutionalising the role for DIET to become the anchors for TPD at district level by:

- Understanding needs of students and teachers
- Supporting in the facilitation of cluster academic meetings by training of CRC and BRC cadre
- Design and implement monitoring and evaluation processes which feed back into the TPD processes.

Seekho Sikhao Foundation's Block-Level Transformation Model in Uttar Pradesh

Context

India faces persistent challenges around teacher support, instructional quality, and school-level governance. In rural districts, teachers often navigate under-resourced public schools, multi-grade teaching, and socio-economic barriers that affect student learning. In this context, Seekho Sikhao Foundation (SSF), a grassroots non-profit, has developed an empowerment-driven, system-aligned model for teacher professional development that leverages existing government structures rather than parallel programmes.

SSF's foundational philosophy maintains that sustainable educational transformation cannot be imported from external sources; it must emerge from within the system by strengthening the capacities, agency, and leadership of teachers, school leaders, and local academic and governance cadres. Their work encompasses strengthening structures for teachers and communities to collaborate in improving public education.

SSF is working in 800+ government schools across 15 districts in UP, supporting more than 3,500 teachers and activating over 440 gram panchayats. Working directly with DIETs, BEOs, ARPs, Shikshak Sankuls, Panchayati Raj institutions, and the wider community, SSF has emerged as one of the state's most locally-embedded, systems-focused CSOs.

Model and Approaches

SSF's approach to in-service teacher professional development is grounded in three core principles:

Figure 6.3: *Three core principles of SSF's approach*

SSF operationalises these principles through three interconnected components:

1. **Strengthening District and Block Structures**

Rather than conducting purely administrative meetings, SSF collaborates with DIETs, BRCs, and ARPs to redesign how academic meetings are structured and facilitated, focusing more intensively on teacher professional development and student learning outcomes. Key processes include:

- **Academic-First DIET Review Meetings and Block Education Review Meetings**

State Resource Groups (SRGs) and DIETs receive support through reflection on the principles and purpose of Shikshak Sankul Meetings. Facilitation skills of ARPs are strengthened through structured planning meetings. This enables a shift toward data-based academic planning at block and district review meetings, wherein SRGs, Block Education Officers, Academic Resource Persons, cluster coordinators, and teacher representatives review progress, discuss ground-level challenges, and align local efforts with state-level priorities.

- **Block Preparation Meetings as Routine Practice**

Implemented across 19 blocks, these meetings serve as spaces where Academic Resource Persons and cluster coordinators gather before Shikshak Sankul Meetings to plan content, review student learning data, prepare demonstration materials, and strategise support for struggling schools. This approach enables ARPs and cluster coordinators to mentor teachers effectively during classroom observations and Shikshak Sankul meetings.

2. **Monthly School Transformation Cycle**

At the cluster and school level, a monthly cycle of instructional improvement has been institutionalised by strengthening linkages between training and classroom implementation. This cycle tightly connects training to classroom practice through several interconnected elements:

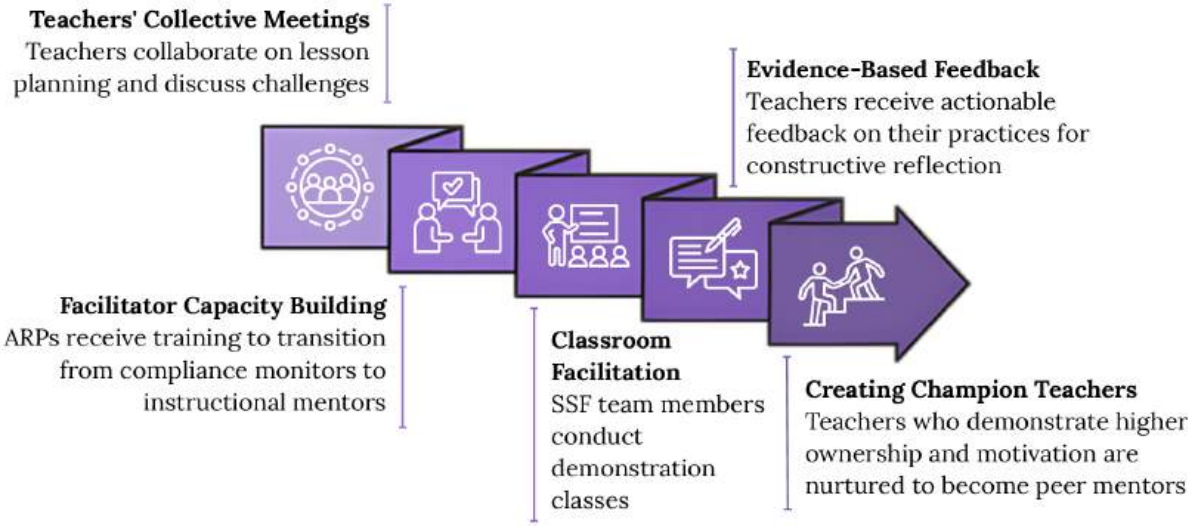


Figure 6.4: *Monthly cycle of instructional improvement*

This comprehensive approach has significantly increased teacher motivation, resulting in the adoption of learner-centred pedagogy, formative assessments, and multi-level instruction strategies in classrooms.

3. **Rural Youth Fellowship**

SSF operates one of India's only fellowships exclusively for rural youth, selecting high-potential local young people who commit to a two-year programme supporting public schools in their communities while developing their own leadership capacities. This creates a pipeline of local leaders who sustain educational reforms long after project cycles conclude.

Key Success Factors

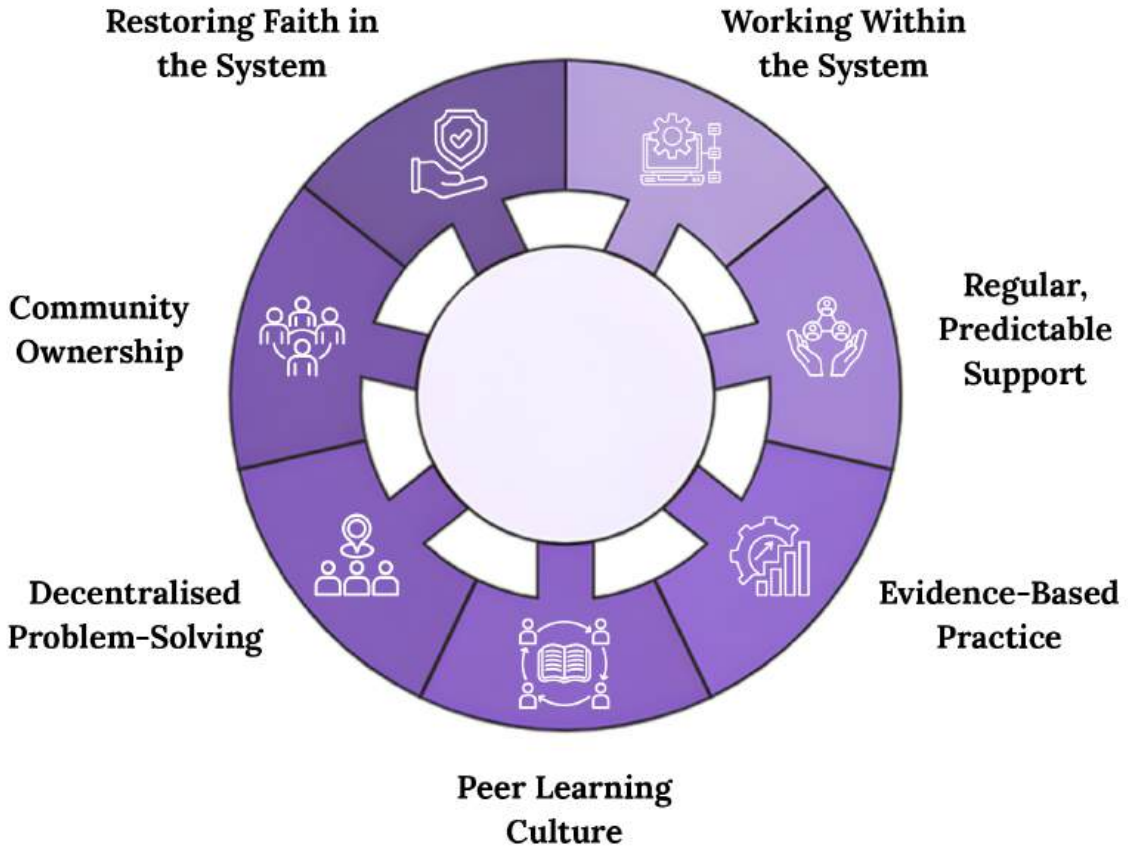


Figure 6.5: *Key success factors of SSF's model*

Seekho Sikhao Foundation's work demonstrates that systemic educational transformation occurs at the intersection of strong institutional structures and sustained, practice-focused teacher support.

Conclusion

Seekho Sikhao Foundation's experience demonstrates that reorienting routine government forums toward academic problem-solving can significantly strengthen teacher professional development. The institutionalisation of Block Preparation Meetings and Teachers' Collective Meetings, combined with ongoing in-class support and demonstration lessons, has created predictable, practice-focused cycles in which teachers and academic functionaries collaboratively analyse student work, plan instruction, and refine classroom techniques through real-time feedback.

SSF's contribution offers a replicable, system-aligned, resource-sensitive model that builds long-term capacity and trust within public education systems.

Implications for Policy

Seekho Sikhao Foundation's system-integrated model offers several actionable insights for strengthening teacher professional development and school governance within government systems:

- **Reorient Existing Academic Forums Toward Instructional Improvement**

Institutionalisation of DIET Review Meetings, Block Preparation Meetings, and Teachers' Collective Meetings can ensure data-based discussions that link training directly to classroom practice in a sustainable manner.

- **Build Teacher Agency Through Peer-Led Learning**

Strengthening collaborative learning opportunities for teachers to share best practices, problem-solve, and receive recognition can lead to meaningful improvement in classroom practices.

- **Prioritise Ongoing, In-Class Support in Teacher Professional Development Frameworks**

Transition from compliance supervisors to instructional mentors through focus on continuous mentoring and structured feedback cycles led by Academic Resource Persons and cluster coordinators.

Overall, SSF's model highlights that sustainable reform is achievable when teacher development, academic leadership, and community governance are embedded within existing structures. Policies that reinforce these mechanisms can advance public education systems toward more responsive, context-sensitive, and enduring forms of school transformation.

Gyan Prakash Foundation's Data Collection and Governance Model

Context

Effective in-service TPD requires a robust M&E system that not only collects data but also ensures its utilisation for systemic improvement. The Gyan Prakash Foundation (GPF) has developed a comprehensive data governance model that partners with the DIET to create a feedback loop between training, practice, and community engagement. This model is built on the principles of transparency, relevance, credibility, and accountability, demonstrating a replicable framework for strengthening academic support structures.

Model and Approaches

Figure 6.6: *GPF's integrated data collection approach*

The core of the model is triangulation. GPF's guiding principle is, "If Shikshan Parishads and classroom observation don't go hand in hand, something is wrong." This philosophy mandates a continuous cross-validation of data. The model actively checks if the strategies discussed in cluster-level TPD meetings (Shikshan Parishads) are translating into tangible changes in classroom practice. In a recent three-month period, data from over 100 Shikshan Parishads was systematically correlated with insights from more than 550 classroom observations, allowing the DIET to see a clear, data-backed link between training and implementation.

GPF's model is operationalised through four key principles that ensure data quality and utility.

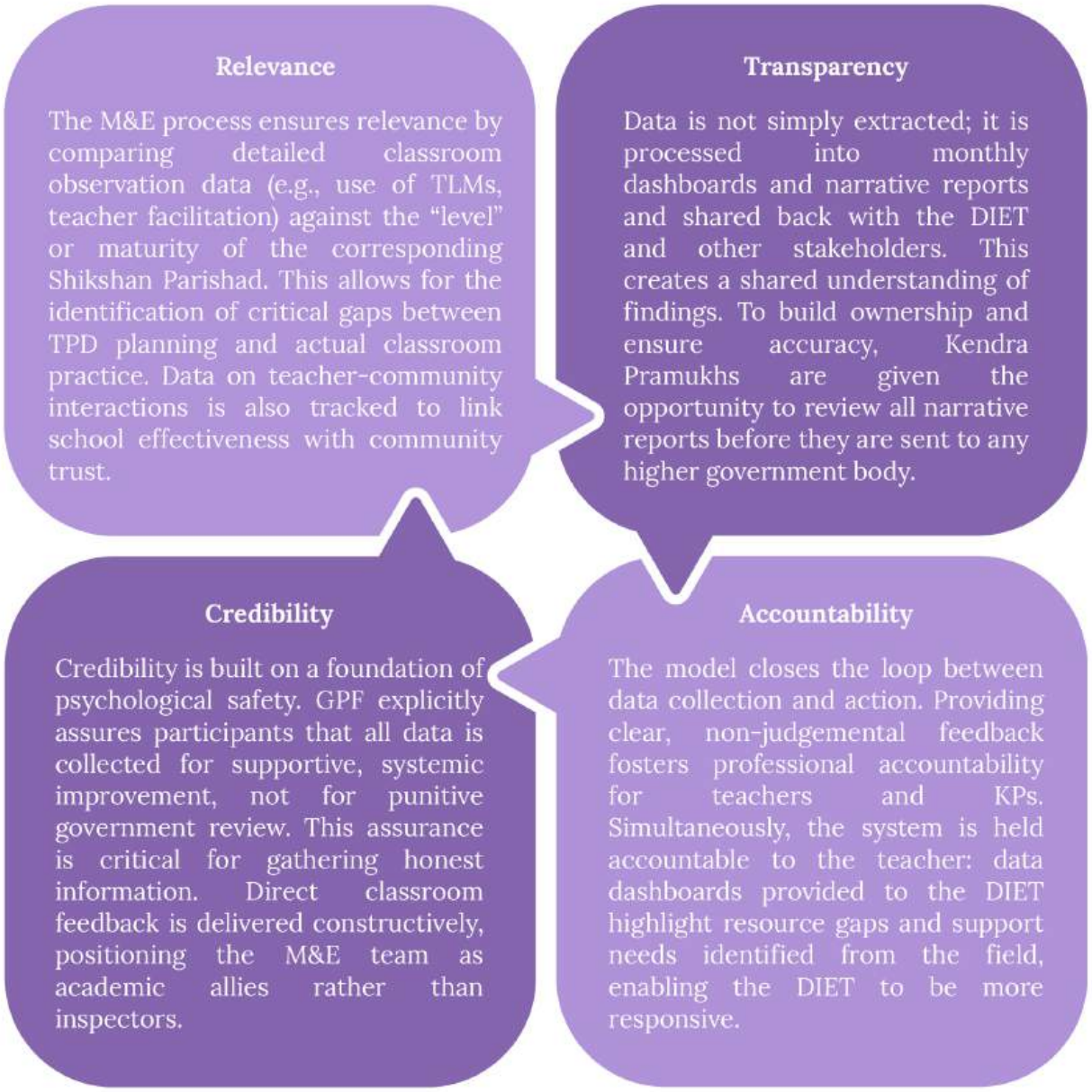


Figure 6.7: *Four key principles of data collection and governance*

Conclusion

GPF's model illustrates a shift from simple M&E to a comprehensive data governance system. By prioritising the triangulation of data and building a foundation of trust with stakeholders, it successfully links TPD inputs to classroom outcomes. The framework's emphasis on making data transparent, relevant, and credible creates a sustainable cycle of accountability, empowering teachers and KPs while making the district-level system more responsive. This approach presents a valuable, replicable model for CSOs and policymakers seeking to enhance the effectiveness of in-service teacher support systems.

Implications for Policy

This case study demonstrates the impact of the recommendation of using closed feedback loops as a process to bring improvements in TPD processes and consequently teaching-learning processes. It showcases that when the process of data analysis is made transparent and used only for reflection and improvement, teachers lose their fear of punitive measures and use data to identify areas for change within their classrooms. Moreover, the training of Kendra Pramukhs on data analysis and collaboration with them in generating reports plays a critical role in generating ownership and strengthening their capabilities to provide academic feedback to teachers.

CETE's Online Communities of Practice

Context

A persistent challenge for in-service TPD in India is translating training into sustained classroom practice. Teachers, particularly in remote and rural locations, often lack access to continuous, subject-specific academic support, leading to professional isolation. To bridge this gap between training and implementation, the Centre of Excellence in Teacher Education (CETE) developed a scalable, high-access model for online Communities of Practice (CoPs).

Model and Approaches

The CETE model integrated subject-specific online Communities of Practice (CoPs) on the Telegram mobile application alongside web-based Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) hosted on the TISSx (an Open edX platform) learning management system. Telegram was chosen for its accessibility — it is mobile-first, functions effectively in low-bandwidth areas, and enables teachers to engage while on the move. Its simple, familiar interface supports the easy sharing of diverse evidence of practice, such as text reflections, photographs of student work, and resource links, complementing the more structured learning experiences offered through TISSx.

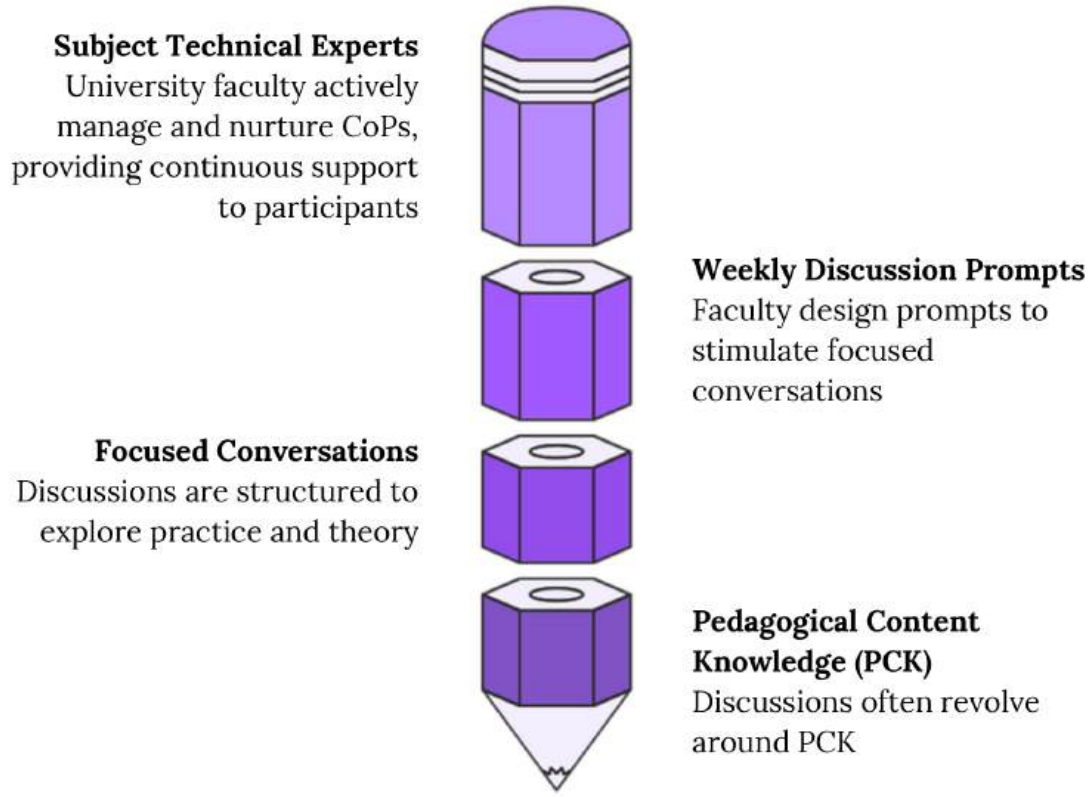


Figure 6.8: *Salient features of online CoPs*

A critical feature of this model is that the CoPs are not unstructured chat groups. They are actively managed and nurtured by university faculty, who act as teacher educators. These faculty members provide continuous pedagogical support and post weekly discussion prompts designed to stimulate focused conversations around practice and theory (such as Pedagogical Content Knowledge, or PCK). In addition to faculty, the groups also include subject matter experts and technical support personnel, ensuring holistic support for participating teachers.

This managed environment makes teachers' classroom experiences visible to a supportive community. This visibility serves a dual purpose: it is a source of intrinsic motivation and professional recognition, while also creating positive peer pressure to experiment with and implement new pedagogical strategies learned in associated TPD courses. The CoP effectively becomes a multi-purpose hub for seeking technical help, showcasing innovative classroom practices, and receiving constructive feedback from both peers and academic experts in a safe environment.

Core Design Principles and Scalability

The model's success is built on a set of integrated design principles.

Community & Social Learning
The central focus is community and social learning, creating a space where teachers build professional relationships, receive support, and collaborate. This community provides both vertical (teacher-to-faculty) and horizontal (peer-to-peer) linkages for reflection.

Practice-based & Rigorous
This social framework supports a practice-based and rigorous design. Teachers are consistently encouraged to implement new pedagogies and share their experiences of both success and failure.

Adaptability & Contextualisation
This entire process is guided by adaptability and contextualisation, allowing course content and discussions to be tailored to local languages and concerns, thereby avoiding a one-size-fits-all approach.

Teacher Agency & Recognition
The model actively fosters teacher agency and recognition, building professional identity by signalling new competencies and providing feedback.

Scalability & Sustainability
Crucially, the entire framework was designed for systemic scaling and sustainability from its inception. The model was not built as a small pilot to be scaled later; scalability was a foundational design consideration, focusing on embedding the programme within local ecosystems.

Outcomes and Impact

The CETE model has demonstrated significant, scalable gains. Most importantly, it gave a voice and a platform to teachers in remote locations, making their unique contexts visible. Seeing a wide range of practices shared and affirmed by faculty gave teachers the confidence to adapt and contextualise pedagogies for their own classrooms.

18
courses are offered as "open runs" for a fee, demonstrating a path to financial sustainability

4,000+
teachers and teacher educators have enrolled in and completed these courses over the last three years

50-60%
course completion rate

The model proved highly scalable. The university credential earned was a key motivator for participants. This long-duration engagement fostered strong university-school connections and led to the recognition of active remote teachers as pedagogical leaders within the community.

Conclusion

For policymakers and CSOs seeking to replicate this successful model, CETE's experience provides several critical implications:

- **Human infrastructure is non-negotiable**

An online CoP is not a technology solution; it is a human one. To function as professional learning environments, these communities must be actively managed. Budgets and programme designs must include a dedicated CoP manager to facilitate learning, monitor exchanges, and ensure teacher queries are addressed.

- **Plan for the real-world technology context**

The platform choice must be based on teacher reality, not institutional preference. This includes accounting for "Bring Your Own Device" (BYOD) policies and high mobile data costs, which necessitates planning for asynchronous learning models. Furthermore, teacher digital literacy cannot be assumed and must be actively developed.

- **Invest in hybrid models**

The impact of online CoPs can be significantly strengthened by linking them to local, in-person TPD structures, such as cluster or district resource centres. This hybrid network approach helps develop and sustain local expertise.

- **Adopt a multidimensional evaluation**

Measuring impact is complex. Rather than focusing narrowly on student learning gains, evaluation must use a mixed-methods approach (surveys, interviews, observations) to understand changes in teachers' knowledge, attitudes, and, most importantly, their classroom practices.

Implications for Policy

This case study beautifully illustrates how state public education systems can collaborate with universities to bring in academic expertise and strengthen research on teacher education. CETE's contribution in developing teacher education courses and providing teachers with accreditation ensured both quality and motivation for teachers to participate and complete the courses successfully.

CETE's design for a hybrid 'Communities of Practice' ties in with the recommendation to activate peer communities of learning amongst teachers. The case study highlights how both online and offline platforms can be used to strengthen discussion amongst teachers to develop their subject expertise. The structured approach of facilitating discussions through weekly prompts and presence of university professors as expert guides in the group is an important design input to ensure effectiveness of online learning communities.

Note: The information in this case study has been partially sourced from CETE (2024). Using ICT for scalable, sustainable Teacher Professional Development in Developing Country Contexts: An approach paper. Centre of Excellence in Teacher Education, Tata Institute of Social Sciences Mumbai.

India Education Collective's Teacher Collective Model

Context

India Education Collective (IEC) developed Teacher Collectives as a system-integrated approach to continuous Teacher Professional Development (TPD). The model decentralises academic planning to the cluster level and transforms routine cluster meetings into dynamic, peer-driven Professional Learning Communities. By focusing on teacher agency at the grassroots and institutional accountability at the district level, IEC has created a scalable blueprint for systemic educational transformation.

Model and Approaches

IEC's foundational belief is that quality education is the most effective mechanism for addressing complex societal challenges — poverty, hunger, and gender inequality — by equipping individuals with skills for respectful livelihoods and healthy lives. This approach acknowledges a critical reality: lasting educational transformation cannot be achieved through parallel programmes or external interventions alone. It must be embedded within government structures, owned by teachers, and supported by responsive institutional mechanisms. IEC recognises the potential and capability in public school teachers and has identified them as the most sustainable agents of change. Rather than attempting to reach every child individually, IEC focuses on teacher development through existing systems, ensuring widespread impact and long-term sustainability.

Design of Teacher Collectives: Why Clusters Matter

The Cluster as the Optimal Unit

IEC identified the cluster level — where teachers from 10-15 geographically proximate schools convene — as the most appropriate unit for Teacher Collectives. This choice addresses several systemic challenges:

Avoiding Context "Averaging":

- Block and district-level meetings often deal with generalised priorities that fail to address the specific realities teachers face.
- Clusters bring together educators working in similar socio-economic contexts, facing comparable challenges with infrastructure constraints, and community dynamics.

Relevant Peer Discussion:

- Teachers within a cluster share students from the same communities, enabling meaningful exchange about what works in their specific context.
- Geographical proximity facilitates follow-up collaboration, classroom visits, and ongoing peer support between formal meetings.

Leveraging Existing Structures:

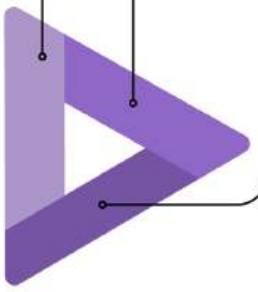
- Monthly cluster academic meetings already exist in most states' education systems.
- Rather than creating new structures, IEC transforms the culture and content of these existing meetings — shifting from administrative reporting to academic collaboration.

Facilitation Structure

Teacher Collective meetings follow a deliberate facilitation structure promoting ownership and academic rigour through three key elements:

Collaborative Monthly Planning

Teachers collectively map curriculum Learning Outcomes to create comprehensive plans covering content sequencing, pedagogical activities, teaching materials, and assessment strategies. This teacher-led planning shifts professional development from external expert-driven training to peer-constructed knowledge.



Grounded in Reality

Teachers share real classroom challenges — learning outcome gaps, student misconceptions, or resource constraints — making discussions immediately actionable rather than theoretical.

Demonstration and Peer Learning

Teachers showcase effective techniques using student work samples, normalise peer observation and feedback, and organically develop champion teachers who model possibilities for colleagues.

Figure 6.9: *Key elements of IEC's Teacher Collective meetings*

Circular Review and Planning

While teacher agency drives classroom-level change, institutional support at block and district levels ensures quality, consistency, and scale. IEC aims to support the strengthening of a structured loop of review and planning at the Cluster, DIET, and SCERT levels to ensure accountability at each stage and enable clear action planning based on defined metrics. This loop aims to operate on a monthly cycle, wherein at the cluster level, district, and state priorities are reviewed and planned through teacher collectives. This is followed by a review of the quality and effectiveness of teacher collectives at the DIET level, where gaps are identified and addressed through the DIET Planning Meeting. Subsequently, the outcomes of the DIET Planning Meetings are reviewed at the SCERT level.

This monthly cycle ensures that each institutional level is informed by the others, allowing progress made and gaps identified in previous months to be systematically addressed. IEC supports system stakeholders in implementing this loop at each institutional level. For this, IEC supports SCERT by providing analyses of key insights from the Google Forms submitted by DIETs, based on which SCERT attempts develop plans and issue circulars to address any emerging state-wide gaps.

On-Site Support by Cluster Resource Persons (CRPs)
Beyond monthly meetings, CRPs provide on-site classroom support through co-teaching, observations with constructive feedback, and implementation assistance. This bridges the gap between collaborative planning and actual classroom practice.

District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs) as Systemic Anchors
IEC's most significant innovation lies in transforming DIETs into active drivers of quality assurance. IEC supported SCERT in Uttar Pradesh to define clear Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for DIETs across all 75 districts, making TPD quality measurement compulsory. The framework specified meeting execution standards, participant roles, and quality assurance methods, including observation protocols and feedback mechanisms.

This multi-layered support system creates coherence across the education system — ensuring that district goals, block support, and classroom practice work in concert rather than at cross-purposes.

Data-Driven Monitoring and Support to SCERT

A systematic approach ensures accountability while enabling responsive support:

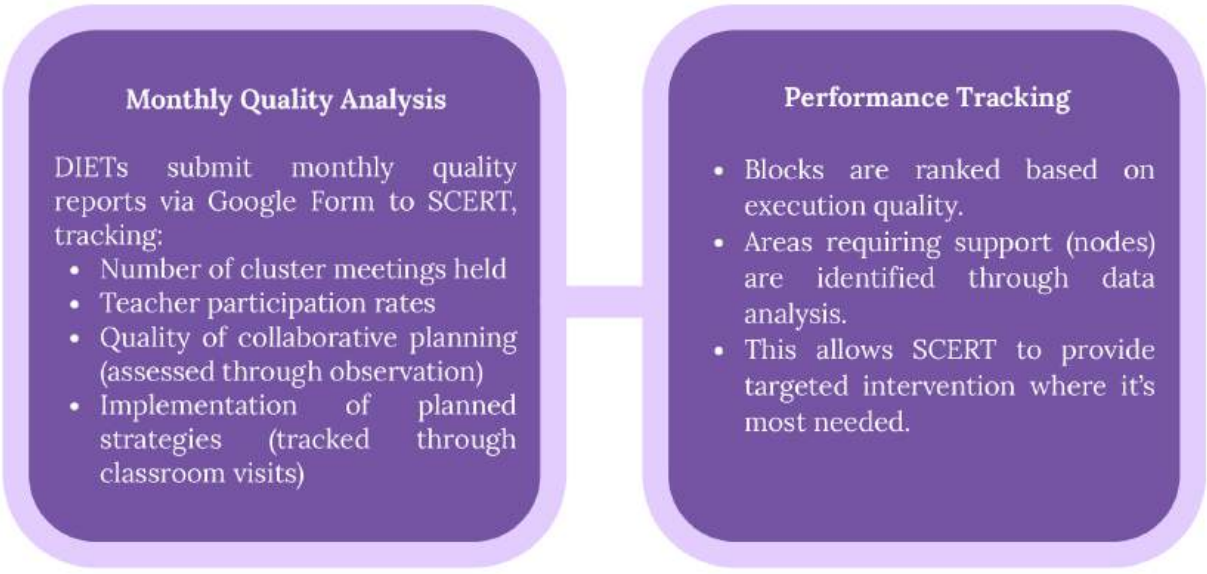


***Figure 6.11**: Data-driven approach of monitoring and support*

Results

Initially, only 14 districts adequately covered the quality parameters. Through focused intervention and performance tracking, this expanded to 50 high-performing districts. This demonstrates that systemic accountability, when coupled with supportive capacity building, drives broad impact.

Fundamental Shift in DIET Function

This accountability process fundamentally transformed how DIETs operate. Previously functioning in isolation and conducting generic training disconnected from ground realities, DIETs now serve as active reviewers and planners of content, using real data on cluster meeting quality and classroom outcomes to inform district-level strategy. They shifted from top-down training delivery to responsive support systems addressing specific cluster and teacher needs.

Creating Systemic Coherence

By aligning DIET priorities with cluster-level realities, the model creates coherence across the system — district goals, block support, and classroom practice work in concert rather than at cross-purposes.

Scaling Strategy

IEC prioritises scaling (embedding within existing systems) over simple replication. The model leverages state-provided curriculum materials, works through existing meeting structures and administrative cadres — ensuring sustainability and government ownership. While core principles remain consistent, implementation adapts to state-specific contexts, ensuring a natural fit within diverse administrative systems.

Conclusion

India Education Collective's Teacher Collective Model offers a blueprint for system-integrated TPD that is both scalable and locally relevant. By empowering teacher-led academic planning at the cluster level and building structured accountability through DIET transformation, the model successfully activates teacher agency within a rigorous systemic framework.

The Uttar Pradesh experience demonstrates that when DIETs have clear quality standards, data-driven monitoring, and responsive support mechanisms, continuous professional development can be scaled across entire states. The result is not a one-time training intervention but an ongoing culture of collaborative learning embedded in the routine functioning of the education system.

This model proves that sustainable educational transformation doesn't require massive new investments or external programmes — it requires redesigning how existing structures function, empowering the teachers already in the system, and ensuring institutional accountability for quality. When these elements align, systemic change becomes not just possible but inevitable.

Implications for Policy

IEC's work across eight states showcases how peer learning communities for teachers can be integrated into existing structures of the public education system across the country. Their work with CRCs and DIETs highlights how different structures/institutions and personnel at the cluster, block, and district levels can work together to provide adequate support to teachers for strengthening learning in classrooms.

IEC's work in Uttar Pradesh with SCERTDIETs offers an important example to strengthen the involvement of DIET in improving the quality and effectiveness of cluster academic meetings.

Creatnet Education's Teacher Leaders Programme (TLP)

Context

Teachers in India, particularly those serving in low-fee private schools and NGO-run centres, often operate in professional silos with limited avenues for continuous development. Traditional in-service training typically follows a top-down, "sage on the stage" approach, which frequently fails to translate into sustained classroom change or improved teacher agency. Addressing this structural gap, Creatnet Education has deployed the Teacher Leaders Programme (TLP), a model centred on creating self-driven, peer-led PLCs.

Model and Approaches

Parameter	Traditional Approach	Teacher Leadership Programme
Teacher Role	Passive recipient of knowledge	Active leader and facilitator
Training Model	Episodic workshops	Purpose-based clusters of 10-12 educators
Expertise Sources	External expert	Peer leader
Pedagogical Shift	'Sage on the Stage'	'Guide by the Side'
Learning Environment	Individual reflection	Collaborative reflection and co-creation
Leadership	Centralised	Decentralised

Table 6.1: *Traditional approach vs. Teacher Leadership programme*

This structure allows teachers to practise self-observation, share challenges, and co-create solutions, effectively decentralising the source of expertise and fostering a culture of distributed leadership.

Philosophy and Methodology

The programme's methodology is distinct in its integral approach, systematically connecting "inner" work with "outer" practice. It posits that systemic change is an emergent property of individual growth, structured across three expanding concentric circles of awareness:

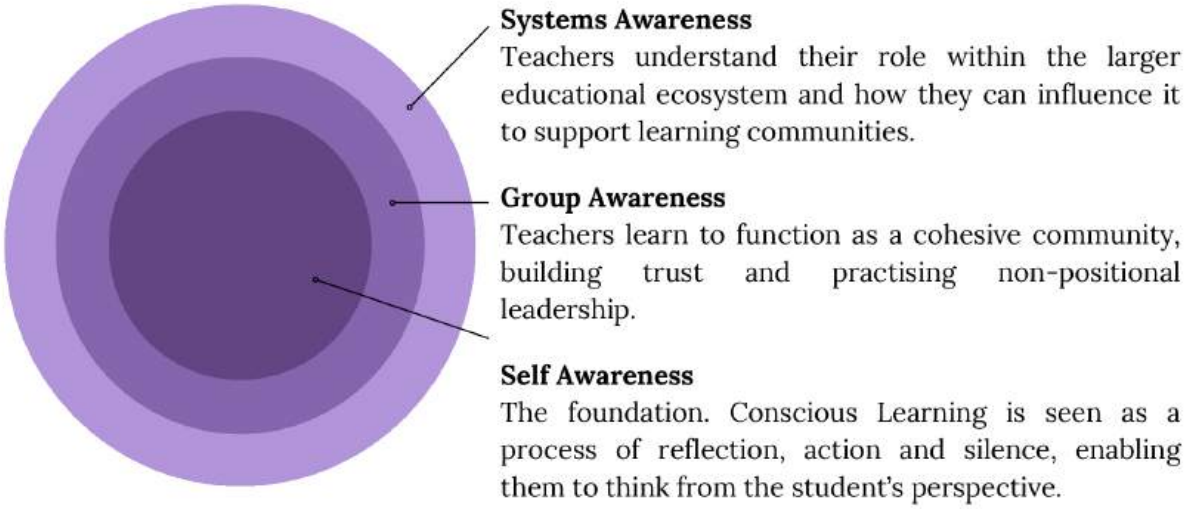


***Figure 6.12**: Traditional approach vs. Teacher Leadership programme*

1. Facilitator Selection & Onboarding

Facilitators are selected annually from various schools and partner organisations. This is a rigorous, competency-based process requiring reflective writing and an online interview. The selection focuses on key leadership competencies. Partner schools can recommend suitable candidates.

2. Annual Facilitator Development Offsite

A 4-5 day in-person offsite is conducted annually to strengthen the facilitator cohort's skills. Learning is experiential, incorporating observation, practice facilitation, peer feedback, and reflection. The offsite involves group work led by an experienced facilitator developer, totalling approximately 20 hours of learning.

3. TLP Programme Modules & Delivery

The programme spans six months and includes 20 hours of learning across the TLP Foundation and TLP Advanced modules. Facilitators simultaneously build and lead their own teacher communities, facilitating experienced sessions in their groups. Facilitators meet fortnightly for reflection and programme review, working with their teachers in the alternate weeks.

4. Partner School Engagement & Support

Visits are made to select partner schools with high alignment to deepen engagement and understand on-the-ground impact. These visits encourage facilitators, provide feedback on classroom practice, and support specific teacher capacity challenges. Structured engagement touchpoints are being developed for school leaders, acknowledging their critical role in shifting pedagogical culture.

5. Tweekly Online Meetups (Alumni & Community Engagement)
Tweekly is a fortnightly online session designed for teachers and alumni to learn collaboratively across organisations. These sessions are led by alumni or active facilitators, allowing them to showcase best practices. The format also provides an opportunity to receive feedback on facilitating a large, open audience session.

6. Physical Exposure Trips & City Meetups
2-3 annual physical meetups are organised in cities like Delhi and Hyderabad to broaden teachers' perspectives. These meetups provide networking, deeper learning, and inspiration through visits to innovative schools or curated learning experiences. The programme envisions expansion to new cities as partner growth allows.

7. Facilitator Developer Vision & Growth Meetups
Facilitator Developers, key members of the community, engage in continuous development initiatives. Two annual physical meetups are organised to enhance their competencies and reflect on ground challenges. The goal is to articulate a shared, informed vision for the TLP community.

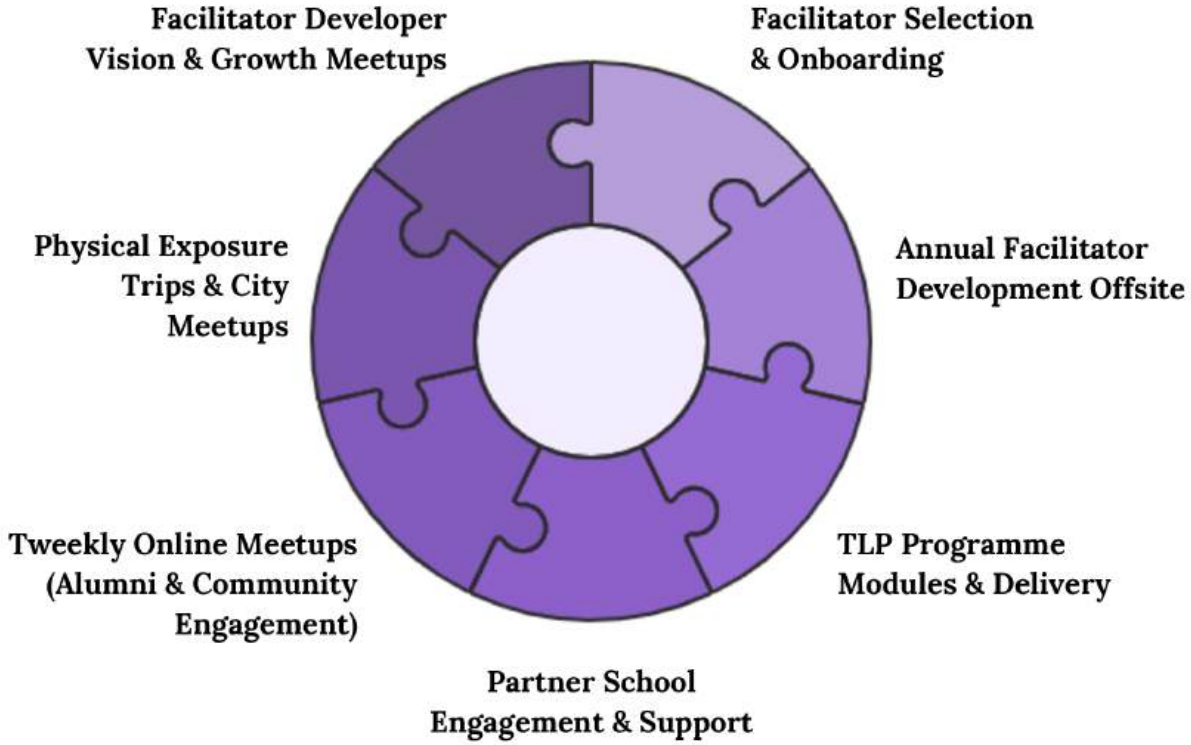


Figure 6.13: *Key touchpoints of the TLP community experience*

Outcomes

The impact of this model extends beyond teacher satisfaction to tangible classroom transformation.

Student-led Learning
As teachers adopt facilitation techniques, their classrooms shift from lecture-heavy environments to interactive, student-led spaces. Students become "fearless", actively asking questions and taking ownership of their learning processes.

Professional Resilience
The PLCs provide a critical support system, a "psychological safety net", that allows teachers to admit failures and seek feedback without fear of punitive measures. This community support promotes personal wellness and significantly reduces professional isolation.

Contextual Adaptation
Because the communities are peer-led, solutions are inherently contextualised. Teachers support each other in adapting pedagogies to the specific realities of their low-resource classrooms.

Student Teacher Connect
Teachers focus on social-emotional aspects of children's development and start paying attention to student needs beyond their immediate lesson. An increase in teachers listening and creating safe spaces is observed.

Conclusion

Creatnet Education's TLP demonstrates that effective in-service TPD need not be resource-heavy or expert-dependent. By focusing on self-growth, exposure to excellent classrooms and enabling self- and peer feedback on facilitation, the model achieves depth and scale simultaneously. For policymakers, TLP offers a blueprint for a decentralised CPD architecture where the system is sustained by the very professionals it seeks to serve.

Implications for Policy

This case study demonstrates how critical reflection can be embedded as a core part of Teacher Professional Development. Creatnet's focus on strengthening self-awareness is pertinent for the transformation of teachers as reflective practitioners.

Furthermore, their work on developing teachers as facilitators for learning communities brings forth an approach for strengthening the facilitation skills of CRCs and BRCs. This is a much-needed skill for the middle-tier leadership within public education systems across the country.

Ignus Pahal's TELOS (Targeted Enhancement of Learning Outcomes through Supportive Supervision)

The TELOS (Targeted Enhancement of Learning Outcomes through Supportive Supervision) model, developed and implemented by Ignus Pahal, represents a systematic approach to improving children's learning by strengthening performance at every level of the education system. Implemented in Uttar Pradesh (2018-19) across 8,234 primary schools in five districts, TELOS demonstrated measurable improvements in both teacher performance and student learning outcomes through its innovative focus on supportive supervision, performance indicators, and data-driven decision-making.

Aspect	Traditional Cascade	TELOS Approach
Focus	Content transmission	Performance transformation
Trainers	Separate from monitors	Trainers are monitors
Standards	Competence-based	Performance-based with clear indicators
Data Use	Top-down reporting	Bottom-up planning
Ownership	Centralised modules	Co-created tools
Timeline	Short-term workshops	3-5 year sustained engagement
Success Measure	Training completion	Observable classroom change

Table 6.2: *Traditional cascade vs. TELOS approach*

Context

The TELOS model emerged from the understanding that assessing in-service teaching in India requires the development of performance standards that define what "good teaching" actually looks like in observable, measurable terms.

This realisation led to the ADEPTS (Advancement of Educational Performance through Teacher Support) framework, which developed performance standards not just for teachers, but for the entire teacher support system, including BRCs, CRCs, and DIETs. The process was highly consultative, involving practitioners from multiple states who worked together to ground the standards in field realities rather than academic theory.

The core insight from ADEPTS was revolutionary: having qualified, competent teachers is necessary but not sufficient. Teachers need enabling conditions (infrastructure, reasonable pupil-teacher ratios, materials) where they can actually use their competence. They also need supportive conditions (institutional support, supervision, recognition) that ensure their performance leads to improved student learning.

TELOS took this insight and built a complete implementation model around it. The model was piloted from June to December 2017 in 20 schools across one block in each of the five districts in Uttar Pradesh. The success of this pilot — particularly the clarity that performance indicators provided to all stakeholders — led to scaling across all 8,234 primary schools in these five districts in 2018-19.

Lessons from DPEP incorporated in TELOS

Reconstruction Approach (UP, Karnataka, Assam)	Key DPEP Principles Incorporated
• Trainers prepared for 40 sessions, chose 24 for each batch • "Sari design vs. trouser design" — adaptive rather than rigid • Transfer of responsibility ("chinta") builds ownership • Rigorous trainer selection through testing (not nomination)	• Outcomes-based planning (not norm-based) • Personalisable modules (not standardised textbooks) • Teacher as co-creator (not recipient) • Long-term staged engagement (not one-off events)

Philosophy and Methodology: Understanding How Change Happens

Figure 6.14: *Core principle and its distinctions*

Guiding Principles

1. Build on Existing Work

- Start where students, teachers, and supervisors are.
- Respect existing learning and intellect.
- Ensure seamless integration within existing systems.

2. Small Wins

- Teachers should witness measurable changes in their own performance.
- This maintains high morale and streamlines growth.
- The same principle applies to CRCs, BRCs, District Resource Teams.

3. Effectiveness Through Data

- Periodic collection of performance data online
- Analysis and planning in collaboration at district, block, and cluster levels
- Data-driven interventions based on actual needs

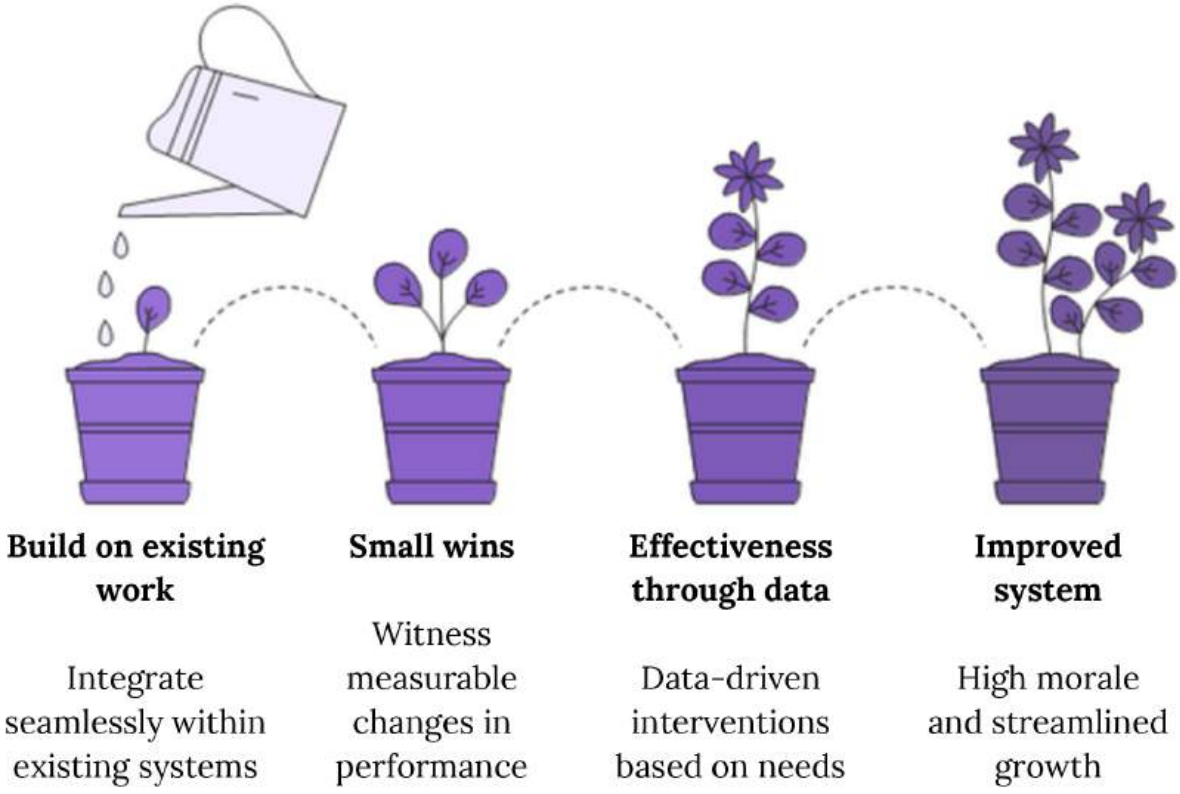


Figure 6.15: *Guiding principles of TELOS*

The TELOS Approach: A Multi-Level Performance Framework

Understanding the Five Interconnected Levels

TELOS recognises that student learning is the result of a complex system where performance at each level depends on performance at other levels. The model, therefore, defines clear expectations and provides support at five interconnected levels.

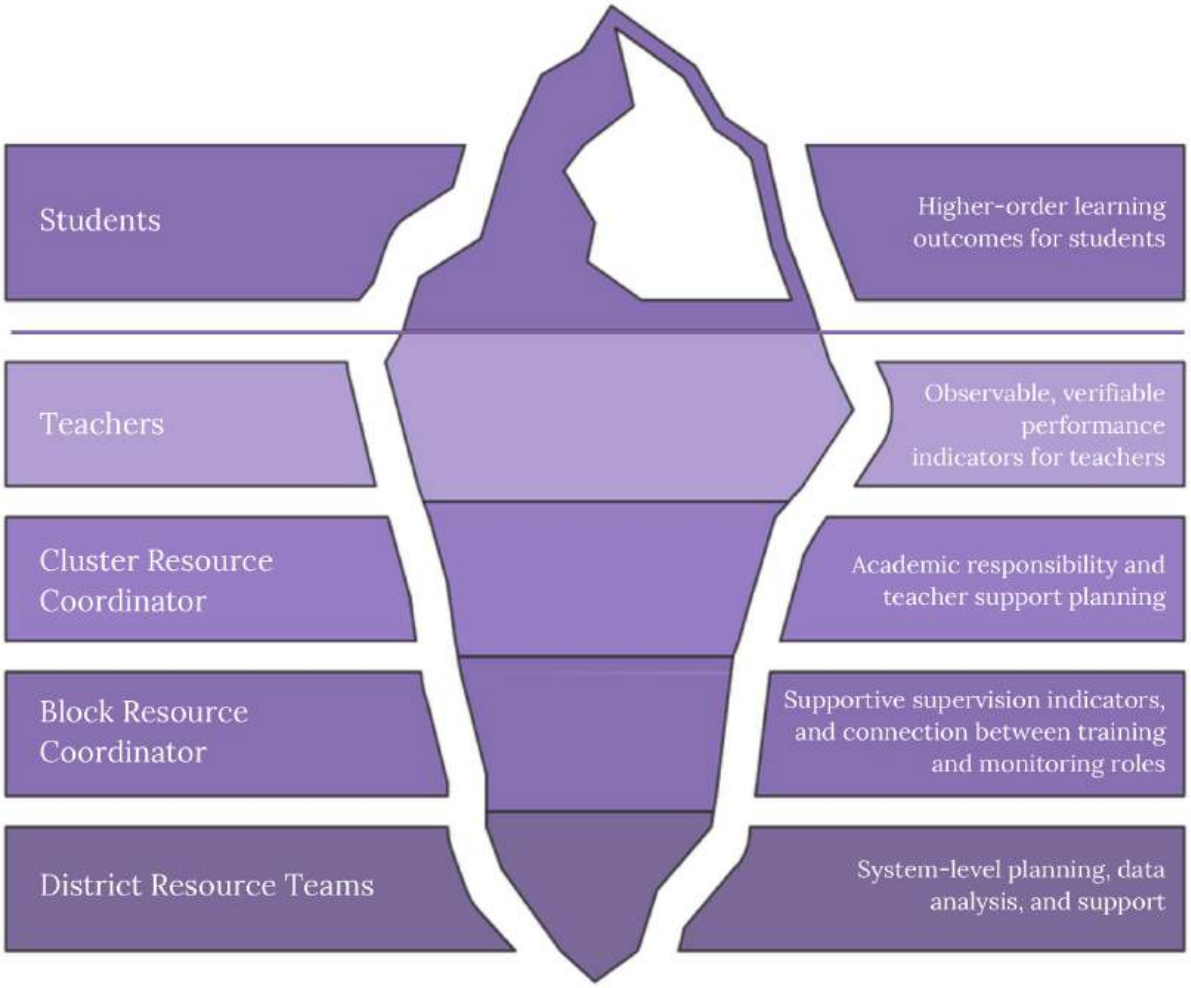


Figure 6.16: *Five interconnected levels of the system*

The Power of Interdependence

The five-level framework makes explicit that improvement at each level depends on others. Students learn better when teachers perform better. Teachers perform better when CRCs support them well. CRCs support better when BRCs train them well. BRCs train better when DRTs provide strategic direction and resources. And DRTs function better when they have accurate data from all levels.

This interdependence also creates shared accountability. The data helps identify where in the chain the breakdown occurred.

Key Innovations

1. Performance-based Approach

Unlike traditional competence-based training, TELOS focuses on observable classroom behaviours with clear indicators that teachers can self-assess and improve incrementally.

2. Supportive Supervision Model
Critical integrations include:

- Trainers are also mentors and monitors
- Reduces the disconnect between training and implementation
- Builds trust and continuity
- Enables context-appropriate support

3. Data-Driven Decision Making
Principles of Effective Data:

- Simple enough for all stakeholders to understand
- Easily available and accessible
- Actionable — can inform specific interventions
- Shared at appropriate levels (school complex, block, district)

4. Ownership and Agency

- Tools and formats co-created in workshops
- Implementers felt ownership over the project
- Teachers created activities and lesson plans independently
- Decisions made collaboratively based on local context

5. High Expectations Throughout
Recognition that mental models matter — supervisors' expectations of teachers and teachers' expectations of children directly impact performance at each level.

Outcomes

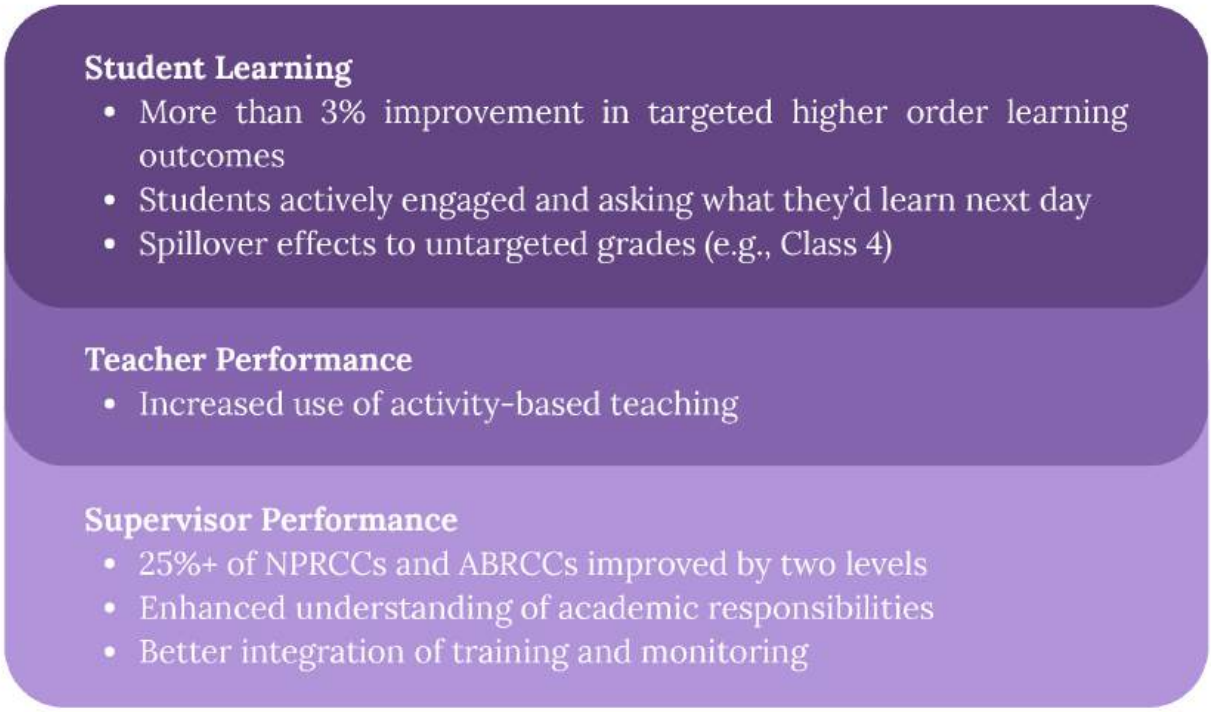


Figure 6.17: *Results achieved by TELOS*

Broader Implications For Teacher Professional Development

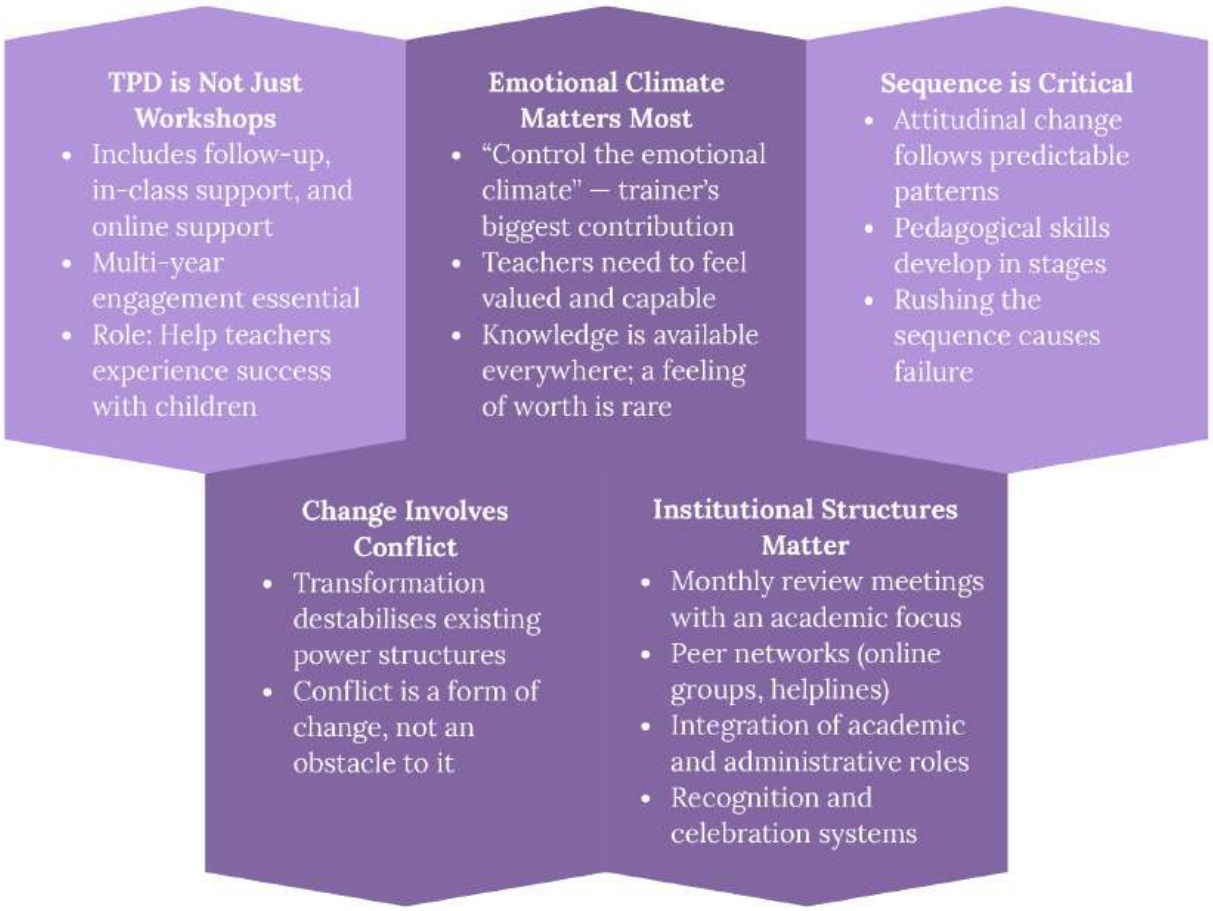


Figure 6.18: *Broader implications of TPD*

Underlying Theory of Change

How Teachers Change: A Sequence

1. Experience Success
Teachers need to taste success — when children say "we liked your class". This recognition is transformative and irreversible.

2. Experience Something Different
- Need to experience being valued and cared for
- Discover that learning can be thrilling and engrossing

3. Follow a Developmental Sequence
The model recognises specific hierarchies in teacher change:

Pedagogical Sequence

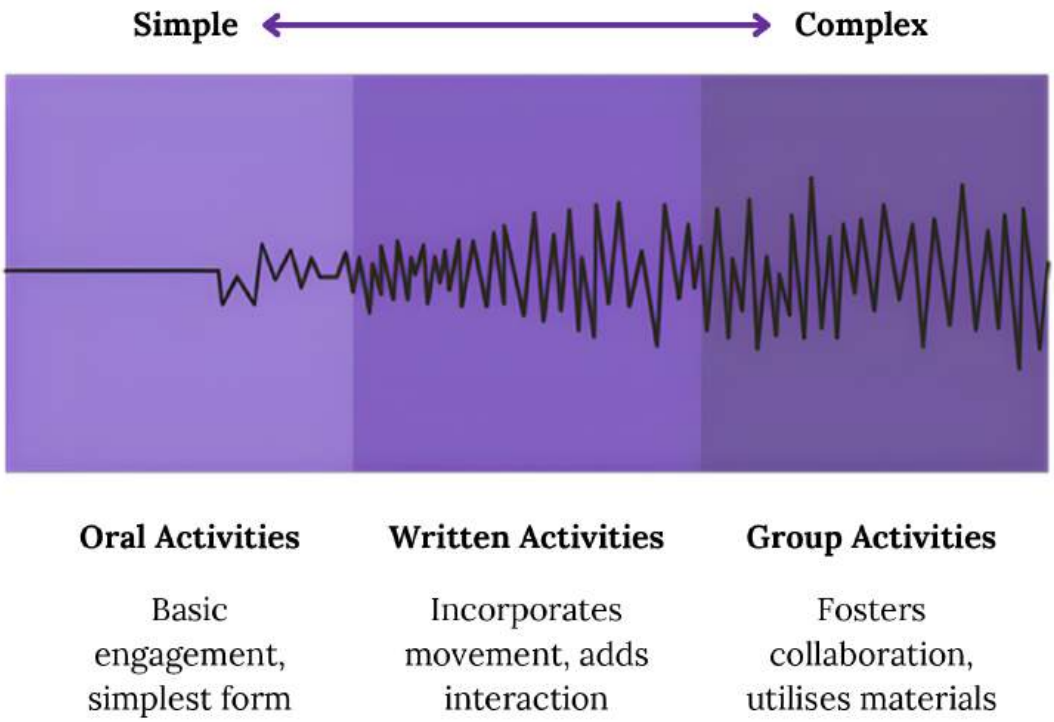


Figure 6.19: *Developmental sequence in pedagogy*

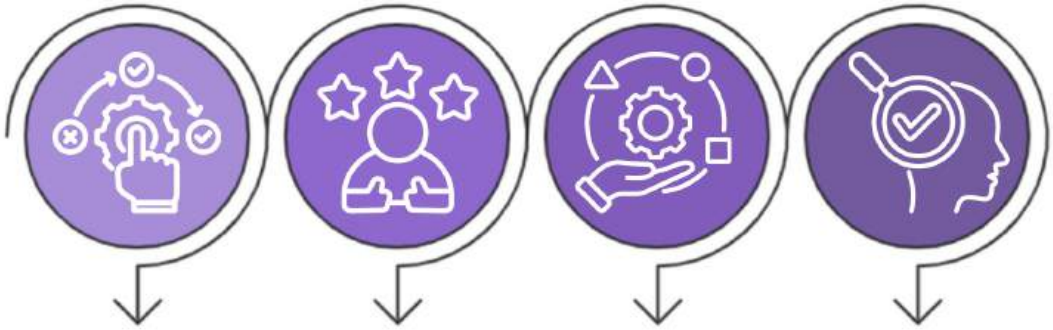
Attitudinal Hierarchy:

1. Attitudes about children in general
2. Attitudes about children from poor backgrounds
3. Attitudes about children from different religions
4. Attitudes about children from certain caste groups
5. Attitudes about girls (most resistant to change)

Beliefs and Assumptions:

- Open-ended questions stimulate reflection
- Facilitated debates reveal and shift internal frameworks
- Changes "internal furniture" that drives external behaviour

Four Essential Questions Effective Training Must Answer



What exactly do I have to do?	Why do I have to do it?	How do I do it in my own place?	How do I know I'm doing it well?
Concrete, specific actions, not vague principles	Experience-based conviction, not just evidence	Contextual adaptation, practical feasibility	Observable indicators for self-assessment

Figure 6.20: *Four essential questions effective training must answer*

Implications for Policy

This case study showcases the need for defining and strengthening the role of each cadre from district to cluster level to contribute effectively to Teacher Professional Development.

The responsibility for improving student learning in public schools can be equally distributed amongst different levels — DIET, BRC, CRC, and teachers — to ensure each cadre is effectively trained and understands their role. The performance indicators outlined in the ADEPTS framework can provide useful guidance in designing an M&E programme for distributed leadership in TPD programmes.

Note: The information in this case study has been sourced from Shukla, S. & Srivastava, D. (2021). TELOS (Targeted Enhancement of Learning Outcomes through Supportive Supervision) as a Model for Enabling and Sustaining Change. Ignus Pahal.

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