



Practice Guide



Leveraging government partnerships to strengthen continuous professional development for teachers in India

Impact at Scale Labs: Foundational Literacy & Numeracy

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Through the Impact at Scale Labs - Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN), Global Schools Forum supports seven grantee organisations across India and Sub-Saharan Africa for testing, iterating, and generating evidence towards scaling their FLN programmes in low-middle income contexts. Read more about the Labs, our grantees and their innovations [here](#)



Overview

This Practice Brief is co-developed by Peepul and Global Schools Forum, as part of the Impact at Scale Labs for Foundational Literacy and Numeracy. The practices, insights and recommendations shared here are grounded in the implementation realities and reflect the lived experiences of organisations working to improve foundational learning outcomes.

These approaches were designed and delivered in specific contexts. Applying them elsewhere will mean adapting to different programme, systemic and delivery realities. We share them as a guiding point for that adaptation. We encourage you to explore these practices and consider how they might inform your own work.

Let's continue the conversation:

If you are exploring how to adapt any of these practices, whether within your organisation, your fund or a wider education system, we would love to learn more about your programmes, the challenges you are navigating and the opportunities for impact you see ahead.

To discuss adaptation or implementation, or to connect directly with the organisations that implemented and refined these practices, please reach out to

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Introduction



India's public education system has made significant progress in improving school access and enrolment. However, ensuring meaningful student engagement and learning remains a persistent challenge. While most children attend school, a large proportion are not cognitively engaged in classrooms, resulting in limited learning gains and increased dropout rates, especially among vulnerable groups.

A key driver of this gap is the absence of sustained instructional support for teachers. While large-scale teacher training programmes are common, they often fail to translate into classroom practice without ongoing, school-based support.

Peepul addresses this gap by partnering with multiple state governments in India

to strengthen in-system coaching capacity that enables continuous teacher professional development (TPD) for teachers.

This approach is anchored in three interlinked components - resources and learning materials, teacher training, and on-site coaching - which together support teachers in both building knowledge and applying it in classrooms. These components are further reinforced through Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) systems and implementation support structures that enable continuous feedback, adaptation, and alignment with system priorities.

About the programme

Programme duration

**Delhi since 2015 and
In MP since 2020**

Implemented by

Peepul India

Goal

To strengthen existing academic cadres such as Mentor Teachers (MTs) in Delhi and mid-level academic officials in Madhya Pradesh—to provide structured, ongoing supportive supervision at scale.



Reach in Delhi



~1,500
Schools



658,541
Students reached

Reach in Madhya Pradesh



~90,000
Schools



5,942,269
Students reached

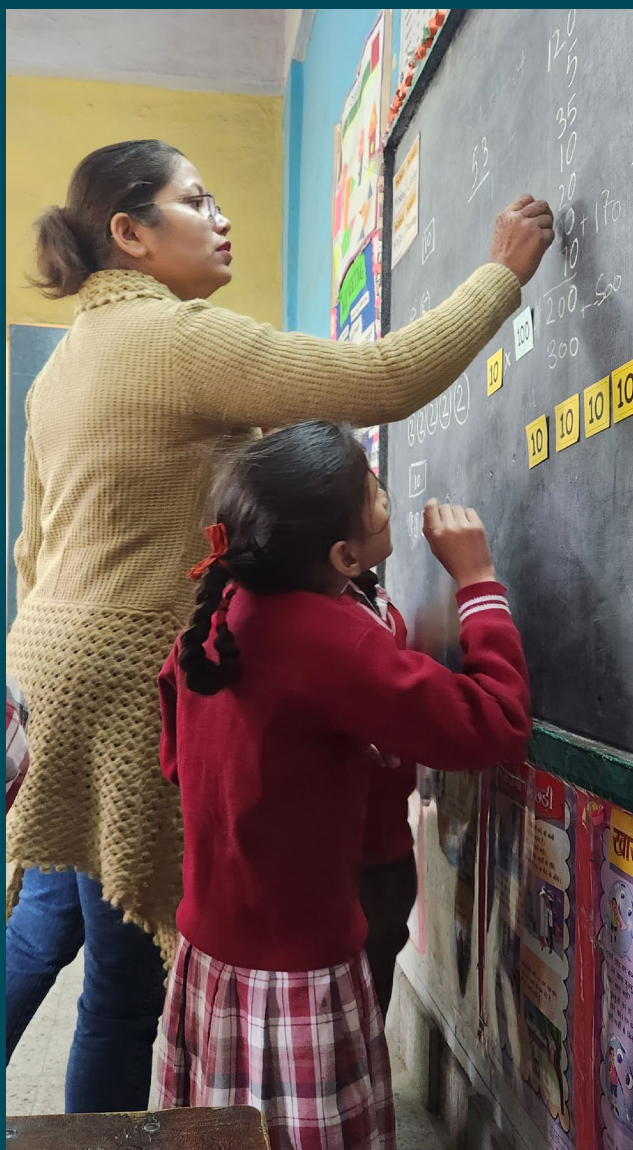
Instead of creating parallel structures, the approach strengthens existing academic cadres such as Mentor Teachers (MTs) in Delhi and mid-level academic officials in Madhya Pradesh—to provide structured, ongoing supportive supervision at scale.

About the Practice Guide

This practice guide explores how the coaching and teacher professional development model is adapted across two different education system contexts, highlighting key design decisions, implementation strategies, and trade-offs. Drawing on work with over 80,000 teachers across two states, it offers practical insights for organisations seeking to drive instructional change by adapting and contextualizing teacher support embedded within government systems. It also highlights the role of Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) in informing design choices, strengthening implementation, and enabling continuous improvement at scale.

02

Context and Problem statement



India has one of the world's largest public education systems serving over 120 million students across nearly 1 million government-run schools

offering free education primarily to children from low-income households (many living on \$60–\$80/month).

Over the past decade, there have been significant gains in student enrolment in primary grades (95%¹), as well as attendance (78%²). Recent policy momentum around foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN) has also created stronger conditions for improving classroom instruction and teacher development. But access has not fully translated into meaningful learning outcomes for all children- especially among girls, children with disabilities, and other underrepresented groups.

A critical underlying challenge remains low student engagement in classrooms. An estimated **50%-80%³ of students are not cognitively engaged**

¹ UDISE 2024-25

² ASER 2024

³ International Journal of Multidisciplinary, Voice of the Teacher Survey, Kundu, Bej, and Rice (2020) and others

during lessons. This indicates that while children are in school; the quality of instruction and interaction is not keeping sufficient pace.

To address this, Peepul focuses on improving student engagement by strengthening TPD. However, existing TPD efforts are often limited to one-time training programmes that do not translate into sustained classroom practice. **Effective professional development requires continuous, in-school support through coaching and mentorship.** Yet, system actors such as School Leaders (SLs), Mentor Teachers, and Mid-level Academic Officials (MLOs) are often not equipped with skills and mindset required to provide instructional coaching, with their roles largely oriented towards administrative oversight.

Peepul's engagement emerged through partnerships with state governments seeking to improve foundational learning outcomes. **This led to a key design question: which government actors, structures and modalities should be leveraged to provide continuous instructional support at scale?** The answer depended on system context, particularly the availability and role of academic cadres.

Peepul's work across Delhi and Madhya Pradesh illustrates how these contextual differences informed distinct design choices.

Table 1: Comparative Context: Delhi and Madhya Pradesh

Dimension	 Delhi	 Madhya Pradesh	 Design Implication
System structure	Centralised, urban	Large, decentralised	Shapes delivery architecture
Academic cadre	Mentor Teachers exist	Block and Cluster Academic Coordinators	Determines entry point and continuity
Scale	~1,500 schools, 658,541 students	~90,000 schools, 5,942,269 students	Impacts model design (direct delivery/ cascaded)
Transmission model	Single-layer	Multi-layer cascade + direct support	Trade-off: fidelity vs reach
Role of middle-tier	Defined coaching role	Primarily administrative; provides academic oversight	Requires role reorientation and capacity strengthening

TPD strategy developed based on state contexts

In Delhi, Peepul partnered with the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) to deliver Teacher Professional Development through a single, dedicated Mentor Teacher cadre.

Although this cadre was rigorously selected, mentoring had drifted toward compliance and administrative checks, with little actionable instructional feedback. The intervention focused on strengthening Mentor Teachers' coaching capacity- strengthening their skills in classroom observation, following coaching protocols and sustaining the practice through regular review and reflection.

Teacher professional development through the existing cadre of Mentor Teachers

Peepul Role: as a technical partner to the MCD



Partnership with Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD)

which manages ~1,500 schools spread across 12 administrative zones.



Existing Mentor Teacher cadre

academic support layer of experienced teachers, each assigned to support 10-12 schools via classroom visits, mentoring.



Delivered through the Mentor Teachers:



Mentor teachers as levers of instructional change

through strengthened coaching capacity, improved skills in classroom observation and feedback, and embedding regular review and reflection mechanisms



Single-layer transmission

relatively compact administrative structure enabled to capacitate Mentor Teachers to directly support classroom teachers through tighter feedback loops and stronger implementation fidelity

In Madhya Pradesh, through close engagement with the Rajya Shiksha Kendra (RSK), Peepul worked through the existing frontline cadre of Block and Cluster Academic Coordinators who had been engaged largely in administrative functions, with limited emphasis on instructional support to classrooms.

The intervention focused on reorienting their roles toward academic leadership- building capacity in classroom observation and coaching and shifting expectations around regular engagement with teaching and learning processes.

Teacher professional development through system officials

Peepul role: as PMU partner to the RSK



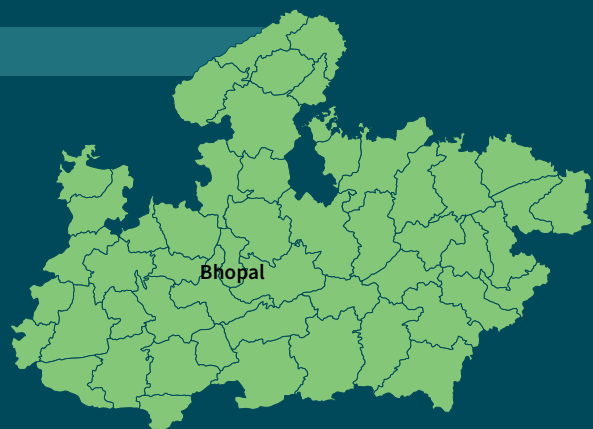
Partnership with Rajya Shiksha Kendra (RSK)

the state education body overseeing ~90,000 government schools spread across 55 districts.



Existing multi-level support cadre

including cluster/block officials, school leaders, State Resource Groups, Master Trainers- with varied administrative and academic responsibilities.



Madhya Pradesh

Delivered through two complementary tracks:



Large-scale cascade

reaching ~60,000 teachers in middle grades through SRGs to Master Trainers to Teachers - across all districts.



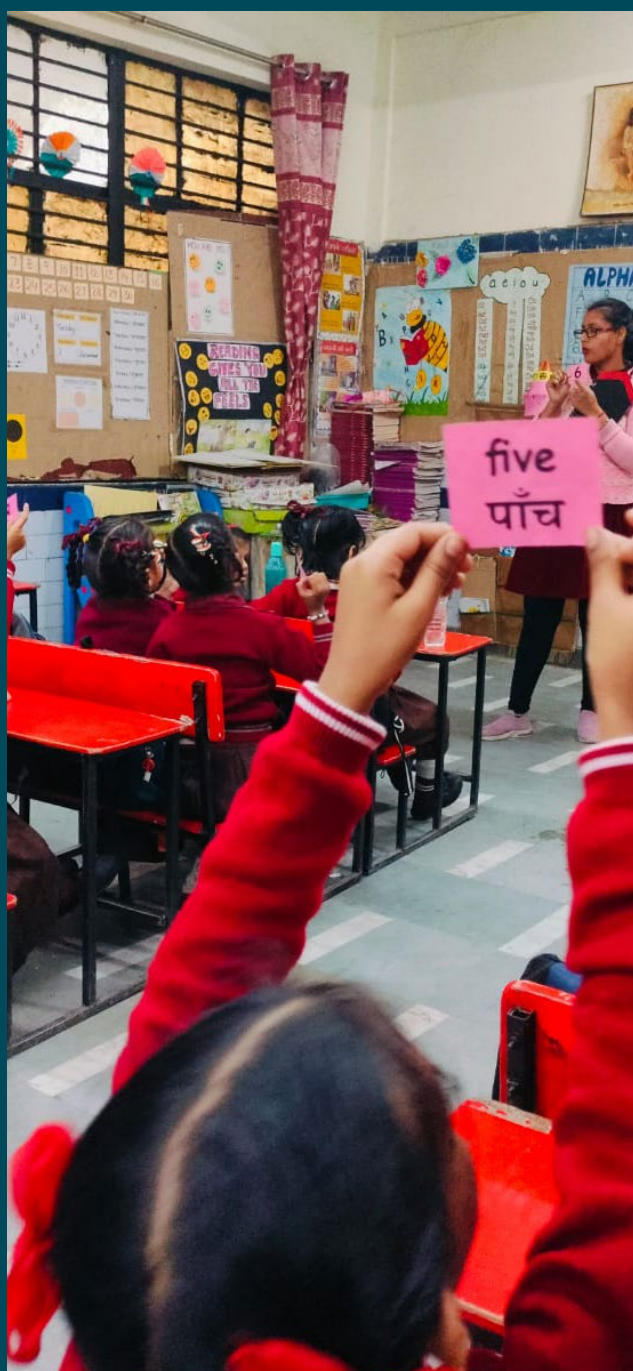
Whole-school transformation

through programmes like Sandipani Vidyalaya & PM SHRI with higher-touch engagement across selected schools spread across the state.

These contextual differences across two geographies led to distinct design considerations and trade-offs. In Delhi, working through a single, well-defined cadre enabled stronger fidelity and clearer accountability, but required intensive investment in building mentor capacity and standardising practices. In Madhya Pradesh, the multi-layered approach enabled scale across a vast and diverse system, but increased the risk of dilution across levels, necessitating additional mechanisms for monitoring, reinforcement, and continuous engagement.

03

Approach to Innovation



In an engaged classroom, students are not merely listening to a teacher explain a concept;

they are actively participating, using learning materials, responding to questions, discussing ideas with peers, and practicing skills with support.

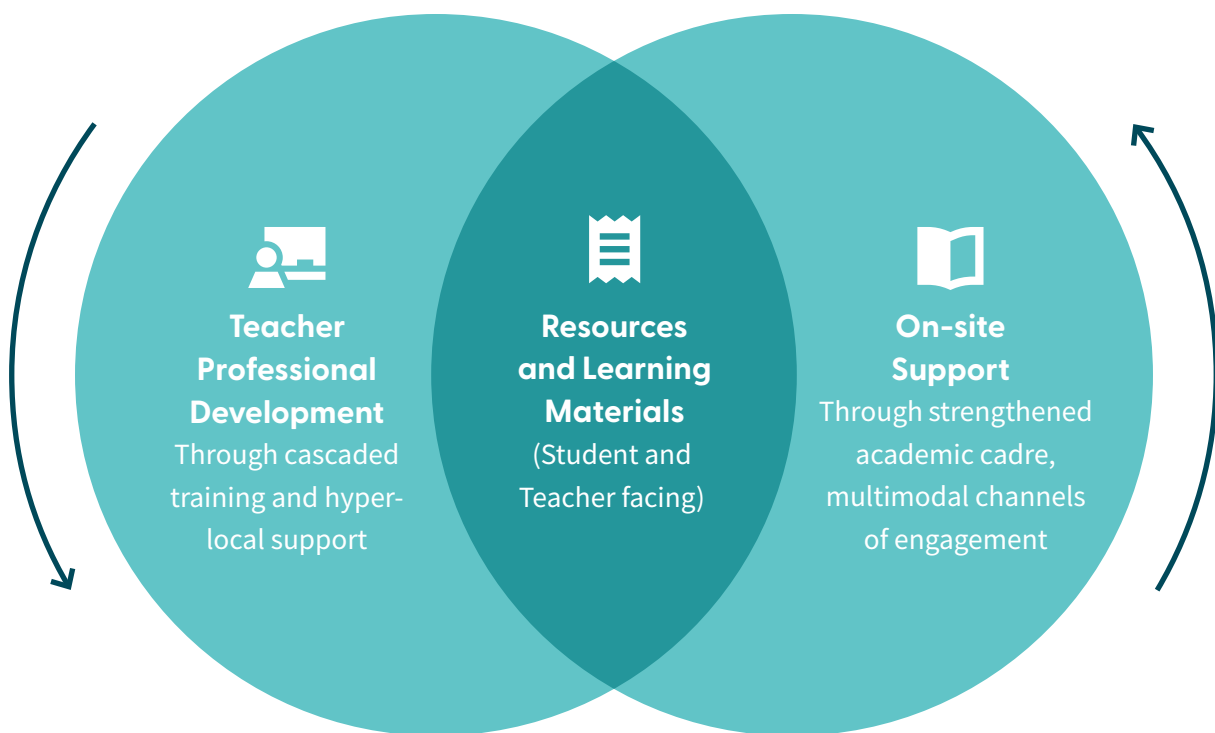
The teacher is able to identify learning gaps, adapt instruction, and use simple tools and routines to keep children cognitively engaged. Creating this kind of classroom experience consistently across government schools requires more than one-time training. It requires an integrated model in which teachers have access to relevant resources, receive practical training on how to use them, and are supported through regular coaching and feedback within their own school contexts.

At the heart of Peepul's strategy to improve student learning is the continuous professional development of teachers. Delivering this at scale requires **working through government systems** rather than creating parallel delivery structures. With nearly half of India's students enrolled in public schools, government systems offer the reach

and institutional capacity needed to enable widespread and sustained change. **While direct programme delivery can demonstrate effective practices, embedding these within government systems ensures that knowledge, routines, and capacities endure beyond the life of individual programmes.**

At the same time, this pathway is inherently complex and non-linear. It requires sustained investment in building relationships, establishing trust, and working in ways that are more embedded, designing and delivering interventions with and through government stakeholders. It also requires flexibility to adapt to evolving system priorities, while remaining anchored to core programme principles that drive improvements in classroom practice.

Across geographies, the engagement has evolved from a training-led model to more continuous, in-situ professional development implemented through three interlinked components: resources and learning materials, teacher training, and continuous on-site coaching, overlayed by programme implementation and MEL support strands.



3.1 Resources and Learning Material

A core component of the model is the development of resources that directly support classroom practice and teacher learning. While student-facing materials enable student practice and continued engagement, teacher-facing materials strengthen pedagogical understanding and provide ongoing professional support. This distinction is particularly relevant across contexts.



In Delhi,
the relatively smaller and more closely networked system allows for higher-touch engagement through physical materials.



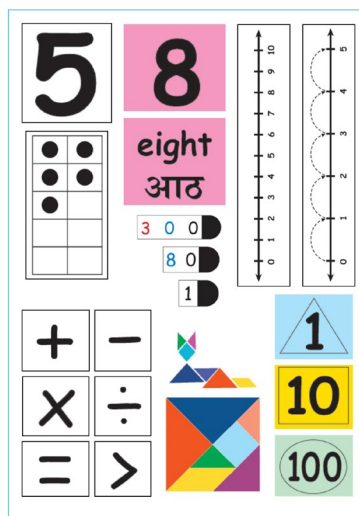
In Madhya Pradesh,
the scale and spread of the system necessitate greater reliance on digital resources to ensure reach and consistency. In both cases, however, the effectiveness of these materials depends on how well they are integrated with training and coaching structures.

Student-facing materials

In many classrooms, Teaching Learning Materials (TLMs) are either unavailable or under-utilised. Even where resources exist, they are often used for teacher demonstration rather than active student engagement. This limits opportunities for children to interact with concepts and reduces the effectiveness of instruction. The student-facing toolkits are designed to address this gap by enabling hands-on, activity-based learning that supports foundational literacy and numeracy.

Key considerations while developing student-facing material:

- 01 Contextualised and need based**
Toolkits developed in alignment with government curriculum and learning outcomes.
- 02 Emphasis on usability**
Materials are designed to be simple, replicable, and easy to integrate into daily teaching.



- 03 Diversity in material**
through flashcards, activity sheets and print-rich materials.
- 04 Clear guidance on usage**
Each toolkit is accompanied by a teacher manual with instructions on how to use specific resources to advance different concepts.



Teacher-facing materials

Teacher-facing materials complement classroom resources by supporting ongoing professional development. These include online courses, structured learning modules, and nudge-based resources designed to improve both pedagogical understanding and classroom practice.



In Madhya Pradesh, Peepul has partnered with the state to develop courses on Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), Professional Learning Communities (PLC'ss), and high-engagement pedagogy. A deliberate effort has been made to leverage government infrastructure rather than create parallel systems. As a result, these courses are hosted on DIKSHA4, enabling scalability and long-term sustainability.



In Delhi, the teacher-facing material is developed in collaboration with government's Core Academic Team, which oversees the design of lesson plans and TLMs within the MCD. They co-design and review all teacher-facing materials through several consultative sessions and working committee meetings with the Peepul Team. The teacher-facing material is aligned with the NEP recommendations and MCD context. Similar to MP, in Delhi Peepul leveraged the existing government infrastructure to ensure that ideas, pedagogical strategies, and materials are deeply embedded through this team for sustainable, large-scale implementation.

⁴ DIKSHA (Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing) is a national platform for school education, an initiative of National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT), under the aegis of the Ministry of Education (MoE), GoI.

Key considerations while developing teacher-facing material :

01 Involve relevant education officials

Partner with state education departments, SCERT⁵, and DIETs⁶ to identify key learning gaps and co-develop content materials.

02 Content alignment to state and national frameworks

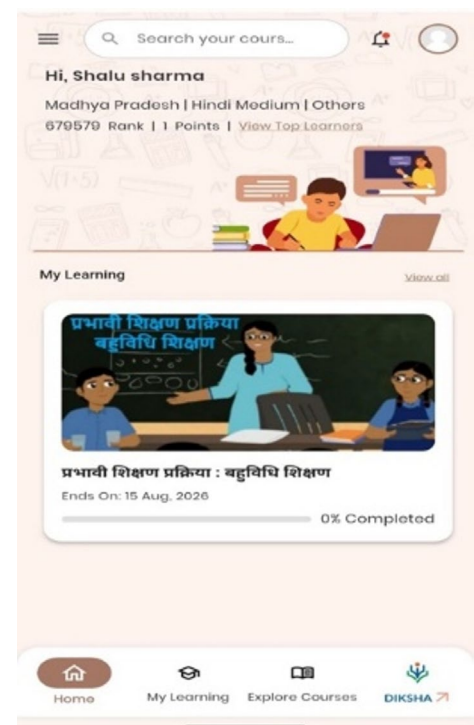
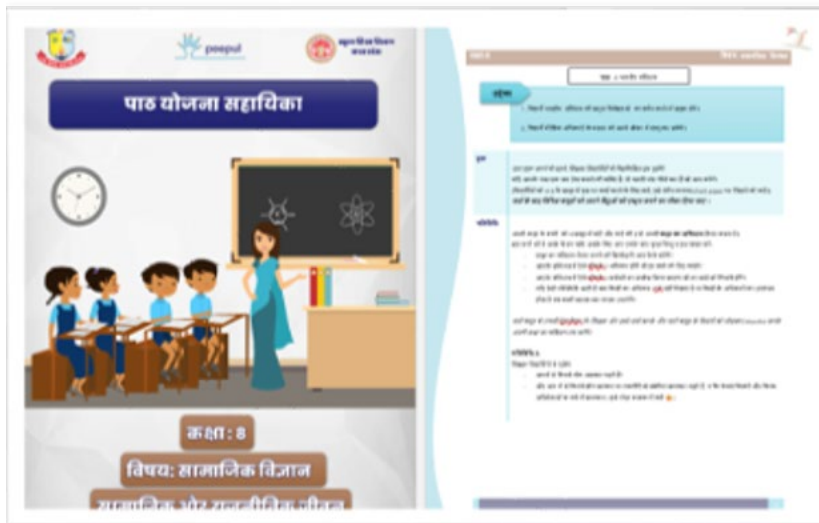
Map materials to frameworks such as the National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST⁷). Importantly, teacher-facing resources must be designed for classroom use - linked directly to student-facing materials and instructional practices.

03 Design for usability

Convert content into simple, modular, easy to use formats that fit into teachers' everyday workflows to ensure materials can be used independently by teachers within real classroom constraints.

04 Enable usage tracking

Deployment through DIKSHA portal enables the state to track participation through enrolment and completion metrics. However, digital engagement is not the end goal and it is tied back to classroom observations and coaching, creating a feedback loop between learning and practice.

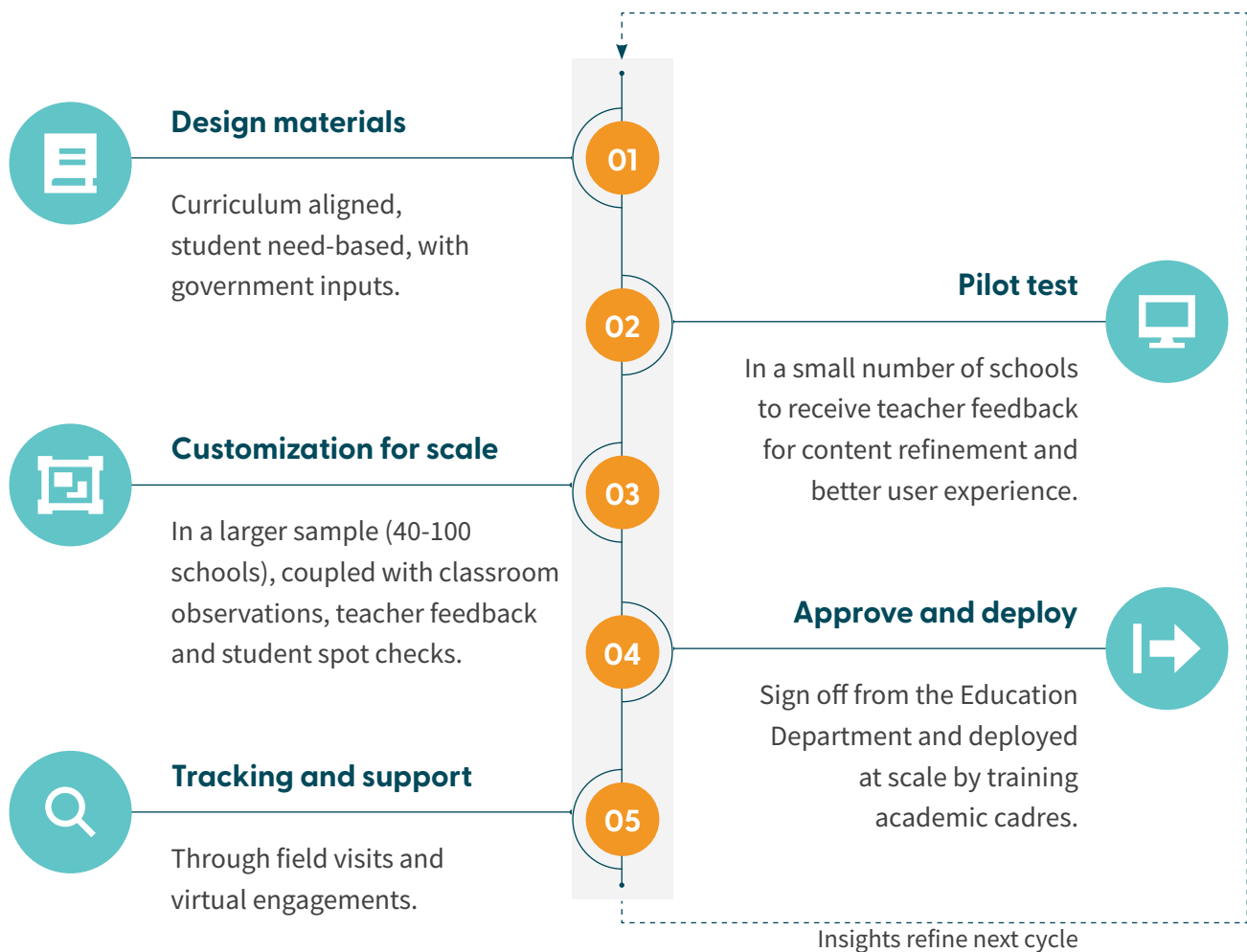


⁵ The State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) acts as the apex academic authority in a state, responsible for improving school education quality. Key functions include developing curriculum and textbooks, training teachers, providing research-based policy advice to the government, and implementing educational innovations.

⁶ District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs) are pivotal government institutions in India, established under the 1986 National Policy on Education to strengthen elementary education at the district level. They focus on training teachers, conducting research, developing curriculum materials, and implementing education policies to improve classroom teaching and learning outcomes.

⁷ National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST) defines standards across four stages—foundational, preparatory, middle, and secondary—focusing on professional development, knowledge, and practice.

Material development process follows a structured and iterative cycle over ~12–18 months:



3.2 Teacher Professional Development

Both research and implementation experience show that while training improves awareness, sustained changes in teaching practices require ongoing reinforcement through coaching, feedback, and structured support within schools. As a result, the focus is not training and continued support to both teachers and academic cadres and system structures around them.

In practice, in both Delhi and Madhya Pradesh there is a shift towards continuous professional development support after training- the specific design and delivery models differ across geographies based on systemic realities.

Table 2: Teacher Professional Development Model

	 Delhi	 Madhya Pradesh
Participants	Mentor Teachers and Teachers	School leaders (principals, vice-principals, middle and primary headmasters, subject teachers), State Resource Groups
Cadre for Training	Mentor Teachers	State Resource Group and Master Trainers
Transmission Layers	Single level transmission: Mentor Teacher → Teachers	Two-level transmission: State Resource Group → Master Trainers → Teachers; and in some contexts, direct engagement by Peepul team
Modality	In-person and online	Primarily in-person, with complementary digital supports
On-site support	Virtual engagement via WhatsApp, -Intensive classroom observation and monitoring, - Data discussion meetings at zonal level	Online courses on government platforms, -Professional Learning Communities (PLC'ss), virtual engagement, - Classroom observation and monitoring, - Data discussion meetings at district level

What this comparison shows is that the training model is not fixed; it is adapted based on system structure, available cadres, and scale requirements.



In Delhi,
where a mentor teacher cadre already exists, trainings are naturally channelled through that cadre.



In Madhya Pradesh,
the system requires a mix of cascade and direct support models, depending on whether the objective is scale or deeper transformation.



Ex-situ teacher training models

Two broad delivery models for teacher capacity building:

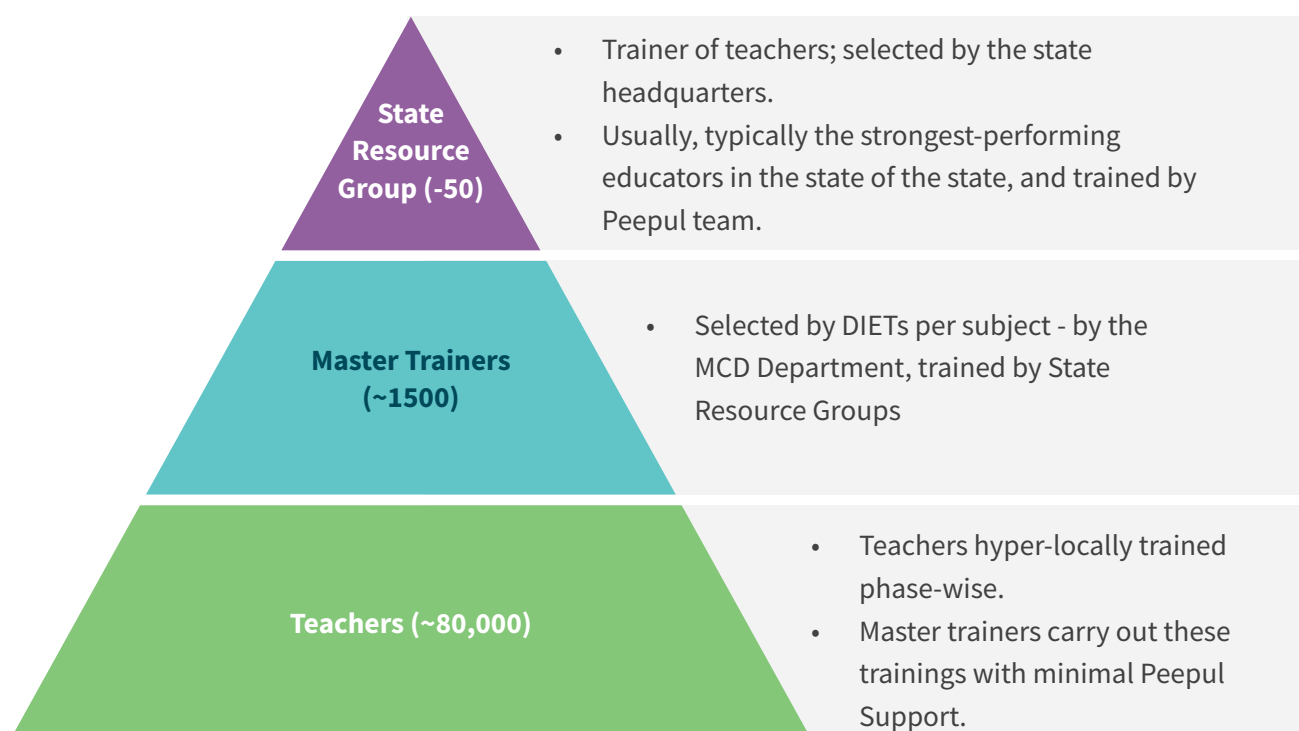
- The first is a **cascade model**, used when the aim is to saturate coverage quickly across large numbers of teachers.
- The second is a **hyper-local model**, used where more direct and contextualised support is needed.

01 Cascade model

The **cascade model** is particularly useful in Madhya Pradesh, where large-scale reach is required. It has been used to support approximately 60,000 middle-grade teachers and is usually deployed to achieve rapid coverage in shorter time periods.

How this works

These are often residential trainings, where teachers are relieved of teaching responsibilities for two days, usually during summer breaks. At the top of this structure is a State Resource Group (SRG), roughly 50 in number, selected by the state headquarters and trained by Peepul. The SRGs function as trainers of trainers and support Master Trainers in conducting the last-mile trainings for teachers. In Delhi, where mentor teachers already exist within the MCD system, any cascade training is facilitated through this cadre, with Peepul focusing on strengthening and coaching the mentors themselves.



02 Hyper-local model

The **hyper-local model** is used where more targeted support is needed as it allows for more contextualised, practice-based support. Unlike cascade models, which prioritise reach, the hyper-local approach works with smaller groups of teachers and is informed by classroom observations and identified learning gaps. This enables facilitators to model practices, address misconceptions in real time, and adapt training to teacher needs. As a result, there is stronger translation of training into classroom practice, particularly in areas requiring deeper pedagogical shifts.

How this works

Peepul works directly with subject teachers in English, Hindi, and Maths, often across a cluster of around six schools in a district. The training content is developed based on a structured needs analysis-undertaken in partnership with the state and informed by school visits and classroom observations by field teams. School leaders and teachers submit need analyses forms, which are then analysed to identify themes and priority areas for training. Based on this, the content and design of the training programme is jointly finalised. While Peepul leads the creation and facilitation of the academic content, the government provides logistical support and institutional backing.

Insights from the field

While cascade models enable larger teachers reach, quickly, but risks dilution at the last mile.

- As training moved from SRGs to Master Trainers to teachers, some sessions became more activity-focused than pedagogy-focused, with trainers emphasising completion of tasks rather than the instructional intent behind them.
- This was identified through training observations, classroom observations, post-training assessments, and review meetings with district/block officials.
- The main gaps were variation in trainer quality, uneven understanding of core practices, and limited transfer from training to classroom use.
- These were mitigated by simplifying key messages, defining non-negotiables for training delivery, adding more demonstrations and practice for trainers.

3.3 On-site Support for Teachers

The design of on-site support across Delhi and Madhya Pradesh has been shaped by three principles.

- First, working with the existing system to identify and strengthen the most relevant academic cadre that can provide support.
- Second, focusing on system capacity strengthening leveraging multimodal communication and support channels
- Third, leveraging existing system structures and people for codifying and institutionalising TPD efforts.

01 Identification of the right academic cadre for coaching

A major implementation lesson from Peepul work is that scaling coaching in government systems depends on identifying the right cadre to work through. In a country as large and administratively layered as India, building parallel structures is rarely viable.





In Delhi, the existing cadre of Mentor Teachers are supported through skills in coaching, mentoring, and facilitation so that they can support teachers on the use of subject-specific toolkits, high-engagement teaching practices, and assessment methods.



In Madhya Pradesh, Peepul works with mid-level academic officials and school leaders,. Recognising much of their time was absorbed by administrative responsibilities, leaving limited attention for academic support, the support involves gradually reorienting them toward academic responsibilities such as regular classroom observation, teacher coaching, and facilitation of peer learning circles. In whole-school transformation efforts such as Sandipani Vidyalaya and PM SHRI Schools, this structure is further strengthened by involving state-level officials more directly in academic monitoring while school leaders provide closer on-site support.

02 Capacity building of coaches and mentors

Once the cadre is identified, structured support is required to ensure that they can function effectively as instructional coaches. This capacity building mechanism involves multiple engagement points.

- It includes a combination of formal training sessions, digital resources and online engagement, joint classroom observations, and data discussion meetings.
- Workshops are conducted jointly with the government (with Peepul supporting design and facilitation) to address the content and skill areas necessary for coaching.
- Digital resources such as DIKSHA-based courses, short learning modules, structured nudges and WhatsApp-based engagement help sustain learning between formal spaces.
- Joint classroom observations provide a practice-based opportunity to model effective support.
- Data discussion meetings help mentors and officials reflect on classroom and student-level evidence and use this to inform future coaching.

All of these spaces are facilitated in partnership with the government. Activities are co-planned with the education department and aligned to the annual calendar and departmental priorities. This helps ensure that the support structures are not perceived as external add-ons but are embedded within official routines and systems.

03 Leveraging in-system structures and resources for codification, and institutionalization of efforts

For coaching and mentoring roles to become sustainable, they must be codified and institutionalised. This is why policy engagement and system-level codification form an important part of Peepul approach.

The three key efforts in this regard across Delhi and MP are:

A Mentor Teacher SOPs in Delhi

A Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) was co-developed with the Education Department for the Mentor Teachers. The SOP draws on evidence from implementation and is intended to formalise day-to-day expectations and practices. Such codification is important to ensure that academic responsibilities are not continuously overshadowed by administrative demands.

With multi-layered engagement (with MCD Education Director and working groups), the mentor -level SOP is co-created and anchored at the highest level and remains central to all mentor-related activities and policies. Recognising that a sustainable transformation at scale requires time, Peepul is currently working with the department to enable phased implementation of the SoP.

B Virtual Engagement in Delhi

A WhatsApp-based engagement initiative with the mentor teachers enables sharing of weekly posts whereby they are introduced to instructional strategies which can be readily implemented in the classroom. The mentor teachers cascade these strategies to teachers, and mentors share reflections, experiences, and challenges from their actual execution.

Such an engagement ensures that mentors can share consistent academic inputs with teachers on WhatsApp in between school visits. Beyond maintaining consistent interaction, it also fosters a peer-sharing culture where mentors and teachers exchange best practices, successes, and challenges with each other.

C Professional learning Communities (PLC'ss) in Madhya Pradesh

In geographies where a dedicated academic cadre does not exist—or where the system is understaffed—it becomes necessary to move beyond role-based coaching models and build distributed, system-owned structures for continuous teacher learning.

In Madhya Pradesh, this has been done by strengthening *Shaikshik Samvaads* (PLC'ss), which serve as a core mechanism for ongoing academic support. Rather than being one-off training events, these are

structured, recurring forums where teachers come together to reflect on classroom practice, discuss challenges, and exchange practical strategies.

Conducted at the cluster and school levels, *Shaikshik Samvaads* are facilitated by local academic officials or trained facilitators, with broad thematic direction from the state but flexibility to respond to local classroom needs. Sessions are anchored in specific teaching practices, such as student engagement, use of TLMs, and assessment, and are supported by facilitation guides and discussion prompts. By creating regular, system-supported spaces for peer learning, PLC's reduce dependence on a single coaching cadre. Instead, this builds a networked model of professional development where teachers learn from each other and continuously improve practice within their own contexts.

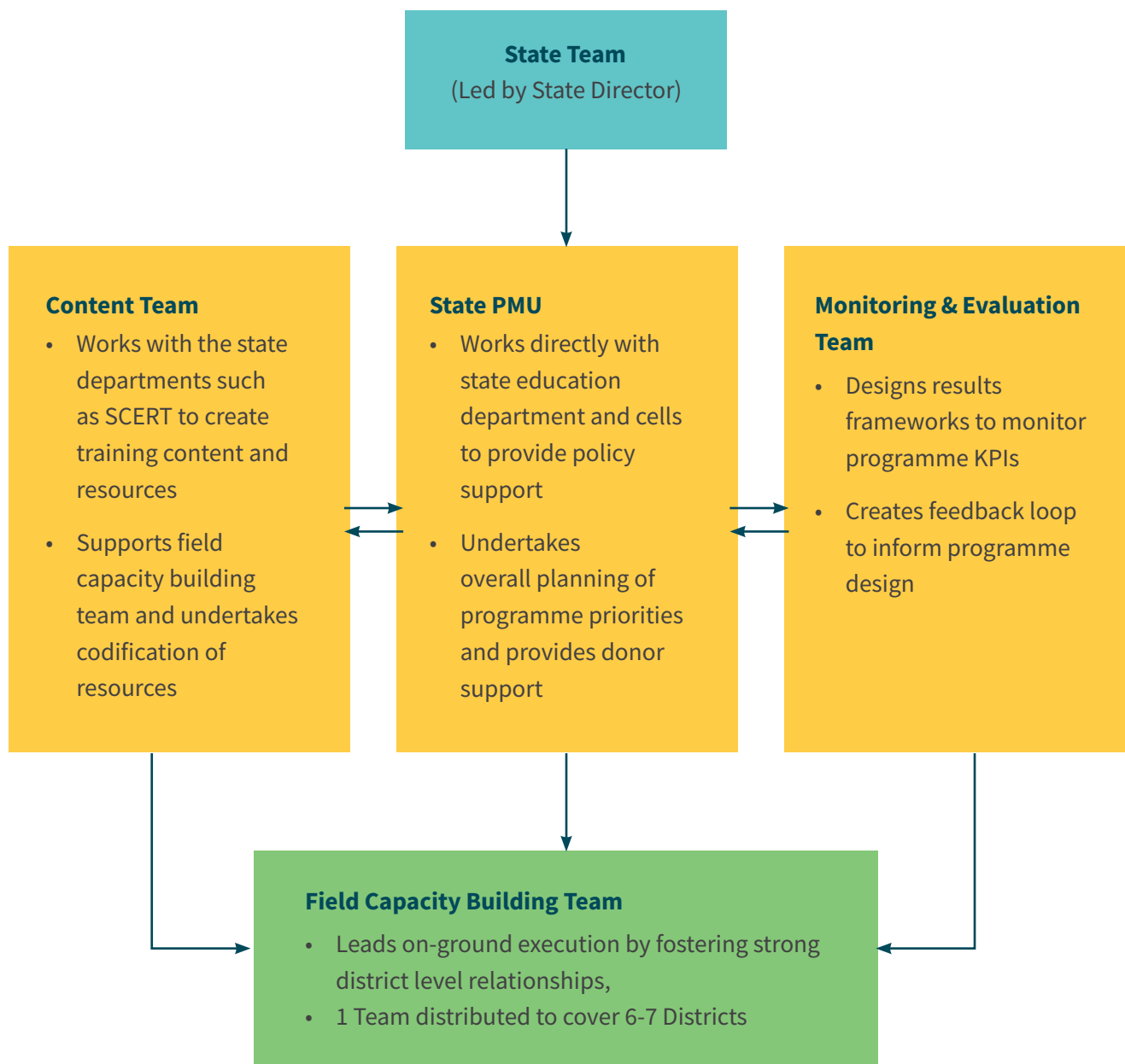


3.4 Implementation Support and System Integration

Peepul works closely with government systems across levels—from state to division, district, block, and school—to support implementation, programme delivery, and policy uptake. In state contexts, this is anchored through Programme Management Units (PMUs) to strengthen institutional capacity, ensure efficient execution of complex projects, and bring specialized academic expertise and monitoring delivery for quality assurance

The PMUs help drive alignment between state priorities and school-level implementation. They support in steering high-level meetings and committee sessions for decision making, district-level problem-solving, and ongoing engagement with officials. In addition, they are a critical link to connect implementation evidence with policy advocacy and systems integration. Their role is especially important in large state systems where effective implementation depends on coordination across multiple layers of administration.

The PMU structure sits alongside government bodies, supplementing government efforts:



04

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) and Impact

System level

Tracks institutional shifts, academic processes and policies that strengthen teacher training and coaching structures

Academic cadre level

Tracks improvements in knowledge, skills and practices among Mentor Teachers, State Resource Groups, Coaches



Teacher level

Tracks adoption of effective teaching practices and improvements in student engagement

Student level

Learning outcomes are assessed through structured assessments, including third-party evaluations where possible

4.1 Key Metrics and Results so far

The table below outlines a set of representative indicators across stakeholders, along with corresponding monitoring tools and results from Delhi and Madhya Pradesh. These indicators are aligned with government priorities and are designed to provide actionable insights at multiple levels of the system.



Stakeholder
System Officials

Key Indicator	Result	
	Delhi – MTPD initiative (2024 onwards)	Madhya Pradesh – TPD initiative (2021 onwards)
Academic processes and policies are developed	Baseline: The system lacked a structured approach to gathering insights from classrooms. The earlier School Visit tool for academic mentors included a lengthy classroom observation section, but it focused on teacher-led activities and left out student engagement. Change state: In 2024, the classroom observation section was revised to include questions on student engagement, use of TLM's, and lesson plans.	Digital Courses: Baseline: No structured processes for regular teacher capacity development. DIKSHA platform was made accessible, but under leveraged. Change state: 285,000+ teachers enrolled in Peepul's courses on DIKSHA in 2020-21. The most recent course (2025–26) on Peer-learning communities had 80% completion rate. Shaikshik Samvaads (PLC's's) Baseline: No peer learning communities for middle-grade teachers. Change state: Cluster-level <i>Shaikshik Samvaads</i> launched in 2024-25- across 5 sessions, 40,000+ middle grade teachers joined.



Stakeholder Academic Coaches

Key Indicator	Result	
	Delhi – MTPD initiative (2024 onwards)	Madhya Pradesh – TPD initiative (2021 onwards)
Coaches possess knowledge of academic practices	Baseline: No contextualised capacity building of Mentor Teachers. Of 15 MTs observed , 93% did classroom observation but only 20% shared any feedback with the teachers.	Baseline: Academic cadre largely uninvolved in the mentoring of middle school grades. Fewer participation in Continuous Professional Development (CPD) initiatives.
Coaches conduct effective classroom observations with , actionable feedback to teachers	Change state: In 2024–25, 140+ MTs attended in-person sessions with avg. knowledge gain of +17 points pre-to-post . In 2025–26, of 132 MTs observed, 68% conducted effective observations and 57% provided actionable feedback.	Change state: In 2025–26, capacity building reached 700+ academic mentors , with average knowledge gains of +13 points (Mathss), +3 (Science), and +2 (Social Science).



Stakeholder Teachers

Key Indicator	Result	
	Delhi – MTPD initiative (2024 onwards)	Madhya Pradesh – TPD initiative (2021 onwards)
Teachers implement effective classroom practices and have high student engagement	Baseline: In 2021, across 36 Hindi language classroom observations in 2 administrative zones, 22% of teachers applying questioning and reading practice. Change state: In 2025–26, across 96 classroom observations in 12 zones, 46% of teachers demonstrated practices of - questioning and practice time. In 44% of classrooms, >75% of students were seen engaged in these activities.	Baseline- Structured classroom observations began in 2025–26 to track adoption of teaching and learning strategies in middle grades. (Sandipani Vidyalaya data served as a reference point). Change state: In 2025–26, 46% of observed classrooms (n=411) in MP Govt schools (non-SV) showed teachers providing student practice work compared to 72% in SVs, where teachers receive more in-depth support.



Stakeholder
Students

Key Indicator	Result	
	Delhi – MTPD initiative (2024 onwards)	Madhya Pradesh – TPD initiative (2021 onwards)
Students demonstrate identified learning competencies	Baseline: In 2023-24, a third-party evaluation found 48% of students achieved grade-level competencies in Hindi, 31% in Mathss and 36% in English, as measured through an oral NIPUN-aligned assessment administered in partnership schools. Change state: Grade 4 (written) assessments results in 2025-26: • Hindi: Grade-level proficiency increased from 56% to 65% (+9 pp), tracking the same cohort from Grade 3 (2024-25). Students also gained 44 scale-score points, well above the ~30-point benchmark for one year’s learning (effect size: 0.74). • Mathss: Grade-level proficiency increased from 60% to 63% (+3 pp), tracking the same cohort from Grade 3 (2024-25). Students gained 31 scale-score points, in line with the ~30-point benchmark for one year’s learning (effect size: 0.54). Partnership vs. Comparison schools: • Hindi: 82% (Partnership) vs. 61% (Comparison) at grade level • English: 51% (Partnership) vs. 11% (Comparison) at grade level	Baseline: 2024-25 assessments showed ~50% of Grade 6 students in MP Government schools struggling with foundational Hindi and Maths competencies. (lower in SV schools). Change state: Competency-specific focus has been sharpened across middle-grade programmes. Learning gains will be measured through a three-year evaluation (Grades 6–8), with baseline in July 2026 and endline in Feb 2029.

05

Key Learnings and Recommendations



Based on implementation experiences across Delhi and Madhya Pradesh, an overarching lesson stands out:

improving teaching practice at scale depends less on designing better training programmes and more on strengthening the systems that support teachers continuously.

Learnings

01 Working through existing government structures is a must for scale and sustainability

Leveraging cadres such as Mentor Teachers or mid-level officials enables both reach and ownership. However, it requires adapting to system's binding constraints and setting and following through expectations at each stage

02 Coaching is the link between training and classroom practice

While training builds knowledge, sustained changes in teaching behavior require ongoing, in-school support through observation, feedback and mentoring.

03 The choice of academic cadre is a defining design decision

Where dedicated cadres exist, the focus must be on strengthening their capacity and mindset. Where they do not, programmes must also take on reorientation for available cadres. This typically entails a longer engagement to shift priorities from administrative to academic functions.

04 Scale and fidelity need to be balanced deliberately

Cascade models enable broad reach but risk dilution, whereas localised approaches ensure stronger implementation but are resource-intensive. Combining the two allows systems to scale programmes, while maintaining quality in targeted contexts – with necessary ringfencing of resources.

05 An integrated MEL approach is essential for programme relevance and effectiveness at scale

Tracking outcomes across all four levels (system, academic cadre, teachers, and students) gives a well-rounded view of how change is unfolding in both classrooms and the systems around them. None of these levels can transform in isolation.

06 Classroom observation data is one of the most powerful tools for understanding and improving teaching practice

Gains in teacher knowledge do not automatically translate into changes in classroom practice, unless structured and regular coaching focused on shifting practices and behaviours are in place. Sharing classroom data with system stakeholders in a timely way and building their interest in analysing trends, probing deeper and acting on what the data shows, sharpens the focus of coaching where teachers need it most. Over time, this builds a culture of evidence-based decision-making across the system.

It is worth acknowledging that working through government systems brings a distinct set of structural realities that shape what and how much is possible.

- Frequent leadership and administrative transitions periodically reset priorities, requiring programmes to realign and rebuild momentum with each change.
- Programme adoption is also shaped by the preferences of individual decision-makers (often as much or more than evidence of impact), leading to uneven uptake across geographies.
- Budget cycles and resource constraints further define the pace and scale at which interventions can be scaled and sustained.

Key considerations for Practitioners attempting similar programmes

01 Start with system stakeholder mapping and a gap analysis to identify the right entry points and actors for TPD support.

Where they do not exist, think carefully and consult with the government before creating parallel ones. Additionally, a diagnostic study or landscape exercise (involving the system officials) might help surface existing opportunities, enablers and hurdles in the academic and administrative domains, right at the onset, and aide in further customizing programme offerings.

02 Prioritise capacity strengthening and exploring ways to make it continual, owned by the system.

Training fidelity declines steeply with each layer of transmission in a cascade model. This necessitates building capacities among system officials responsible for delivery (negotiate for number of training days, manage content load between academic and general domains) and build reinforcement mechanisms at system and classroom levels through continual coaching, feedback and data-informed reviews.

03 Align with government priorities, structures and timelines to increase chances of programme adoption and sustainability.

Role reorientation of government officials from administrative to academic functions takes sustained engagement, manage it through a mix of bottom-up and top-down push and pulls.

04 Use more than one approach for professional development.

Based on the audit of resources and capacities available in the intervention locations, combine in-person and virtual training and local peer learning to support continuous development.

05 Plan for institutionalization early, and sustained government engagement from the outset.

Embed practices within system processes and platforms by:

- Understanding and **working towards building government buy-in** early- both in terms of political salience and system capacity (e.g., initiative owners, presence of review structures, decision-making channels and distributed leadership).
- **Prioritizing partnership-based engagement models** over transactional, vendor-led arrangements is necessary. Through joint design, delivery and monitoring of programmes with government officials, longer-term commitment can be achieved, compared to delivery models tied strictly to contracts and timelines
- **Embedding programmes within existing system routines**, such as review meetings, training calendars, and digital platforms, so that implementation continues even when leadership or priorities shift
- **Aligning programme timelines and expectations with government processes**, including budget cycles, approval structures, and administrative bandwidth
- **Maintaining flexibility to adapt to changing system priorities**, while staying anchored to core programme principles that drive classroom-level impact.

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