peepul™

Transforming Lives through Education
Annual Report 2019-2020
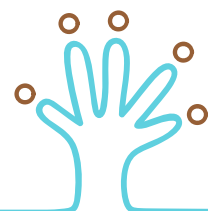
www.peepulindia.org

Contents

What's in **our name**?

Our organisation is named after the Peepul tree, which holds great significance in Indian culture. Lord Buddha is believed to have attained enlightenment under a Peepul tree. Perhaps because of this reason, it is considered the tree of wisdom and its shade has served—and still does in some regions—as a setting for open classrooms.

Peepul trees have deep roots and foster a nourishing environment around themselves. As an organization, we aim to be exactly that for our children: a steadfast presence around which they can thrive and learn.

We believe it is fitting that our name resembles "people", considering we are a people-centric and people-first organization that empowers teachers to transform classroom learning and puts children's interests at the centre of everything we do.

All our actions are driven by what is best for the children we work for.

Our Dream

We dream of a world where every child is enabled and supported to reach their potential.

Our Mission

To transform learning in government schools, so that children of the poorest of the poor are given an excellent, holistic education

The Problem:

The Quality of School Education in India

Understanding the crisis

Every school system – or as we call it, every *education ecosystem* – has the responsibility to nurture, enable and grow every child under its care.

The poorest of the poor in India depend on the public education system to realise their dreams of a better future. This system is a lifeline for them, being free of cost, and the government expends immense resources towards enabling learning for these children.

Millions of dollars are budgeted and expended – towards school buildings, books, stationery, boundary walls and beyond. Millions of schoolteachers, school leaders and a constellation of education officials are engaged daily in delivering education to the next generation of the country.

But, if you work in education, you know these figures: the ASER report of 2018 revealed a sobering truth: around half of Class 5 students in India's public schools cannot read a Class 2 text; nearly three-quarters cannot do division.

In other words, many children in the public education system are falling through the cracks and not receiving the high-quality education they deserve.

While both public institutions and civil society organisations run many initiatives to address some of these issues, and empower the people in the arena, there is a long way to go.

If left unaddressed, this crisis in education will leave a large section of the future generation without essential life skills, critical thinking abilities, and core human values.

Together, we need to shift the system towards learning

Enrolment → Attendance → Engagement → Learning
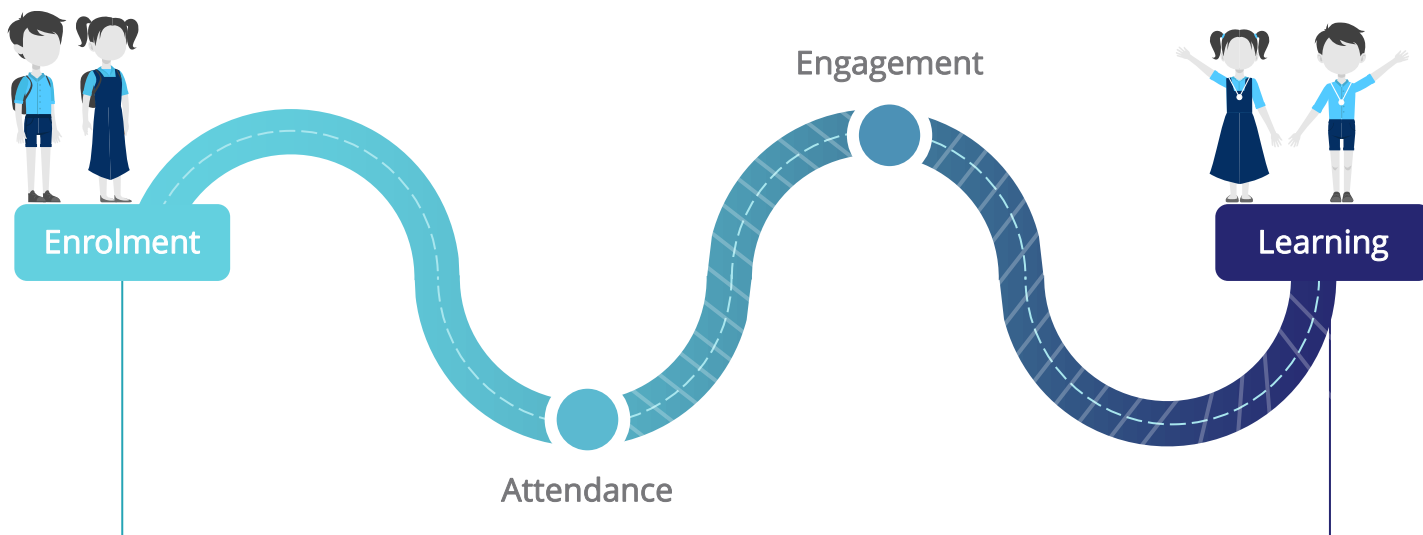
1.1 million
Government schools

166 million
Students enrolled in government schools

50%
Class 5 students cannot read a class 2 textbook

72%
Class 5 students cannot divide

Our Solution:

Student Engagement through Improved Teacher Practices

At Peepul, we believe that **creating an environment for meaningful student-teacher interactions**, is key to transforming the system.

Sift through the stories of high-performing children anywhere in the world, and you will invariably meet a great teacher toiling behind the scenes. An excellent teacher can bring out the best in every child. Under their care, children start to believe in themselves. They engage deeply with their subjects. They apply themselves. They learn. They excel.

A "meaningful teacher-student interaction" – one that kindles the embers of possibility in a child and stokes it to full potential – requires a high-quality teacher, one that is enabled with the requisite *skills*, possessing an indomitable *will* and equipped with the right *resources* to teach.

That is why we exist: to create high-quality teachers who bring out the champion in every child.

We help **transform the public education system**, in deep partnership with governments.

We closely partner with national, state and local governments to design and implement high-quality, scalable solutions that enable meaningful engagement between students and teachers, and help every child reach their potential.

Our work ranges from developing the pedagogical skills of teachers through a combination of training, coaching and learning circles, to effecting systemic changes that strengthen the system's accountability to improve learning outcomes.

Through our programs, we prove that change at scale with quality is possible. We also codify and share our work, so that organizations and governments in other regions can deploy our approach and amplify our impact. Because we're in this together.

There are many organisations doing **exceptional work** to improve the quality of education in the public education system.

Bright Spots

One set of organisations is creating bright spots, i.e., examples of excellence, often outside the sphere of public education—for instance, high-quality school operators imparting world-class education to children from low-income families. Though transformative for that child in the classroom, they are far too few to make a dent in the massive government school system, and are financially difficult to replicate at scale, without concurrent administrative reforms.

Systemic transformation efforts

There are yet others, executing large-scale systemic transformation efforts in partnership with governments. While these transformations are exceptional at strengthening administrative processes and fixing critical systemic issues, they often lack the nuance and expertise that an education practitioner brings. The daily acts of courage that teachers perform in the classroom, the difficulty of imparting learning to the next generation, the uphill task of overcoming deep-rooted societal biases — there is the danger that these aspects can get reduced to figures and graphs, where the map is mistaken for the terrain.

In short, while the bright spots struggle to spread their light, systemic transformation efforts tend to lack critical nuance.

We bring in a new model of 'Education-inspired management transformation'

Bright Spots — **Education-inspired management transformation** — **Systemic transformation efforts**

We leverage our experience as practitioners and our deep knowledge of government systems to enable large-scale systemic transformation.

Our day-to-day experience running three exemplar partnership government schools offers us an up-close view of on-ground pressures and realities. In our organisation, we have teachers and teacher trainers, with over a combined 100+ years of experience.

At the same time, we also understand flawless large-scale program execution. We have run district and state-level programs to immense success, breaking the quality-scale trade-off and setting new benchmarks nationally, and internationally.

We understand, **creating that space for a meaningful teacher-student interaction**, requires **creating the ecosystem** to enable it

The Peepul Pillars of Change

Building belief

Building champions

Building the ecosystem

Visual exemplars

Skill Development

Meaningful Teacher-Student Interaction

Monitoring

Mentoring
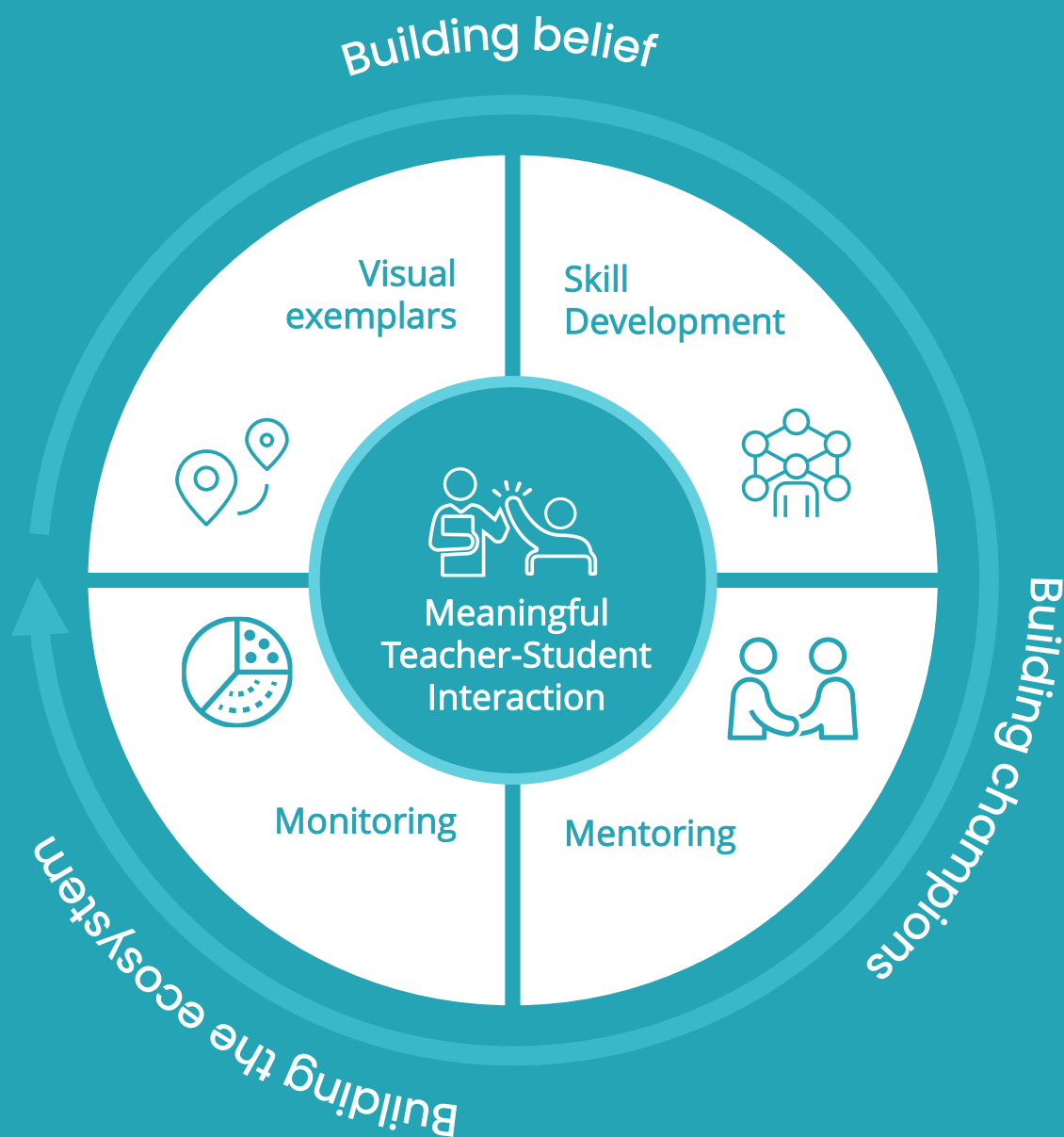
We believe that the following **four interconnected interventions** can cultivate all requisite system enablers—skill, will and resources—and unlock excellence in teachers

Meaningful Teacher-Student Interaction

	What's the issue?	**What we do**
Visual exemplars that inspire	India's education system suffers from the belief that a truly excellent education for the poor is too challenging to make happen.	We create bright spots in the government system, to build belief in the drastic improvement possible, and showcase how excellence could look like.
Training that enlightens and enables	As teachers in India receive very limited professional development training, they tend to remain trapped in the web of outdated teaching methodologies.	We design and deliver practical training programs for teachers to help them improve a range of classroom skills. We also build learning circles, to create a community of supportive peers.
Mentoring to manage the change	Without continued mentoring, teachers are often not able to markedly improve the quality of classroom learning.	We work with principals and government officials across levels to help teachers implement what they have learnt, overcome barriers to change and get feedback on their development.
Monitoring the right things, the right way	India's education system is predominantly geared towards administrative support, and not academic outcomes. The resultant lack of accountability translates to lack of motivation among teachers to go the extra mile.	We work with stakeholders to orient avenues of accountability towards academic outcomes, and designing new frameworks for performance assessment and evaluations.

> I have watched Peepul's scale journey very closely. It has been a privilege to mentor them as they conceptualised and executed on the idea of Exemplar Education Ecosystems. It has been quite exciting to witness how they developed and supported state governments with a blueprint for reform. Peepul has impressed me with their analytical rigour, big-picture thinking, their unique practitioner approach to systems change and robust execution. Their programs have not only scaled but pioneered systemic improvements. Their work reminds me of what Pablo Picasso once said, "Everything you can imagine is real." Peepul leads with imagination and follows through with intense execution.

Sanjay Purohit
Chief Curator, Societal Platform, EkStep Foundation

Our programmes

We run three programs across Delhi and Madhya Pradesh, each spanning one or more pillars of change

Running **Exemplar Schools**

Delhi

In partnership with

South **D**elhi **M**unicipal **C**orporation

Building the Capacity of Teachers and Education Officials: **SDMC Sitara**

Delhi

In partnership with

South **D**elhi **M**unicipal **C**orporation

Supporting Systemic Change and Strengthening Institutions: **CM Rise**

Madhya Pradesh

In partnership with

School **E**ducation **D**epartment, **G**ovt. of **M**adhya **P**radesh

An English class ongoing in Peepul's exemplar school at Lajpat Nagar, Delhi

Running Exemplar Schools

Delhi

Our network of **three high-achieving primary schools** in Delhi **transforms the lives of over 1000 children** from low-income communities.

1100+
students impacted

85%+
students achieving grade-level competencies

As practitioners who believe in demonstrated impact, we have pioneered the turnaround of three ailing schools into visual exemplars, in partnership with the South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC).

These 'proof-of-concept' schools that are run within the government system act as our innovation labs. We track and analyze school-level data for insightful evidence on interventions that work. We contextualize international best-practices to the Indian government school context. And once we identify what works, we also codify and disseminate it across the programmes we run.

The profile of our students and the talent pools our teachers are from are the same as those of a typical government school – yet, we deliver exceptional results.

With 85%+ students achieving grade-level competencies and 95%+ Parent-Teacher Meeting attendance, our schools stand testament to the high quality of education that is achievable within the public school system.

The **Peepul Effect**

Enrolment

9	~1000
students in 1 school	students in 3 schools

Attendance

<40%	>75%
annual attendance	annual attendance

Learning outcomes

>85%

students meeting or exceeding minimum grade-level expectations

Parental involvement

95%

parent-teacher meeting attendance

"

Peepul is an exemplary PPP project in the education sector transforming the lives of children from marginalised families through holistic education. It is a disruptive educational initiative within the government system. With core elements of personalised attention, curated curriculum, passionate teachers and also active engagement of parents, I'm sure their efforts and model will bring the best in every child.

Nixon Joseph
Chief Operating Officer, SBI Foundation

The Peepul approach: What our schools do differently

Our success is built on three pillars

Nurturing children in their 'attendance to attainment' journeys

Empowering teachers to deliver excellence in education

Engaging closely with communities that shape our children's formative years

Nurturing children in their 'attendance to attainment' journeys

Caring classroom environment:

Our classrooms are safe spaces that empower children to live up to their potential. Meaningful school routines, fun and engaging delivery methods and an emphasis on values, respect and good behavior cultivate a desire to learn from an early age.

Innovative curriculum:

We have developed a strong curriculum, using international best practices and guidance from reputed Indian experts. Our focus is on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) so that children have a strong base on which to build. Colorful and interesting teaching materials are used to ensure children have opportunities to collaborate, learn and play.

Data-backed, child-specific interventions

We celebrate every child's uniqueness by recognising that not all children in a classroom are equally empowered. We regularly monitor and assess child-level learning indicators, to give each child the attention and support they require.

Empowering teachers to deliver excellence in education

Rigorous selection and training:

We undertake a rigorous multi-stage interview process to identify teachers with the right attributes. We spend four weeks intensively training our Peepul teachers to be skilled classroom practitioners and they continue to receive regular in-service training throughout the year.

Independence, with support:

We encourage our teachers to take ownership of their classrooms, from creating their own lesson plans to innovating teaching methodologies tailored to students. Weekly, evidence-based developmental coaching helps our teachers bring their best selves to the classroom, "learning circles" and "co-planning" enable collaboration and exchange of best practices and expert teachers guide newer recruits through role modelling.

Tailored growth opportunities:

We give our teachers the flexibility to craft their individual professional journeys, be it by limiting their administrative responsibilities or taking on special roles (organising student clubs / tutoring groups of students who require extra attention) that keep them motivated and excited.

Capability building:

We partner with and work hand-in-hand to build the knowledge, skills and capacity of government teachers who work in our exemplar schools. We introduce them to innovative pedagogy and impactful teaching practices that will help them bring about transformation in their classrooms.

Engaging closely with communities that shape our children's formative years

Awareness-building:

We work closely with communities in the catchment areas around our schools to empower them with the information required to support their child's education. We not only carry out home visits but also communicate regularly through phone and messages about each child's performance at school.

Continuous engagement:

We run initiatives to ensure that parents / family are involved in positively shaping their child's education; e.g., we have a dedicated set of community champions who take the lead on school events aimed at increasing community engagement.

Counselling and support:

Our social workers engage with parents and families to diagnose issues at home to try and support/counsel where needed and possible. We also monitor the child's health and family conditions so that we can speak with the family in the case of illness or poor attendance.

Peepul impact: significantly higher achievement in external evaluations

2-3x better performance in Mathematics and Hindi

8-15x better in English

Grade 2
% of students

Mathematics
Comfort with numbers (10-99), subtraction, division

44 93
2.1x
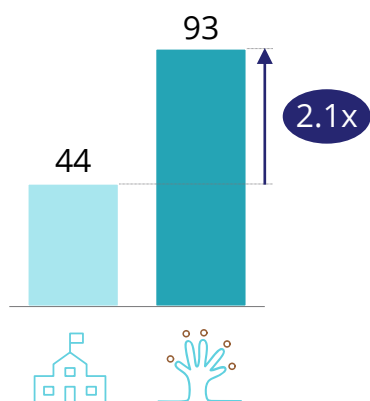
Hindi
Comfort with reading paragraphs/stories

18 44
2.3x
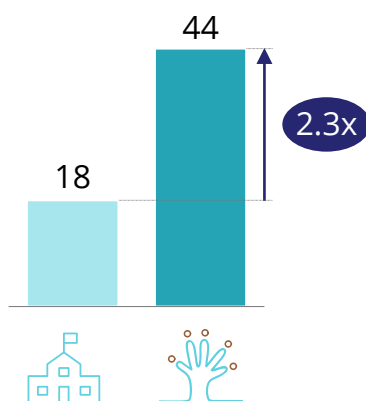
English
Comfort with reading paragraphs/ stories

3 51
17x
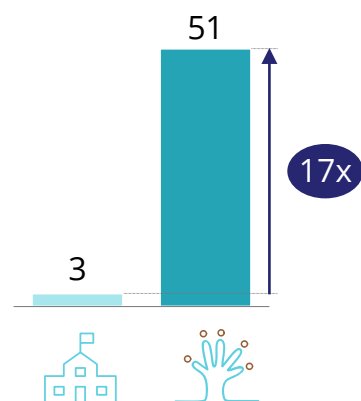
Grade 3
% of students

Comfort with numbers (10-99), subtraction, division
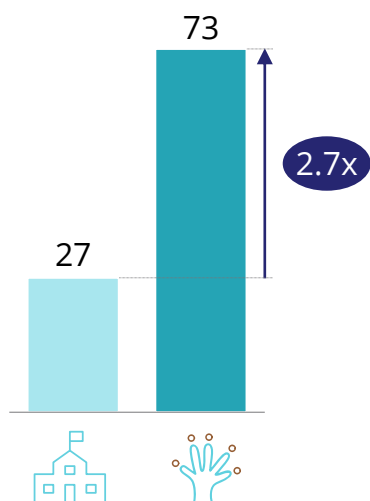
27 73
2.7x

Comfort with reading paragraphs/stories

47 80
1.7x

Comfort with reading paragraphs/ stories

13 63
5x
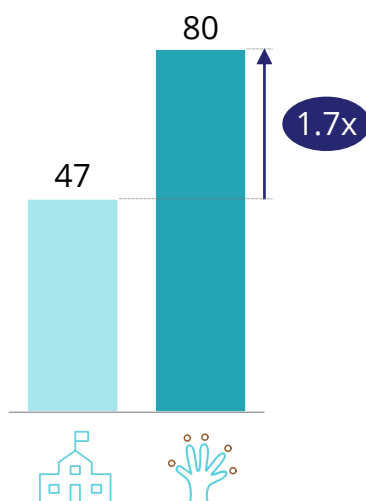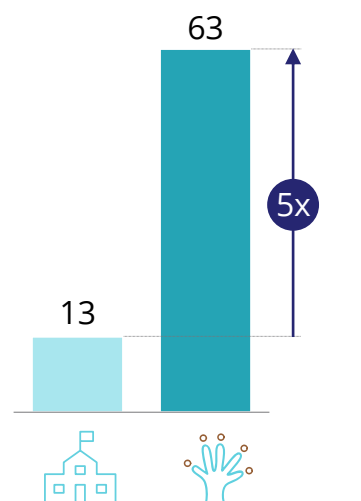
Our schools are shining beacons, that have drawn the attention of government partners and global organisations

Lieutenant Governor, State of Delhi and Commissioner – SDMC

Country Director - India, The World Bank

Prince Charles

Mr. Anil Swarup, Secretary, Ministry of Human Resource Development

Part of a delegation of 60 government teachers, principals and block/district Officials, on an exposure visit from Madhya Pradesh

Cross-state learnings through exposure visits to the Peepul Exemplar schools

In November 2019, three delegations of teachers, school leaders and academic officials from Dewas, Madhya Pradesh, visited Peepul's exemplar schools as part of an exposure visit organized by the Government of Madhya Pradesh.

Classroom observation

Facilitated group work and reflection

Design thinking workshop

> "
>
> Peepul provides a great example of improving quality of school education through public-private partnership, which is replicable and scalable. They have now also come up with commendable initiatives to grapple with the fallout of COVID 19 which are worthy of emulation. With the New Education Policy's much needed focus on Foundational Literacy, teachers, competency assessments, there is a huge need to focus on implementation. I look forward to Peepul's continued impact by making it happen.

Anil Swarup
Former Secretary, Ministry of Education, Government of India
Founder and Chairman, Nexus of Good

Snapshots from our schools

Happy Learning Spaces

Snapshots from our schools

Snapshots from our schools

We are a box of crayons, each of us unique, but when we get together, the picture is complete.

KINDNESS MAKES US BLOOM!

#5thgradersarekind

Snapshots from our schools

A fun parent-child activity as part of the 2019 New Parent Orientation Day, Lajpat Nagar School. Parents are introduced to new ways of teaching and engaging with children so that they can replicate these at home.

Our schools are inclusive with children of all abilities integrated in general classrooms. Our teachers plan lessons keeping the needs of different children in focus. Where necessary, a few children are given further scaffolding through individual lessons, and a modified curriculum.

Classroom and school libraries build a love for reading. Library classes are scheduled into the class timetable and books are labelled according to level of difficulty so that teachers can guide children to the right level.

Minimising Learning Loss
During COVID

Reach & Teach

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit the poor disproportionately hard; beyond loss of livelihoods, the associated school closures that have gone on for many months, with immense learning losses for their children.

And so, as soon as the lockdown began, our teachers swung to action, under the Reach & Teach Task Force. We reimagined how to continue learning to our students, virtually. We reached out to our students through their parents' phones and widely available low-tech solutions like WhatsApp. We partnered with parents to support the child. We curated and created exciting, attractive and relevant material

Digital, distance learning is neither straightforward nor easy for the poor, with their limited access to and understanding of technology.

To conduct effective low-tech virtual learning, we crafted a six-step process: onboarding and orienting the parents, providing learning content, providing regular review and feedback, and assessing learning.

1. Create Group
2. Parent Orientation
3. Learning material flow
4. Sharing Homework
5. Feedback
6. Follow-up

Made for Peepul schools. Open to everyone.

The learning content created by Peepul teachers have proven impactful in keeping the learning of our students going. And so, we are making them available freely for anyone to use. We hope you can use these resources to good effect, too.

Peepul Resource Hub

We designed and executed the programme with empathy for the situation of the parents and children

Using a clear learning framework

- We planned a learning framework that **covers the important foundational concepts** that children need to know to be ready for their next class.
- **One concept / subject / week which** builds week-on-week. E.g. three strands in Math (Number system, Money and Shapes).

Keeping it light

- We sent **1 content piece in a day, 3 days a week**. The intervening days were for the teachers to check in with the students. On these days, teachers made calls. Teachers called the ones who struggled more. As they say, 'What works for the child who struggles the most will work for all children.'

Using small-sized videos

- Due to bandwidth issues, we avoided YouTube. We sent **1 video / subject / week**, for Math, English, Hindi. Each **video was < 2 minutes long**, and was accompanied by a worksheet.

Differentiating content

- Teachers used Broadcast lists on WhatsApp to get this sent out.
- Even for the same video, the **task was made differentiated**. Worksheets were modified for the children. If its too easy, the smart ones drop off; if its too hard, the struggling ones will drop off.
- For children with Special Education Needs, teachers did group calls to provide greater attention.

Ensuring curated content suits the child

- Accent, context, content of curated materials may be barriers to appeal and understanding for the child. Hence, wherever we sent materials from outside, **we added a voice note from the teacher** to help the child understand what the video is about.

During the lockdown, we regularly tracked the number of children who had been reached and engaged across the weeks.
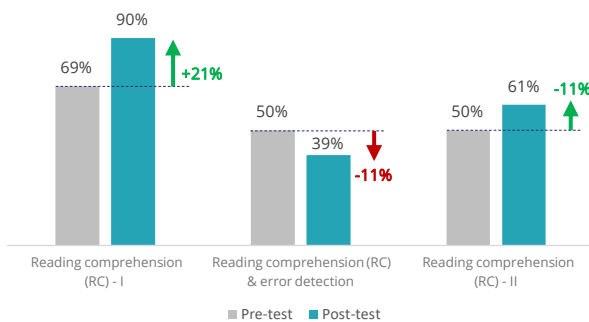
As the weeks went by, we carefully designed and conducted a deeper impact analysis of the *learning outcomes* of the children. For all the immense effort that went into digital teaching-learning for our children, were we able to make an impact?

We really wanted to know if all our efforts paid off. The good news is: our impact assessment shows that they definitely did.

The evaluation and continuous assessments indicated growth in concept mastery, a striking change in test scores and a sizeable delta in learning levels of children. Below is some of the data that has come in.

Grade 3 – English assessment

Proportion of students exceeding expectations (score >=70%)

- Reading comprehension (RC) - I: Pre-test 69%, Post-test 90%, +21%
- Reading comprehension (RC) & error detection: Pre-test 50%, Post-test 39%, -11%
- Reading comprehension (RC) - II: Pre-test 50%, Post-test 61%, -11%

■ Pre-test ■ Post-test

Change in mean scores across teaching modules

- RC - II: 6.2 → 6.9, +0.7
- RC & error detection: +0.6
- RC- I: +1.0

Total score: 10

Pre-test — Post-test

Grade 3 – English assessment

Proportion of students exceeding expectations (score >=70%)

- Reading comprehension (RC) - I: Pre-test 76%, Post-test 83%, +7%
- Informal letter writing: Pre-test 41%, Post-test 70%, +29%
- RC-II & collective noun: Pre-test 59, Post-test 67%, +8%

■ Pre-test ■ Post-test

Change in mean scores across teaching modules

- RC-II & collective noun: +1.4
- Informal letter writing: +1.6
- RC- I: +0.5

Total score 10

Pre-test — Post-test
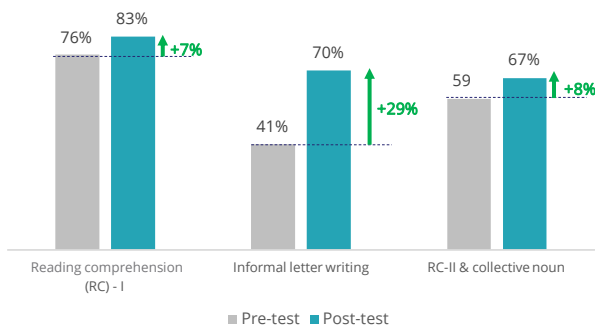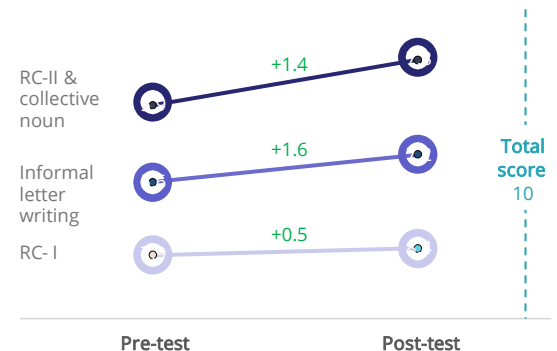
Note : These children were given a pre and a post test for 4 different modules of three subjects - Math, Hindi and English. The test data was then analyzed to find growth - positive or negative, patterns for the changes and a better understanding of concept mastery.

A micro-training session being conducted at the SDMC Pry. School, Harkesh Nagar

Building the Capacity of Teachers and Education Officials

Delhi

At Peepul, we believe that great teachers are the foundations of great schools. To this end, we empower teachers to drive meaningful interactions in their classrooms, resulting in improved student outcomes. Since 2017, we have pioneered an impactful training program for school-teachers in partnership with the SDMC.

In the last two years, we have trained over

600
Government teachers

across

200+
schools

enriching

18,000
children

Equipped with learnings from our own exemplar schools, we help good teachers develop into great teachers, capable of teaching their students in the most effective way. We use lesson observations, hands-on practice and learning communities to ensure that teachers absorb and apply their learnings.

Our results and feedback speak for themselves

98%
believe that this is useful and relevant for their everyday work

94%
of teachers apply our classroom management techniques

It is with this momentum that in 2020, we joined hands once again with the SDMC to launch 'SDMC Sitara' – an ambitious, four-year systemic intervention aimed at scaling this programme six-fold. The aspiration is to enable capability building of over 2,800 teachers in South Delhi to positively impact over 100,000 children.

"

At SDMC, in line with the Global Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), we believe that high-quality education is pivotal when it comes to shaping lives and the future of our children. In our pursuit of providing high-quality education to all our children we are continually helping our teachers become great teachers and strengthening their skills to bring international best practices and innovations in pedagogy to the classroom. To be able to do this, we have partnered with Peepul on a Teacher Development Programme that combines practical, immersive training on specific modules (e.g. English, Hindi and classroom management) and also supports schools through regular coaching and the creation of virtual and in-person learning circles.

Through this partnership, 450 teachers have been able to make their teaching practices more effective. We sincerely appreciate all the efforts that Peepul has been putting in since 2017 through their capacity building trainings and on-ground support that has resulted in improved quality of teaching and learning in the schools. I hope our collective effort will continue to impact lives positively and meaningfully and shape our children's lives for a better tomorrow.

Gyanesh Bharti, IAS
Commissioner, South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC)

The Peepul approach: A unique recipe for teacher training

Experienced and approachable trainers:

Training sessions are conducted by Peepul teachers based on their experience in our exemplar schools. With their everyday exposure to government teachers and classrooms, our trainers have a deep understanding of teachers' contexts and key unlocks that can create a difference.

Relevant content, succinctly delivered:

The program comprises of three modules delivered over nine days every year. Each module is carefully curated to include aspects of classroom management, lesson planning and innovative pedagogical approaches.
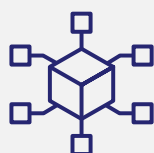
Structured to enable continual learning:

The essence of our teacher training programs can be observed in any distinctive teaching-learning environment: being engaging, hands-on and collaborative. We ensure enduring impact by moving away from typical 'lecture-based' sessions to include 3 innovative aspects:

Practical, **bite-sized modular training sessions**, including hands-on practice, role plays, etc., to help learnings 'stick'

Follow-ups and **classroom observations** at schools; discussions with principals to explain relevance of new approaches

Virtual and physical **learning communities** to share best practices and inspire others

" " With Peepul's teacher training program, we are getting great insight into the methods that are most effective in the classroom. Through classroom observations, we can directly see how the methods we are trained in are used.

Neeru Sethi
Teacher, SDMC Badarpur School

" " I really loved the three modules I attended – on Classroom Management, Hindi and English. In the 18 years of my service, these are the best trainings I have attended – I found them extremely fruitful. The materials provided, the way the sessions were taken... It was very informative.

Rajni
Primary Schoolteacher,
SDMC Primary School, Sriniwaspuri (Girls), South Delhi
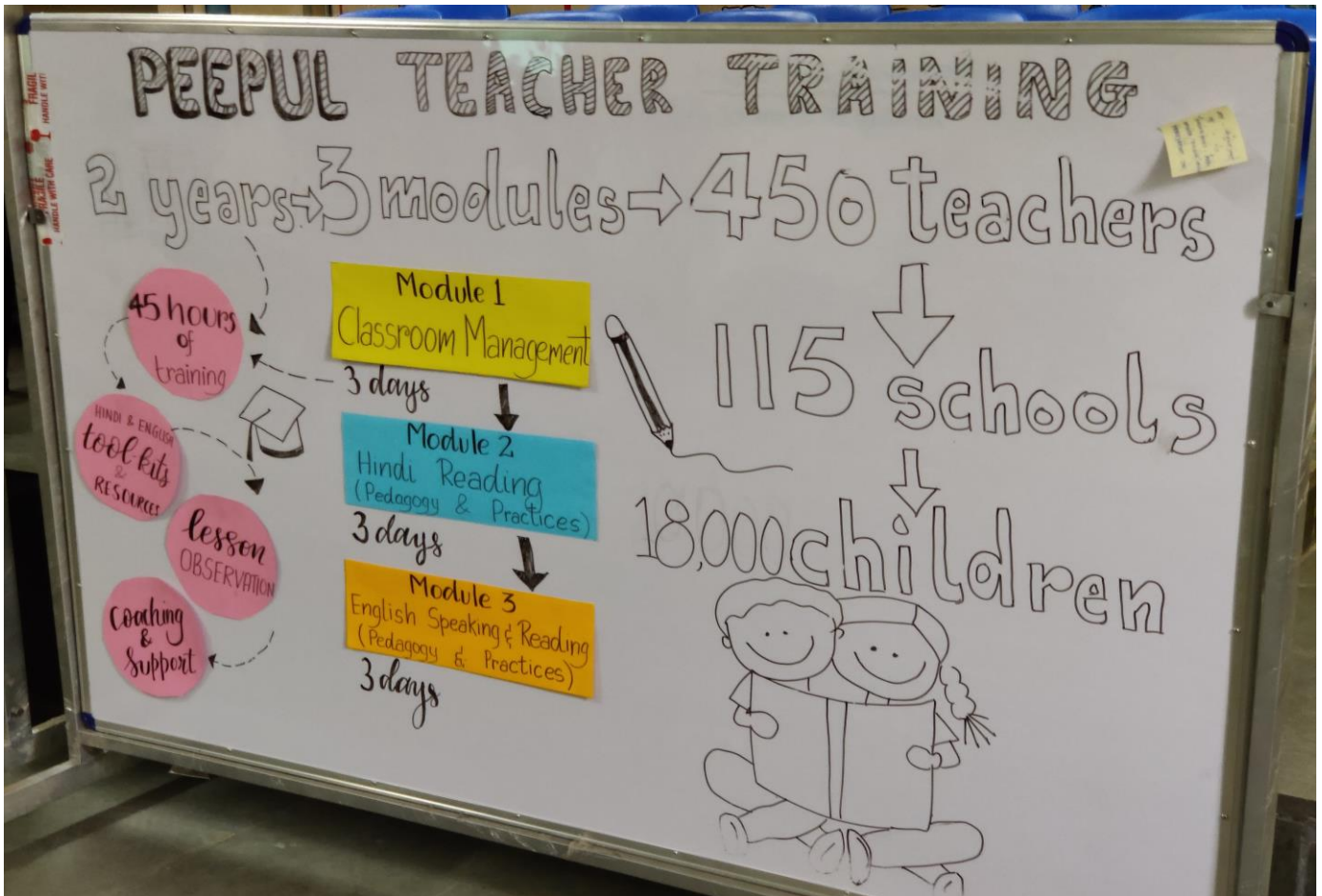
A creative visualization of the SDMC Teacher Training programme by the programme team

Views from the Closing Ceremony of the SDMC Teacher Training programme 2020

Our training sessions have received **glowing feedback from teachers. . .**

98% Teachers felt the training was relevant to their every classroom practice

99% Teachers said they learnt new techniques in the training

99% Teachers found the sessions engaging and well-planned

Based on Post-training feedback forms

. . .and our programme has created **strong impact**

94% Teachers used Peepul classroom management techniques

78% Teachers exhibited right mindset on language pedagogy post Peepul training and coaching intervention

86% Teachers could maintain active student engagement using Peepul techniques

73% Teachers delivered lesson content leveraging effective questioning

Based on Post-training impact evaluation classroom observations

The path ahead: 'SDMC Sitara' will empower over 2,800 teachers to create better classrooms
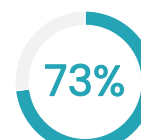
SDMC Sitara's bold aspirations encompass not only its large scale but also its depth in teacher training. With a virtual kick-off in July 2020, this is already proving to be a valuable source of capability-building amidst the Covid-19 pandemic.

4
years

2800
teachers

500+
schools

4
Resource Centres across all SDMC Zones

- Hubs of all training-related activities
- Set up in strategically located government schools to promote wide coverage and easy access

48
Master Trainers to champion training interventions

- Cohort of in-house, Peepul-trained, resource persons to lead initiatives across Centres
- Rigorous selection process with shortlisted 'Champion Teachers' eligible to become Master Trainers

9
month long immersive training for new recruits

- Immersion into Peepul schools to receive exposure to an exemplar model within the government system
- Apprenticeship model to inculcate an in-depth understanding of curriculum and pedagogy

10
Part holistic set of outcome focused interventions

- Interventions include customised TLM (teaching-learning material), school leadership buy-in, review and reflection exercises
- Monitoring and evaluation to ensure that program improves student outcomes

"

Kruti and the team at Peepul have the energy of a start-up and the impact of a strong organisation that lives its purpose. It has been inspirational to see the strides they have covered in making education better and world-class in India."

Umang Vohra
Managing Director and Global CEO,
Cipla

The launch of CM Rise by Hon'ble Minister Shri Tulsiram Silawat at Bhopal, on 1 May 2020

Supporting Systemic Change and Strengthening Institutions: CM Rise

Madhya Pradesh

A **resilient education** ecosystem requires investing in **high-quality teachers**

In the period since the COVID-19 pandemic began and the associated country-wide lockdown, government school systems have been grappling with identifying and implementing new ways of working – trying to enable distance learning for their students – something that is neither easy nor straightforward.

When schools eventually do reopen, it will be tougher than ever to impart learning – with many students having faced trauma and hardships in this period, time lost in the academic year, and the continued threat of the virus spread in the school premises, mandating rigorous implementation of new health practices.

During this time, making teachers aware, equipped and motivated to support their students sensitively and effectively, and to impart learning in new modes with high-quality – will be invaluable to tide the country's poor through this crisis, and to enable the government system to continue providing education for children of the poorest of the poor.

Teachers are the frontline resources for children that need to be equipped to deal with these challenges and serve as the 'last mile' support for the child.

CM RISE
New Horizons

The Government of Madhya Pradesh and Peepul have partnered to conceptualise, design and implement CM Rise, to create a holistic learning ecosystem for the 300,000 teachers in the state, to help them navigate the current and future times, and empower them to be effective last-mile support, counsellors and educators for their students and their families.

We began the journey with CM Rise Digital Teacher Training, leveraging the national platform DIKSHA of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, to deliver bite-sized, modular training courses for the teachers. This has since evolved into a three-year program vision and plan for the state on teacher professional development.

The programme supports teachers **across the 52 districts of the state**

9,500,000
School students

320,000+
School teachers

100,000+
Schools

The CM Rise **Vision**

Creating a concerted learning ecosystem that enables every teacher to support their students, linked to their realities and needs.

This programme aims to:

1. Equip teachers and education officials with the skills and knowledge required to support children effectively through this COVID crisis (including psychosocial support)

2. Create an ecosystem of continued development for teachers that is personalised, need-based and supports societal and academic goals, to build a more aware, capable and resilient teacher workforce for the future.

Blended Training

Learning Forums

High-performing teacher for every child

Mentoring

Monitoring

The initial focus of the courses is on building the foundation for teachers through CM Rise Digital Training

Exploring role of teacher and building reflection as a practice

Role of a Teacher, Reflection: The Basis of Effective Teaching

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Empower teachers with topical content e.g. Effective distance learning, Providing emotional support to children, Teacher well-being

Distance Learning, Preparation for School Reopening

Addressing gaps in teachers' skills to manage classrooms and impart learning e.g. Classroom culture, Classroom management

Understanding Learning Outcomes, Lesson Planning based on Teacher Handbooks

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Working on key foundational subject areas - Foundations of language, number system, Skills in EVS/Social and Science

Strategies to teacher subject concepts, Pedagogy of Subjects, Concept wise trainings

Every course covers the complete training arc—from introduction to reinforcement

Pre-work

An initial 'hook' to engage participants and get them thinking about the course subject

Course session

Core training course explaining a critical, bite-sized piece of knowledge (subject / non-subject) and linking it to classroom reality
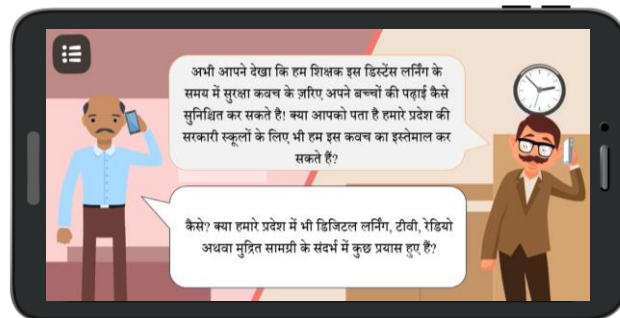
Post-work

Exercises that involve self-assessment and application of acquired learnings

We use a variety of content in our courses to good effect

Videos   Podcasts   Readings   Quizzes and questionnaires

Explore all CM Rise courses

We have been at the heart of the programme design and implementation

Programme Strategy and Oversight

Nurturing the programme and setting direction to its growth

- Part of the Steering Committee and Working Committee of the programme
- Creating an integrated schedule of teacher development events: Training, Learning Communities, and Mentoring
- Building enabling structures for widening and deepening impact

Content curation and creation

Keeping the training #LightButRight

- Creating and curating bite-sized "light but right" training courses —comprising videos, audio clips and readings, leveraging our deep education expertise
- Creating training courses on high-criticality, cherry-picked topics, in close collaboration with state subject experts and Teacher Education Institutes
- Setting guidelines and standards for the course creation, to enable wider collaboration in the ecosystem

Technical integration and tracking

Partnering closely with the National Informatics Center (NIC) and DIKSHA to enable data-based decision-making

- Creating the monitoring backbone of the programme, e.g. through daily dashboards
- Large-scale data analytics to derive insights on programme access, usage and impact.

Field Support and Feedback

Debottlenecking field issues, and creating feedback mechanisms

- Set up of robust feedback mechanisms and support structures to enable issue debottlenecking – directly and through partnerships
- Establishing methods and SOPs for decentralised technical support to teachers (e.g. through block MIS teams)
- Targeted support to low-performing districts

From Ark, to Ark India to Peepul, it has been an interesting journey and Madhya Pradesh has been an integral part of it. The support we got in 2014 for developing the Shala Siddhi framework was the beginning. Together, we worked to rollout and implement Shala Siddhi across 25,000 schools in the state and build the capacity at the district level to conduct self and external school assessments.

When my team and I saw the Delhi exemplar schools in action in 2019, we began discussing the idea of developing one district as an exemplar so that it can lead the way for others and inspire them towards excellence. We believed that it was important to showcase excellence and inspire others to follow.

While we were still working in that direction in early 2020, COVID happened. We decided to use the lock-down as an opportunity to train our teachers and help them evolve their thinking as well as skills using the national Diksha platform. The Peepul team stepped in and supported us in developing that idea and fructifying it into a well-rounded program.

I am very happy and proud to share that this idea which was launched as the CM RISE digital training program for teachers is now one of the biggest and most successful teacher training programs in the country.

In a very short period of time and in the middle of a very tough situation, the state government and Peepul have partnered to achieve something that was unthinkable even a few months ago. Our teachers have responded to the training modules with enthusiasm and have shared their ideas and feedback to help us make it even better. We are looking forward to pioneering teacher development together with Peepul.

Rashmi Shami

Principal Secretary, School Education,
Government of Madhya Pradesh

The program has seen much success, with record enrolments and completion rates

All data current as of 15th January 2021

The big picture

4.5 million+
enrolments

4.3 million+
course completions

4.3 million+
certificates issued

Access and engagement

290,000+
Madhya Pradesh teachers completing
CM Rise courses on Diksha

4 million+

hours of learning
time delivered

95%+

course completion
rate across all 18
courses launched

55,000+

users from other
states completing
CM Rise courses on
DIKSHA

हमे ऐसे प्रशिक्षण की बहुत आवश्यकता थी जो आपने पूरा किया आगे भी करते रहना सर

मुझे बच्चों को देने के लिए अच्छी सामग्री मिल गयी है

Note : All comments exactly as submitted by users on the DIKSHA portal using the feedback functionality

The CM Rise programme also supported the successful implementation of the **NCERT NISHTHA 2021 programme** in Madhya Pradesh

Peepul supported as the primary implementation partner of the School Education Department, to implement the **NISHTHA** (National Initiative for School Heads and Teachers Holistic Advancement) training of all Class 1-8 teachers of the state of Madhya Pradesh.

Our support included, for these 18 training modules:

- Building decentralized capacity for technical support for NISHTHA across the state
- Enhancing the courses with contextual academic inputs
- Creating "how-to" videos and communication to help teachers understand the NISHTHA process
- Managing and co-ordinating the DIKSHA process end to end with NCERT and the School Education Department
- Organizing synchronous, supplemental training, with fortnightly YouTube Live trainings, led by the Teacher Education Institutes

The results

267,000+
Madhya Pradesh teachers completing the training

~95%
completion against target

70,000+
live viewers for YouTube Live Training related to courses

India Report Digital Education

Remote Learning Initiatives Across India

June 2020

Department of School Education & Literacy
Ministry of Human Resource Development
Government of India
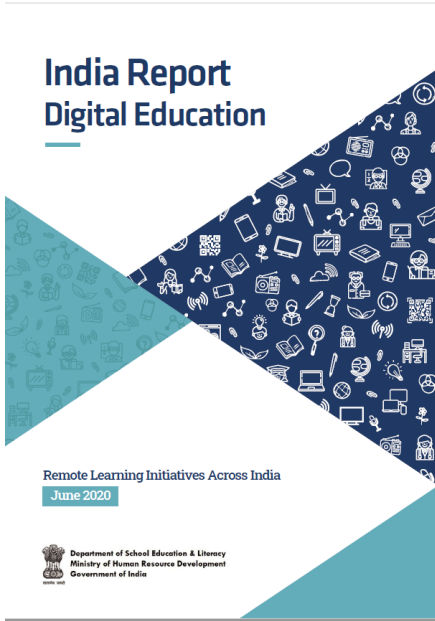
Featured in the "India Report: Digital Education" by the national Ministry of Education

Strategies used for adoption and monitoring of CM Rise courses have been extensively used as best practice in the Standard Operating Procedure" for post-launch management for NISHTHA, sent to all states in the country

NCERT

Guidelines for Implementation of NISHTHA on DIKSHA for NISHTHA Coordinators of States / UTs
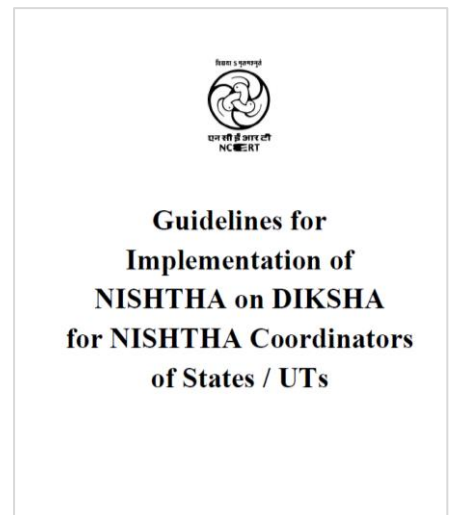
Recognized by the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network as one of 50 youth-led solutions globally, featured in the Youth Solutions Report 2020.

WE'RE FEATURED!

YOUTH SOLUTIONS REPORT 2020
50 #YouthSolutions for the SDGs
www.youthsolutions.report

SDSN YOUTH   Solutions Program

Peepul
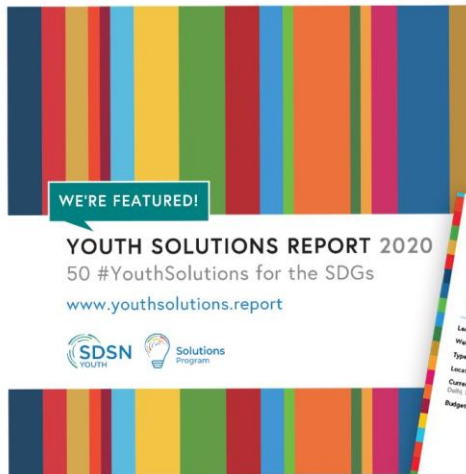
Page 33

We will continue the CM Rise programme to provide need-based learning journeys for teachers, towards **Continuous Professional Development**

Blended Trainings

Professional Learning Communities

Self-Assessment

Classroom Based Observation

Single view of Teacher Strengths and Development Areas
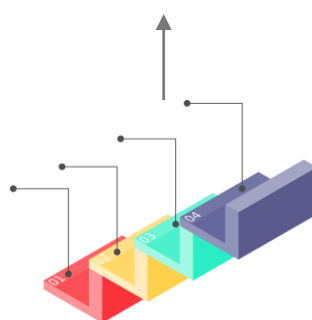
Teacher **Competency Matrix**
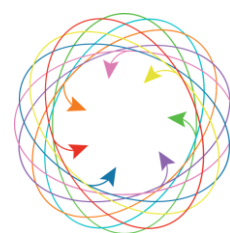
Personalized **Continuous Professional Development Plan**

Key initiatives being incorporated

- A unifying **Teacher Competency Matrix**
- Synchronous and asynchronous **Learning Forums**

- Classroom observation and **coaching**
- A **tech tool** to support personalized, individualized learning journeys

"

The Peepul team has been excellent in their support especially by activating stakeholders at all levels in the education system, ensuring seamless coordination with multi-stakeholders for the programme. Their efforts in ensuring that this program has the enthusiastic participation and support of all teachers, academic officials, various institutes across the state, and other partners (technology and content collaborators) has been remarkable. This has been a valiant effort from Peepul and makes them a valued partner in this flagship endeavour of the Department of School Education"

Lokesh Jatav
Former Commissioner, School Education Department
Government of Madhya Pradesh

The
Peepul Story

2010
Established as Ark India to run high quality education programmes

2011

2012
Launched **Quality Assurance (QA) Programme** to support the State Govt. of Madhya Pradesh

2013
Scaled QA programme to 25,000 schools across MP and integrated it with Shala Siddhi

2014

2015
Established Delhi's **first Public Private Partnership** (PPP) school; catalyses formation of Government's School Quality Enhancement Programme (SQEP), where multiple PPP schools are begun in the SDMC.

2016

2017
- Spun off from Ark to become **Peepul India**
- Opened **two more PPP schools** in Delhi
- Started Teacher Development Programme in the South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC)

2018

2019
- Launched CM Rise with the Government of Madhya Pradesh, for Holistic Professional Development of 300,000+ teachers and academic officials in the state

2020
- Started Project Sitara to train 2,800 teachers and set up four Teacher Development Centers in the SDMC

Our **Values**

Impact
Puts the child's interest ahead of all others

- Celebrates every child's uniqueness and empowers them to live up to their potential
- Enables a high-quality, holistic education for every child, regardless of socio-economic background
- Evaluates every initiative for its impact on the lives of children

Excellence
Pioneers thinking and approaches to transform educational ecosystems

- Upholds a high bar on quality for all pursuits
- Partners with policy-makers and educators to enable high academic outcomes
- Integrates learnings from exemplar schools and school systems worldwide

Leadership
Nurtures an unbeatable environment to deliver excellence

- Sustains and celebrates a mindset of trust and mutual respect
- Exemplifies courage and resilience
- Inspires others to continuously grow and improve

The Peepul family has received many awards & accolades

NITI Aayog
Top 130 Women Transforming India

SDMC Best School Award

Outstanding performance in School Quality

Govt. of Madhya Pradesh – State Certificate of Appreciation

FICCI flo
The Power to Empower
Excellence as CSR Project Partner

WEF WOMEN ECONOMIC FORUM
Exceptional Women of Excellence from WEF

MULAGO
Mulago Rainer Fellow 2020

one YOUNG WORLD
One Young World Ambassador

ASIAN-AFRICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY
Leader in Innovation in Education 2019

ET
Women Ahead List 2018

BW BUSINESSWORLD
BW Technology Disruptor of the year

WORLD HRD CONGRESS
Women Super Achiever Award 2018

The Peepul family has received many
awards & accolades

BW 40under40
list 2019

Millennium Alliance
Innovation Award

BW Woman Social
Entrepreneur of the Year
2019

50 Fabulous Innovative
Leader by World
Innovation Congress

51 Fabulous Global Social
Innovators by World
CSR Day

Global Women Super
Achiever Awards

Our supporters

SBI FOUNDATION
Service Beyond Banking

MERCER
MAKE TOMORROW, TODAY

maitri trust

Draper Richards Kaplan
FOUNDATION

MULAGO

MILLENNIUM ALLIANCE
Inspiring Innovation. Sharing Solutions.

OMIDYAR NETWORK INDIA

N/CORE

Our supporters

McKinsey & Company

THE WORLD BANK

Cipla Foundation

Ark

THE BRITISH SCHOOL NEW DELHI
WE FLY WITH OUR OWN WINGS

THE EDUCATION ALLIANCE
enabling partnerships for quality education

give INDIA

amazon

Gartner

Bharat Petroleum

genpact

SÜD-CHEMIE
CREATING PERFORMANCE TECHNOLOGY

Certifications and Accreditations

Our senior leadership team brings a diverse range of experiences and expertise

Kruti Bharucha
Founder and Chief Executive Officer

As the CEO, Kruti sets the vision and strategic direction to Peepul's work. She has **20 years of experience in various leadership and management roles** in the education, management consulting and advisory sectors as well as with multilateral institutions. Prior to Peepul, she worked with CEB's India and Washington DC offices, McKinsey and Co., The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Kruti was recently recognised on **Business World's 40 Under 40 List** (2019), **Social Entrepreneur of 2019 by Business World** and **Promising Leader for Innovation in Education** by the World CSR Forum and an Exemplar Leader by the **Asian African Chamber of Commerce and Industry.**

Urmila Chowdhury
Education Director

Urmila has over **30 years of varied experience in the field of education**. In her role as the Education Director for Peepul, she leads the education and academic team to run Peepul's exemplar schools, contextualize and use international best practices, design new programmes and in partnership with governments, develop scalable solutions for learning challenges faced by children from underprivileged backgrounds.

She has been a teacher for two decades in prestigious schools like La Martiniere and the Shri Ram School. She has been a school leader and teacher trainer, a Drama in Education practitioner and an English Language Learning (ELL) consultant. Her work and writing have been featured in Times Education Supplement UK, Business Standard, Times of India and Reader's Digest.

Girish Ananthanarayanan
Chief Operating Officer

Girish, as the Chief Operating Officer, **is the Programme Director for Peepul's programmes in Madhya Pradesh,** and also has the responsibility of managing key corporate functions.

For the last 7+ years, he has worked in delivering systemic and technology solutions across agriculture, renewable energy, education and financial inclusion. Prior to Peepul, he worked as an **Engagement Manager with McKinsey & Co.** in the Asia-Pacific region. He has worked as the Country Manager of Generation (McKinsey-incubated skill development non-profit) and also at ITC Ltd. He is an alumnus of IIT Madras and IIM Ahmedabad, and is a **One Young World Ambassador.**

Peepul's management team comprises exceptional individuals with a shared passion for education

Sonia Mondal
Teacher Development Lead

Sonia has 13 years in the field of elementary education, working on interventions with both children and educators.

Has developed training modules for government teachers on classroom management, lesson planning and developed curricular toolkits that can be used by teachers to deliver classroom instruction more effectively.

She has worked at Amity International School, Heritage School and Tagore International School. Published curricular content /books with Amity University Press, Eklavya and the NCERT. She holds a Masters in Elementary Education from TISS, Mumbai; and has been trained by Cambridge.

Sachin Ashapure
Programme Manager, Madhya Pradesh

Sachin has been with Peepul since 2014, based out of Bhopal. Sachin brings in deep experience of government relations and implementation and is co-leading our state reform program in Madhya Pradesh. He works with Government of Madhya Pradesh officials to track project progress, provide data/dashboards to flag potential issues with implementation and liaise with various state departments to enable institutionalization of the efforts.

Beyond acting as the primary liaison with the School Education Department, Sachin manages a team of Implementation Coordinators in the state that work closely with field officials, to provide support and capability building to districts in implementing key programmes. Over the last few years, his primary responsibility were the oversight, implementation, and technical support the School Quality Assurance (SQA) programme, rolled out as Shala Siddhi across 25,000 schools, including coordinating the training of 40,000+ individuals.

Rahul Raina
Programme Manager, Madhya Pradesh

Rahul brings in a mix of deep academics and operational experience and is co-leading our state reform program in Madhya Pradesh. Rahul has spent the last 7+ years of his career in the education sector working deeply on school-wide transformation projects. Before joining Peepul, Rahul was working as a Programme Lead with the India School Leadership Institute (ISLI), where he worked on coaching and mentoring school principals of government and private schools on school improvement projects on capacity building in early childhood education, literacy projects, teacher development, building school culture, community investment in rural and urban schools.

Before coaching school leaders, Rahul was a school leader himself, leading a school in rural Maharashtra where he worked closely with teachers, parents and community on developing of school. He was also a Teach for India fellow, having taught primary grades in a low-income school in Hyderabad.

Kavish Dilawari
Manager, Finance

Kavish is the Manager, Finance at Peepul. He comes with a **decade-long experience** in finance, taxation, operations, grants management and accounts. His last stint was with **India HIV/AIDS Alliance** as Senior Grants Management Officer. Kavish has first-hand experience in handling projects funded by globally recognized funding bodies such as **Global Fund, Dutch Government, Tides Foundation and European Commission**. Before HIV/AIDS Alliance, Kavish was with the **United Nations Organization Project Services (UNOPS)** and has worked very closely with several State Governments in India. Kavish is a commerce graduate from **Delhi University** and an MBA.

Nikita Tulsyan
Manager, Monitoring & Evaluation

Nikita is the Manager, M&E at Peepul. A practitioner in the development sector with four years of experience in monitoring, evaluation and research, she has worked with Sambodhi Research and Communications to conduct monitoring and evaluation of projects and programmes across a range of sectors including education, health, skills and community development. There, she has managed large M&E studies and developed proficiency with statistical tools and methods. Nikita has also interned with organizations like Gram Vikas and NASSCOM Foundation to get a practical understanding of programme operations that she can bring to the M&E space. She is a Post-Graduate in Rural Management from Xavier Institute of Management (XIM), Bhubaneswar.

Our Advisory Board comprises of eminent experts from the education, public affairs, and corporate sectors.

Ramesh Srinivasan
Senior Partner, McKinsey and Company

Ramesh Srinivasan currently co-leads the Pharmaceuticals & Medical Products and Organisation Practices at McKinsey. He has had an illustrious career, spanning twenty-four years spent in India and in New York. Over the years, Ramesh has led and shaped organisational change projects for clients from diverse industries – ranging from healthcare, to banking to technology, and much more. Promoting better education has also been an area of active engagement for Ramesh. He finds himself on the Boards of pioneering education not-for-profits in India such as the Akanksha Foundation and Teach for India. He is also a member on the Board of the NYU Tandon School of Engineering. Ramesh holds a Business technology degree in Computer Science from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras and is an MBA graduate and a gold medalist from the Indian Institute of Management (IIM).

Abha Adams
Former Director, Shriram Schools and Advisor Education, Step by Step School

Abha Adams is a well-known educationist, and a prolific writer and orator. She holds a Masters degree in English Literature from Lady Shriram College, University of Delhi and a Masters in Drama and Theater Arts from Leeds University, UK. With almost four decades of experience in the education sector, Abha began her career as a lecturer in English, at Lady Shriram College. She later served as the Director of the Shriram schools for thirteen years. Currently, she is an advisor for education at Step By Step School in Noida, and the lead education partner for Carnegie Hall, New York. She is also a member on the boards of the Assam Valley School, the Ahvaan Trust and the Fab India Education Trust.

Lisa Jordan
Managing Director, Draper Richards Kaplan Foundation

With a career focused on social impact and systemic change for two decades, Lisa Jordan is currently the Managing Director at the Draper Richards Kaplan Foundation, and the founder of Aim for Social Change. She has previously held senior leadership positions at the Bernard van Leer Foundation, Porticus Foundation and the Ford Foundation. Committed to strengthening civil society, Lisa also contributes her time as a member on the boards of several leading social enterprises and not-for-profits working towards social justice. She has to her credit the title of being amongst the top ten influencers in civil society, in the Netherlands (2018). Lisa holds a Master's Degree in Development Studies from the Institute of Social Studies in The Hague, Netherlands.

Soumya Rajan
Founder, MD and CEO Waterfield Advisors

Soumya Rajan in her twenty-five years of experience in the financial services sector has held diverse portfolios, including that of leadership positions at one of India's leading private banks – Standard Chartered. Soumya also serves on the Boards of several education-based not-for-profits, including Reach to Teach and Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Gandhinagar's Research Park and Entrepreneurship Centre. Among her several notable achievements is the recognition rendered to her for being one of India's top 100 women in finance (2019). An alumna of St. Stephen's College, Delhi, Soumya went on to be awarded the prestigious Radhakrishnan Scholarship to study at Oxford University, where she completed her Masters in Mathematics.

Sumit Bose
Vice Chairman, National Institute of Public Finance and Policy

Prior to serving as the Vice Chairman at the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy, and the Public Interest Director at BSE, Sumit Bose has had a career spanning many years with the Ministry of Finance and the Education Department, Government of India. His role was pivotal to the launch of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (Universalisation of Elementary Education) in India as the then Joint Secretary, Department of Elementary Education. He has also served as the Secretary, School Education in Madhya Pradesh, the Union Finance Secretary and Revenue Secretary in the Ministry of Finance. Sumit is an alumnus of St. Stephen's College, Delhi and the London School of Economics. He joined the Indian Administrative Services in 1976.

Vibha Parthasarathy
Former Chairperson, National Commission for Women

Vibha Parthasarathi is a renowned educationist with almost fifty years of experience in teaching and learning, and education systems reform in the west (UK and USA) as well as in the global south (India and Kenya). Educated at Cambridge University, and Boston University, Vibha went on to serve as the Chairperson of the National Commission for Women (NCW) from 1999 to 2002. She also served as the Principal of Sardar Patel Vidyalaya in New Delhi.

Peepul In the News

NGO joins hands with SDMC to pilot teacher training programme

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI, JANUARY 31, 2018 00:00 IST
UPDATED: MARCH 16, 2018 21:59 IST

SHARE ARTICLE   PRINT   A | A | **A**

The group will work towards creating a systemic impact in corporation schools within Delhi by working with approximately 250 government teachers each year

Teaching the teachers to teach better is the first-of-its-kind initiative by non-government organisation Peepul, which has collaborated with the South Delhi

The Hindu
31 Jan 2018

South corpn starts reach-&-teach plan

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: For two lakh children of 591 municipal primary schools sitting at home due to the Covid-19 lockdown, the South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC) on Friday launched a reach-and-teach programme.

With the help of school management committees (SMC), NGOs and volunteers, SDMC has started the new session. It is even trying a voice call- and SMS-based system for parents who don't have a smartphone, an education official said.

The programme for 581 municipal and 10 aided schools is delivering teaching material to the students through e-learning modules. Study materials include worksheets, audio files, videos and activity tasks, which will be sent to the parents through WhatsApp. Teachers will make calls or send messages to parents who don't have smartphones. "The project will be monitored by teachers and they will assess the implementation status after taking feedback from students or their parents," the official said.

NGO Peepul and SARD are helping SDMC impart online training to teachers, said spokesperson Radhakrishan. Both parents and SMC members will help students with the new method, he added.

Times of India
18 April 2020

mp editorial | 7

Peepul

Making abundant use of public-private-partnerships, Peepul has made significant strides in its efforts to overhaul the image and quality of government school education in India

Nexus of Good

ANIL SWARUP

This PPP experiment has had phenomenal results. 85 per cent of children are meeting or exceeding grade-level expectations, there is 95 per cent attendance at parent-teacher meetings, 75 per cent attendance and 90 per cent retention rate of students

There had been repeated requests from the founder of Peepul to visit the Municipal Corporation School at Lajpat Nagar, New Delhi but I was busy travelling around the country to fathom the nuances and the problems that beset school education in the country after having taken over as Secretary, School Education in 2016. I did finally relent but it took me almost two years to do that. And what an experience it turned out to be. It was indeed a perfect example of the 'Nexus of Good'.

The journey at Peepul began in 2015 when the first exemplar school commenced operations in Delhi as a "bright spot" for excellence in the government system to demonstrate 'what great looks like'. The exemplar served as a springboard towards realising the potential and possibilities of working with the education system.

Peepul took on an under-enrolled municipal corporation school in one of the elite neighbourhoods of South Delhi — Lajpat Nagar. Enrollment for grades KG and one in this school was only nine pupils. Most students and parents had moved to low-cost private schools with the perception that the quality of schooling was better in these schools. A situation arose where there was a government school spread over 2.5 acres of land but with a total of around 50 students across grade one to five.

Peepul and the South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC) embarked on a school transformation project, using a PPP framework to demonstrate the excellence that could be possible in the government school system and deliver high-quality learning. The poorest families study at government schools because they are fee-free and several benefits are offered (such as meals, scholarships, textbooks) — the system must cater to and ensure these vulnerable children get the same quality of education as any private school to have a chance to succeed in their lives.

On the first day of 're-opening' the premises with a PPP avatar for grades KG and one initially, enrollment was at 90 pupils (compared to 9 pupils). Word spread quickly. Within three months, enrollment had hit full capacity at 120 students. Within a year, enrollment increased to 230 children, with a waitlist of children. Parents were asking for places, as with any private school and attendance was at 75 per cent. The SDMC was soon looking to revitalise 100 such PPP schools.

Although it was only one school, it served as the catalyst for change and pioneered a model that could pave the way for how NGOs and the government could creatively and consciously work together to bring about significant quality improvement. Peepul managed school operations such as teacher hiring, training, pedagogy, assessments, parent and community engagement with the government providing the infrastructure and continued resource allocation by way of meals, scholarships, materials, etc.

This PPP experiment has had phenomenal results. 85 per cent of children are meeting or exceeding grade-level expectations, there is 95 per cent attendance at parent-teacher meetings, 75 per cent attendance and 90 per cent retention rate of students.

Peepul began to codify and solidify school operations over time, creating a prototype for how to replicate this model across other corporations. From operating a single PPP school, Peepul realised that for change to happen within the government system, the definition of PPP had to expand to other areas of functioning. The schools were centres of excellence but there was much to be done beyond providing inspiration and a belief of 'this is possible'. To show that it was not a 'one-school wonder', Peepul expanded the number of schools to three schools using a model where they worked more closely with government school teachers. Hence, they also commenced a teacher development programme to create systemic impact, training 450 plus teachers across 150 schools to impact 16,000 students. This was done through close partnership and building a cadre of champion teachers in the system that could be ambassadors of excellence and trainers for other teachers.

Through teacher development, Peepul reinvented the way teachers are trained and coached. In terms of the direct outcome of the initiative, out of the teachers trained, 96 per cent of them felt the training was relevant and very helpful in their classroom practices and 97 per cent of teachers showed evidence of implementing techniques in their classrooms. Their approach is different from the norm of lecture-based teacher training. Instead, it is based on bite-sized, practical modules followed up by classroom observation and coaching. Data has shown that 90 per cent of these innovative techniques are being implemented in government classrooms across 150 schools.

Amazed at what I saw during the visit to Lajpat Nagar School, I encouraged them to think more deeply about replicating their models at scale. They adopted this approach quite seriously and pivoted their strategy to work in deep partnerships with state and local governments.

As they expanded their work in Madhya Pradesh and Delhi, they began to think more deeply and rigorously about the systemic change required to bring about meaningful teacher-student interaction and, at the core, improve classroom practice.

Making it happen in the government school system must translate into an improvement in the quality of the teaching that happens in the classroom and with each child. Using this at their core, they moved from thinking about exemplar schools towards creating exemplar education ecosystems.

An exemplar ecosystem would be focused on academic excellence with four critical pillars. These were creating a visual exemplar for building belief, teacher training and development to build skills, mentoring and coaching for school principals, block and cluster-level academic officials and monitoring and accountability frameworks to ensure the use of data at the state and district level.

The model that has emerged is a distinctive one. Peepul is one of the only non-profits in India that works at both the micro and the macro layers of the government.

In the micro, they now run three exemplar public-private partnership (PPP) schools that cater to over 1,100 children. The idea is to run a network of exemplar schools across Indian states to raise expectations and show through results on the ground.

At the macro, they work on teacher and school leader capacity building for teachers in Delhi and work closely with the Government of Madhya Pradesh to run a teacher professional development for all 3,20,000 teachers across the 1,00,000 schools in the state.

The case in point of building an exemplar ecosystem is well seen in their Covid response work in MP, where they saw the Covid school closures as an opportunity to boost teacher skills. What started as a Covid response effort in partnership with the government has now shifted to a state-wide PPP effort on teacher development called CM Rise. A progressive State Government with a dynamic set of officials, led by an outstanding IAS officer, Rashmi Arun Shami, the Education Department have played a big role in creating a sustainable and successful partnership towards having an impact at scale. The State and Peepul, under the inspired leadership of its founder, Kruti Bharucha are now working together on a systemic teacher and school strengthening plan that can be an exemplar for the country.

The practices of CM Rise are now being adopted by other states and appreciated by NCERT as a best practice.

Views expressed are personal

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Article of Peepul's journey by Mr. Anil Swarup, Former Secretary, Ministry of Human Resource Development

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