



**2016-2018**

**A THREE YEAR JOURNEY**

# **PRARAMBHIK BHASHA SHIKSHAN COURSE**

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**LANGUAGE AND LEARNING  
FOUNDATION'S FLAGSHIP PROGRAM**



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“Language is not everything in education, but without language everything is nothing in education.”

-Wolff



## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABRC	Assistant Block Resource Coordinator
BRC	Block Resource Coordinator
BRP	Block Resource Person
BTC	Basic Training Certificate
CAC	Cluster Academic Coordinator
CRC	Cluster Resource Coordinator
D.El.Ed	Diploma in Elementary Education
DIET	District Institute of Education and Trainings
GRR	Gradual Release of Responsibility
LLF	Language and Learning Foundation
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
RGSM	Rajeev Gandhi Shiksha Mission
SCERT	State Council of Educational Research and Training
SSA	Samagra Shiksha Abhiyaan
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

## OUR BELIEFS

In education, language is not everything, but without language, everything is nothing.

When children learn language, they are not engaging with only one type of learning; but with the foundations of learning itself.

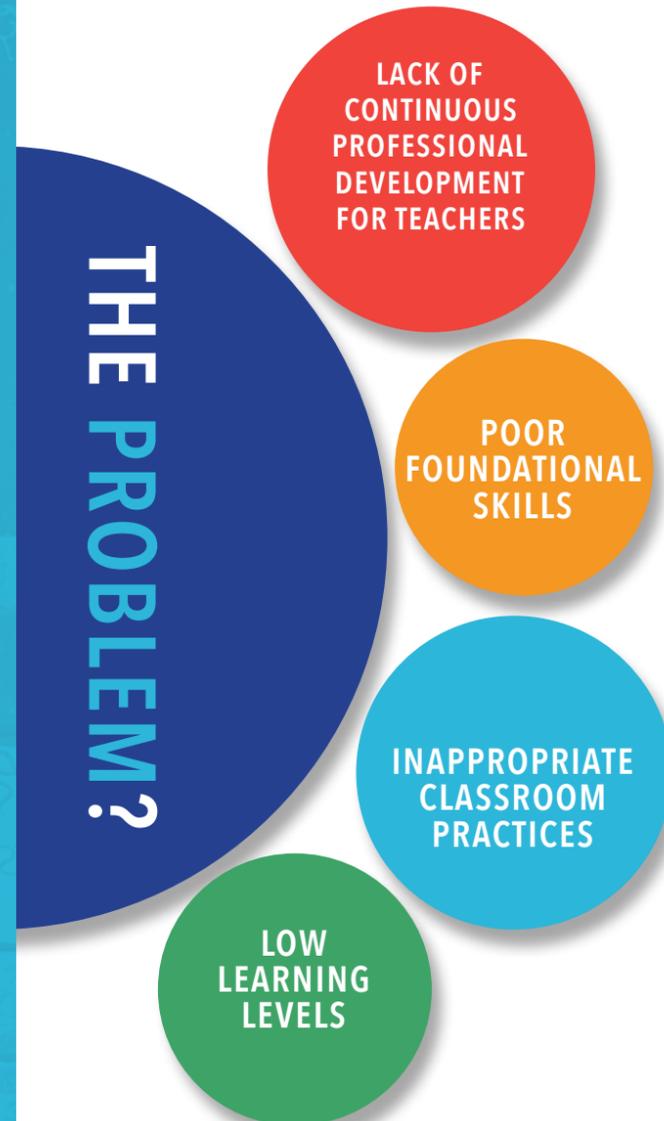
Strong foundational literacy skills, along with 'thinking and reasoning' abilities, are the basis of almost all learning later, in school.

Many teachers are willing to learn and bring about a change in their classrooms.

**LLF IS COMMITTED TO IMPROVING THE LANGUAGE LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

## BACKGROUND

Early literacy and numeracy form the basis for future learning; making it crucial to improve the teaching and learning of these topics. Language and Learning Foundation (LLF) was established in 2015 with the dual aims of creating and implementing a variety of opportunities for teachers, teacher educators and other stakeholders working in the area of early grade student learning to develop professionally; with a focus on language, literacy and multilingual education.



An introductory module on language and literacy of Prarambik Bhasha Shikshan

## PRARAMBHIK BHASHA SHIKSHAN COURSE

### OUR 9 MONTH COURSE ON EARLY LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

## INTRODUCTION

LLF believes that providing continuous professional development for teachers and teacher educators is imperative in bringing about a sustainable and substantial shift in classroom practices that result in improved language and literacy skills of children. LLF's Professional Development Programs have been designed to ensure continuous professional guidance and support by meeting the various requirements of teachers, teacher educators and academic resource persons that are involved in the teaching and learning of language in early grades. The duration of these courses range between a month to a year.

The flagship program of LLF is the intensive, 9 month course on language and literacy (Prarambik Bhasha Shikshan), which blends both theory and practice. The course is designed to improve the conceptual understanding and classroom practices of language and literacy teaching in early grades. It also seeks to equip participants with the ability to create and develop instructional strategies and programs. Executed using a blended distance learning model, the medium of instruction and resource materials for this course are in Hindi.

# COURSE OUTREACH

In 2016, the course was launched in the states of Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan, and is currently in its third year of implementation. In all five states, LLF has been collaborating with either the SCERT, the SSA or DIETs for the execution of the course. These institutions have played a pivotal role in steering the program in their respective states with active engagement in the process of application, organisation of face-to-face workshops, and certification of participants after course completion, jointly with LLF.



## COLLABORATION WITH STATE GOVERNMENT

STATE GOVERNMENT AGENCIES CONTRIBUTE BETWEEN 25% TO 30% OF THE OVERALL EXPENDITURE ON THE COURSE

STATE ACADEMIC AGENCIES APPROVE COURSE MATERIALS

THE PARTICIPANTS ARE CERTIFIED BY STATE GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, JOINTLY WITH LLF

The Prarambhik Bhasha Shikshan program is supported by Tata Trusts, Central Square Foundation, UNICEF and various state education agencies.

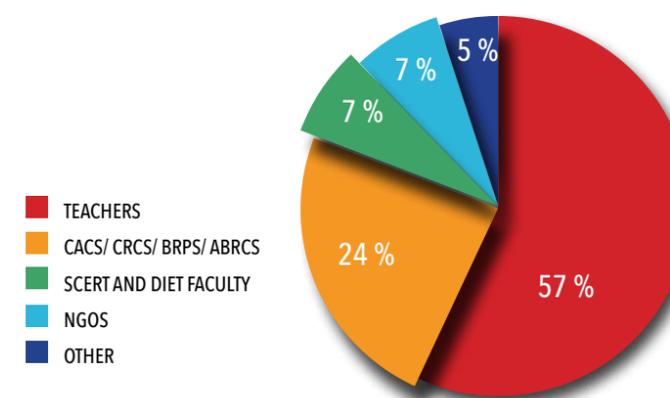


## PARTICIPANTS' PROFILE

The course has reached out to 498 participants across different categories :

- Primary school teachers, teaching grades 1 to 3
- Teacher educators - Language faculty from SCERTs/ DIETs
- Academic support personnel at the block and cluster levels (BRCs/ ABRCs /CACs/ CRCs)
- Other NGOs.

Most participants apply for the course on a voluntary basis. In some states, however, a few participants are nominated by SCERT, SSA or DIET. The selection of participants includes a strict screening of application forms, followed by one-on-one telephonic interviews.



NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS 2016-18				
STATE	2016	2017	2018	TOTAL
BIHAR	14	42	30	86
CHHATTISGARH	16	78	56	150
HARYANA	20	36	29	85
RAJASTHAN	14	21	48	83
UTTAR PRADESH	7	27	29	63
NGO	31			31
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>498</b>

# COURSE COMPONENTS

The course, spanning over 350 hours, is designed to include both interactive components, like face-to-face workshops and group conference calls, as well as self-learning modules, like small tasks and projects. The course also involves multiple assessment tools like quizzes, assignments, and tests.

## LEARNING MATERIAL

Twelve modules, of 70-80 pages each, including key readings that are supplemented with audio and video resources, which can be accessed using QR codes. Time period for each module is 3 to 4 weeks.

Total duration: 150 hours

## GROUP CONFERENCE CALL

Two, hour-long, interactive calls for every module.

Total duration: 24 hours

## SMALL TASKS

Four small tasks for each module that are checked for the understating and application of a given unit or section and requires less time.

Total duration: 24 hours

## ONLINE QUIZ

An online quiz for each module with 10 knowledge based questions.

Total duration: 5 hours

## MY COURSE DIARY

A Reflective Diary to record the major learnings of a module, things that participants intent to do and what they could actually apply in the filed. This needs to be presented at the end of the course. This diary was introduced in 2018 to replace the action research project

Total duration: 24 hours

## ASSIGNMENT

One assignment per module which is either desk based or field based (where participants have to work with children in the classroom.)

Total duration: 15 days/ 120 hours

## ONLINE DISCUSSION FORUM

3 to 4 theme based online forums where participants from different states can interact and discuss pre-selected topics.

Total Duration: 3 hours

## EXPERT CALLS/ SESSIONS

3 to 5 theme based conference calls (one hour each) with external experts during the course.

Total duration: 24 hours

## TEST

A final online test following the completion of 10 modules

Total duration: 8 hours

# COURSE DELIVERY THROUGH MENTORS

## MENTORS

Provide continuous support to 15-20 participants each, throughout the course

## FACE-TO-FACE INTERACTIONS

Workshops spread over 9 months

## VIRTUALLY

Whatsapp, phone calls, e-mails, Moodle based portal & app, LLF website

The 9-month professional development course takes place through a network of mentors who are responsible for creating the necessary learning environment for participants and facilitating their learning process. There is one mentor for every 15-20 participants, providing them with continuous support throughout the course. The mentors stay connected with participants over the phone, through WhatsApp groups and emails. They also evaluate the participants' performance on different course components and provide the necessary feedback and support. They are also responsible for keeping a record of the participation and scores of each participant in the various course components. Mentors also visits some of the participants in the field to see the impact of the course at the ground level.

Interactive sessions on calls and face-to-face workshops lead to the constant capacity building of these mentors.

Course mentors facilitating a group during the workshop

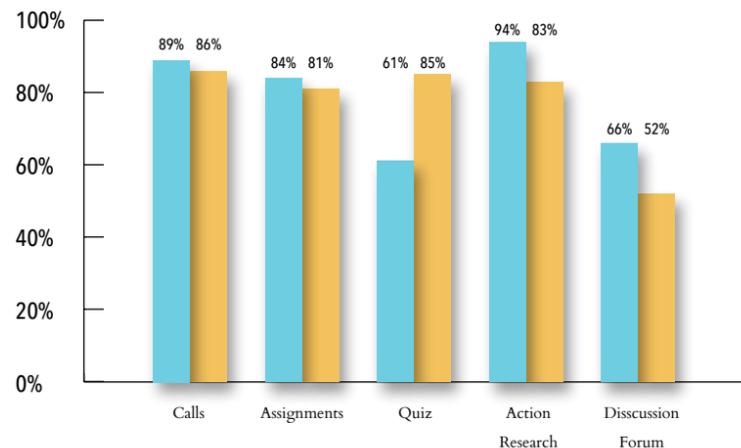




Certificate distribution by Mission Director RGSM, SCERT Director and UNICEF State head Chhattisgarh

## COURSE PARTICIPATION AND COMPLETION

Continuous monitoring is undertaken to ascertain the participants' levels of engagement in each component – i.e. calls, assignments, small tasks, quizzes, discussion forums and action research projects. The scoring system aids in the evaluation of participants on different components. There is a minimum criteria that the participants must fulfil to receive the certificate and this is ascertained based on their participation and scores.



PARTICIPATION RATE IN DIFFERENT COURSE COMPONENTS

■ 2016 ■ 2017

## MINIMUM CRITERIA TO RECEIVE THE CERTIFICATE

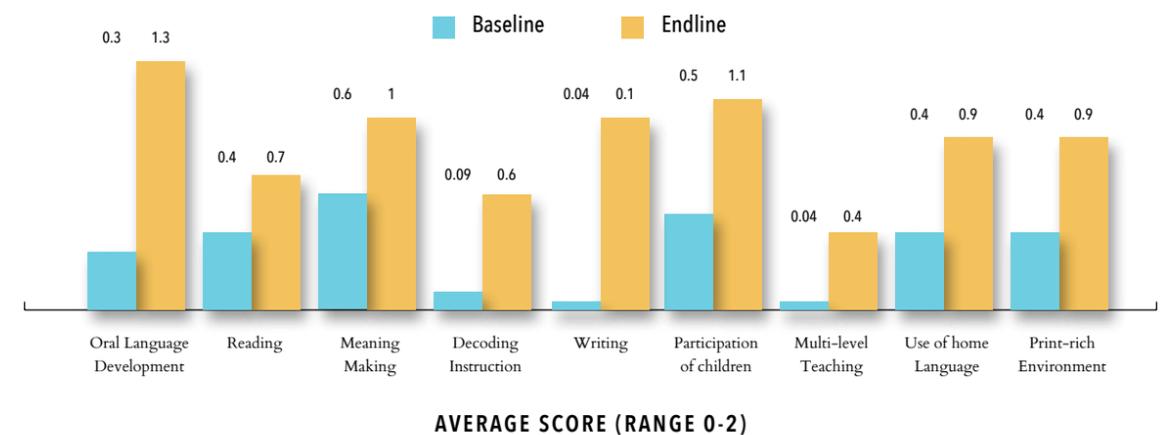
- Attended at least **70%** of the conference calls for their full duration.
- Submitted over **50%** of the assignments, with a minimum grade of 30% in each.
- Attempted at least **60%** of the quiz.
- Posted on at least **2 out of 3** theme based discussion forums.
- Submitted the action research project and obtained a grade of at least **45%**

## COURSE EVALUATION & IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The mechanisms adopted for evaluation and impact assessment of the course have evolved over the last three years, with at least one new element being incorporated every year to enhance their robustness.

- In 2016, the process focused on monitoring participation and course completion by participants.
- In 2017, the evaluation process focused on changes in teaching practices following the implementation of the course by assessing knowledge enhancement, observing classroom practices and conducting interviews.
- In 2018, third-party evaluation was commissioned to evaluate the 9 month course.

For the purpose of evaluation, changes in classroom practices were gauged by comparing the average scores (computed across all observations) assigned to the major components of early language and literacy teaching, during baseline and endline observations. The lowest score assigned was '0', indicating the least desirable practice associated with a component, and the highest score assigned was '2'. The graph below plots the average scores assigned to classroom practices associated with early language and literacy during baseline and endline observations.



AVERAGE SCORE (RANGE 0-2)



Participants Taking Endline - UP 2017 batch



Baseline of practice taken by a Third Party for the batch 2018

Some areas that presented significant improvements in score were ‘oral language development’, ‘active engagement of children’, ‘nature of writing tasks’ and ‘multilevel teaching practices’.

## ORAL LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

There were only 5 classroom observations with least desirable practices, i.e. no oral language activities, during endline observations – a considerable improvement from the baseline which indicated 15 such classroom observations.

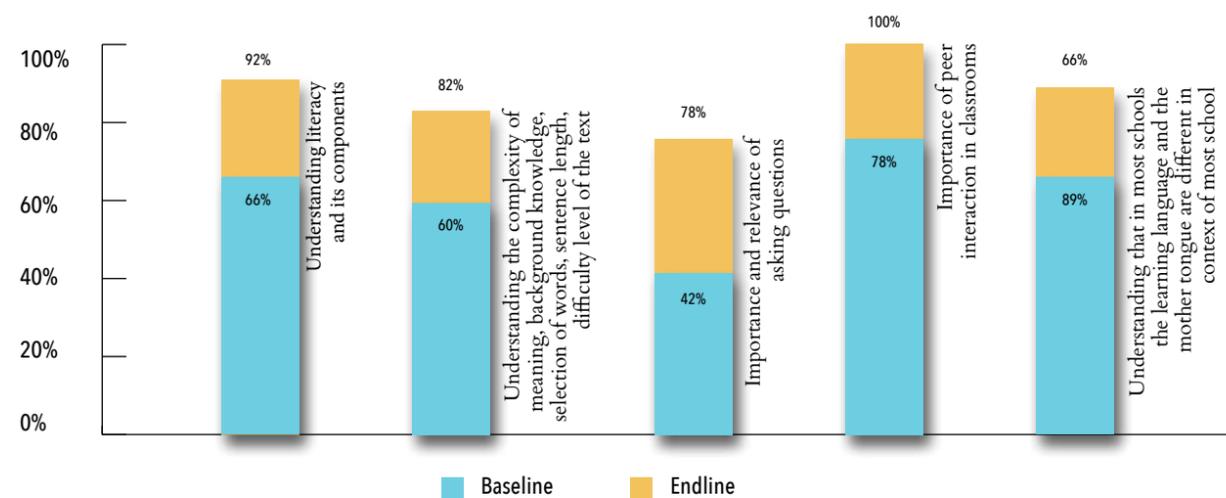
Similarly, there were 13 classroom observations showing desirable practices in oral language development during endline observations i.e. some oral language activities conducted in the classroom where children interact and respond. This showed a significant shift considering no observations showed such practices during baseline.

## WRITING

Writing activities in classrooms showed improvement with only a few observations showing least desirable practices, i.e. students practice only repetitive writing of letters – decreasing from 21 observations in baseline to only 7 during endline.

The shift in the number of observations with desirable practices, like students undertaking differentiated writing tasks of letter/word/text writing, (however, not independent writing) was also noted– from 0 at baseline to 6 during endline.

Baseline and endline assessments of the participants’ beliefs, attitudes and knowledge, regarding various areas of early language teaching and learning, were also conducted. Some of the areas that presented a marked improvement in the participants’ conceptual understanding were:



AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT

## POST COURSE ENGAGEMENT

After the course completion all the interested participants are enrolled on the portal “Bhasha Ki Duniya” (Community of Learning and Practices) an online platform through which alumni across batches and states stay connected. As a member of the community the participants are expected to help, support and enrich each other’s learning and also update their knowledge, skills and competencies.

The alumni are also involved in the various activities of the running batch. They are invited to take sessions in the workshops ; participate as guest callers in conference calls to share their understanding on specific modules; moderate online discussion forums along with the LLF team and anchor thematic sessions as experts.

Some of our alumni members continue to engage with us in the capacity of Mentors for participants of the short term courses.



Alumni Mentors facilitating participants during a workshop



Alumni taking sessions in the face to face workshops



Alumni becoming mentors for the short term course



Alumni facilitating a group

# STORIES OF CHANGE



2016 & 17 participants of CG as master trainers for state level in-service teacher training on language



2016 & 17 batch Uttar Pradesh participant invited to SCERT Lucknow for developing Learning Kit for EGR

- Many of our participants from the 2016 & 17 batches have been invited by SCERT to contribute to curriculum reforms, textbook revisions, resource material development and teacher and resource person trainings on early language and literacy.
- Fifteen participants from LLF's 9-month professional development course were selected to train 2704 Cluster Academic Coordinators (CAC) in Chhattisgarh on different aspects of Early Grade Reading, under RGSM, SCERT, UNICEF and Room to Read's joint initiative.
- LLF's course material is regularly used for state level, in-service trainings of language teachers, in the state of Chhattisgarh.
- The participants from the 2016 and 2017 batches, from Chhattisgarh, Bihar and Haryana, are now facilitating LLFs 3 month course as mentors.
- The course was granted Diploma status from Pandit Sunderlal Sharma Open University, Bilaspur (Chhattisgarh) in the year 2017.
- LLFs course content is being used to develop the pre-service curriculum for the BTC program of Uttar Pradesh, as well as to refine the D.El.Ed course of Chhattisgarh.
- In Uttar Pradesh some participants have formed Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) in their districts to take forward learnings from the course and share them with fellow teachers.
- SCERT-Uttar Pradesh has used the QR codes of course videos in their grade 1 and 2 textbooks, facilitating their reach to crores of viewers (including teachers, children and parents). SCERT has also shared these videos on the Diksha platform - a National level open platform with viewers all over the country.
- The course has drawn attention from state officials and has increased the demand for courses of varied durations, with district specific interventions.

We have now courses of different durations, such as:

- A 3-month certificate course on ELL, catering to Block and Cluster level academic resource persons and primary school teachers.
- 4-week courses on specialized topics in ELL; focusing on practice-based knowledge.
- A 12-week blended course to develop effective literacy practices in early grades for children from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

“The understanding developed through this course is very effective for BRPs. Strategies of teaching, skill and comprehension based approach and activities, initiating critical thinking, ZPD, scaffolding, GRR and the concept of language teaching, with a balanced approach, helps in improving the learning levels of children.”

MEENA  
BRP , Haryana

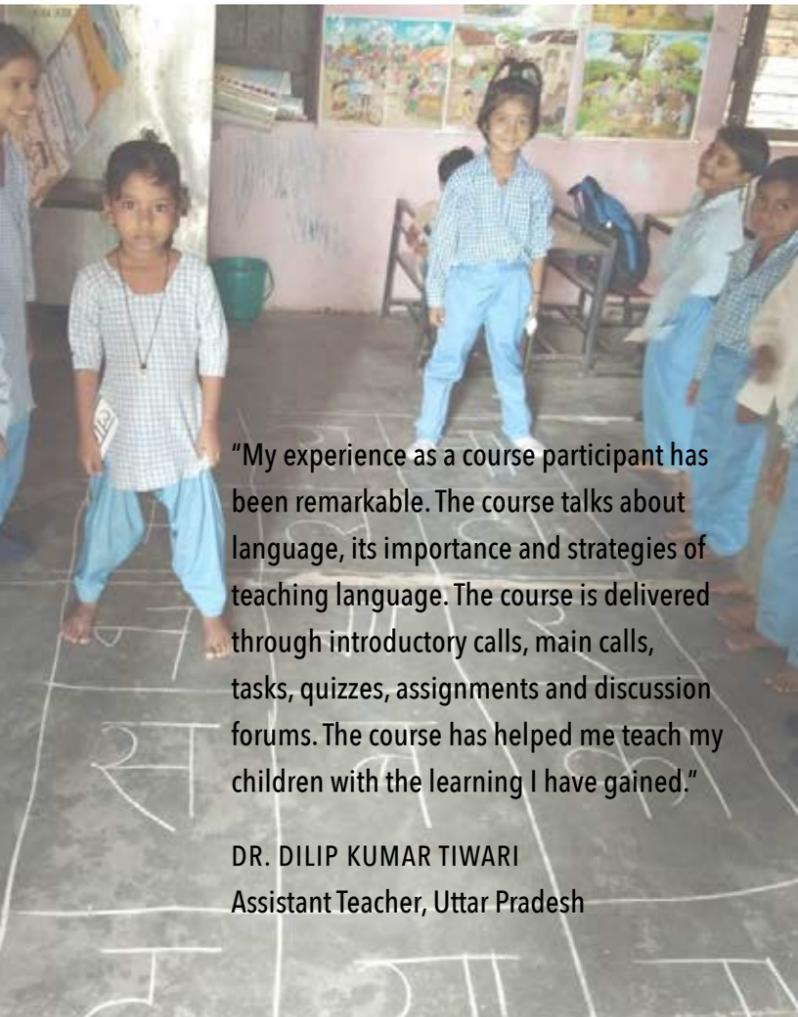


“One significant improvement as a result of the course is the increase in interactive reading in my class. I have understood better what goes into pre reading, during reading and post reading. Now I encourage children to make predictions, I ask question to stimulate their higher order thinking, I connect their reading with writing tasks and much more. I had never thought on these lines earlier! In fact, now I also ensure a print rich class for my children, even if it means that I need to spend from my own pocket. With such change in my classroom practices, I can see clearly the change it is bringing about in my children – how they are becoming more and more confident, more and more engaged and how they are turning into avid readers!”

PUSHPA SHUKLA  
Assistant Teacher,  
Primary School Karchiya, Chhattisgarh

“My experience as a course participant has been remarkable. The course talks about language, its importance and strategies of teaching language. The course is delivered through introductory calls, main calls, tasks, quizzes, assignments and discussion forums. The course has helped me teach my children with the learning I have gained.”

DR. DILIP KUMAR TIWARI  
Assistant Teacher, Uttar Pradesh



“As a cluster academic coordinator, I found that many children of class 3 were unable to read & write, and those who could lacked the confidence. Module 2 of the course helped me understand two things; less time is being allocated to the process of learning and very less participation of children in the learning activity. Subsequently, I issued a letter in my cluster which focused on these two elements; necessity for language teaching and learning. These aspects gained special attention during monitoring as well.”

OM NARAYAN SHARMA  
CAC, Chhattisgarh (2016)



This course is a combination of conceptual and behavioural aspects of language and learning and its structure ensures ease of participation. In addition to the self-reading module, this course involves an introductory and main call, thematic calls, small tasks, audio-visual material, quizzes, etc. – and this is carried out under the guidance of a mentor, in a certain time period for each module. Assignments for each module are evaluated, assessed and proper feedback is provided on each. Participants are in constant touch with the course, and other members of the course, through Whatsapp and workshops.

ABHA RANI, LECTURER  
SCERT, Patna, Bihar



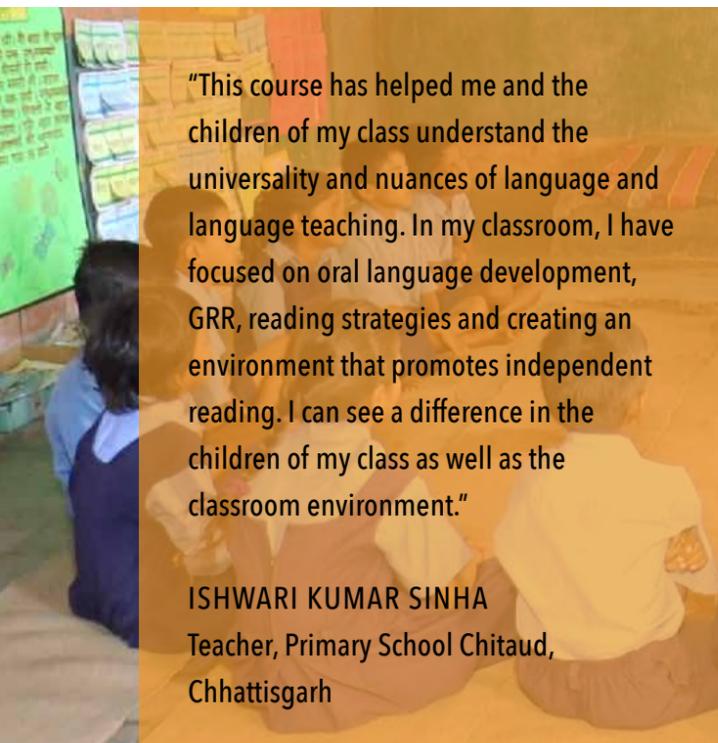
“Earlier, I did not know how to handle a multilingual class. However after participating in the course, I have understood how to use multi-grade, multilingual teaching and Gradual Release of Responsibility (GRR) strategies while teaching. Now I enjoy working with children in a multilingual environment and even I get to learn from them.”

DRON SAHU  
Govt. Primary School,  
Bijemal, Chhattisgarh (2016)



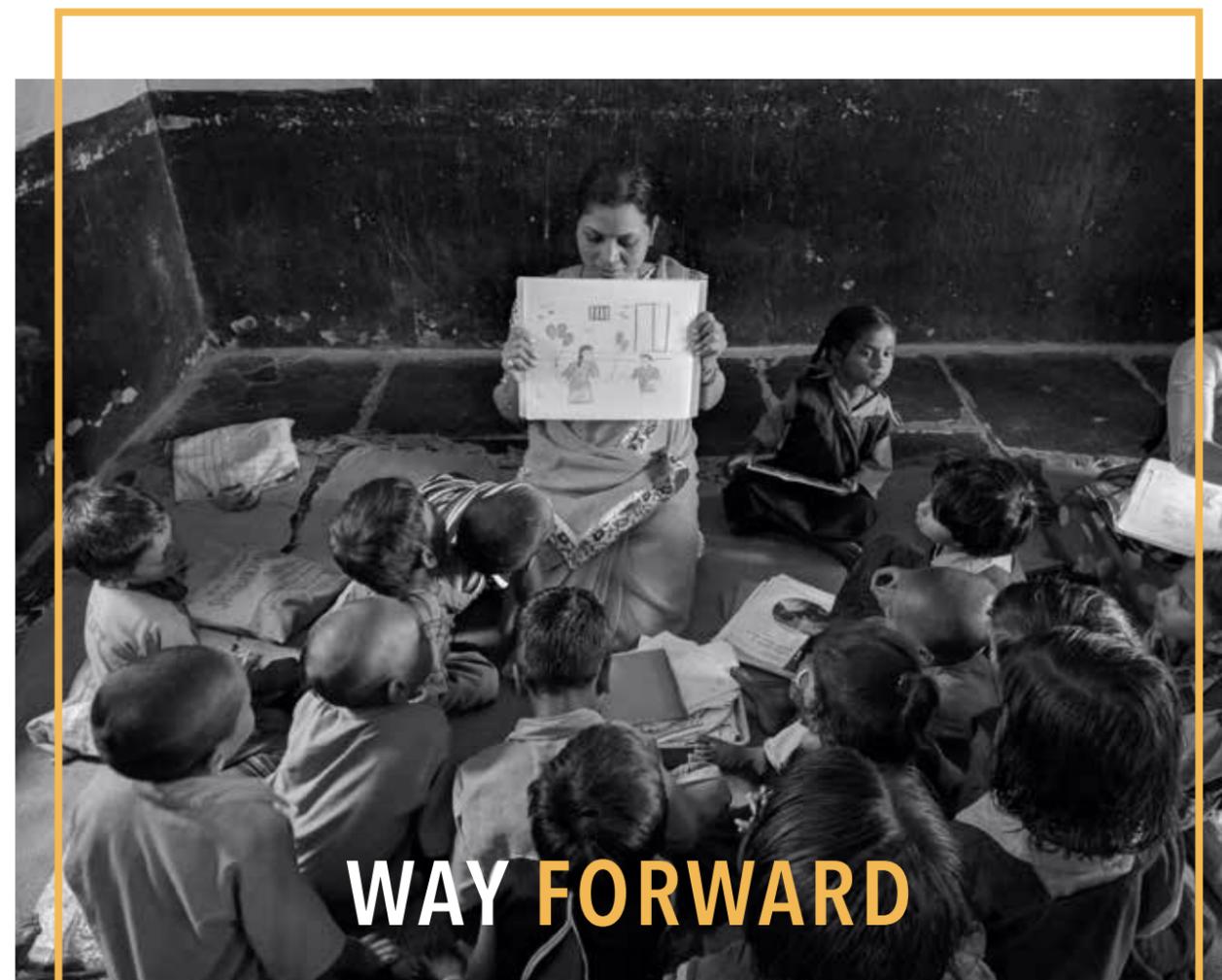
"This course has served as a stepping stone from me . I had been teaching language for many years but the course gave a new direction and perspective of language teaching . Not only had it helped me flourish as language teacher but also as a language resource person for the state and the district. I have formed a Professional Learning Community by the name 'Neev' through which I am trying to bring about a change in the language teaching of the teachers of my district. "

ALPA NIGAM  
Head Teacher, Primary School Tilauli,  
Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh



"This course has helped me and the children of my class understand the universality and nuances of language and language teaching. In my classroom, I have focused on oral language development, GRR, reading strategies and creating an environment that promotes independent reading. I can see a difference in the children of my class as well as the classroom environment."

ISHWARI KUMAR SINHA  
Teacher, Primary School Chitaud,  
Chhattisgarh



## WAY FORWARD

The course will be redesigned and offered as a one year course following the quarter system to the participants of the 4<sup>th</sup> batch, starting May 2019. Each quarter will cover 3 modules along with the related course components. There will be quarterly assignments and tests which the participants would need to clear in order to complete the course. The course will follow a credit system aligned to the diploma course structure mandated by UGC.



## OUR PARTNERS

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