



Teaching and Learning Practices Survey - Assam

A study to strengthen FLN teaching and
learning practices in India

2025

SUMMARY

Implemented with



TLPS 2025

Teaching and Learning Practices Survey 2025. Assam

December 2025

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256B, Prince Anwar Shah Road
Kolkata, WB - 700045
Email: info@vikramshila.org

Acknowledgements

The Teaching Learning Practices Survey (TLPS) Assam report is the result of a collaborative effort involving state institutions, district and block-level functionaries, educators, and school communities committed to strengthening foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN) in the state.

We extend our sincere gratitude to Tata Trusts for their strategic and financial support in enabling this study. Their commitment to strengthening early learning and advancing evidence-based system reform has been instrumental in making this work possible.

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Our sincere appreciation goes to all schools, teachers, and children who participated in the study. We are especially thankful to the teachers who welcomed the survey teams into their classrooms and engaged openly with the process. Their willingness to reflect on their practices lies at the heart of this report.

We also acknowledge the contributions of academic support structures across the system, including Block Resource Persons (BRPs), Cluster Resource Persons (CRPs), and Block-level education officers, whose role in supporting classroom practices is central to strengthening FLN outcomes.

We extend our thanks to the researchers, field investigators, supervisors, and data teams whose rigorous efforts ensured the quality, consistency, and integrity of the data collected across classrooms in Assam.

Finally, this report reflects the collective efforts of the central, state, and district teams, whose collaboration and commitment made this study possible.



Executive Summary

Introduction

India's National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 positioned Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) as the country's highest priority for education. This renewed focus was further strengthened by the National Curriculum Framework for Foundational Stage (NCF-FS, 2022). To operationalise this vision, the Government of India launched the NIPUN Bharat Mission with a clear national mandate: Achieve universal FLN for all children by 2026-27. This has catalysed unprecedented efforts across states to improve the teaching and learning of FLN.



The Government of Assam is tracking progress in student learning through a range of large-scale assessments of FLN learning outcomes, via the NIPUN Axom Mission. Launched in 2021, this initiative is a welcome step towards qualitative improvements in early primary school education in the State.

About TLPS 2025

The Teaching Learning Practices Survey (TLPS) 2025 was conceptualised to provide systematic, national-level evidence on teaching practices for language and mathematics in Grades 1 and 2. By examining these practices in early-grade classrooms across diverse contexts, the Survey provides a direct lens into how children's learning materials, teacher training programmes, and on-site academic support are getting translated into classroom teaching and learning.



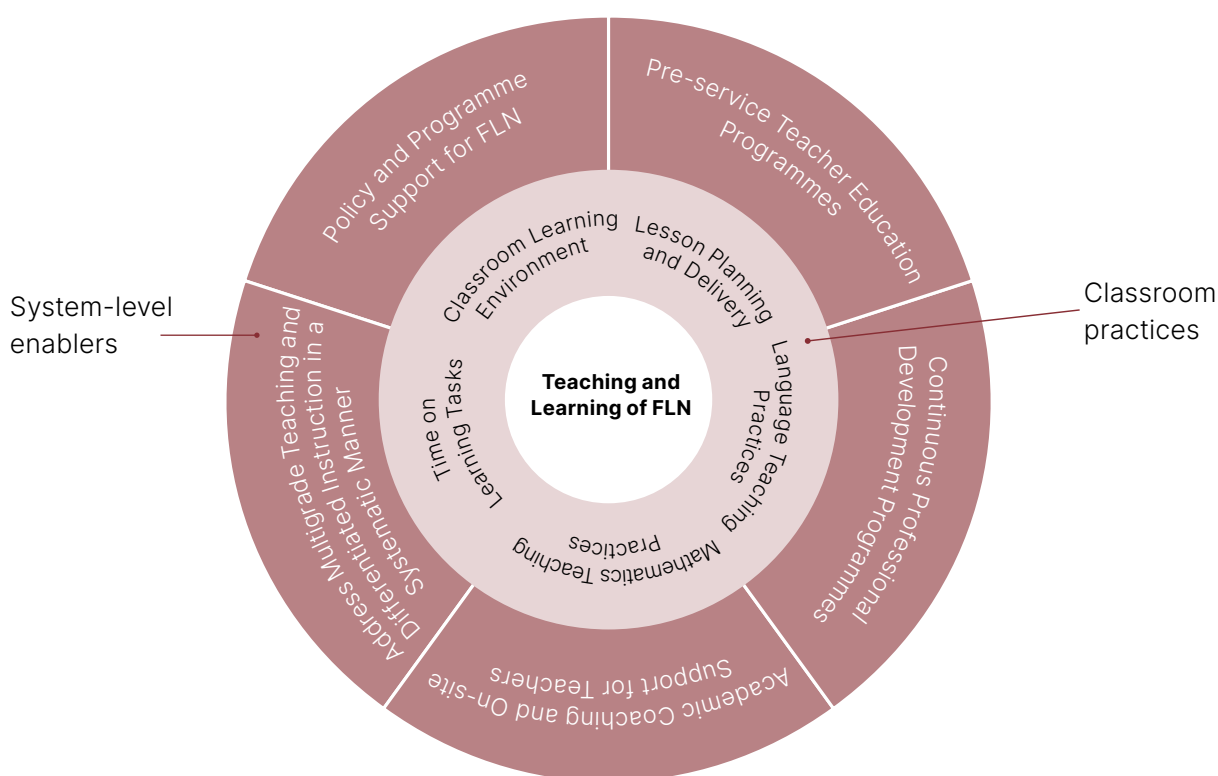
The Survey was conducted between November 2024 and March 2025 in nine states—Assam, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, and Uttar Pradesh, covering 21 districts and 1050 classrooms. By capturing a wide range of contexts, the Survey provides a rich snapshot of the current teaching and learning practices for FLN. This document serves as a status report on the current state of teaching and learning practices in the sampled schools in Assam. Informing how system-level efforts translate into classroom-level pedagogical change

and where further improvement is needed. A total of 100 classrooms were surveyed across Kamrup and Goalpara districts of the State.

Findings and Recommendations

The Survey presents findings under the following themes: classroom learning environment, lesson planning and delivery, language teaching practices, mathematics teaching practices, and time distribution for different classroom activities for both teachers and children. It also presents teachers' perceptions on some aspects of FLN and their professional development.

Priorities for classroom practices and system-level enablers



The Survey includes two types of recommendations:

- > Recommendations for strengthening classroom teaching practices, drawing directly on the Survey's main findings. These are presented in the following section along with the related classroom-level findings.
- > Recommendations for system-level changes that will enable and sustain effective teaching practices are presented in the section after the one on classroom teaching practices.

Findings and recommendations for classroom practices

Classroom learning environment

The Survey examined the following: classroom physical environment, teacher-child relationships and opportunities for children to participate.

Main findings

Almost all observed early-grade classrooms had a functional blackboard. Few classrooms (12%) displayed print-rich materials.

In 88% of classrooms, children were seated in rows and columns, and the arrangement was changed in few classrooms during the observed lesson.

In 43% of the classrooms, at least some children looked comfortable, spoke freely and engaged in conversation with the teacher, or learnt from one another. Teachers asked questions to individual children in over a third of the classrooms.

Children in sampled Assamese-medium schools spoke predominantly in Assamese (70%), followed by Bangla (26%).

Recommendations

There is scope for improving availability of print materials in classrooms and for placing them thoughtfully and using them actively during instruction to support learning.

Teachers should be encouraged to adopt flexible seating and grouping arrangements to foster more interaction and collaboration among children.

Strengthening teacher-child relationships in early-grade classrooms is important to help children become more confident, participate in discussions, and engage meaningfully in learning.

Lesson planning and delivery

The Survey examined the following: teachers' use of clear instructions with children, observation and monitoring of children's independent work, feedback on writing tasks, use of check-for-understanding (CFU) strategies, and use of differentiated instruction for different learning levels in the classroom.

Main findings

Around 53% of interviewed teachers reported planning for their lessons the next day. 17% of those teachers had documented plans during classroom observations.

Teachers in 64% of classrooms gave instructions before or during an activity. A majority of them did not confirm whether children understood those instructions.

Teachers in a third (32%) of classrooms observed and monitored children during independent or group activities at least sometimes.

Recommendations

In addition to giving clear instructions, teachers should model expected responses and verify that children have understood so that they can participate meaningfully and learn successfully.

Through regular and purposeful observation, teachers should identify errors, adjust instruction, and provide timely support.

There is scope for strengthening feedback practices through regular checking of children's work, clear explanations of mistakes, and simple steps for improvement.

Teachers in a majority (61%) of the classrooms checked at least a few children's written work. Few teachers (4%) provided meaningful feedback or guidance to help children improve.

In over half (59%) of the observed classrooms, teachers relied on asking questions to the whole class, which elicited a choral response from the children. Few teachers checked for individual children's understanding through varied methods.

During the limited observation period, few teachers used differentiated teaching strategies to support children at different learning levels.

In Assam, 52% of the observed classrooms were multigrade.

During lessons, teachers should use simple and varied checks for understanding, such as asking individual children to explain their thinking or giving children a quick task to demonstrate their learning.

Using targeted strategies such as flexible grouping, guided practice in level-based groups, and scaffolded tasks can support all learners. It is essential to provide extra attention and support to children who are struggling to learn, after proper identification.

Language teaching practices

The Survey examined the following: use of children's prior knowledge in discussions, asking open-ended questions, employing a variety of strategies for teaching decoding, use of comprehension strategies during read-aloud, opportunities to practise reading independently, and providing clear prompts for expressive writing.

Main findings

Effective use of children's real-life experiences and open-ended questions to encourage children to think and express themselves during oral language activities was observed in fewer than 30% of classrooms.

For teaching decoding, teachers in 50% of classrooms relied on using one activity to reinforce sound-symbol association. Teachers used two or more decoding strategies in 34% of the sampled classrooms.

In 76% of the sampled classrooms teachers asked some factual questions or simply repeated the text to support children's understanding.

Recommendations

Oral language activities need to encourage active engagement by connecting content and discussions to familiar contexts and experiences, asking children to predict, think, and infer, and giving them opportunities to respond more fully to open-ended questions.

Decoding teaching should be more systematic and include multiple activities that reinforce sound-symbol associations in different ways, including the use of simple teaching-learning materials (TLMs).

Teacher read-alouds of texts need to encourage greater participation from children, while offering stronger support for building comprehension.

Children got the opportunity to practise reading independently in 53% of the classrooms. In 13% classrooms, this was paired with teacher feedback and correction.

Independent writing tasks,* where children could write in their own words, were rarely observed in the sampled classrooms during the observation period.

Children need adequate time to practise reading in small groups or pairs, as well as independently, with more active guidance from the teacher.

Writing activities should move beyond copying exercises to include meaningful opportunities for children to compose their own texts and express ideas and emotions.

*Teaching of writing was observed in fewer than 30 classrooms, so results are only indicative.

Mathematics teaching practices

The Survey examined the following: use of TLMs by teachers and children, opportunities to practise mathematics tasks independently, use of children's real-life experiences for mathematics concepts, and use of 'why and how' questions by teachers.

Main findings

In around 85% of the observed classrooms, teachers used TLMs to explain mathematical concepts, though mostly in an unplanned manner. Children used TLMs in two-thirds (68%) of the classrooms. Most children consistently got the opportunity to do so in 9% of the classrooms.

About two-thirds of teachers (63%) did not use real-life examples to contextualise mathematical concepts and processes.

Few teachers (11%) posed 'why and how' questions.

Children were given independent tasks for practice in three-fourths of the observed mathematics classrooms. Teachers provided active feedback in 17% of the classrooms.

Recommendations

Teachers should use TLMs more consistently and in planned, learner-centred ways. This will ensure that children have regular opportunities to explore concepts hands-on and build conceptual understanding, rather than only observing demonstrations.

Mathematical concepts should be introduced using familiar and everyday contexts so that young children can relate mathematics to their daily experiences and develop practical problem-solving skills.

Teachers should ask questions that encourage children to explain their thinking and reasoning, helping shift learning away from rote mathematical procedures to deeper conceptual understanding.

During independent practice, teachers should actively monitor children's work and provide timely guidance and feedback so that practice goes beyond mechanical repetition and strengthens conceptual understanding and fluency.

Time on learning tasks

The Survey examined the time spent by teachers and children on different classroom activities.

Main findings

In sampled classrooms, children remained 'off-task' (i.e., not engaged in any learning activity) for 37% of the total class time. When they were 'on-task', mechanical or repetitive activities consumed most of their time.

Recommendations

There is scope for creating a better balance between teacher-centred instruction and learner-centred practices to enhance children's engagement with learning.

Teachers should plan and manage independent and group tasks more deliberately, particularly in multigrade contexts where their attention is divided.

Other findings

- > There is strong awareness among teachers (68%) about FLN goals and learning outcomes.
- > Nearly nine in ten teachers reported that they had attended an in-person training on FLN in the past six months.
- > Almost all teachers believe that the NIPUN/FLN Mission is having a positive impact.
- > Almost half (46%) of the teachers did not receive on-site academic support. Around 35% reported receiving academic support at least sometimes or regularly.



Recommendations for system-level changes

This section outlines key systemic levers that need to be strengthened to enable and sustain the classroom-level actions described in the previous section.

Continue and extend policy support to FLN

It is vital that policy support for FLN must continue beyond the current NIPUN Akshar Mission. While Grades 1 and 2 must remain the primary focus, the policy and programme focus for the consolidation of foundational skills needs to extend to Grades 3 to 5 (Preparatory Stage in NEP 2020) to prevent learning gaps from widening over time. As this support is extended, there is a need to broaden the vision of foundational learning itself to include critical thinking, strong oral expression and independent writing for language, as well as problem-solving and reasoning for mathematics. Such a shift helps move classroom practice beyond mechanical skill acquisition towards meaningful application to real-life situations.

Integrate FLN focus within pre-service teacher education programmes

Pre-service teacher education requires curricular revision to include a clear focus on early language and numeracy learning, play-based pedagogy, teaching in linguistically and culturally diverse situations and practical classroom strategies for multigrade and multilevel teaching. There is a need to move from lecture-based instruction towards practice-oriented and experience-based teacher preparation. Teacher education institutions should model effective FLN pedagogy through activity-based learning, demonstrations of effective teaching practices and reflective practice. Strengthening internships through structured mentoring, classroom observation and feedback can help ensure that teachers are better prepared to support foundational learning from the start.

Build a coherent and practice-focused system of continuous professional development (CPD)

There is a need to reimagine in-service teacher training as CPD rather than as isolated events. Effective CPD should offer multiple pathways for learning, including structured courses, blended and online programmes, in-person workshops and simple digital support such as WhatsApp nudges and short, on-demand learning resources. State-led training programmes need significant improvements to reduce loss of quality during cascade implementation. This includes better preparation of facilitators, shorter gaps between cascade levels and mechanisms for monitoring and feedback to ensure that the intent of training is retained. Creating opportunities for teachers to learn from one another through learning circles, peer observations, joint planning and sharing of effective practices can help reinforce training messages and support sustained change in classroom practice.

Strengthen academic coaching and on-site support for teachers

Teacher interviews reveal that academic support for teachers has scope to be more regular and instructionally strong. On-site academic coaching can be strengthened through regular classroom visits by academic resource persons (ARPs), CRCs, or equivalent roles. These visits should focus on observing classroom practice, demonstrating effective strategies and providing concrete, actionable feedback tailored to each teacher's context. Such support is vital for helping teachers translate training inputs into day-to-day practice. In addition, cluster-level meetings should be reoriented as structured academic forums rather than administrative gatherings. With clear agendas centred on FLN pedagogy, classroom challenges and shared problem-solving, these meetings can become an important platform for collective professional learning.

Address multigrade teaching and differentiated instruction in a systematic manner

These challenges require specific and systematic programme support, not just general suggestions or brief training efforts alone.

Multigrade teaching

Teachers working in multigrade settings require specific curricular guidance and pedagogical tools to manage multiple groups effectively. This includes support for planning parallel activities, organising independent work, using flexible grouping and managing time across grades. Addressing multigrade teaching systematically—rather than treating it as an exception—can help teachers use these classrooms more productively, even in less-than-ideal conditions.

Differentiated instruction

System-level efforts are required to help teachers understand children's learning levels, recognise the value of targeted support and use simple differentiation strategies—such as flexible grouping, scaffolded tasks and guided practice for small groups, especially for children who are struggling to learn. Providing extra attention and support to such children is key to reducing learning gaps within the classroom. Teacher guides, training modules and academic support systems should explicitly model how differentiation can be planned and implemented within everyday classroom routines.





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Supported by Tata Trusts, the Survey has been implemented in different states in collaboration with a consortium of organisations: Centre for microFinance, Educational Initiatives, Madhi Foundation, QUEST, and Vikramshila Education Resource Society.

The TLPS 2025 Report presents findings that describe and analyse the classroom learning environment, lesson planning and delivery, selected teaching practices for language and mathematics, and time on learning tasks for both teachers and children. It also explores teachers' perceptions of some aspects of FLN and their professional development. The recommendations of TLPS suggest how classroom teaching practices can be improved and the system-level changes that can enable and sustain this change in FLN teaching and learning practices.



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Tools for TLPS 2025 and grade-wise data-tables can be accessed from the QR Code above