

PUNJAB

EDUCATION COLLECTIVE



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THE PUNJAB EDUCATION COLLECTIVE

Our Vision



Enriching educational experience of children in public schools of Punjab

To see this vision to fruition, the Punjab Education Collective (PEC) was set up with the combined conceptual expertise of four organizations:

The Punjab Education Collective

- 01** Mantra4Change (Bengaluru)
- 02** Sanjhi Sikhiya (Punjab)
- 03** Samarthya (Delhi)
- 04** ShikshaLokam (Bengaluru)

These four organizations joined hands along with the Department of School Education, Punjab to bring about systemic changes and development in the Punjab School system.

The Collective was set up with the objective of transforming the public K-12 education system of Punjab by identifying challenges faced by the stakeholders on the ground, by co-creating solutions with the government system and thus, improving the education experience for the child.

The Punjab Education Collective (PEC) came into being at a time when the Department of School Education, Punjab was implementing many programs as part of its larger education reforms initiative.



Systemic transformation project over 5 years to improve quality of education to over **23 lakh** students and impact **19,000** public schools in Punjab.



Create value for **1.3 lakh** education leaders by giving structure to interactions and interventions with schools, positively impacting learning outcomes of students.

The efforts of PEC, thus aligned with the State Government's initiative of boosting education in the state under the "Padho Punjab, Padhao Punjab" initiative, which focuses on improving literacy and numeracy outcomes of students, capacity building of teachers, and partnering with the community in schools, through need-based capacity building initiatives and data-backed strategies.

What followed in the next few months was a thorough mix of rapid digital transformation, adoption, and assimilation, that would not only change the school system but also the way public education is perceived by the people of Punjab, right from the ministerial levels to the root levels comprising students and their parents.

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KEY HIGHLIGHTS OF PEC's WORK

Virtual PTMs in the times of COVID-19 - **5 lakh+** parents reached

100,000+ school visits recorded on Darpan by instructional and administrative leaders in the state within a month

State-wide enrollment helpline set up. The state witnessed an overall increase in enrollment by **13.75%**.

Media and Branding team set up and trained in the state to drive better communication and a culture of appreciation

A **state level task force** setup to enable continuity of learning despite school closure during COVID-19

School evaluation framework designed with the state used by Sikhiya Sudhaar Committee for **2000+** schools

“Sanjhi Sikhiya's experience and expertise have helped us a lot in creating and ensuring online learning is a success. Even when COVID-19 struck, our online learning methods only became much stronger to ensure education is not impacted in any way.”

Ms. Nirmal Kaur, State Resource person (Math)



WHY PUNJAB

Punjab, a relatively less populous state in India with a projected population of 3.05 crores in 2019 contributes to just a little over 2% of the Indian population. Known for its rich cultural history and its naturally rich landscapes of fertile soils and water resources, Punjab is primarily an agricultural state. In recent times, Punjab has been battling a number of core issues. Prominent among them are issues of drug abuse with 65% of households in Punjab having at least 1 drug addict, migration, and a stark increase in the unemployment rate.

The learning crisis in government schools in the state in recent years has been a driving force for the need to work in Punjab -

1 + 2 = ?

Over **50%** of students in Grade 5 can't comprehend basic mathematical operations and only **36%** of students in Grade 3, can read Grade 2 level text



The current literacy rate **76.7%** is slightly higher than the national average of **73%** (Punjab Elementary Education Report Card 2016-2017 (retrieved from UDISE)



Even at a secondary level, the situation is quite grim where over **70%** of students between **14-18 years of age** cannot identify their own state on a map



Public schools in the state witnessed a decline of over **2 lakh** in student strength due to students migrating from the public to private schools between 2012 and 2018

This reveals the glaring need for a proper education system in place which can evolve with the times and enable holistic development in children and thus, allowing them to make the right choices in life and build a career.

Additionally, the COVID-19 crisis led to schools being shut for an indefinite period, leading to a loss of learning for the students and difficulties in ensuring access to learning materials.

READINESS FOR EDUCATION REFORMS

The Department of School Education, Punjab, has been working relentlessly towards establishing a well-structured learning program to ensure more children have easy access to quality education.

Even before the Collective was formed, the Department had been making radical changes to the system through several programs, and striving to strike a seamless collaboration between the academic and administrative systems, which have always been running parallel to each other, but not in tandem.



Infrastructural improvements in schools through the Smart School Initiative



Foundational Literacy and Numeracy program called "Padho Punjab Padhao Punjab" towards improving learning outcomes of students



Improving administrative processes for teachers such as Teacher Grievances Process, and Promotions in Teaching and Non Teaching cadres



English as a medium of instruction was started in the State






More power to RTE by conducting statewide campaigns and providing free textbooks to all students

OUR WORK IN PUNJAB



The Collective carried out an in-depth assessment of the current state and structure of education in Punjab and presented their findings on the same in August 2019 to The Department of School Education, Punjab. Key areas identified were:

-  **Need for strengthening instructional leadership and streamlining academic processes across all levels, and understanding of roles and responsibilities for every individual in the system**
-  **Requirement of clear engagement with parents and guardians in the school and children's learning**
-  **Building a positive narrative about the public schoolingsystem**

Based on the observations, a detailed report was presented to the Department that comprised 20 different solutions, and aimed at improving the education in the state of Punjab for multiple stakeholders. Within a month, in September 2019, the Director of the State Council of Education Research and Training (SCERT), signed the MOU with the collective, and thus the journey of a unique educational transformation in India began.

OUR GOALS

Managing communication among such a large network of stakeholders, and ensuring feedback and learnings are not lost in this humongous system is a major challenge. Communication among the stakeholders is further influenced by policies, processes, education technology, curriculum, and variables like competencies of leaders (other actors) and their behaviour. Given the sheer size of the department and the number of stakeholders involved, over time these interactions got fractured, while some interactions still managed to create value. However, these interactions had the potential to be structured further to help realize their maximum potential.

The Collective realized that it would need to improve the nature of these interactions to generate maximum value and, they would have to streamline structures and processes which will help all the programs in the long run. To do this the Collective mapped the actors aka the stakeholders to understand these interactions better. This is where the platform integration began in a more focused manner.



Goal 1: Strengthen instructional leadership



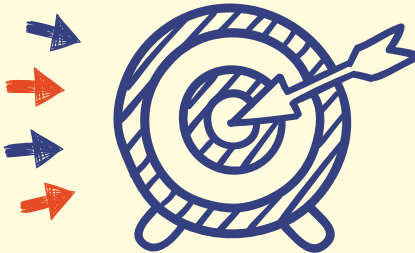
Goal 2: Improved community engagement with schools



Goal 3: Improved effectiveness in policy implementation



Goal 4: Improved teaching-learning practices



Building a resilient, self-healing system, enabled by technology that would survive the ravages of the pandemic and creating acceptance among all stakeholders for the same, was also added to the list of possible goals.

DEVELOPING INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

In order to better support the functioning of teachers and schools, the “Padho Punjab, Padhao Punjab” program has set up a system consisting of block and district level master trainers, who play a key role in ensuring that large scale reforms are able to sustain and thrive. Their primary role is supporting, mentoring and coaching the teachers with their instructional duties, making it imperative for the department to work with them and help build their competencies to be able to carry out their roles effectively.

Redefining school visits towards improved visibility

Redefining roles had a clear activity of devising school visit forms for each stakeholder, which is a primary task of each actor in the system. This was done on the Darpan assessment capability by ShikshaLokam which captures and analyses data being collected by various instructional leaders and resource groups.

This was aimed at:



Nudging each actor in the direction of supporting the teachers and providing them with specific support for their subjects, engagement with community and other stakeholders



Incorporation of coaching and mentoring aspects which would help the leaders build credibility with the teachers



Moving the system towards data-driven decision making by using the school visit form data for the state resource group building capacity of each leader

Solutions rolled out:

The platform Darpan hosts a number of forms that were used by the instructional leaders during their school visits and by the heads of school to capture actionable data that can help plan a future course of action. The following are some of the key solutions the Collective introduced into the system:



“Darpan app has brought in revolutionary changes in the education department, mainly by establishing accountability among the BMs and DMs to follow the school visit processes to a tee, using the forms provided to them. This has also helped bring accountability into the entire system. Furthermore, we have 5 teachers from every district who are continuously monitoring and providing feedback about the online teaching process on the Darpan app.”

Mr. Sushil Bharadwaj, State Resource Person (Science)(on Darpan app)



“I use this form to focus on what activities to monitor in the school. It is like a weekly report for me.”

Principal, GSS Girls, Ferozepur (on the School Heads Form)



Form for instructional leaders for secondary grades (Block/ District Mentors)

A form was rolled out which would help the leaders define their role and ways in which they can support the teachers and school. The form was used to record school visits, classroom observations along with feedback and support needed by the stakeholders. This allowed the DMs and BMs to identify and extend specific support to the teachers, by asking them the right questions.

DEO form

In order to ensure that what happens at the state level is not lost at the school levels, the state department of education made their District Education Officers (DEOs) and Nodal officers in charge of relaying what is happening at the school level at regular intervals. To give structure to this observation by the DEOs, a school visit form was launched on Darpan. The form would ensure that the data from the school visits stayed organized and secure and could be accessed as and when required.

School Heads Form

The School Heads Form is a self-assessment form, that was rolled out on Darpan, for school heads of secondary schools. This form was used on a weekly basis to assess the crucial aspects that they need to inspect and focus on the school, in general. This form enables school heads to oversee the school's overall improvement while planning and prioritizing various activities that are crucial to see these plans to fruition.

Sikhiya Sudhar Form

A form was rolled out for the Sikhiya Sudhar Committee on Darpan, to be used during their school evaluation visits. This form allowed the committee members to collect data regarding the current practices in the school, areas of improvement and the discussions held with the school staff. This further aided the team in providing feedback to the department to create improvement plans for the schools.

IMPACT



100% of District and Block Mentors trained on various topics like conducting effective school visits, using data from school visits etc.



Enabled District Education Officers of all **22 districts** to record **10,000+** school visits across three months.



Develop a school evaluation framework and tool enabling the Sikhiya Sudhar Committee (dedicated to school evaluation and improvement planning) to effectively evaluate schools through **2,400** school visits across three months.



Instructional Leaders reflect on and improve support for teachers. **50,000+** school visits recorded across five months by 100% of Block and District Mentors.



Enabled state resource persons to analyze data from school visits towards planning improvement, planning and reviewing monthly action plans, as well as building team capacity.



“Darpan app has helped bring discipline and routine to the school visits conducted by the BMs and DMs, and has made supervision much easier. Sending feedback to the state department about the strengths and weaknesses of the school and the areas where they might benefit from the department's help can be seamlessly communicated with Darpan.”

DM, Science



“I use the BM/DM form regularly. It clearly outlines what I have to observe during school visits. It reminds me to take demo classes to better support the teachers. I have observed an increased investment among school heads and teachers because the app records data that they can view and use. I share the questions on the app with the school leader and teachers which makes them aware of the data I collect and helps them improve in the observed areas of development.”

Bharat Talwar, Block Mentor, Science, Punjab



“Because a question in the form asks me, whether the teacher is observing while I give a demo class, the teachers have started participating and observing demo classes.”

District Mentor, (on the BM/DM Form)



Harmonizing learning during Covid-19: Mission Ghar Baithe Sikhiya

While the PEC hit the ground running with a detailed roadmap on how to boost the state department's education program, COVID-19 struck the country and state at large, and schools were shut to ensure the safety of students, staff, and teachers.

The Collective needed to take immediate action and reinstate a resilient system that could beat the issues of lack of regular school time and parent-teacher interaction. With an aim to enable continuity of learning and engagement of children so that they don't lose touch of the disciplined school life and learning, the Collective worked closely with the department on "Mission Ghar Baithe Sikhiya".



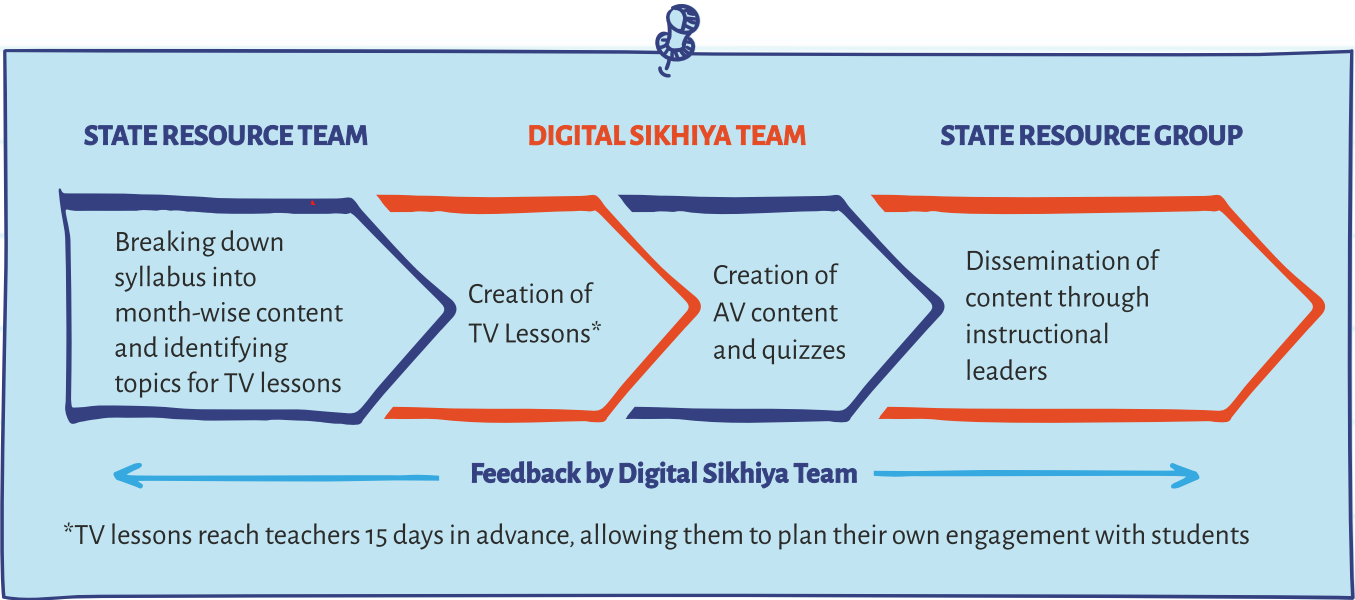
The initiative would address the following objectives:

To engage children in learning and healthy routines

To engage as many children as possible by leveraging multiple channels

To harmonize and streamline content and activities reaching children

The Collective set up different teams, processes and rolled out solutions to effectively engage students at scale. There are three key processes that work to make the content streamlined and coherent, and are owned by different teams:



Digital Sikhiya Sahayak

“Digital Sikhiya Sahayak Team”, a state-level task force responsible for providing feedback and suggestions on all learning resources reaching the students which comprises teachers, BMs, and DMs from each district, who are tasked with monitoring and collecting feedback on the TV lessons and written assignments. The DSST form is hosted on the Darpan app where Sahayaks can access the checklist that helps them evaluate the selected learning content for a particular grade and subject.



IMPACT



3000+
resources created and reviewed by
Digital Sikhiya and Sahayak Teams

All the assignments and learning material are now available in one place, which makes it easier for the students to access the resources'. 'From not knowing how to even connect my phone to the computer, to now being able to create content and upload them on the platform, my skills have improved. I am happy to learn new things every day and proud to be a part of this team.'

Mr. VidyaSagar, Digital Sikhiya Team (on daily schedules)

“We create and send out content on a daily basis to teachers and students in the secondary section. Since we are dealing in both English and Punjabi Mediums, the content is created in both languages and sent out to the respective school teachers and students. In order to ensure that the students get the concepts right, we select and present conceptual content for the subjects on a daily basis. The contact number of the content creator is mentioned right at the bottom so that teachers can contact them and provide feedback to ensure, better and more focused content, every time.”

Mr. Hardavinder Singh, DM English (on daily dose content creation)



STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT WITH EDUCATION

The education system is formed by a network of continuous interactions. These interactions are not only limited to student-teachers but also teacher-parent and teacher-community leaders. Realising that parents play a very important role in the overall development of the child, and building their involvement towards the school has been a challenge for the system to tackle.

One of the biggest initiatives undertaken by the Collective was improving the interaction between the schools and community during the Parent-Teacher Meetings (PTM). Moving beyond just discussing results, we have actively tried to work on making parent-teacher interactions richer.

Proud Parents Campaign



The Proud Parents Campaign was launched to capture testimonials of parents who are proud of the fact that their children study in public schools. These testimonials were shared on social media and WhatsApp to build a positive narrative about the public school system and also to boost enrollment under the state's "Each One, Bring One" campaign.



"We are very fortunate that our teachers are taking such personal care to ensure our children don't lose out. We, as poor people, have hopes that education will make our children's lives better and therefore our lives better. With teachers keeping such a close watch, our children don't slack off and it's one worry less for us."

Parent, Patiala (shared during Virtual PTM call)



"About 85% of parents are satisfied with the way their children are coping with the new online teaching mechanism via TV and mobile phones. However, given the financial constraints, some students still are unable to access the lessons through smartphones. The TV medium, on the other hand, has become very popular among both students and parents, as it is free of cost and students feel a connection to the teacher when they see them on the TV, instead of while learning from the phone."

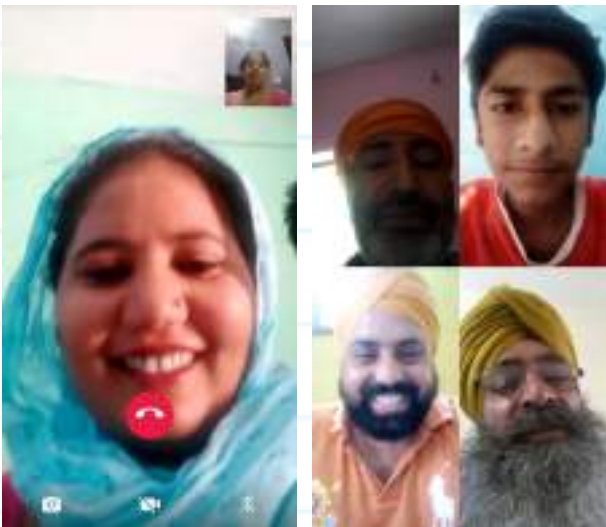
Mr. Parampreet, Science Teacher, Fatehgarh Sahib (on online learning and PTM)



Virtual Parent-Teacher Meeting

The need to not only spread awareness about the importance of education, but also address concerns of the parents and community around the quality of education available in government schools has been a key focus. Supporting the community and parents by making them feel heard and a part of the system was vital in ensuring minimum learning loss for the students during this time.

In their efforts to reinstate the importance of education in the state, PEC initiated the virtual parent-teacher meeting format to enable parent engagement in a child's learning, and initiate smooth and continued communication between parents and teachers even though schools remain closed.



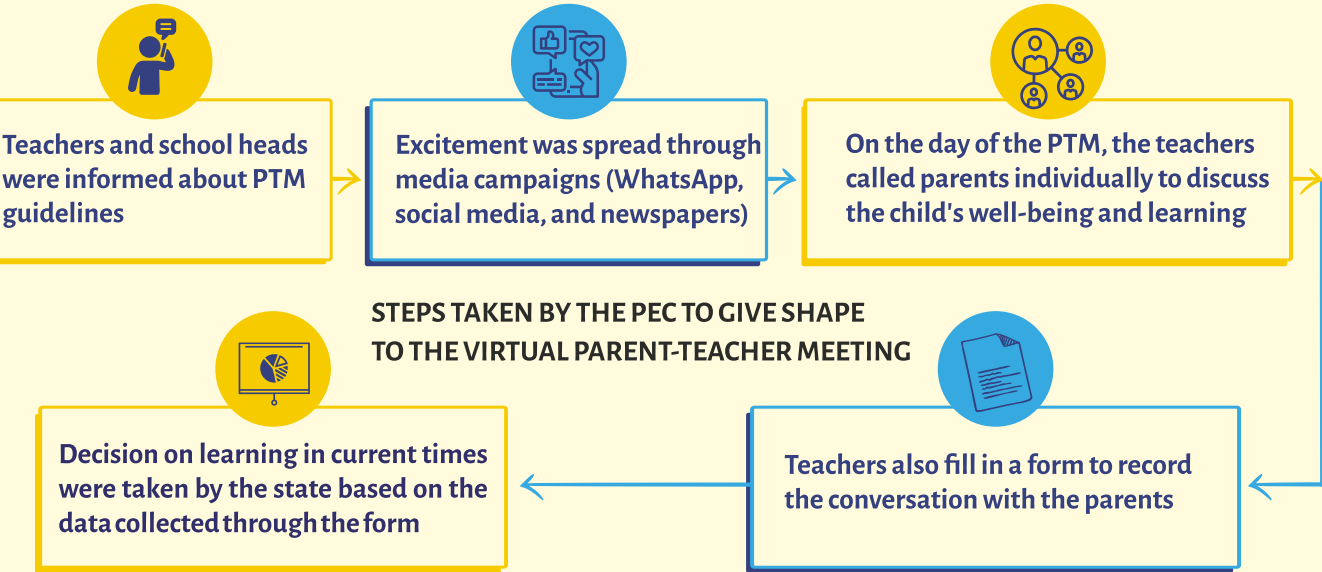
Virtual Parent-Teacher Meeting, which was organised for the parents of 5 lakh+ students across 6000 Secondary Schools for Grades 6-12

Aimed at:

Parents feeling supported, heard and informed about the education programs

Teachers being aware of the challenges faced by the parents and students, and being prepared for it likewise

Continued support to the department to strategically plan ahead based on the data collected from these calls



“The Virtual PTM was a new experience altogether, but despite its pros and cons, it was indeed a success. Teachers and parents were wholly invested in the conversation and parents were happy that despite the fact that we could not conduct a face-to-face meeting, we could still connect with them to discuss their child's education and the way forward.”

Ms. Meenakshi, Principal, Ludhiana (on Virtual PTM)

IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICIES

Enrollment Helpline

The Collective proposed the setting up of centralised Enrollment Helpline Numbers which also aid in easing the process of admitting the students in the schools. Helplines have been set up at both the State and District levels, and are being widely circulated around the communities. Calls made to the helpline numbers help the parents enroll their child in their nearest government school, and learning resources are shared by the school as per the child's class schedule.



The Collective supported the State media team design a campaign to create awareness about the enrollment helplines. The helplines were set up to ease the process of admitting students in schools during the lockdown, and support the parents and community to ensure every child was enrolled in school.

The campaign was run across various mediums (social media, WhatsApp and mainstream media) by the state and district media teams. The numbers were circulated through posters, videos, interviews and news articles.

Sujhaav Somvaar

Enabling an exchange of information and authority between the people who design programs and those who implement them became important especially during the pandemic, when most interactions and initiatives became remote. In order to create a platform for the voice of stakeholders to reach decision makers at the state level, PEC along with the department initiated “Sujhaav Somvaar”. This initiative aims to collate information from various stakeholders (teachers, instructional leaders etc) and design need-based, contextual programs and continuously collect feedback on the same.

A form is rolled out every Monday on Darpan which aims to collect feedback and suggestions from the ground on the various programs, which is then shared with the state teams who design the said programs. The “Sujhaav Somvaar” form would give stakeholders a chance to share:

- **Innovative ideas with a focus of improving the learning process for the students**
- **Honest and unbiased feedback on the existing programs of the department**



“Sujhaav Somvaar” allows for a faster and diverse feedback loop. This in turn allows the department to improve on insights from multiple stakeholders and improve initiatives quickly.

ABOUT THE ORGANISATIONS

Here's a glimpse into the four organizations responsible for the impactful change in Punjab's education sector.



Founded in the year 2013, Mantra4Change is a Bengaluru based non-profit that works in the field of school improvement and education leadership development. While continuing to prototype and implement systemic change programs at school and cluster levels in Bengaluru, Mantra4Change has evolved into an ecosystem builder, contextualizing and catalysing transformation, and change efforts across geographies. Currently, Mantra4Change is present in Bengaluru (Karnataka), Delhi, Punjab, Andhra Pradesh and Bihar through direct interventions. The organization is staffed with over 60 employees working across these geographies and is impacting the quality of education across 75,000 schools.



Sanjhi Sikhiya is a collective movement that aspires to transform Punjab into a land of hope, courage and possibilities. With a deep focus on collaboration and co-creation, the group intends to enable public systems for a better quality of life in Punjab for all. It currently focuses on bringing systemic changes in the public education system of Punjab. Apart from being a part of the state level collective, they work on the ground in districts of Punjab to bring diverse stakeholders together and make children's learning a priority of everyone involved.

This work is done by selected young people who have shown exceptional leadership potential and are a part of an intensive two-year leadership program called Punjab Youth Leaders Program (PYLP). During these two years, young leaders work with teachers, parents, panchayats, and other stakeholders to improve the learning and governance processes of government schools. In this process, they actively build on their own leadership competencies and prepare themselves for tackling systemic issues in Punjab.

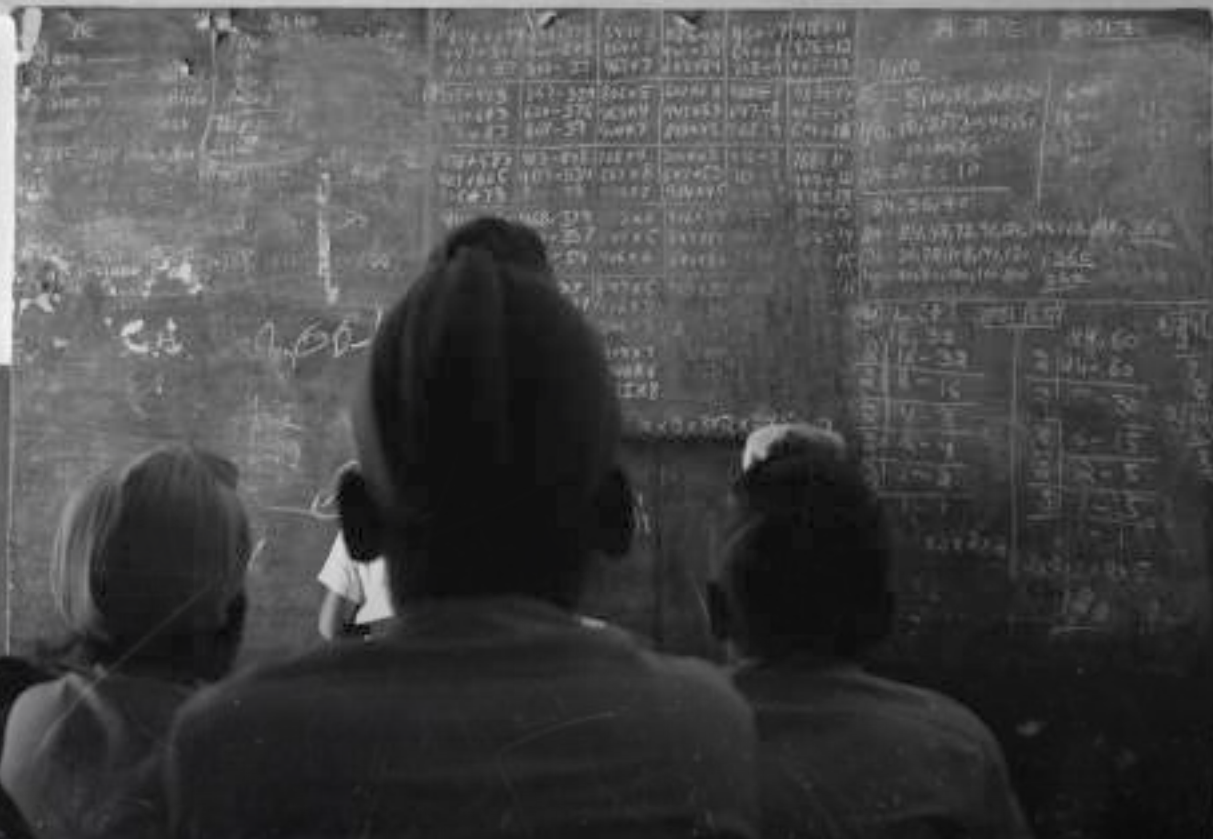


Samarthya is a non-profit organization founded in May 2016, with the vision of making the governance of public schools more inclusive and representative by activating forums such as School Management Committees, Parent-Teacher Meetings to enable collective dialogue and action. Samarthya believes in the power of decentralized decision making and over the years, they have worked with communities to concretize their understanding of school governance, and their role in school development. Currently, they are present in Delhi, Haryana, and Punjab.



Founded in 2017, ShikshaLokam is a societal platform that is reimagining how education leaders learn and transform the system. Being an education leadership platform, ShikshaLokam aims to amplify development opportunities for the actors by restoring their agency and enabling them towards improving the education system. The team works with over 80+ Samaaj partners and multiple Sarkaar actors to encourage active co-creation of programs and innovative solutions towards systemic reforms. Building an energized ecosystem is at the core of ShikshaLokam's work.

ਮਾਪੇ ਅਧਿਆਪਕ ਅਤੇ ਸਮਾਜ ਬੱਚੇ ਦੀ ਸੁਖਸੀਮਤ ਉਸਾਰਦੇ ਹਨ।



The Punjab Education Collective is supported by

