



TITAN
COMPANY



Titan Kanya

Impact Assessment
FY 2021-2022

Report By



Table of Contents



Abbreviations	3
Executive Summary	4
Introduction	5
• Background	5
• Titan and their Corporate Social Responsibility Initiatives	6
• Programme Objective	6
• Programme Outreach	7
Assessment Methodology	9
• Research Objective	9
• Research Approach	9
• Research Methodology	13
Findings	14
• Project Implementation	14
• Students - Current Scenario and Challenges	22
• Teachers - Skill and Personality Development	24
• Parents and Community - Participation and Perception	26
Case Studies	29
Analysis	31
• Relevance	31
• Efficiency	32
• Effectiveness	33
• Impact	34
• Coherence	35
• Sustainability	35
Recommendations	36
Conclusion	37
Appendix	38

ABBREVIATIONS

ALA - Alternate Learning Activities

CEP - Child Engagement Plan

CPC - Child Protection Committee

FGD - Focus Group Discussion

FLN - Foundational Literacy and Numeracy

KII - Key Informant Interview

LC - Learning Centre

LO - Learning Outcomes

MGML - Multi-grade multi-level

NGO - Non-governmental Organisation

PNGO - Partner Non-governmental Organisation

QCA - Quarterly Child Assessment

QTA - Quarterly Teacher Assessment

SMC - School Management Committee

TIP - Teacher Improvement Plan

TLM - Teacher Learning Material

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report gives a detailed assessment of the Titan Kanya Programme for the financial year 2021-2022. Titan partnered with IIMPACT in 2013 to provide quality primary education to female students in remote villages of Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and West Bengal. A Learning Centre (LC) was started in the villages and a multi-level multi-grade approach was followed to teach female students aged 06-14 years.

The assessment followed a mixed methodology approach with qualitative research methodology used for the primary research and a mixed methodology used for the secondary research. The sampling covered during the primary research included 28 focus group discussions and 72 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with stakeholders at the programmatic and organisational levels. A geographical outreach of 15 LCs in five districts across the three states has been achieved.

This report provides a detailed account of the background of the programme, the assessment methodology deployed, findings collected through the secondary and primary research, limitations, case studies and analysis. The findings have been divided into four categories: programme implementation, student-level findings, teacher-level findings and parent and community-level findings. The programme has been analysed through the REECIS evaluation framework by OECD-DAC.

The key insight gained from the assessment reflects that the programme has been successful in bringing quality primary education to female students residing in remote rural areas by setting up a Learning Centre in their vicinity. The programme has increased the interest of female students towards education by engaging in learning material and activity-based learning. As a programme structure, the LC only admits 30 students which is the fixed intake number. This intake number, at times, does not suffice the eligible female student group present in the LC's geography.



INTRODUCTION

Background

The development of a Nation cannot be thought of without thinking about women or without keeping gender equality in mind. Education helps the individual in many facets of life, i.e., making her a responsible and informed citizen, acquiring livelihood, building her agency, opening many opportunities, and overall helping the nation's socio-economic development. Hence, investing in citizens' education, and especially that of girls, provides a significant social return.

Education is measured through various metrics, such as literacy rates, school/college enrolment rates, graduation rates, etc. To understand in the global context, the female literacy rate globally was around 86.28% in 2018¹ while India was behind at 65.79%. Even neighbouring China is ahead of India with a female literacy rate of 95.16%.

According to the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) which indicates the number of students studying in every grade, in 2021-22, 25.57 crore students were enrolled in primary and secondary classes. These numbers show a marginal improvement from 25.38 crore reported in 2020-21. Of these total enrolment numbers, the female enrolment for primary to higher secondary level for 2021-22 stood at 12.29 crore which was an increase of 8.19 lakh girls from 2020-21.²

Girl child education in India has come a long way over the years, but there is still much work to be done to ensure that all girls have quality education. In many parts of India, girls face significant barriers to education, such as the cultural norms to give priority to boys over girls, poverty, and lack of infrastructure, especially in rural areas. These challenges force girls to drop out of school or never enrol in the first place. And if we observe the rural scenario then these problems appear to be at grosser levels. A decade back, the literacy rate was half for females in rural versus urban (Census 2011). The situation becomes harder once caste hierarchy and poverty are taken into account.

In India, educating girls has been linked to a range of positive social changes. For instance, according to UNICEF, girls who receive an education are less likely to marry young and the proportion of girls getting

¹<https://www.statista.com/statistics/997360/global-adult-and-youth-literacy/>
²<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1873307>

married before 18 years has decreased from 47% in 2006 to 27% in 2016, where education is one of the major factors. Also, educated women have healthier children, the NFHS 4 data reflects that the Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) was 51 deaths per 1,000 live births among infants born to mothers with no education, compared to 21 deaths per 1,000 live births among infants born to mothers with 12 or more years of education. Educating women also leads to decreased crime rates as it builds their agency. It can be easily observed that the states having low crime rates have literacy of more than 80% while the states having a high level of crime rate have a low level of literacy (O'Neill, 2023). Additionally, educated women are more likely to participate in the formal workforce, which can lead to greater economic growth and development.

Titan and their Corporate Social Responsibility Initiatives

Titan is a consumer goods company that was established in 1984. It is a subsidiary of the Tata Group. Titan has expanded into underpenetrated markets and created lifestyle brands across different product categories. Known widely for transforming the watch and jewellery industry in India, Titan is shaping India's retail market by pioneering experiential retail.³

Titan has always strongly committed itself to Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives and has undertaken several initiatives to promote sustainable and inclusive development of India. Some of the key focus areas for CSR activities include—Education and Skill Development, Health and Sanitation, Women Empowerment, Environmental Sustainability, etc.

Programme Objective

In 2013, Titan Company launched an initiative, Titan Kanya, to empower the girl child. The programme has been implemented in partnership with Project Nanhi Kali, a non-governmental organisation jointly run by the KC Mahindra Education Trust and the Naandi Foundation; and IIMPACT, an initiative of the alumni batch of 1978 from the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad.

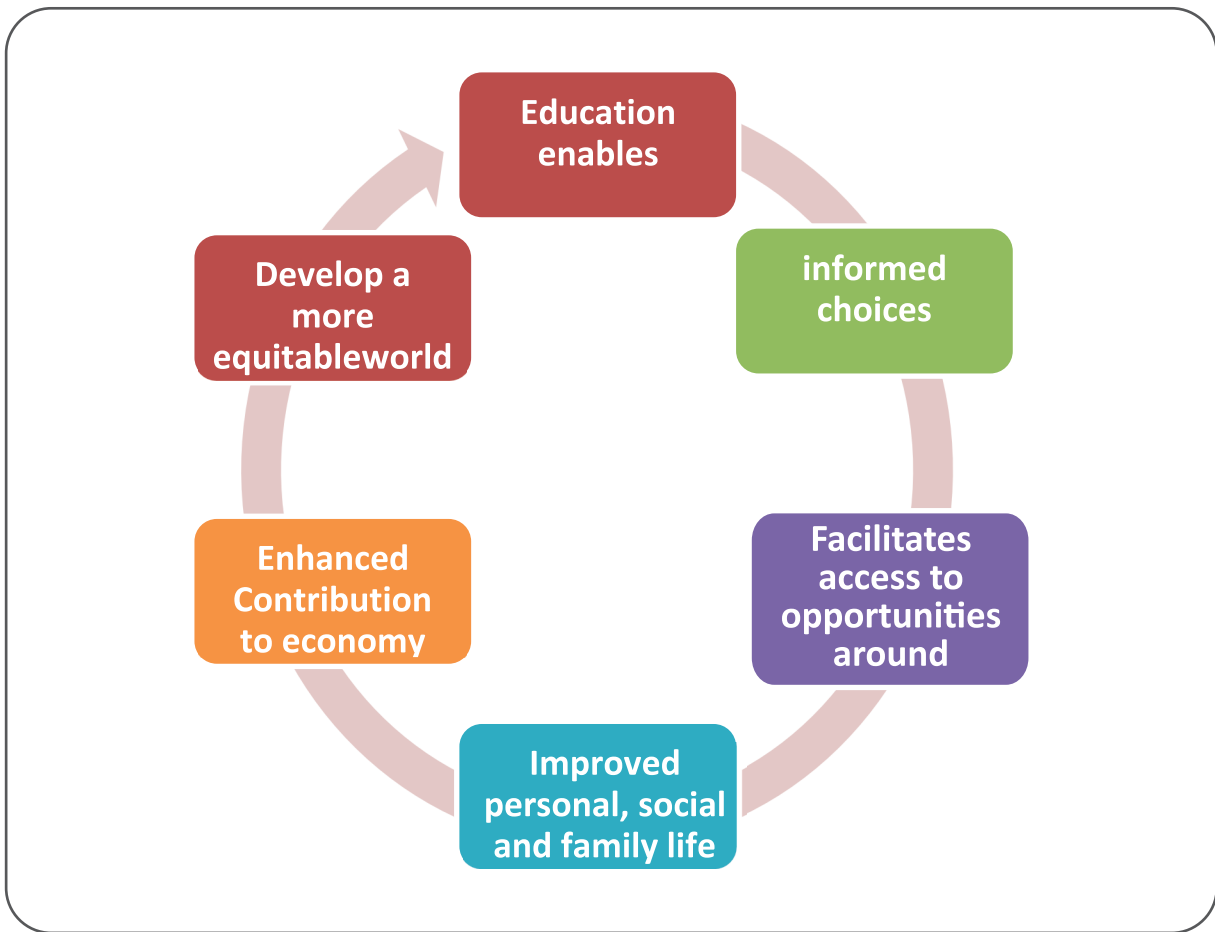
With the implantation partner IIMPACT, the Titan Kanya programme has impacted the lives of 9,806 girls across 349 LCs in five districts in Uttarakhand, seven districts in Uttar Pradesh and two districts in West Bengal (FY 21-22).

The objective of the programme is to provide quality primary education to girls aged 6-14 years facing issues such as dropping out of school and irregular attendance. And thereby fulfilling the mission of a gender-equal and empowered society.

IIMPACT being one of the key implementation partners of Titan's Kanya initiative has been creating learning opportunities for resource-deprived girls by using the multi-grade and multi-level learning approach (MGML).

Under this model, IIMPACT establishes single-teacher-led learning centres (LCs) in villages with a high concentration of out-of-school/irregular-to-school girls in the 06-14-year age group. The LCs are led by single teachers and impart education through a multi-grade-multi-level approach. These girls benefit from the LC approach as these centres are located near their homes thereby bringing quality primary education to their doorsteps. The LCs employ local female teachers who provide high-quality education through play-way methods. The LCs are also a converging point for the local villagers as they recognise the importance of education for girls and break the age-old shackles in the education of female children.

³<https://www.titancompany.in/about-us>



Programme Outreach

Project Overview : Class-wise status of girls

State	Districts	LC Count	Enrolled Girls	Foundation	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4	Class 5
	Dehradun	7	200	4	45	72	51	7	21
Uttarakhand	Haridwar	19	630	3	123	121	55	161	167
	Tehri Garhwal	53	934	7	177	136	372	202	40
	Udham Singh Nagar	30	905		5	43	117	261	479
	Uttarkashi	62	1,554	16	367	886	207	78	
Uttar Pradesh	Kanpur Dehat	5	135	1	67	6	14	14	33
	Kanpur Nagar	15	451	2	292	6	21	25	105

	Kheri	20	583		170	413			
	Mirzapur	20	635		152	483			
	Prayagraj	4	116				20	94	2
	Saharanpur	30	900		157	301	442		
	Shahjahanpur	1	30			3	25	2	
West Bengal	Murshidabad	48	1,825			1,087	694	44	
	South 24 Parganas	35	908		22	91	284	327	184
Grand Total		349	9,806	33	1,577	3,648	2,302	1,215	1,031

In the FY 2021-2022, under Titan, IIMPACT was implementing the Titan Kanya programme in three states and 14 districts educating 9,806 students. There are 349 LCs active in this geography with a majority of LCs being in Uttarakhand (171).



ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

Research Objective

NuSocia’s objective of the assessment was two-fold. The first was to assess the impact of the Titan Kanya Project on girl child education in the Learning Centres in Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal for the FY 2021-2022; Second, to identify opportunities for improvement in terms of scaling up and/or replication. The findings and recommendations have been presented in this report.

Research Approach

The three-pronged approach which has been adopted while examining the Titan Kanya programme includes:

1. Research approach: Qualitative research methodology
2. Research outreach and sampling: Convenience and purposive sampling
3. Analysis Framework: ‘REECIS’ framework by OECD-DAC

1. Research Approach

The primary research for the impact assessment was rooted in qualitative research methodology. With the aim of deploying this research methodology to gain programmatic as well as organisational insights, unique research tools were created for all the identified stakeholders.

The primary data collection was done through on-field research in Uttarakhand, UP and West Bengal as well as via virtual interactions. The on-field research enquiry utilised qualitative research tools like Focus Group Discussions (FGD) and KIIs while the virtual interactions were all KIIs.

2. Research outreach and sampling

The research outreach covered a total of 15 LCs across 5 districts in 3 states.

State Name	District Name	Learning Centre (LC) Sample
		(3 LCs per District)
Uttarakhand	Haridwar	Firozpur urf Buggawala (LC-01558)
		Daulatpur Urf Budhwa Shaheed (LC-01571)
		Majahidpur Satiwala Khalsa (LC-01563)
	Udham Singh Nagar	Kaupa (LC-01601)
		Kulha (LC-01591)
		Jainagar (LC-01599)
Uttar Pradesh	Mirzapur	Tosawa (LC-02830)
		Bhagesar (LC-02732)
	Kheri	Nakti Misrauli (LC-02736)
		Chauri (LC-02734)
		Sarkhana Purab (LC-02746)
		Maan Nagar (LC-02736)
West Bengal	24 South Parganas	Rasulpur (LC-00591)
		Nahanna (LC-01768)
		Panch Gansingber (LC-01638)

The sampling covered through primary research is as follows:

1. On-field interactions

State Name	District Name	Qualitative Research							
		FGD				KIIIs			
		Current Students	Community	LC Teacher	Parents	Alumni	Centre Management Committee	Primary School Teacher	Panchayat Head
Uttarakhand	Haridwar	3	2	3	2	1	1	1	1
	Udham Singh Nagar	3	2	3	2	1	1	1	1
Uttar Pradesh	Mirzapur	3	3	3	3	-	3	-	2
	Kheri	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3
West Bengal	24 South Parganas	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	-
Total		15	13	15	13	8	11	5	7

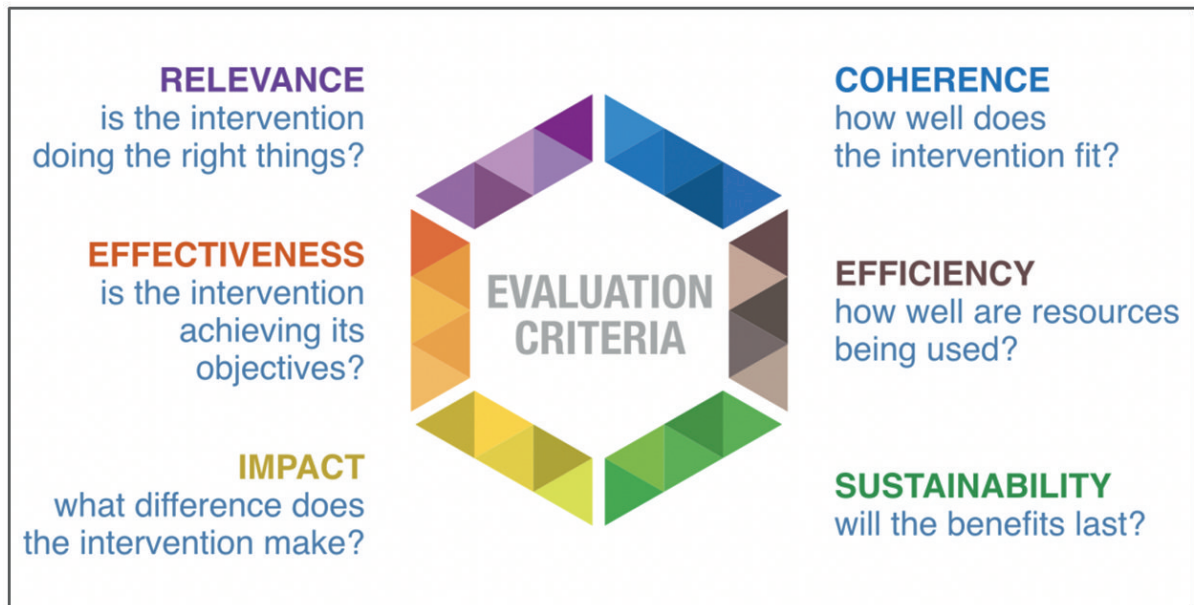
2. Virtual Interactions

Other Stakeholders	Qualitative Research
	KIIIs
IIMPACT Senior Leadership	3
IIMPACT Programme Manager	1
IIMPACT Training Officer	3
IIMPACT Project Officer	3
PNGO Supervisor	3
Total	13

The primary research included on-field, as well as virtual interactions, covering a total sampling of 28 FGDs covering a respondent group of 359 individuals and 72 KIIIs from all the states as well as across the programme team.

3. Analysis Framework

The global analytical framework by OECD-DAC was used as an evaluation framework for assessing the Titan Kanya Programme at a programmatic as well as organisational level. The framework analyses the programme on six indicators: Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Coherence, Impact, and Sustainability (REECIS).



REECIS Framework by OECD-DAC

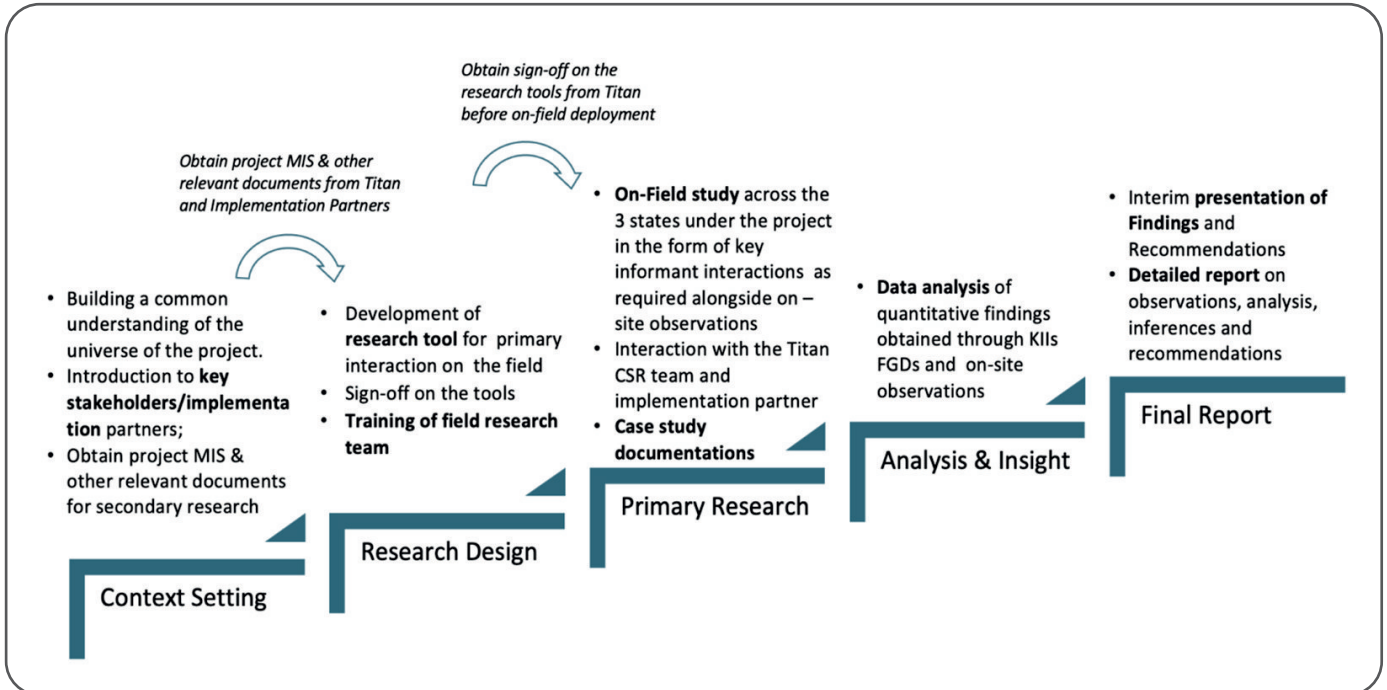
The REECIS analysis provided the following information:

- **Relevance** : The importance of the Titan Kanya Programme in the context of the girl-child education scenario in India.
- **Efficiency** : The evaluation of the processes involved in the implementation of the Titan Kanya Programme.
- **Effectiveness** : Actions taken under the Titan Kanya Programme to help achieve the programme objectives.
- **Impact** : The impact of the programme on all the intended and unintended beneficiaries.
- **Coherence** : To understand the compatibility of the Titan Kanya Programme with similar interventions happening in the Indian education sector - private as well as non-private.
- **Sustainability** : The long-term effectiveness of the programme benefits.

⁸<https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>

Research Methodology

The assessment followed a five-phased methodology to enable a thorough understanding of the programme as well as deliver a detailed narrative report.





FINDINGS

This section provides detailed information about the implementation of the programme, the learning outcomes of the students, the training and learning outcomes of the teachers of the programme, and lastly, the attitude and involvement of the parents and community. The findings have been derived from primary and secondary research.

1. Programme Implementation

1.1 Curriculum development and gender sensitisation

Initially, the curriculum was designed based on the requirements of IIMPACT's donor partner and was diverse across states. In 2021, the learning outcomes were aligned with the outcomes identified for Class I-V by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT). The curriculum and the pedagogy in all the LCs were then developed by IIMPACT's internal department. The outcomes were then adapted to the multi-grade multi-level (MGML) system by further dividing the outcomes into 20 levels with four levels per class method. In this method, the students are expected to surpass at least two levels in one semester.

The curriculum and the levels are contextualised to the SCERT curriculum. Once the curriculum was developed, it was circulated at the regional levels for their approval. This approval measure ensures that the curriculum is contextualised to the diverse student population in the LCs. The contextualisation also comes from the creation of extra teaching materials which are created in different languages suitable to the LCs' locations.

Right from beneficiary selection to community engagement and giving attention to the varied surroundings the girls come from, a gender-sensitive approach has been followed in designing the curriculum and the programme. Gender sensitisation also comes from the efforts taken to create awareness about the rights of girls and organising forums where topics such as gendered social issues and female health are discussed to create awareness.



Various multi-lingual learning materials are created for the students.

1.2 Identification of location and resources

The process of identification of a location for starting a Learning Centre was done in a collaborative manner with the donor agency. The locations were decided after initial guidance from the donor agency about the regions suiting their CSR's geographical scope.

Once the location is decided, a partner NGO (PNGO) is identified from the region to collaborate at the district level. The PNGO selection happened through ground-level research as well as proposal submissions from organisations present in the region. The PNGO selected is an organisation that has been active in the region and holds significant visibility and credibility. The other important criterion is that the organisation should be working actively in the education development sector and is aware of the literacy status in the region. Once a PNGO is onboarded, a Supervisor and a Project Coordinator are appointed from their team to undertake district-level responsibilities under monitoring, data maintenance, and the LCs' smooth functioning.

From the inception of the centre as a project model, community participation has been an essential component of successfully running an LC in a village. Cooperation and communication with the village-level authorities and the community ensure that the LC not only runs well but receives support and participation where necessary. Since the project design does not cover infrastructure in it, the establishment of an LC is dependent on the community and the Panchayat providing a space for it.

If there are situations where the community or the Panchayat repeatedly tries to influence the LC operations, the LC is moved to another location.

The engagement initiated with the community and the important local stakeholders helped create transparency in the LC's operations and intentions from the beginning, and thereby minimised the expectation gaps if any among the stakeholders.

1.3 Setting up the Learning Centre

The PNGOs are responsible for mobilisation as well as identification of beneficiaries and teachers. Their network and community outreach is leveraged for primary engagement with the community. The community and the parents are made aware of the LC through door-to-door mobilisation and word of mouth. For beneficiary mapping, a village-wide survey is conducted to identify the number of eligible students between ages 06-14 years in the village. The programme ensures reaching out to families that do not give priority to education and would benefit from an LC in their neighbourhood. Other factors like the status of education, distance to school and dropout rates are also noted. A location to start an LC is finalised based on the number of eligible students in the village.

Once the centre is selected, the next task is the appointment of a teacher identified in consultation with the Panchayat and the community members. A few eligible candidates are then selected for the written test which is designed after defined learning outcomes and the interview round. The primary educational qualification to become a teacher is Class XII but preference is given to those who have completed graduate-level education. The eligibility criteria have been defined by IIMPACT. If an eligible candidate is not found from within the village, sometimes a teacher from a neighbouring village is selected. Since community support is an integral part of programme implementation, having a teacher from the local community is an effective measure to do so.



Interaction with the community becomes much easier as they (teachers) are locals. For any help or assistance, the teacher can easily reach out to the community. Connecting and communicating about certain issues with the parents and community during the meetings is done in a better way through the teacher. It helps run the centre smoothly and in easy acceptance of the community.



- Training Officer, West Bengal

At the time of enrolment, though the centre is designed to provide quality primary education to 06-14-year-old girls, during the student identification, the PNGO aims to enrol girls aged 06-09 years to ensure that the student spends at least 2-3 years in the LC. Once a student agrees to join the LC, after enrolment she undergoes a 45-day trial period. If she is able to attend a minimum of 70% of classes then she gets formally enrolled. After this enrolment, a baseline test is conducted for mapping her academic level. The girls who are unsuccessful in joining the LC in the 45-day trial period may get a chance to reapply after a few months. In such cases, the parents belatedly realise the importance of the LC and make requests to enrol their daughters.

The selection of local teachers creates a collaborative model of the LC with the villages they are located in. In addition, the careful selection of eligible beneficiaries ensures that the students will benefit from the LC to their fullest potential.

1.4 Ground-level monitoring and data recording

The programme implementation team has multiple individuals holding responsibility at village, block, district, state and zone levels. For ground-level monitoring, the team up to the state level is involved.

1.4.1 Village-level

At the village, that is the LC level, the main responsibility of the teachers is to teach 30 students. In addition, the teachers maintain multiple registers to record the attendance of the students, and child profiles with student details (personal, attendance, and assessment outcomes), create the daily lesson plan for every level and record the daily remarks. If a student's attendance reflects irregularity, the teacher makes home visits to understand if there are any challenges. The Supervisors also at times support this task.

The teachers also undertake the tasks of data recording. The teacher maintains the stock register and a visitor register. The teachers are responsible for arranging monthly meetings with the parents, planning the agenda, writing the meeting minutes and conclusion of the meeting in the respective registers; organising the Arambh Manch session which gives a platform to the alumni group and other individuals aged 10-18 years to speak about their challenges and life skills.

In terms of monitoring the progress of the students, the teachers conduct the Quarterly Child Assessment (QCA). Initially, the PNGOs used to set their own papers. Around three years back, IIMPACT started setting its own paper to ensure that there is uniformity in the assessment. The teachers report all the data maintained to the Supervisor.

Another mechanism for ground-level monitoring is the formation of the Centre Management Committee (CMC). Community-level monitoring through the CMC is frequently organised with the teachers, students, alumni, and parents as well as the community at large. The CMC structure has been defined by the IIMPACT team to ensure participation from varied stakeholders. The CMC needs to have 15 members of which eight should be females; 50% of the members are supposed to be parents and the other 50% to include two alumni representatives, socially aware community influencers, panchayat members, school representatives, School Management Committee (SMC) representatives, Child Protection Committee (CPC) representatives, and government staff. Apart from the 15 members, two representatives from among the current Class IV or V batches in level 14 onwards are to be included in the discussions.

The CMC is responsible for closely overseeing the LCs and their activities. Monthly meetings are conducted with the CMC members where the pointers on improving management and the study environment for the students are discussed. The aim is to be a support structure for the teacher and enable parents of the current students to mainstream their daughters after finishing their levels at the LC. On a larger level, the CMC also performs this task to create ownership among the community about the education of every eligible child.

The CMC also interacts with mainstream committees, SMC and CPC, to have a dialogue about the well-being and education of female students.

1.4.2 Block-level

At the block level, the supervisor's responsibilities involve direct on-ground tasks. The supervisor is responsible for maintaining monthly utilisation certificates, conducting daily visits to different LCs in rotation and providing remarks on their activities, arranging and reporting monthly meetings, submitting monthly reports, and entering data such as student attendance and child profile in the online database. The supervisor is also responsible for engaging with the teachers and understanding and resolving the challenges.

The Supervisor reports to the Project Coordinator (PC). The PC mainly acts as the link between the PNGO and IIMPACT as well as monitors the budget utilisation and attends monthly meetings with parents and teachers.

The PC prepares the quarterly donor reports which include the quarterly activities and highlights, 1-2 success stories, and a brief of the meetings conducted. The PC reports to the Project Officer (PO) who is an IIMPACT team member.

1.4.3 District-level

The PO handles nearly 200 LCs; visiting the LCs and ensuring that the LC sampling visit covers varied kinds of centres—eg: old and new. At the centre, the PO asks the teachers to carry out a few tasks to assess their proactiveness. After the visit, the PO gives feedback to the Supervisors based on their observations. The POs report to the Programme Manager.

1.4.4 State-level

The Programme Manager is responsible for the operations over a few states. The key responsibility is to support and handhold the entire team, PNGO as well as the IIMPACT team, wherever required. For data recording, in the third quarter of FY 21-22, IIMPACT launched its tech platform to record and maintain all the records for the programme. With the primary function of being a customer relationship management tool, the platform records all the programmatic and assessment reports of the on-field activities. The Supervisors have a significant role here as they are the ones entering the data received from the teachers on the LC's daily operations. The Supervisors have been provided training and are provided with timely support to use the online platform.



I receive a lot of support from the IIMPACT team. We work in a collaborative manner. We are able to solve our queries and doubts in a timely manner.”



- Supervisor, West Bengal

Currently, the Supervisor collects all the data from the teachers and enters it into the online platform. The online platform has been effective in cutting down manual labour to an extent giving a boost to efficiency and ensuring that there is streamlining of processes and a way for better management.

1.5 Alumni Engagement

An important aspect which has been introduced in FY 20-21 is Alumna tracking. IIMPACT believes that the alumni of the learning centre are ‘social capital’ and ‘role models’ for other students who are currently studying. This engagement was seen as essential to motivate the current students and keep pursuing education. The aim is to build a support system and make the alumni ‘peer educators’.

This effort was carried out by tracking the alumni group, recording their data in the MIS and creating an organised manner of engaging with them. The tracking effort was also expanded to the alumni who may have moved out of the LC village and districts for academic or marital reasons. The PNGO team, supported by the IIMPACT team, took up the task of tracking through home visits carried out by teachers, Supervisors and Project Coordinators.

Details of the Alumni Tracking	
Phase 1 geographical outreach	39 districts and 1,700+ villages
Total alumni tracked	45,028
Total Titan alumni tracked	5,461
The average tenure at LC	Over 3 years
No. of girls mainstreamed at the time of exit	4,726 (87%)
Current education status	Yes – 2,425
	No – 1,435 (56% of alumni who have discontinued education have completed at least 12 levels or more at the LC)
Marital Status	99% unmarried

The alumni tracking is scheduled to be done once a year, followed by updates of their records in the MIS. To create the organised engagement, two alumni are to be part of the CMC and work with the teachers and other members towards the betterment of the LC operations and facilitation of education.

Along with tracking their status and engaging them with current students and motivating them, there are a few other objectives of this alumni exercise. The first one is to identify the challenges or issues faced by the alumni in pursuing education and how they can be resolved through need-based scholarships till at least the school level. The second involves creating awareness about the relevant government programmes and schemes they can leverage and the alternative and better education opportunities at their disposal.

Another objective that has taken shape comes from the recommendation of Titan to build on life skills education to help the alumni prepare for present challenges and the ones to come. With an aim to create a dialogue on life skills, health, nutrition, career counselling, child protection, etc., Aarambh Manch, a platform to discuss all these topics was launched. The teacher takes the responsibility of organising the Aarambh Manch once a month to give a platform for these conversations.

In the on-field interactions, the alumni appreciated the interactive form of learning they experienced in the LCs. They stated that the learning tools that were used in the centre were very helpful. When asked about their current academic experience in the conventional educational system, one alumna responded that she misses the structure she had when she was studying in the LC. The LCs completely blocked out the hours for studying, something that does not happen easily now.

1.6 Adaptation to COVID-19 Pandemic

To cope with the lockdown that was in place during the COVID-19 pandemic, an Alternate Learning Activities (ALA) model was adopted. The ALA model incorporated an in-person as well as a home-based learning alternative. In the ALA model, the usual LC strength of 30 students was divided into two batches of 10-15 students who attended the LC in two shifts. When the second wave of the pandemic commenced, the ALA mode was halted and home-based learning started taking place wherever possible.

In the home-based learning mode when ALA was suspended, a Child Engagement Plan (CEP) was created. Under this CEP, a programme called Chhote Vaigyanik (junior scientist) was launched. The virtual programme was designed to nurture the inquisitive nature of the students and create opportunities for them to think about experiential learning through two project-based modules.

The objectives of the programme were :

1. To engage the students to have a scientific discovery approach through exploration and observation.
2. To enable children to apply theoretical knowledge into action.
3. To enable children to use their observation skills to observe patterns and changes in their surroundings.
4. To help the students develop a better understanding of their surrounding socio-cultural and physical environment.
5. To help students appreciate their local and/or indigenous history and culture.

The programme adopted a sectioned approach with 1 CEP created for the students of Class III-V and a second one for the students of Class I and Class II.

1. Engagement of Class I and II students

For the comparatively younger students of Class I and II, their CEP, the students were expected to carry out simple activities which encouraged exploration and discovery. This CEP also saw the involvement of parents/older siblings/an elder through a 'Volunteer Support Programme'. The individuals selected for the support programme spent time with the students to read and tell them stories from their surroundings and carry out simple observation-oriented activities.

A 'Core Resource Group' was developed to discuss and develop the module. The group was trained on the module creation, implementation, monitoring and tracking mechanism. The Group also helped select the volunteers and assist them as required.

Total number of teachers trained for CEP	Total number of students engaged in CEP	Total number of volunteers finalised for CEP
252	6,123	2,937

2. Engagement of Class III-V students

The students from Class III-V were engaged in theme-based projects where they worked individually as well as in groups. The students worked on a theme and then carried out activities and tasks like planning and execution such as developing a questionnaire, collecting the information, and putting the information in the form of a report. They sought help from their parents and elders as and when required.

The themes for this CEP were identified from the National Curriculum Framework 2005.

No. of teachers trained for <i>Chhote Vaigyanik</i>	No. of groups formed from Class III-V	No. of themes selected	Total number of Children engaged in the Project	Few selected themes
231	618	98	3,232	1. Domestic Animals 2. Cleanliness and Good Hygiene 3. Festivals celebrated in our village 4. Crops grown in our village 5. Farming tools

The programme also allowed the parents or other family members of the students to get involved in their child’s studies and interact with them. The students who were not able to connect virtually remained connected through home visits conducted by the teachers. The PNGO and IIMPACT teams made sure that the students do not disconnect from their studies during the lockdown.

As the severity of the pandemic started subsiding in the second quarter of FY 2021-22, the programme team started reaching out to the students’ families and community members to prepare for the reopening of the LCs. Consent forms were circulated among the village authorities and the students’ parents so that the students could come back to the LCs in an ALA mode.

The IIMPACT team made sure that all the teachers and staff members who interact with the students and communities are vaccinated and that the health precautions are strictly adhered to.

There was also an unintended benefit of the ALA mode as observed by one of the Training Officers:



COVID-19 was a stressful situation. The centre offered a good place for the kids to distance themselves for a few hours from the problems and stress of the parents during the COVID-19 times.



- Training Officer, West Bengal

A donor engagement activity was also implemented during this time. With travel restrictions in place, the donors were given e-visits of the centres and a glimpse of how classes are conducted at the LCs. The students also got a chance to present their projects under the Chhote Vaigyanik programme which gave them a chance to develop their communication and presentation skills. Through this, the donors were also able to interact with all the individuals such as the programme staff and community members who come in contact with the Lcs.

2. Students - Current Scenario and Challenges

2.1 Initial challenges faced by girls

Initially, the status of education among the female students was a combination of social conditions, lack of quality education in their proximity, and low-interest level in education.

The students only used to attend school and did not give any more time and attention to their studies. Due to marginal financial conditions, they could not join any formal tuitions or extra classes either. Despite attending school, factors such as lack of attention given to individual students by the teacher and the learning environment there lead to low knowledge retention. It was also observed by the IIMPACT team that since the students belong to poor families, the mid-day meals provided in the schools are a big attraction. Many students used to attend school till the mid-day meal and then run away to their homes.

Along with this, they had familial responsibilities at times as well. Tasks such as household chores and taking care of their young siblings kept them occupied and deviated from their studies. As a result, the students had low clarity on fundamental concepts and had poor reading levels.

2.2 Learning Attitude and Outcomes

2.2.1 Learning Attitude

After enrolling in the learning centre, the female students have been able to engage in activity-based learning that keeps them engaged. Multiple students stated that they prefer learning at the LCs. The learning material provided to the students, which is quite different from the school syllabus, is highly appreciated by them as they are more engaging.

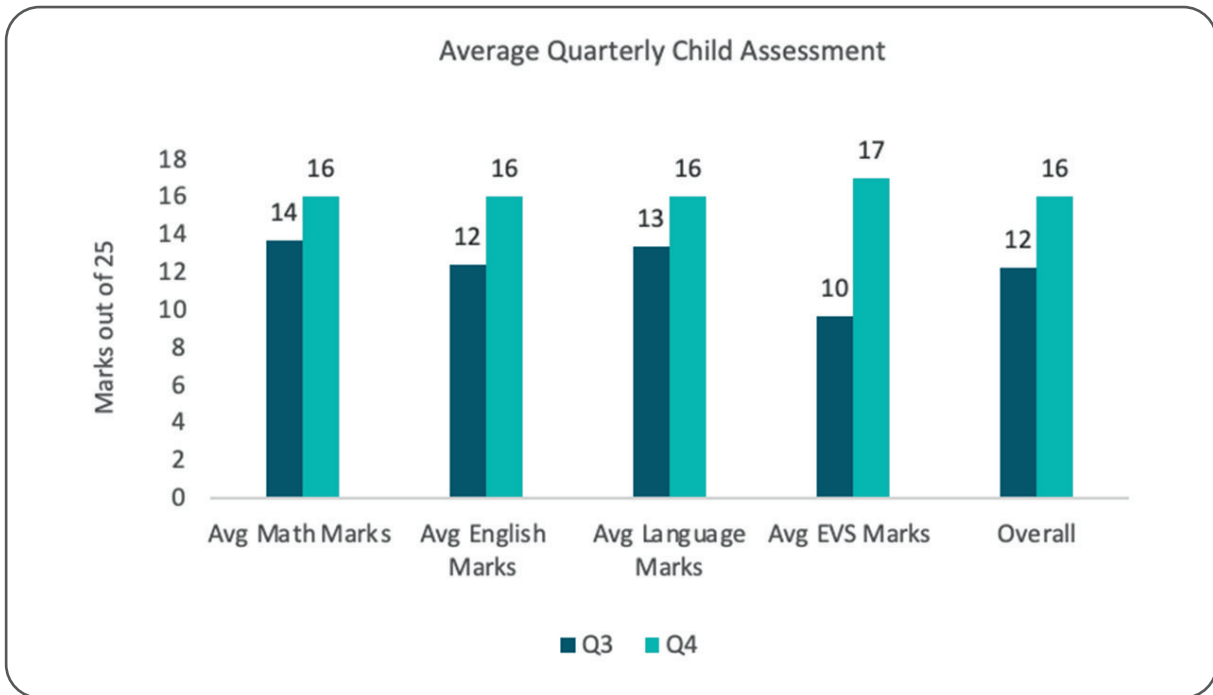
One of the biggest solutions that LCs provided is the creation of a structured time for the students to study apart from school. Students are drawn to the environment created at the LC which helps them interact better with the teacher and learn more freely. This environment also helps boost their confidence as compared to the academic environment in conventional schools. The students have spoken about the LC to many of their friends.

Currently, the majority of students are attending conventional school as well as coming to the Lcs.

2.2.2 Learning Outcomes

The student's learning outcomes are monitored on a quarterly basis through Quarterly Child Assessments (QCA). Due to the pandemic, in FY 2021-22, QCA could not be conducted in the first quarter. For the QCA in the second quarter, the entire data has not been reported as only the girls were present in both Q2 FY 2021-22 and Q4 FY 2020-21.

The QCA cycle settled into its normal cycle in the Q3 and Q4 of FY 2021-22.



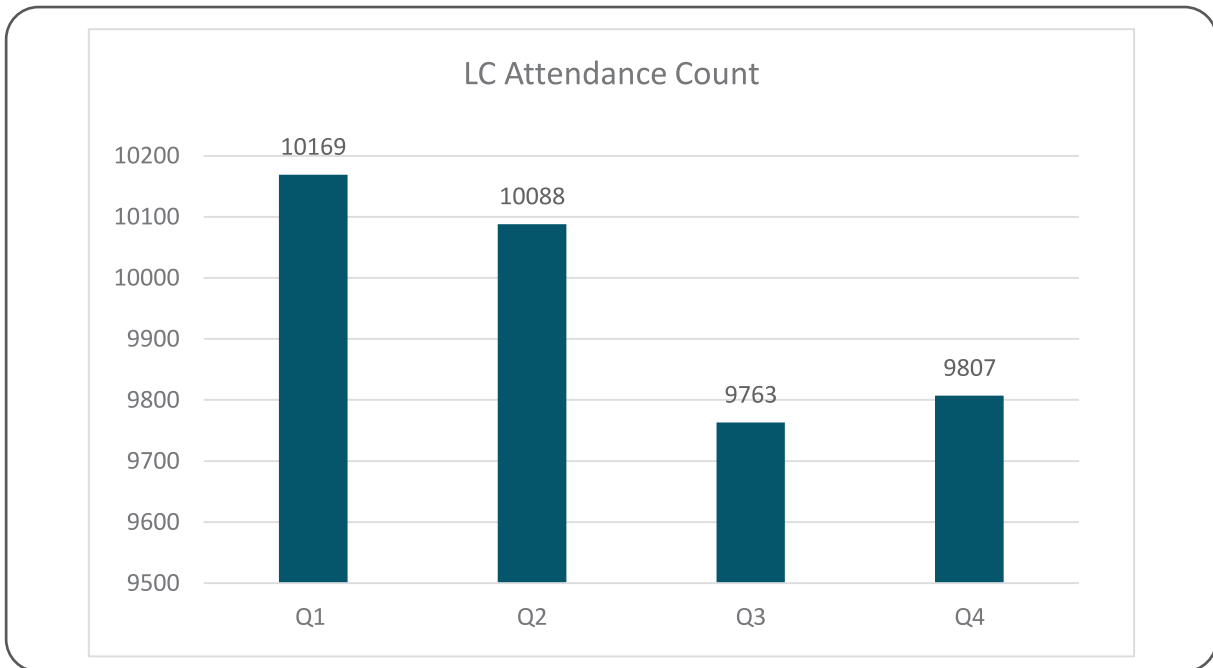
As the graph indicates, there is an increase in the learning outcomes of the students as they progressed from Q3 to Q4. The highest improvement was seen in the EVS subject as the average marks of students increased from an average of 10 marks out of 15 to 17 out of 25.

Notable feedback has also come from the primary school teachers interacted with during the primary research. They reported that the students who come to the LCs have better-grasping power and are more confident as they are now exposed to good and quality education. The school teachers are now noticing the difference in the learning levels of the children from the centre and sometimes ask them to demonstrate the things they have learnt in the centre. They also noted that the students of the LC are sincere with their assignments and completed those on time. In the post-COVID situation, the other school kids had forgotten everything that was taught and could not even construct sentences but the students from the centre faced no such issues as their connection with academics was intact throughout the pandemic.

In terms of attendance, the teachers were happy to report that the majority of the students have been attending the LCs regularly. An activity calendar with celebrations on multiple days in a month and short-term activities conducted in the LC help boost the consistency in attendance that the students have.

2.3 Persisting Challenges

There are two primary issues faced by the students: First, pursuing higher education is still a challenge in terms of accessibility as well as affordability. Second, since a significant proportion of the parents are farm labourers, their work engagement is increased after the crop cycle. During this period, they take their children to the harvest site because of which children are not able to attend classes.



It can be seen in this graph which jots the LC attendance count for every quarter in FY 21-22. The eastern part of India is more focused on growing rabi crops which are sown in winter and harvested in spring. Since, these two seasons coincide with Q3 and Q4, it might be one of contributing reasons to the drop in the student count.

3. Teachers - Skill and Personality Development

The programme is supported strongly due to the pool of local teachers created. The teachers, preferably a woman, are members of the community and are thus able to engage with the community faster.



When the teacher comes from the same community, the biggest benefit is that the community thinks that one of their own is working there.



- Training Officer, Uttar Pradesh

3.1 Training and training outcomes

Once the teacher is selected, she initially goes for fundamental training to understand the teaching as well as the monitoring process. The Training Officer guides them on the multi-grade multi-level (MGML) approach and the defined learning outcomes. “The teachers are also needed to be taught the fundamental literacy and numeracy concepts,” the Training Officers said. Another part of training is to understand the process of the programme. Since the teachers are themselves from rural areas, teaching them the work processes is a need. The Supervisor along with some engagement from the Project Coordinator and Project Officer makes them aware of the reporting structure and documentation involved.

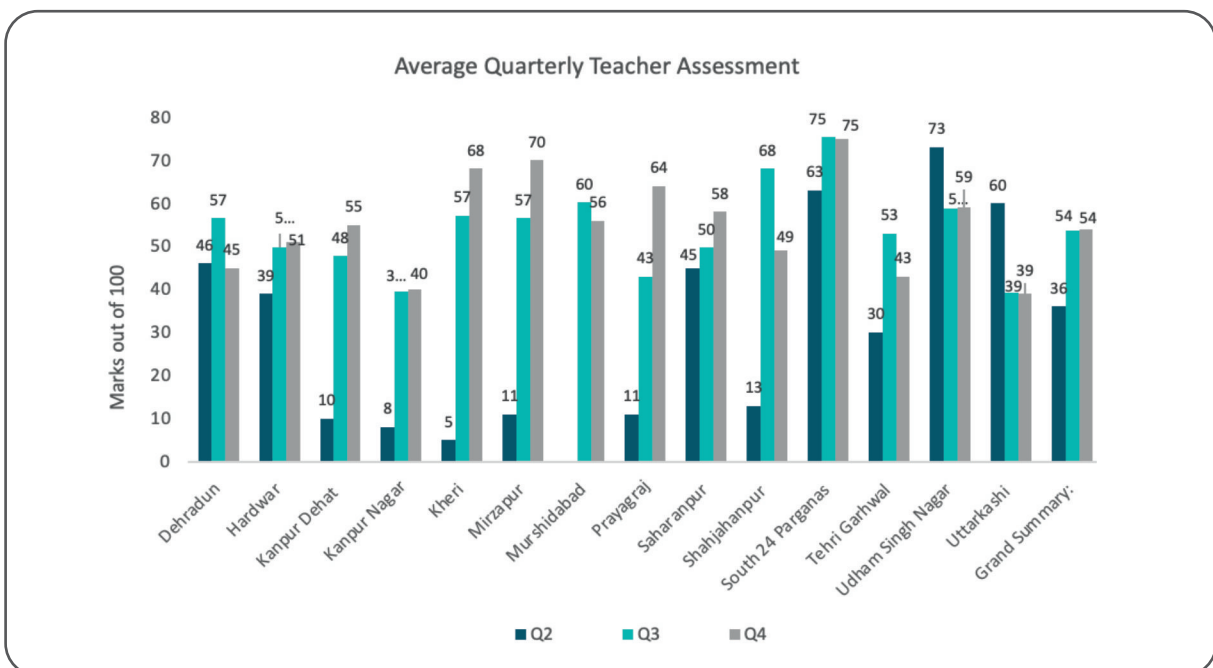
The teachers are also guided on building the different communication skill sets for students as well as the community members. To accomplish the aim of increasing students’ willingness to study, building communication skills for an engaging teaching experience is necessary. It is an important skill to relate to the students' experiences, engage and encourage them to keep coming to the centre. Once the foundational training is completed, the teacher is considered equipped to take charge of the LC.

To ensure that the teachers stay updated on the learning outcomes of every level, pedagogy, and child development, IIMPACT arranges Quarterly Teacher’s Assessment (QTA) and quarterly training sessions. The QTAs are usually conducted in the second month of the quarter and the evaluations are done by the IIMPACT’s head office team. The QTA examines the teachers’ understanding of every subject matter. The head office team analyses the marks received by the teachers and identifies areas where support is required. The supervisors are made aware of these areas and accordingly, a Teacher’s Improvement Plan (TIP) is derived which gets incorporated into the quarterly training held at the end of the quarter. The Supervisors also speak with the teachers to understand their areas of concern and topics they would like to cover in training. These requests are also incorporated into the training.

Since the teachers themselves come from a similar academic background as the students, the training sessions play an essential role in improving the teachers’ subject knowledge and getting inputs on child development and behavioural aspects which are needed to ensure consistent engagement from the students belonging to marginalised communities. The residential training sessions are conducted for over five-six days by IIMPACT’s Training Officer. Every training session follows a pattern similar to the MGML where teachers get guidance on teaching the learning outcomes at a particular level through multiple activities. These training sessions also include a review of their assessment to identify and overcome their areas of improvement. These training sessions are also attended by the Supervisor who creates a daily report at the end of each day.

Since 2019, the practice of Study Circles has been added to the programme which occurs post the quarterly training. These Study Circles are conducted once or twice every month where teachers from neighbouring LCs come together and revise the learning outcomes and the activities from the TLM. The teachers decide the agenda of the Study Circles on their own which helps them keep revising effectively. These were conducted throughout the pandemic time as well.

In terms of the outcomes of the QTA, the assessment was conducted in its usual manner from Q2 to Q4. The QTA is conducted on five subjects: Language, Math, English, EVS, and Child Development. Every subject test has questions of 20 marks each.



It can be seen that a majority of the teachers belonging to Uttar Pradesh districts such as Kanpur Dehat, Kanpur Nagar, Kheri, Mirzapur and Shahjahanpur have shown tremendous growth in the QTA outcomes.

3.2 Multi-faceted development

Being a teacher with the LCs has brought development in the teachers at multiple levels such as economic, social, interpersonal, digital, and personal.

In terms of economic and social development, becoming a teacher has brought a formal source of income for the teachers in the interior, rural areas. There is an official onboarding process with documentation that recognises their appointment. Consequently, the parents of the comparatively younger teachers are not persistent about their marriage. Having a formal engagement, which is well-respected in the community, and paying regular income have contributed to an exemption from traditional social expectations like marriage.

The communication skills training that the teachers receive has added to their confidence. In the interaction with the Supervisors, they expressed that the teachers, initially, were not comfortable with communicating and presenting in front of people and used to have insecurities. Over time, they are now handling LCs, making presentations in the Study Circles in front of fellow teachers, and conducting monthly meetings with the parents, the CMC members and the community.

The teachers experienced digital development during the COVID-19 time when online teaching and activities were conducted. The teachers have now become digitally equipped and are comfortable attending and arranging virtual meetings over applications like Zoom and Google Meet.

In terms of personal development, the programme brings exposure in many ways. Many of the teachers have never travelled anywhere outside their district. The training sessions conducted provides a visit to an urban or a peri-urban area as well as give them an opportunity for an insightful stay among peers. The Training Officer of Uttarakhand mentioned that during the training days, she tries to arrange cultural activities so the teachers can get a chance to participate in their own extracurricular activities and have unrestricted fun.

3.3 Challenges

The teachers are very capable of handling operations and community engagement but do face challenges in certain areas. The Training Officers expressed that every teacher comes in with her own individual academic background and challenges which need to be carefully understood and addressed.

Though the teachers receive quarterly training, the habit of self-study and taking time out to revise their TLM is not at par. The teachers need to be constantly encouraged to take time out for their own revision. In cases like the teachers from West Bengal, some of them come from tribal belts. The teachers from the region are first-generation learners who require more effort to continue their studies. The Training Officers need to constantly push them to make efforts to ensure knowledge retention till the next training session. In terms of the teachers' own learning areas, they face challenges in English and written communication. The teachers are comfortable conversing in their own language but face challenges in areas like written sentence structure. The introduction of Study Circles is to start with helping address these challenges.

4. Parents and Community - Participation and Perception

4.1 Initial challenges

Parents and the community as well used to be of the common view that saving money for their girl child's marriage was a better investment than spending it on their education. This was further fuelled by the low

levels of literacy present and the earning capacity of the families from such remote, rural regions. Most of the families are involved in pursuing agricultural labour and daily wage jobs. For these families, earning money took priority over pursuing education. The parents often relied on the children to take on caretaking responsibilities, and household chores and provide household support when they went out for work. This resulted in the female students having irregular attendance and, in some cases, eventually dropping out of school. In addition to this, for families belonging to minority communities, there was an added issue of social settings, discomfort in sending their children to the schools, and a lower tendency of attending school.

4.2 Change in Attitude

Parents feel that their daughters are in a safe space at the LC. Parents belonging to the minority community especially feel comfortable as the teacher at the LC is a member of their own community. They are keen on sending their daughters to the centres because they do not get that kind of attention and activity-based learning in the centres elsewhere.



In our society, girls are sent to get an education only for a good marriage and not to make them self-reliant. Initially, we thought the same for our daughter we should stop her studies after Class VIII, but we did not. She continued her studies.

- Parent KII, Uttar Pradesh



The parents, especially mothers, said that they were trying to reduce the caregiving responsibilities that their daughters had so far so that they can focus on their studies. In some cases, this happens easily as some parents have more than one child studying at the centre. Mothers also actively participate in the meetings that are conducted in the LCs, and they also participate in the CMC meetings if involved.

Parents have also noted a drastic change in the attitude of their children towards education. Parents and mothers especially, feel that their children can give more time to their studies now that they are more motivated and independent.



Parents are keen on teaching their students as much as they can. One of the parents told us that initially his kids did not even go to school and now they are getting 3rd rank.

- Project Officer, West Bengal



The parents now understand that the programme is giving a better environment to learn which will be better for their future. This has increased the willingness of the parents to enrol their daughters in the LCs. Parents stated that they are willing to educate their daughters as much as they can afford in their academic journey.



Initially the kids were very reluctant to participate in any social or cultural programmes organised. But that has totally changed now.

- Parent, Rasulpur, West Bengal



4.3 Involvement of parents/guardians during COVID-19

During the lockdown period, children were engaged in online learning wherever possible. But where it was not possible, the teachers visited the homes of children who could not do so and helped them with the

activities they were supposed to do. Responding to the unavailability of technology in mind, a ‘Volunteer Support Programme’ was introduced for the students of Class I and II. The aim of the programme was to involve the parents, older siblings, or a suitable member of the community to engage with the students through storytelling and activities which encourage them to observe and interact with their surroundings. A module was created for this home-based learning activity and appropriate volunteers were selected. The IIMPACT team was able to engage 3,136 volunteers, of which 2,937, who worked with 6,123 (out of 6,158) students from Class I and II, were finalised.

4.4 Attitude of the Community

Since an important aspect of the programme design is involving the local authorities and forming a CMC first, key members of the community are aware of the LC’s operations before an LC actually starts.

Continuous scope for involvement of the community stakeholders through meetings has created transparency about the LC operations. During the on-field interactions, a few Panchayat heads stated that they make sure to attend the meetings arranged by the LC and participate in the decision-making process. In some cases, the Panchayat heads interviewed were new to their position but were aware of the activities of the LC. Another aspect appreciated by the community was the appointment of a local teacher. The community believes that this helps inspire the students.



Madam is also from our community and in the future, many girls from the centre will serve the community by opting for the teaching profession.



- CMC Member KII, Uttar Pradesh

In terms of academic development, the community has observed an increase in female students' interest towards education as well. Community members commented on how the LC students now are less involved in household chores. As a result, the Panchayat members are now also requesting the parents to send their children to the Lcs.

In terms of the attitude towards the centre and primary education of female students, the community is aware of the challenges that the LC is helping resolve. Earlier, when the teachers used to have their training sessions, the centre used to stay closed for those days. Now, in some LCs, the alumni or community members such as retired teachers come to the LC and teach the students so that there is no need to close the LC.

The community and local authorities also have a positive attitude towards other efforts taken by the LC such as the sessions arranged to make the community aware of social issues and the help given during COVID-19 and the natural calamities. Panchayat heads voiced their appreciation for the help received during both the difficult situation as it helped reduce their burden. In terms of sessions conducted, the Supervisor from West Bengal commented that the community was initially not aware of social practices such as early marriage. These sessions have made them aware of the negative consequences. In addition, it has also created awareness about issues such as child trafficking.

Limitations

1. The lack of uniformity in data points across donor reports made it challenging to analyse points such as student attendance for the entire financial year.
2. The dates of the primary research were clashing with the electoral schedule in West Bengal which made it challenging to speak with the Panchayat head or a Panchayat member in 24 South Parganas.

CASE STUDIES

1. Student - Uttarakhand

Name - Ms. Anshika

Centre Name - Jainagar, LC-01599

Anshika is a 10-year-old girl who lives in Jainagar village. She has two brothers, a younger sister, a mother and a father in her family. Anshika is a very sharp-minded girl. At such an early age, Anshika shoulders many responsibilities in her household. Despite her circumstances, she is a sharp-minded girl who is full of confidence.



Anshika is confident to introduce herself by saying, “My name is Anshika. I study in class 4. I have a younger sister and two brothers. I come from a poor family. My father works as a labourer on other's farms and my mother is a homemaker but helps through livestock rearing. I help my mother to get the fodder from the nearby jungle and fields and also take care of my younger brother and sisters. My uncle gifted a small cycle to my brother, which I like very much. Sometimes when I am getting late, I use it to carry the fodder. My mother and father say that I have become smart and intelligent since the time I started coming to the centre.”

Anshika says, “I am tired of doing housework, going to school, and taking care of my younger siblings and then also bringing fodder. But even after this, I love coming to the centre and studying because I want to be a police officer when I grow up. Our Priyanka madam has told us that to become an officer, studies are very important, and fitness is also important, so now I also do running. My mother has said that she will bring me a bicycle too, and then it will be a little easier for me. I will study hard and become an officer. Thanks, SUDHA and IIMPACT.”

Ashika’s progress in her academic journey - When Anshika started at the LC, the teacher and the LC staff started to help and support her in her difficulties. Regular interactions were conducted with her parents about the situation and how they can contribute towards providing a suitable educational environment at home. Anshika was taught foundational concepts like sentence structure, Hindi alphabet pronunciations, English alphabets and basic addition-subtraction through learning material like flashcards and speaking exercises.

Anshika can now easily write sentences in Hindi and read lengthy paragraphs without any difficulties. She has also improved in English and now can read English words with better pronunciation and make small sentences. Her parents are happy for her improvement.



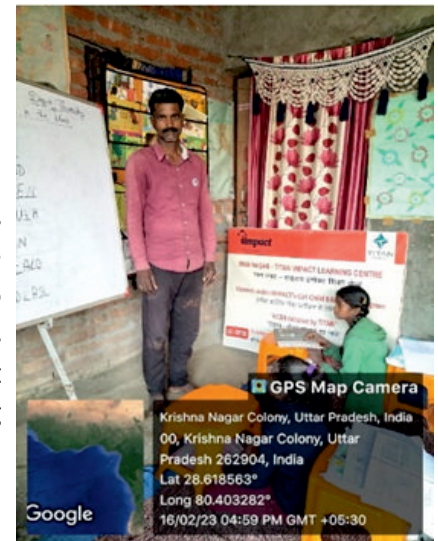
2. CMC Member - Uttar Pradesh

Name - Chandan Kumar

Centre Name - Mannagar, LC-02735

Mr Chandan has been the CMC Chairperson since the Mannagar LC's inception. He is a very proactive member who has participated in all the CMC meetings and makes sure to speak about the efforts taken at the LC to the wider community. He is aware of how the LC has helped the girls improve through their timely evaluations and is always ready to support them. The girls also have good habits like respecting their elders and being confident while speaking to anyone.

Mr Chandan participates in all the celebrations of national festivals with the community where the Panchayat head is also present. Some time back the LC teacher Ms Deepmala organised a meeting with the CMC members to discuss the lack of roof at the LC which bothered the students. The CMC came together and collected donations for the improvement of the LC where all the community members played an important role. Mr Chandan is always ready for social contribution due to which the girls of the village can learn and glorify the name of the village.



3. Teacher - Uttarakhand

Name - Ms. Mamta Devi

Centre name - Kulha, LC-01591

Mamta has been very professional with her approaches at the LC and towards the students as well. She joined in 2018 and is skilled in creating a very enigmatic and vibrant learning atmosphere. She openly discusses the learnings and her personal experiences of being a teacher in the programme at every forum.

Mamta is a very confident individual and does not shy away from taking lead in village level community meetings. Her ability to find solutions in any situation helps create new opportunities for herself. In addition, she is a well-read person who is proactive in helping and sharing information on various topics and concepts.



During the pandemic, she continued to share videos of various sources based on E-learning to the parents of the students which actively keep the child engaged. At this point, the parents had also realised that the pandemic situation is hampering the learning capabilities of their children as they were away from the mainstream education.

Mamta has been pivotal in creating a platform for the children of her village. She is also active in the community as she took frontline efforts to make people aware of the precautions they need to take during the pandemic.

In her short time as a teacher, she has grasped the MGML method of teaching and other aspects like JodGyan really well and has become an inspiration to the rest of the staff. Her commitment towards the LC, teaching the students and the way she deals with them socially and emotionally is a great example for the rest too.



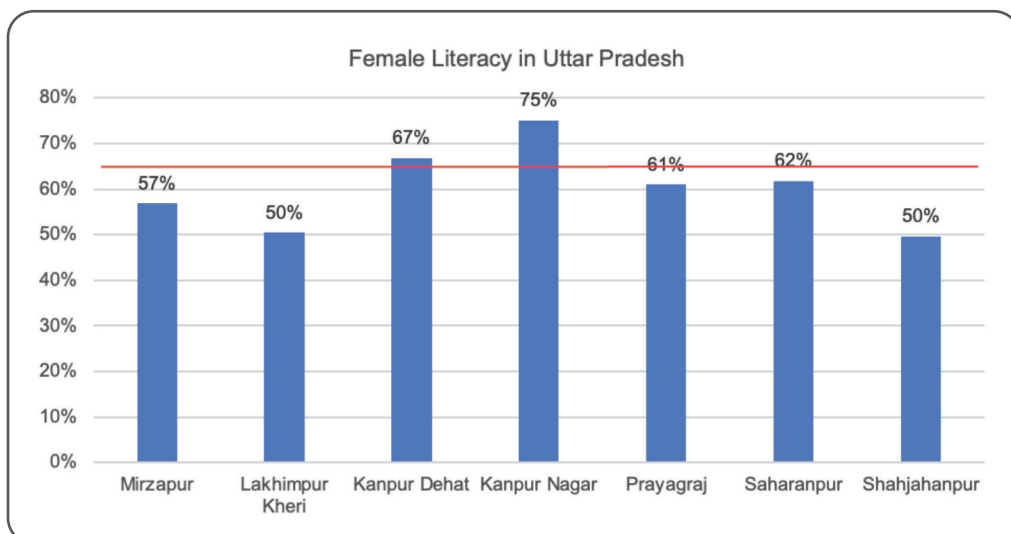
ANALYSIS

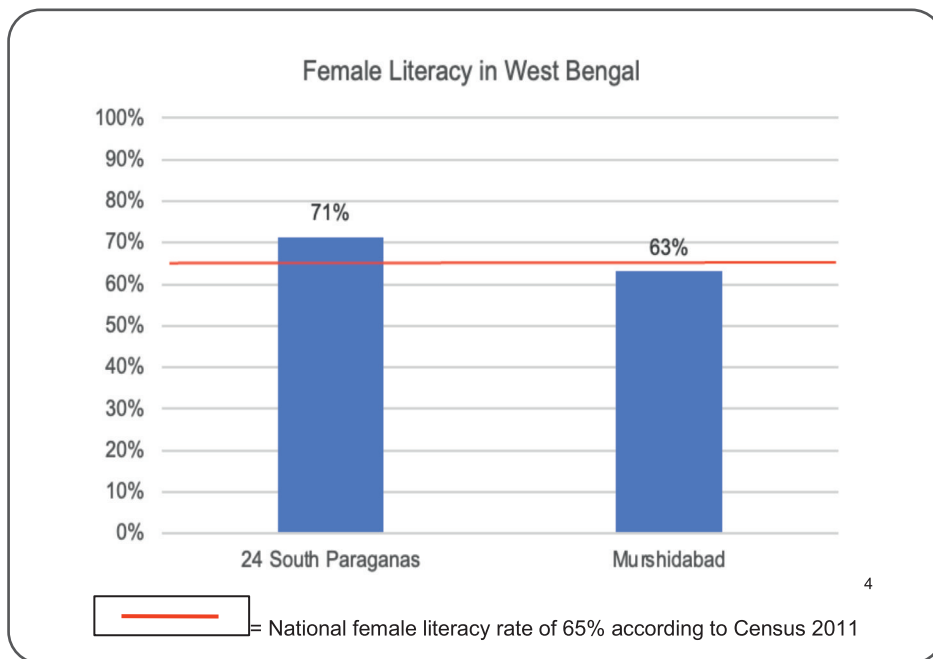
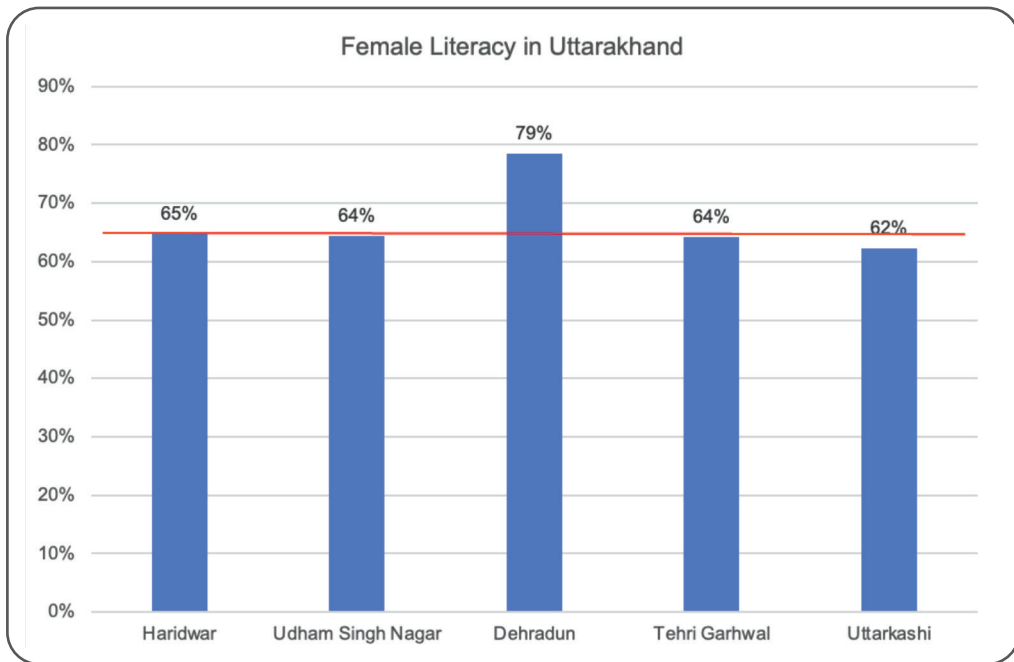
In the following section, the programme's activities for FY 2021-22 have been evaluated through the REECIS framework:

Relevance

The programme was launched after conducting a detailed ground-level survey of the literacy needs of the area. This ensured that the locations where the LCs will be operational and the beneficiary group it interacts with are in need of quality education.

This is further verified by the literacy levels present in the districts where the graphs below map the female literacy present in all the locations of the Titan LCs across Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and West Bengal according to the census 2011 survey⁵. With the exception of single districts in all three states, the remaining districts are underperforming in female literacy rate against the national value of 65%.





Measures such as contextualisation of the learning outcomes through SCERT and approvals from state-level IIMPACT team members ensure that the knowledge provided is relevant and most beneficial to their context. The inclusion of local resources such as PNGOs and local teachers are the steps that also contextualise the programme at the implementation level.

The continuous feedback mechanism through monthly meetings and at the community level takes into account the unique needs of the diverse communities the LCs interact with.

Efficiency

IIMPACT adheres to strict criteria while selecting the personnel, especially the ones directly coming in contact with the students and the community. This aspect of the project design ensures that individuals who have a

⁵<https://www.censusindia.co.in/>

clear understanding and context of the geography are involved in the direct field-level operations and interactions.

Given the programme design, the programme has the involvement of such varied stakeholders. Throughout the calendar, there are various engagements planned on a daily, weekly, bi-monthly, monthly and quarterly basis. This ensures that every stakeholder involved gets enough time with the programme implementation team to discuss with them and listen to their opinions, grievances and ideas for development. This open dialogue also comes in handy to mitigate risks and leverage support wherever necessary.

With LCs spread across the map, the programme as a whole has a very detailed calendar throughout the year. The annual calendar is prepared in advance with planned short-term activities and celebrations. The FY 21-22 saw the LCs engaged in a short-term activity each quarter and multiple celebrations which boosted the attendance of the students as well as the willingness to come to the centre after or before school hours.

In terms of monitoring, submission of reports, and maintaining record of all daily operations, every meeting and training session brings transparency to all activities. This also helps in internal progress tracking and measurement of outcomes against the action items. On a larger programmatic level, monthly reports for internal purposes and quarterly progress reports are developed for donors who document the programmatic activities.

For budget monitoring, breaking down the budget on a monthly basis brings ease of tracking. For all the monitoring activities, a clear division of among the programme staff has created a seamless system. Since the number of students at an LC are the same, the cost per LC and a child are uniform across the programme. The cost per child for 2021-22 was Rs. 3854, which is an increase from the previous year's cost of Rs. 3354. The rising costs of resources get reflected in this increase.

Effectiveness

The steps taken before the initiation of an LC include ensuring the existence of a sufficient beneficiary group before the LC is started. In addition, the balanced inclusion of individuals from multiple areas such as the community itself (teachers, CMC), someone with a prior presence (PNGO), and IIMPACT's own staff with their unique strengths and networks ensure the success of the implementation. The involvement of diverse partners also strengthens the design of the programme as seeking approval from these partners on project aspects brings in different opinions and perspectives. This works very well with regard to elements such as curriculum development where local resources of a particular geography are consulted for their approval. It ensures effective customisation of the curriculum.

Involvement of the community, village-level authorities, and key individuals like primary school teachers and ASHA workers when needed is an effective way of reassuring that the LC is a part of the community and intends to coexist with the village.

At an organisational level, the collaborative relationship between IIMPACT and Titan helps in adding essential components like life skills through Aarambh Manch to the programme design. Titan's involvement through field visits and provision of recommendations from their observations also helps maintain transparency between the two agencies in a donor-implementer relationship.

TITAN initiated the TITAN Kanya programme with a vision of educating 10,000 female students. As of date the programme, across implementation partners, has been able to educate 17,000 female students.⁶ As the programme is progressing the defined outcomes have been focused on the efficient running of the existing

⁶<https://www.tata.com/newsroom/community/titan-kanya-giving-them-wings>

programme. Since FY 2020-2021, IIMPACT's key responsibilities are to measure the learning outcomes of the students, capacity building of the teachers, safety and well-being of the students, selection of suitable human resources and other programme design aspects. Due to this shift in focus, the existing processes of the programme are functioning smoothly and strong enough to cope with unprecedented events such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

Impact

The project has been successful in bringing quality primary education to the intended beneficiary group's vicinity. Though the female students are technically enrolled in government schools, their lack or inconsistency in attendance stemmed from issues such as distance to the school and support in household chores. As a result, the LCs now have a structure where they can dedicate more time to their studies. The contextualisation of the study materials and the activity-based teaching to ensure engagement has resulted in the creation of an appealing learning environment. Their interest in education has also increased due to the environment created at the LC. As the teachers belong to the community, the students felt comfortable asking questions repeatedly without hesitation. This has also helped in a complete understanding of their fundamental concepts. The female students have also experienced a surge in their confidence levels due to the exposure they got at the LCs through programmes like Chhote Vaigyanik.

Creating space in the project design to include stakeholders such as parents and the community who can help address issues has created a positive environment towards education. For the parents, it is understood that the persisting challenges for their daughters' academic journey stem more from their economic conditions and not from any discriminatory factor. Efforts such as alumni tracking are impactful in bringing attention to alumni students who may be facing such problems and providing them with scholarships that can ensure their education till at least the school level.

For the teachers, being appointed to the LCs has not only brought them employment opportunities but also helped establish them as respected members of the community. The community now regards them as important dignified members of society. The tasks that they perform in terms of teaching as well as engagement efforts with village-level stakeholders have resulted in an increase in their confidence levels and presentation skills.

At the community level, the scope for involvement of the community stakeholders in the decision-making space has created transparency in the LCs' operations. In addition, the contribution made by the LCs during the pandemic and natural disasters displayed that the programme is taking responsibility for the overall well-being of the current students. This effort alleviated the burden on the local authorities and looked at the LCs as important social structures. The help provided during the COVID-19 pandemic and the floods in Uttarakhand has created unintended beneficiaries at the village level. As a result, there is an increase in the feeling of ownership towards the LCs by the community and local authorities.

As the LCs are being accepted and the community is beginning to understand the benefits the female students are getting, requests for similar centres or efforts for their male children are being made by some parents. The parents and the community are now assured that their girl children are getting quality education due to LC's presence. There needs to be more awareness created among the parents and in the community to increase their understanding of the difference in higher education experience among males and females.

At the organisational level, TITAN's perspective of looking beyond the core objectives of the programme and at the beneficiaries beyond the programme's scope has helped IIMPACT become more holistic in its programme design and implementation.

Coherence

The curriculum developed for the LCs stands coherent with the national curriculum and the foundational literacy and numeracy outcomes. This ensures that once the students enter the mainstream education system, they will be able to blend seamlessly into the school system upon completion of the LC levels.

In addition, the LCs' operational hours are different from that of the schools present in the area. The efforts made to ensure that LC's timings do not overlap with that of the primary school have also made the LCs coherent with the village-level academic ecosystem.

It was observed that the timings of the LCs based in Lakhimpur Kheri are colliding with the school timings. The school teacher reported that the students leave the school in order to go to the LC. Since the LCs are supplementing the conventional education system, it needs to be ensured that the LC timings are completely separate from the school timings and that there is no overlap.

Sustainability

The measures taken by the entire programme in terms of stakeholder selection, partner selection and opening of the decision-making sphere across stakeholders have created a model where every stakeholder develops a sense of ownership.

Furthermore, the contributions made by the LCs during times of the pandemic and natural calamities have helped the LCs be a part of the community. This has helped the LCs to be viewed as an asset by the community.

The academic development of the female students by the parents and the community has helped in changing their mindset towards girl child education. Viewing girl child education as a liability has significantly changed in the locations of the Lcs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Inclusion of meals

The students spend up to four hours at the LC and also attend school. The inclusion of nutritional meals or snacks can ensure that the students are able to get some sustenance in this daily routine.

2. Digitalisation

Currently, the teachers provide all the data and the registers maintained to the Supervisor who then enters it into the online MIS. The submissions are done in a hardcopy format which needs to be uploaded. The introduction of digital MIS maintenance right from the teachers' level can help in further reducing the time and streamlining the processes.

3. Uniformity in resources

- 3.1 The infrastructure of the LCs is entirely the community and the Panchayat's responsibility. Though there are some guidelines given, the list of basic requirements can be upgraded for a better facility.
- 3.2 IIMPACT can partially take up responsibilities for the LCs' infrastructure to ensure that the structures provided are adequate for peak weather conditions.

4. Uniformity in data points represented

There needs to be uniformity in the data points and their analysis which is presented in the donor reports. This will aid in mapping the outcomes annually.

5. Increase in capacity

The capacity of the LC can be modified based on the needs identified in the villages. The current strength of 30 students in an LC is not adequate for some locations as eligible students have to wait to enrol till some of the current students complete all the levels.

CONCLUSION

The Titan Kanya programme has been successful in bringing quality primary education to female students aged 6-14 years in remote, rural locations. The programme is strengthened by leveraging local resources and stakeholders which assists in not only the acceptance of the programme but also in creating a programme suitable to the geography entered. The programme design helps tackle the varied issues that are faced in the education of girl children. The scientific approach applied in the creation of the curriculum and the teaching materials addresses the key issue of low understanding of foundational literacy and numeracy. The pedagogy designed to be activity-oriented using colourful learning materials addresses the other issue of female students having low interest in pursuing education.

The active inclusion of parents and community members in the programme brings visibility to the operations. It also creates an opportunity to address the socio-cultural stigmas that are linked to girl child education and thereby create awareness about its importance. A key takeaway from the findings and analysis is that the programme is easy to replicate in varied or the same geographies.

APPENDIX

1. Photos of interaction with stakeholders



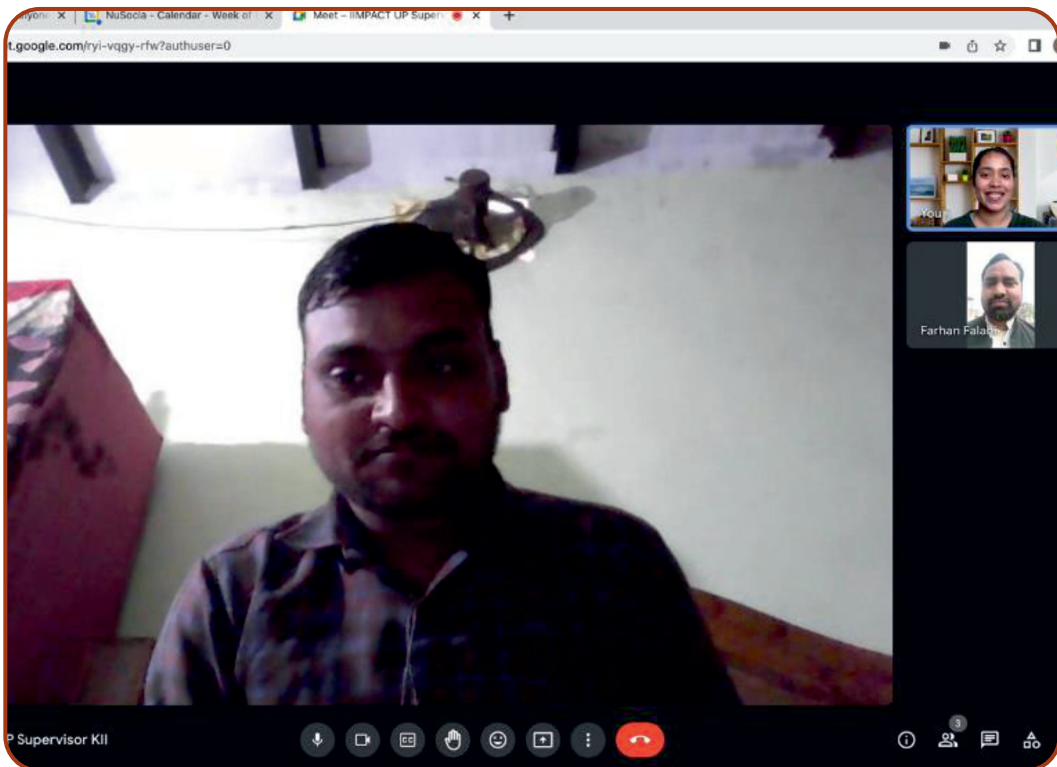
Interaction with the community in Uttarakhand during an FGD



KII of a CMC member in Uttarakhand



Community interactions taking place in West Bengal



Virtual interaction with Supervisor from Uttar Pradesh



Interaction with IIMPACT's Training Officer for Uttarakhand



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