



# INCREASING SYSTEM SYNCHRONISATION IN SOUTH WEST B, DELHI

September 2019

# THE SITUATION

South-West B is one of the largest districts of Delhi National Capital Territory, but it's also one of the most remote, bordering with the state of Haryana. Unlike most of Delhi, the district also contains a significant number of rural schools.

STiR began working in every secondary school in South-West B in 2017 as part of its system-led approach. In partnership with the Delhi government, each school appointed a Teacher Development Coordinator (TDC) who is responsible for supporting the teachers within their school. These TDCs are supported by Mentor Teachers, who provide training and coaching for TDCs, and in turn receive support from Bala, one of STiR's District Leads.

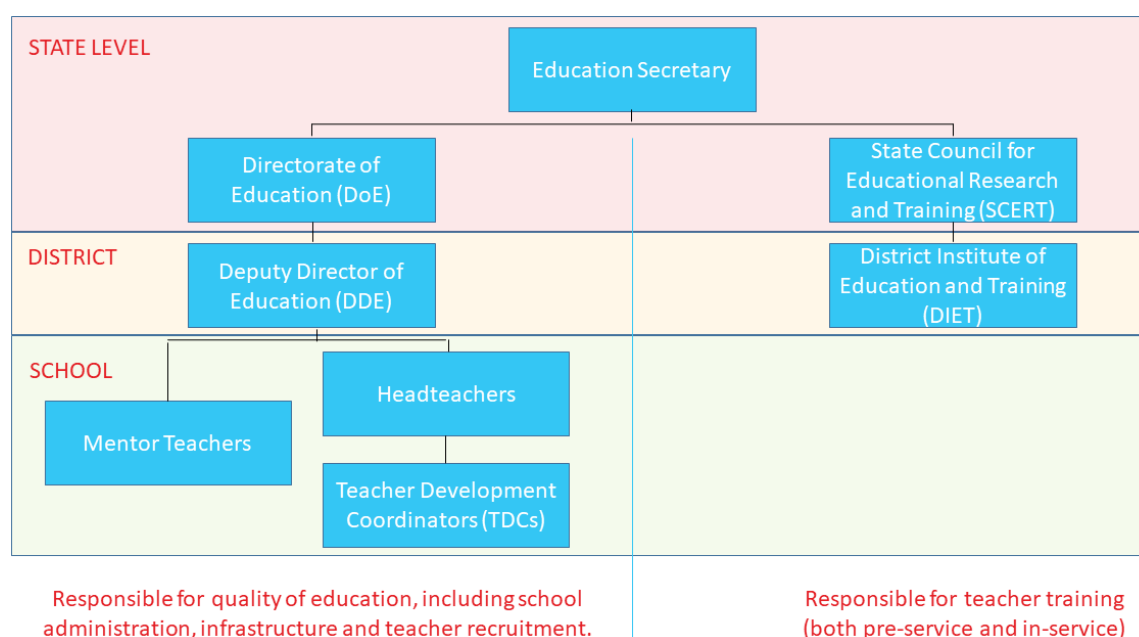
District fact file	
Year STiR started working	2017
# secondary schools	94
# secondary teachers	5,710
# secondary pupils	29,600

At the start of the programme, the Delhi government was making a significant investment in infrastructural upgrades to schools, but there was no culture of academic discourse or sharing best practice among teachers. There was also no culture of appreciation or recognition at any level of the system. In order to address these cultural challenges, we focused our efforts in two main areas:

## INCREASING SYSTEM SYNCHRONISATION

One of the biggest challenges in the early stages of programme implementation was a lack of synchronisation between the different government departments responsible for education in the district: the Directorate of Education (DoE) and Ghumanhera District Institute of Education and Training (DIET). Activities were not coordinated between the two departments, and the DIET was not fully integrated into the school system, as training took place in isolation with no follow-up in schools or further professional development in classrooms.

STiR's TDC programme is delivered primarily in partnership with the DIET. Their officials provide input on design and monitor the quality of implementation through regular school visits and data analysis alongside our team. However, the DDE holds the highest authority within the district and leads on school operations, as all Mentor Teachers and headteachers report into their office; and the two departments do not work closely together.



Although STiR had good buy-in from DIET officials, we needed support from the DDE to ensure that programme activities were able to take place. Mentor Teachers were enthusiastic about the programme, but they were more engaged in administrative work and unable to focus on academic goals. As a result, they could not attend training sessions for TDCs or participate in progress review meetings. Initial efforts to coordinate activities between the two departments were challenging, since the DIET had no mechanism to communicate with Mentor Teachers or TDCs directly, as this needed to go through the DoE. Building engagement from the DDE and ensuring alignment with DIET activities was therefore a key priority in the first two years of the programme.

## CHANGING THE NARRATIVE AROUND TEACHERS

The district also had a negative view of teachers. System officials used only extrinsic motivation approaches to monitor and review teacher performance. Although teachers were working hard, their efforts were rarely recognised; in fact, if results improved the credit was often given to senior system officials, but if results declined teachers were blamed for the poor performance. Changing the professional mindsets and behaviours of these officials was also important if we were going to build the motivation of teachers, TDCs and Mentor Teachers.

# OUR APPROACH

## BUILDING ENGAGEMENT WITH THE PROGRAMME

A core element of our strategy was to work much more closely with senior officials in both departments. After every school visit completed by Bala, he shared his insights with the DDE, and followed up on these reflections in visits to their office. In the beginning, it was difficult to build rapport, as they rarely made themselves available to meet with our District Lead. But Bala persevered and continued to share insights, and after a few months, he received a call from the DDE who had read the latest note and wanted to attend a school visit to learn more about what was happening in the schools. Bala organised a visit for the DDE to meet with teachers, the headteacher and the TDC, and arranged for some DIET officials to join the visit too. This made a significant difference in building their understanding of the programme and its objectives, and helped to build links between the two departments. It also had a knock-on effect for the motivation of teachers and TDCs, who felt more valued by the attendance and interest of these senior system officials.

## ESTABLISHING LINKS BETWEEN DEPARTMENTS

Once Bala had established more regular meetings with the DDE, he started to ask some TDCs to attend this meeting with him to deepen their connection with the programme by learning about the activities taking place in schools. He also encouraged the DIET Principal to start sharing their own insights with the DDE. After some time, the DDE agreed to attend more programme activities and play a more active role in improvements.



Bala also established forums for information sharing between the different departments. District progress check meetings were introduced every month for the DIET officials and Mentor Teachers to share their thoughts and reflections, and the DDE now attends some of these meetings too. As a result of these meetings, the DIET have conducted some additional capacity-building training sessions for Mentor Teachers to improve their coaching, and by encouraging them to use a rubric for their sessions with TDCs. This has led to an improvement in the quality of network meetings, as TDCs respond to high quality feedback and make changes to their practice.

## SIGNS OF SUCCESS

The quality of the programme across South-West B is now in line with the expected progress for this point in the partnership. The DIET and the DDE have agreed a common action plan, and now have much greater clarity about the expectations from their roles for achieving programme success. They are now frequently visiting schools without prompting from Bala, and this is filtering through the system, with headteachers now taking a much greater interest in the network meetings in their schools. Teacher attendance and engagement in these meetings has also improved, and they continue to share their learning and insights in daily 30-minute sessions in between the meetings.



Our priorities for the next year are as follows:

- To strengthen the level of 'ownership' from senior district officials – the DDE and DIET Principal are now engaging well with the programme, but we want to see them taking more of a lead in implementation.
- To refine and refresh the role of Mentor Teachers in leading teacher development, allowing them to focus more of their time on the key skills of facilitation, observation, coaching and feedback.

### ACADEMIC YEAR DATA

95% of expected coaching sessions for Mentor Teachers took place (up from 70% at the start of the year)

90% of expected network meetings took place (up from 70%)

84% of teachers were observed trying new practices in their classrooms (up from 63%)

### TESTIMONIALS

*"The TDC programme has a unique focus on the alignment between different wings of the education ecosystem. The emphasis on connections, which have continued through the programme, has led to a visible positive change in student motivation."*

Dr. Dinesh Kumar, Principal, Ghumanhera District Institute of Education and Training

*"This programme has helped to build connections between students and teachers, teachers and teachers, and teachers and parents. Some of the strategies such as mind-mapping and retrieval practices are clearly visible in the classroom. The TDC programme is bringing a lot of change in our schools, and everyone is accountable for their roles and responsibilities in ensuring that schools are good learning organisations."*

Dr. Meena Sherawat, Facilitator, Ghumanhera District Institute of Education and Training

*"The TDC programme is giving teachers the opportunity to think innovatively. Classes are more interesting and learning is better than ever before."*

Garuv Kumar, Mentor Teacher, Ghumanhera District Institute of Education and Training