

# END LINE REPORT – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Monitoring and Evaluation of the Competency-Based Education-CBSE Project

Submitted by Ecctis to the British Council India

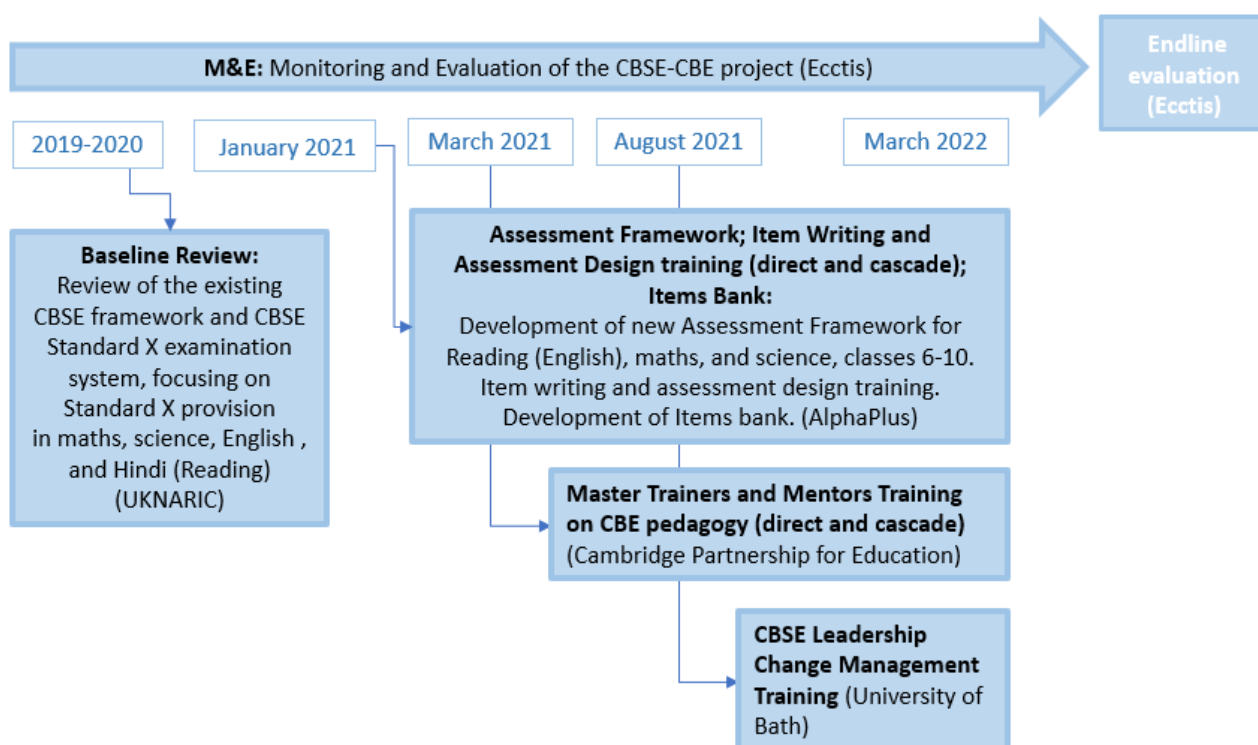
July 2022

## Project Aims and Context

Ecctis was commissioned by the British Council India to conduct a monitoring and evaluation (M & E) review of the CBSE-CBE project, a multi-phased project aimed at strengthening the capacity of the Indian education system to deliver high-quality competency-based education (CBE). Working closely with the Central Board of Secondary Education in India (CBSE), the project sought to improve learning and assessment of science, maths and English (reading) at secondary school level (classes 6 to 10), by ensuring that:

- CBSE teachers are trained and empowered to deliver high-quality CBE lessons in English (reading), maths and science, classes 6-10 (**Outcome 1 – Teaching focus**)
- CBSE affiliated schools have the tools and resources to develop teachers' skills in designing CBE assessments and test items (**Outcome 2 – Assessment focus**)
- CBSE leaders have a clear understanding of the process for improvement of education standards in line with CBE principles and support schools in that process (**Outcome 3 – System / Leadership focus**).

This report was designed to provide an end line evaluation of the project (see figure below for the project's timeline).



## M & E Methodology

To conduct the evaluation, a mixed-methods approach was deployed to ascertain the compatibility of project outputs with CBE best practice. This approach combined stakeholder engagement and an independent review informed by OECD DAC criteria (relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability).<sup>1</sup> The main project outputs

<sup>1</sup> OECD DAC Network of Development, 'Evaluation Criteria', available at: [www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm](http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm), accessed 06/05/2022

reviewed included: the Assessment Framework,<sup>2</sup> the Items Bank, the trainings on item writing, assessment design, CBE master training, CBE mentorship, CBE pedagogy and change management in educational systems.

## Key Findings

Ecctis' mixed-methods evaluation found that:

1. **Project implementation:** all project activities were successfully finalised by March 2022, with the project being positively perceived by the majority of those involved.
2. **Gender and Inclusion (G&I):** gender and socioeconomic neutrality was observed across project outputs, though there is further scope for proactive promotion of equity and inclusivity. A demographic tilt in participation towards female, urban, and private unaided schoolteachers was observed in most trainings and Open Day events.
3. **The Assessment Framework:** the framework embedded CBE principles to a good extent, though further guidance could be provided on demand, synoptic and interdisciplinary assessment, promotion of equity and inclusivity, adjustments for students with learning difficulties, and quality assurance.
4. **The CBE and Assessment trainings:** the training content embedded CBE principles to a good extent and a good level of attendance was observed for all trainings. However, some gaps in training retention were found, which may need to be addressed through follow-up training and/or further guidance. Some training accessibility issues were reported, which may be addressed in future through further accessibility considerations during pre-training planning.
5. **The Item Bank:** the sample of item bank items reviewed only embedded some CBE principles to a reasonable extent. To further increase CBE embeddedness, the establishment of quality assurance processes and further training/guidance is recommended to address issues of validity, reliability and accessibility; promote equity and inclusivity; and increase the presence of higher-order thinking skills, real-world relevance, synopticity and interdisciplinarity in assessment.
6. **Open Day Events:** these were well attended, with some accessibility issues being reported by survey respondents. Further dissemination of project resources and training may be beneficial, as nearly one third of survey respondents reported not knowing how to access the project's outputs (i.e. the Items Bank and Assessment Framework), and 64% expressed an interest in receiving training/further training on aspects of CBE.
7. **The Change Management Leadership training:** this was generally relevant, helpful, and impactful, and senior stakeholders were found to have a good level of knowledge of the CBSE-CBE project. However, more context-specificity in the training sessions and materials (including explicit reference to CBE implementation in India) and

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<sup>2</sup> British Council and AlphaPlus (2021), 'A suggested assessment framework for CBSE science, mathematics and English for classes 6 to 10'. Available at [https://www.britishcouncil.in/sites/default/files/cbse\\_assessment\\_framework\\_for\\_science\\_maths\\_and\\_english\\_of\\_classes\\_6-10.pdf](https://www.britishcouncil.in/sites/default/files/cbse_assessment_framework_for_science_maths_and_english_of_classes_6-10.pdf).

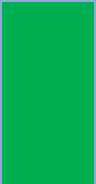



continued post-training activities and interaction would have enhanced its relevance and impact further.

## Conclusion on Project Implementation and CBE Embeddedness

Based on the results and findings from this end line review, the table below provides a top-level assessment of the extent to which each of the project's outcomes has been achieved:

Focus	Outcome	Output
Teaching/lesson plan focus	Outcome 1	CBSE teachers are trained and empowered to deliver high-quality lessons in English (reading), maths and science, classes 6-10, that support the development of competencies in students
Assessment focus	Outcome 2	CBSE affiliated schools have the tools and resources to develop subject-specific (English [reading], maths and science) competencies and skills in teachers to design competency-based assessments and test items
System / leadership focus	Outcome 3	CBSE leaders have a clear understanding of the process for improvement of education standards in line with CBE principles and support schools in that process

Key:

	<i>All/the majority of outputs fully achieved / achieved to an outstanding standard</i>		<i>Most outputs achieved to a good quality standard, with some room for improvement</i>		<i>Achievement of some outputs to a medium quality standard</i>		<i>Low number of outputs achieved (i.e. few to none) / outputs inappropriate or of low quality</i>
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Overall, the CBSE-CBE project was successful in completing all its project outputs to a good standard of quality.

Focus	Outcome	Output	Indicator
Teaching/lesson plan focus	Outcome 1	1.1 A clear reference point (i.e., assessment framework and lesson plans bank) for CBE teaching and the design of lessons is established	1.1.1 Degree to which the competency-based assessment framework reflects CBE principles and appropriately informs the development of lesson plans
			1.1.1.1 Degree of gender and socioeconomic neutrality/bias in the competency-based assessment framework
		1.2 Teacher capacity for CBE teaching and knowledge of CBE pedagogies is increased	1.2.1 Number of teachers attending CBE teaching and learning pedagogies training (cascade trainings included)
			1.1.1.1 Degree of gender and socioeconomic neutrality/bias in CBE teaching and learning pedagogies training and training materials
Focus	Outcome	Output	Indicator
Assessment focus	Outcome 2	2.1 Teacher capacity for creating CBE assessment items is increased	2.1.1 Number of participants attending training
			2.1.1.1 Degree of gender and socioeconomic neutrality/bias in item writing training materials
		2.2 Teacher expertise in holistic CBE assessment development	2.1.2 Number of trained participants demonstrating knowledge and technical ability to produce appropriate CBE test items
			2.2.1 Number of participants attending training

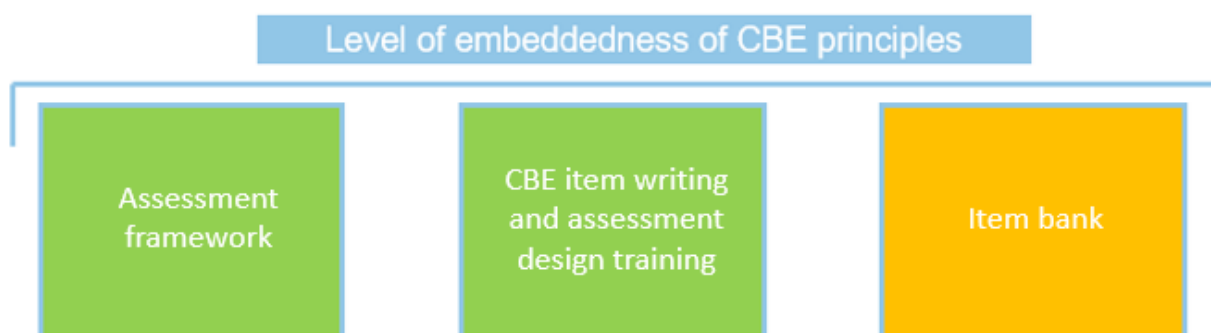
		(i.e., assessment papers) is increased	2.2.1.1 Degree of gender and socioeconomic neutrality in item writing training and training materials
			2.2.2 Percentage of trained assessment developers demonstrating knowledge and technical ability to develop holistic CBE assessment papers
		2.3 A clear reference point for the design of assessment (specifications, items, assessment objectives) is established	2.3.1 Degree to which the competency-based assessment framework appropriately informs the development of CBE assessment
		2.4. A bank of good practice item exemplars is developed and made accessible for maths, science, and English (reading) across classes 6-10 # of good quality CBE items created	2.4.1 Number of good quality CBE items created
			2.4.1.1 Degree of gender and socioeconomic neutrality/bias in CBE items bank
			2.4.2 Percentage of teachers aware of and with access to the items/assessment exemplars
Focus	Outcome	Output	Indicator
System / leadership focus	Outcome 3	3.1 Key stakeholders (CBSE Senior Leadership, school leadership) are aware of the programme aims and have increased capacity to support the transition	3.1.1 Number of CBSE Senior Leaders attending Change Management Leadership training
			3.1.2 Extent to which CBSE Senior Leadership understand and can express core principles / CBSE objectives / programme aims and activities
			3.1.3 Number of school leaders attending programme orientation seminars

Key:

	Fully achieved / achieved to an outstanding standard		Achieved to a good quality standard, with some room for improvement		Achieved to a medium quality standard		Not achieved / achieved to a low-quality standard
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### CBE Embeddedness

The diagram below summarises the level of embeddedness of CBE principles across three of the main outputs looked at in this review – the assessment framework, the training on item writing and assessment design, and the items bank.



Key:

	Embeds all CBE principles well		Embeds most CBE principles well		Embeds CBE principles only to some extent		Fell significantly short of embedding CBE principles
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The level of embeddedness varied per output, with the application of CBE principles being less visible in the reviewed sample of items from the Items Bank than in the Assessment Framework, and Item Writing and Assessment Design trainings. To address this, Ecctis recommends the establishment of an active semi-structured community of practice to:

- Safeguard the quality of CBE resources by undertaking relevant quality assurance processes (e.g. review of items against CBE principles before publishing);
- Promote continuing professional development of all actors involved in assessment development by sharing additional resources (e.g. follow-up online training, additional guidance) and examples of best practice (e.g. additional sample items reflecting less embedded CBE principles, such as interdisciplinarity and synopticity).

Overall, this review found evidence of a good level of CBE embeddedness in project outputs, a high level of responsiveness to issues raised at midline, and some areas of outstanding achievement. Likewise, the review also found aspects that would require more focussed attention in future initiatives to develop outstanding achievement across the board and solidify the gains, maximising project impact and sustainability. Detailed suggestions on how to do so can be found on Section 9. Key Findings and Recommendations of the report, which offers 33 recommendations focussed on enhancing system-wide CBE implementation, improving inclusion and accessibility, and guaranteeing the quality of future training, guidance and resources. These include:

### **System-level**

- Creating, and communicating to teachers, a clear roadmap for CBE implementation in the country, including strategies to change traditional mindsets, tackle resource challenges, and ensure curriculum alignment with CBE
- Establishing and maintaining quality assurance processes to safeguard the quality of CBE training and guidance materials
- Establishing a vibrant community of teachers and education professionals to disseminate best practices
- Investing in wider dissemination of CBE resources within the CBSE system

### **G&I**

- Embedding G&I considerations in the design of future initiatives and project outputs, including training and guidance materials, to tackle accessibility challenges and actively promote inclusion

### **Training**

- Ensuring that all CBSE teachers are trained on CBE and providing further CBE guidance and training to teachers, item writers, and assessment designers to strengthen CBE knowledge within the system
- Taking action to increase attendance and enhance participation in CBE training and events, particularly by participants from underrepresented demographic groups (i.e. male, rural, and non-private unaided school participants)
- Further contextualising training and guidance to reflect the appropriate local context, as well as subject- and class-specificity
- Conducting baseline assessments prior to training and carrying out post-training assessments