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GOVERNMENT OF MAHARASHTRA

# TATA TRUSTS



## Technology enabled education through joint action and strategic initiatives

# TEJAS



# PARTNERING TO TRANSFORM EDUCATION

With advances in pedagogy and technology, and the demands of a changing learning environment, supporting teachers through innovative programmes for professional development is more important than ever.

The National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE) 2009/10<sup>1</sup> recommends 'creating spaces for sharing of experiences of communities of teachers among themselves.'



Keeping this principle in mind, the Government of Maharashtra, Tata Trusts and the British Council developed the TEJAS project, a three year pilot project across schools in nine<sup>2</sup> districts of Maharashtra. The goals of TEJAS are in line with the shared vision and objective of all three organisations to bring about systemic change in the quality of the teaching and learning of English in Maharashtra.

TEJAS AIMS TO PLAY AN ENABLING ROLE IN THE HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE 18,000 PARTICIPATING TEACHERS.

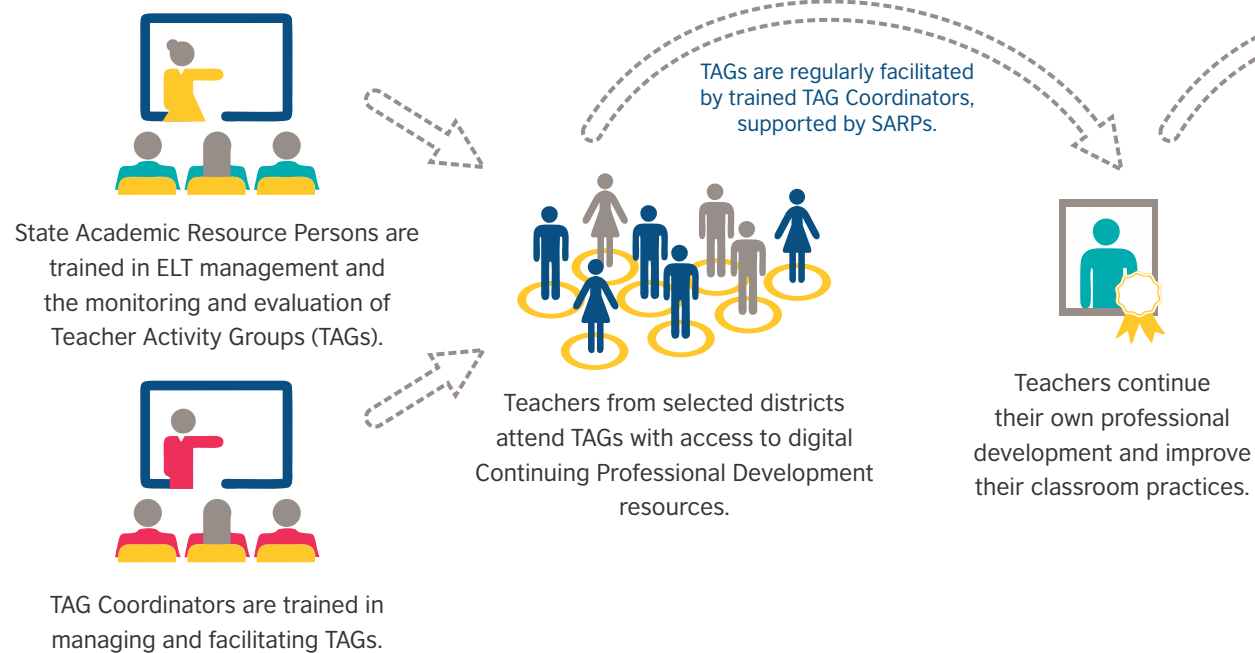
Under the TEJAS initiative, teachers form face-to-face and digital communities of practice in their local areas which enables them to develop their language ability, teaching skills, knowledge and experience. TEJAS also aims to revitalise the State Institute of English (SIE), Aurangabad so that it is equipped to independently plan, manage and support English training initiatives across the state.

<sup>1</sup> [http://ncte-india.org/ncte\\_new/pdf/NCFTE\\_2010.pdf](http://ncte-india.org/ncte_new/pdf/NCFTE_2010.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Amravati, Aurangabad, Beed, Gadchiroli, Hingoli, Nagpur, Nandurbar, Nashik and Yavatmal

# THE THEORY OF CHANGE

In order to achieve the dual objectives of improving the quality of teaching in schools and building the capacity of the SIE, the programme provides a framework that enables the professional development of teachers. Within this framework, the mechanism for the support and monitoring of teacher activities during the pilot phase aims to improve the capabilities of the state machinery. Institutionalisation of the different elements to enable independent implementation of the programme is another important aspect of the process.

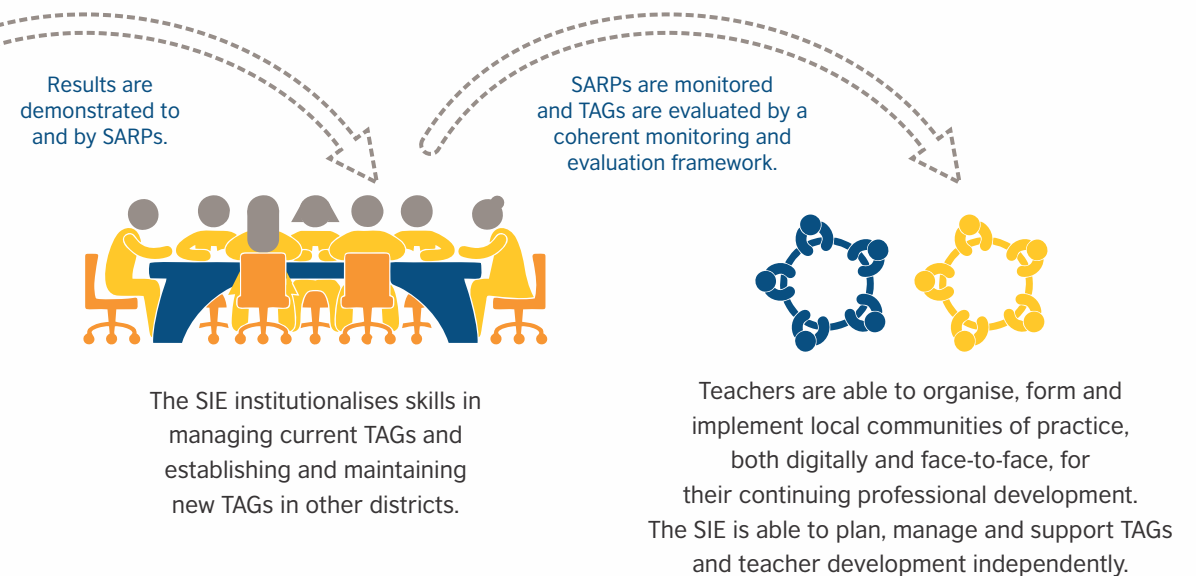


**Abbreviations**  
 TAG: Teacher Activity Group  
 ELT: English Language Training  
 SIE: State Institute of English  
 SARP: State Academic Resource Person

## TEJAS VISION



A fully functioning, equipped and resourced SIE plans, manages and supports teachers in their training and development. Teachers form face-to-face and digital communities of practice through TAGs in their local areas which enables them to develop their language learning and teaching skills, knowledge and experience. This results in more motivated teachers who take part in a culture of sharing and learning, which results in improved quality of teaching and learning in the classroom.





# THE TEJAS PROJECT MODEL



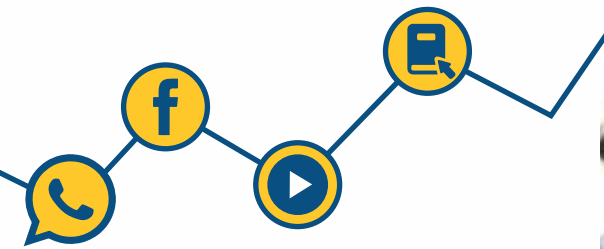
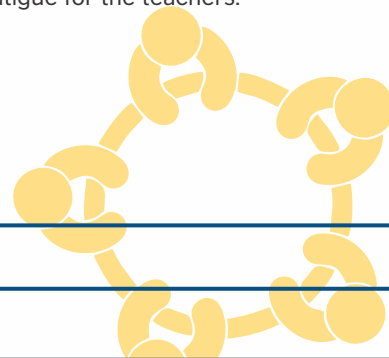
TEJAS focuses on a collaborative approach enabled by digital support. This takes into account the directive issued by the Government of Maharashtra to steer clear of the traditional models of training for teachers in favour of a programme based on teacher demand and with digital elements.

## COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

TEJAS puts the teacher at the centre of his or her own development. At the cluster level, TAGs consist of a group of primary school teachers. These teachers meet once a month to learn new ideas and teaching techniques, share experiences and lend learning support to each other through discussion and interaction. These meetings are meant to serve as a platform for peer-to-peer learning wherein active participation of teachers is key. There is no formal trainer present; instead one of the teachers from the group is selected to be a facilitator. This idea of forming communities of practice is at the heart of TEJAS.

## BASED ON LOCAL NEEDS

In every TAG meeting, the teachers can pick a topic for discussion from the TAG Resource Book. The decision is collaborative and is based on the requirements of the group. This ensures that their learning is not merely academic but can have an actual and immediate impact on their classroom teaching. Another advantage of this programme mechanism is that it is less likely to lead to training fatigue for the teachers.



## DIGITAL LEARNING

The learning effort of the teachers in the TAGs is supported by appropriate digital tools. To enable a better grasp of teaching concepts discussed in the TAG sessions, several topics are covered using video content. The collaborative approach also extends to the digital medium. WhatsApp groups and Facebook communities are used to encourage sharing of experiences, learning and best practices. Self-access and e-moderated courses have also been embedded in the project.

## CAPACITY BUILDING

While the TAG Coordinators facilitate the TAG sessions, the Kendra Pramukhs are responsible for arranging the TAG meetings in their respective areas. A core group from the SIE is trained in project management, and in the monitoring and evaluation of the TAGs. This group assumes responsibility for the progress made by the teachers. By demonstrating its ability to establish, support and manage TAGs, the SIE will build its capacity to independently implement English subject training across the state.



## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

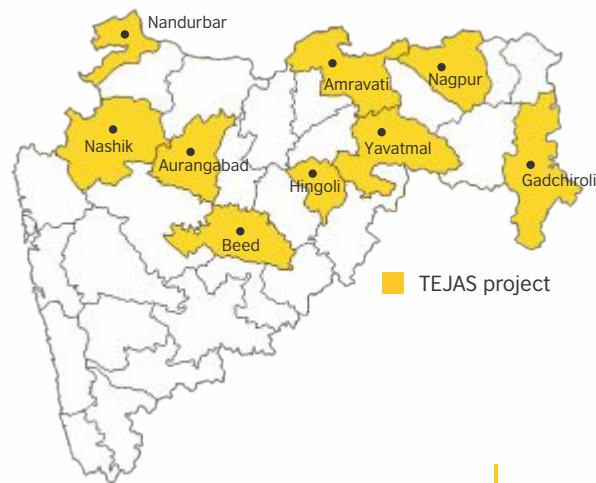
The success of TEJAS will be measured based on three key aspects – participant engagement, evidence of participant learning and participant application of practice in the classroom. Baseline, midline and endline data will be collected for detailed analysis using classroom observations and focus group discussions. The day-to-day monitoring of the project is undertaken by the TAG Coordinators and the State Academic Resource Persons (SARPs).

## SCALING UP

TEJAS will initially be conducted as a pilot project in nine districts across Maharashtra. These areas represent a cross-section of urban, semi-urban and rural areas. As a result, the different contexts will help the project provide a stronger proof of concept. Once the initial phase is successfully completed, the project will be scaled up to include the rest of the state.

# TEJAS IN NUMBERS

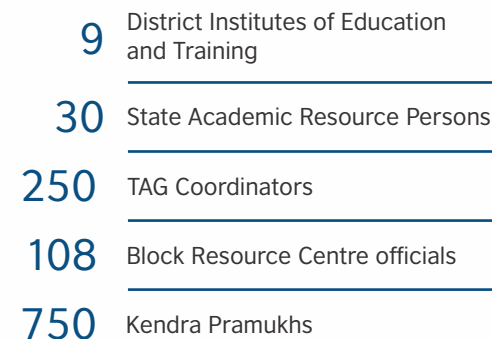
Because of its nature, scope and scale, TEJAS is an ambitious project that can have far-reaching impact.



## DIGITAL SUPPORT



## INVOLVEMENT OF GOVERNMENT INFRASTRUCTURE



18,000 teachers  
will participate



750 Teacher  
Activity Groups  
will be formed

TEJAS is the **first** time that a state government is institutionalising the establishment of communities of practice on such a large scale.

# TEJAS SPEAKS

"The Government of Maharashtra is committed to creating a quality circle of dedicated and creative teachers by inculcating the habit of self-learning amongst teachers. TEJAS is a step forward in this direction where technology and demand driven training join hands to enhance the levels of teachers in Maharashtra."

**Mr. NandKumar,**  
Principal Secretary School Education  
and Sports, Government of Maharashtra

"The Education portfolio of Tata Trusts is based on the life cycle approach with a focus on ensuring quality and equity. The Trusts' initiatives address educational needs of all children by working with teachers and schools, along with systems strengthening and community participation. Guided by the principles of its founder, Jamsetji Tata and through his vision of proactive philanthropy, Tata Trusts catalyse societal development while ensuring that initiatives and interventions have a contemporary relevance. In today's world, while recognising the role of the mother tongue in ensuring that concepts are understood, English is valued as the connect, both, to a vast pool of knowledge as well as opportunities in the workplace. By integrating technology, the TEJAS initiative has been designed in this spirit to strengthen the teachers in Maharashtra."

**Ms. Tara Sabavala,**  
Associate Director, Tata Trusts

"At the British Council we want to see sustainable and systemic change in the education system. With our partners in Maharashtra we have developed TEJAS, a professional development project which uses technology to build strong local communities of practice. We believe TEJAS will help people achieve more for themselves and their communities by raising the level of English in schools and we are immensely proud to be involved."

**Ms. Sharon Memis,**  
Director West India, British Council

"TEJAS is launched for self-help, peer support and capacity building. It helps one to be independent and at the same time encourages one to be respectful of each other's opinions."

**Mr. Santosh Gaikwad,**  
State Academic Resource Person

"TEJAS is a flagship project to empower teachers in Maharashtra to enhance their teaching skills and achieve continuing professional development through the sharing of ideas and use of technology."

**Dr. Subhash Kamble,**  
Director, State Institute of English,  
Aurangabad

"TEJAS will play a vital role in making teachers and learners confident in using English. It will be a real gateway to learning English in a fun way for both teachers and learners."

**Mr. Nitin Gabale,**  
TAG Coordinator, Aurangabad

# PROGRAMME FAQS



## 1. What is SIE?

SIE is the State Institute of English. Located in Aurangabad, it is the apex body for all English language teaching and training initiatives in Maharashtra.

## 2. What is a TAG?

TAG stands for Teacher Activity Group. 20-25 teachers from each cluster meet once a month to discuss and share teaching and learning ideas, methods and techniques.

## 3. How is a TAG different from training?

In a TAG, teachers themselves choose which areas of development they want to focus on based on their needs in their local contexts. In a TAG, all participants are peers. There is no trainer. Instead there is a facilitator who guides the discussion and encourages all participants to contribute and share their ideas. As TAGs take place monthly, they enable teachers to take charge of their professional development on an ongoing basis. Teachers keep in touch with each other during the month through social media and share their learning, successes and challenges with each other. Teachers draw up an action plan in each TAG and report what they tried out in their lessons.



## 4. How does this project link to the educational goals of the Government of Maharashtra?

This project is designed as per the guidelines of the Pragat Shaikshanik Government Resolution and aims at realising the government's vision to create a quality circle of dedicated, committed and creative teachers by inculcating the habit of self-learning. This is done through a technology based support system and demand driven training.

## 5. What are the responsibilities of Kendra Pramukhs?

Kendra Pramukhs will be responsible for setting up the venue for TAG meetings, ensuring and keeping the attendance of teachers in the TAGs and reporting attendance to the SIE on a monthly basis.

## 6. What are the responsibilities of the Block Resource Centre (BRC) officials?

The BRC officials will ensure the smooth rollout of TAGs in their blocks, ease administrative road blocks, if any, in conducting the TAGs and encourage teachers to participate in the TAGs.

## 7. Who and what is a SARP?

SARP stands for State Academic Resource Person. SARPs form the core academic team of the SIE which includes 30 members. There are seven SARPs based at the SIE in Aurangabad and the other 23 are based across the state of Maharashtra.

## 8. Who is a TAG Coordinator and what is his/her role?

TAG Coordinators were jointly selected by the British Council and the SIE to facilitate TAGs. Each TAG Coordinator is responsible for three TAGs in his/her district and reports their overall progress to the SIE on a monthly basis.

## 9. Who is a TAG Facilitator and what is his/her role?

TAG Coordinators will nominate a teacher with good facilitation skills, academic knowledge, motivation and enthusiasm to facilitate one TAG in the cluster. Each TAG Facilitator will report the progress of his/her TAG to the TAG Coordinator.

## 10. What happens if a TAG is not organised in a particular location?

TAG Coordinators and Kendra Pramukhs (KPs) will report this to the SIE which will take the necessary steps to resume the TAG.

## 11. What is the Book of Learning?

The Book of Learning will capture the learnings and achievements of TEJAS over three years through stories and pictures of key stakeholders including learners, teachers, TAG Coordinators, SARPs and officials. It will focus on what changes have taken place and why these changes are important.

## 12. How are Tata Trusts and the British Council involved in this project?

Tata Trusts is amongst India's oldest, non-sectarian philanthropic organisations that works in several areas of community development. In the education sector, Tata Trusts aim to improve access of underprivileged children and adolescents to quality education, while addressing concerns of equity and by using technology as an enabler. The British Council believes in an evidence-driven, innovative and solution-oriented approach to English language teacher education and development that brings about systemic transformation in the quality of English language teaching and learning. TEJAS is a culmination of these objectives and the government's bold intent in the form of the Pragat Shikshan Government Resolution.

