

LiftEd EdTech Accelerator

Impact of Acceleration Study 2024



Founding Partners



UBS Optimus Foundation



Programme Leader

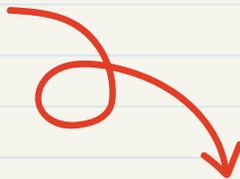


Design and Technical Partner





Table of Contents



	Acknowledgements	4
1	Background	5
	1.1 Introduction	5
	1.2 Inclusive EdTech for Foundational Learning	5
	1.3 LiftEd EdTech Accelerator	6
2	Impact of Acceleration (IoA) Study	9
	2.1 Description of the Study	9
	2.2 Accelerator-level Theory of Change (ToC)	9
	2.3 Study Design Process of IoA	10
3	Accelerator-level Findings	12
	3.1 Onboarding	12
	3.2 Thought Partnership	13
	3.3 Financial Support	14
	3.4 Mentorship	15
	3.5 Capacity Building	16
	3.6 Integrated Outcomes	18
	3.7 Future Areas of Focus	20
4	Annexure	22
	4.1 Description of Knowledge Products and Process of Creation	22
	4.1.1 Partner-level Knowledge Products	22
	4.1.2 Accelerator-level ToC	24
	4.2 IoA Enquiry Framework	25
5	Bibliography	26

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We hope the study findings will help stakeholders gain a well rounded understanding of the nature of support required to catalyse EdTech initiatives in Bharat and inform future interventions.

In deep gratitude,
Central Square Foundation

1

Background

1.1 Introduction

Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) — the ability to read, write, comprehend and perform basic mathematical operations by the end of Grade 3 — is the cornerstone of lifelong learning.^{1, 2, 3, 4} In India, significant learning deficits emerge early, particularly among children aged 4 to 8. Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) data over the past decade consistently highlights low foundational learning levels, exacerbating challenges as children progress through school, finding it increasingly difficult to grasp what is being taught in later grades. In 2022, only 21% of Grade 3 students could read a Grade 2-level text, and merely 26% could perform basic subtraction.⁵

To tackle these challenges, the Government of India has introduced multiple initiatives. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 conceptualises FLN as a five-year continuum (three years of pre-school plus Grades 1 and 2) and emphasises measures such as revised curricula, technology integration and teacher capacity-building.⁶ The National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy (NIPUN Bharat) launched in July 2021, sets ambitious FLN targets for preschool to Grade 3 by 2026-27. Similarly, the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) Reading Mission (2021) provides Hindi and English reading materials to enhance comprehension skills in CBSE schools.⁷ Complementary programmes include the National Curriculum Framework for Foundational Stage (2022) and Jaadui Pitaara (2023), a repository of teaching materials in 13 regional languages. Progress is monitored through the National Achievement Survey (NAS) and Foundational Learning Survey (FLS), which evaluate FLN outcomes. Further, budget allocations for education under Samagra Shiksha have increased steadily from ₹31,050 crores (~4200 million USD) in FY 2021-22 to an estimated ₹37,500 crores (~4500 million USD) in FY 2024-25.⁸

Concurrent to the central government initiatives, state governments, in collaboration with private partners and civil society organisations, have implemented tailored initiatives to bridge learning gaps.

1.2 Inclusive EdTech for Foundational Learning

Educational technology (EdTech) harnesses the power of technology to enhance teaching and learning, both in classrooms and at home. It offers innovative solutions to address critical educational challenges, such as varying teacher quality, diverse learning levels in classrooms and limited student access to quality instructional resources. By empowering teachers with tools for effective pedagogy and enabling parents to support their children with interactive

1 Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India. (2020). [National Education Policy 2020](#)

2 Institute for Competitiveness. (n.d.). [State of Foundational Literacy and Numeracy in India](#)

3 Ministry of Education, Government of India. (n.d.). [About Foundation Literacy and Numeracy](#)

4 Sinha, A (2023). [Maximising India's demographic dividend through foundational literacy and numeracy](#) *Hindustan Times*

5 Annual Status of Education Report (ASER). (2022). [ASER 2022 National Findings](#)

6 Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India. (2020). [National Education Policy 2020](#)

7 Storyweaver (n.d.). [CBSE Reading Mission](#)

8 The Hindu. (2024). [Budget 2024: PM Poshan, Samagra Shiksha allocations much lower than pre-pandemic years](#)

resources and progress tracking, EdTech may have the potential to transform learning outcomes when designed with high-quality, pedagogically sound principles.

Ensuring access to digital infrastructure for children from low-income households is becoming increasingly achievable. A recent study indicates that 72% children from low-income households have access to a shared device, with no variation observed by gender.⁹ Additionally, 74% children spend more than 30 minutes daily on their parents' phones.¹⁰ Data from the ASER 2022 shows that smartphone ownership in rural India more than doubled (from 36% to 75%) between 2018 and 2022.¹¹ The report further revealed that over 95% of rural households now have a mobile phone, 75% have a smartphone, and of these, almost 90% households had internet available on the day of the survey. This widespread smartphone access opens up significant opportunities for leveraging EdTech solutions to improve learning outcomes and bridge educational gaps.

Current EdTech solutions are being built primarily for middle-income and high-income India, with most content in English, contextually unconnected and the subscription costs being out of reach of the low-income segment.

There is emerging evidence on the use of EdTech for supporting learning at home globally. The Global Learning XPRIZE Competition, launched in 2014, incentivised teams from around the world to create open sourced, scalable software that empowers children to achieve foundational learning skills and saw learning gains for both literacy and numeracy across competing solutions.¹² Similarly, Angrist, Bergman, and Matsheng provide experimental evidence on strategies to support learning when schools close.¹³ Using a randomised control design, they tested two low-technology interventions in Botswana – SMS messages and phone calls – with parents to support their child's learning and found that combined treatment improves learning by 0.12 standard deviations. This translates to 0.89 standard deviations of learning per USD 100, ranking among the most cost-effective interventions to improve learning.

To unlock EdTech's transformative potential, especially for low-income communities, it is essential to design inclusive solutions that address foundational learning challenges and generate actionable evidence on their effectiveness. Bridging these gaps will ensure EdTech becomes a critical lever for equitable and impactful education in India. It was with this objective that the **LiftEd EdTech Accelerator** was set up.

1.3 LiftEd EdTech Accelerator

To bridge the aforementioned gaps and to leverage the opportunity that India has, a consortium of non-profit and philanthropic organisations set up a [LiftEd EdTech Accelerator](#), a two-year initiative from April 2023-25, to support foundational learning of children using EdTech. **The Accelerator aims to support the NIPUN Bharat mission to significantly shape the future of tech-based learning at home for foundational literacy and numeracy in India by reaching 2.5 million children by 2025.**

The LiftEd EdTech Accelerator is anchored by [Michael & Susan Dell Foundation](#), [Reliance Foundation](#) and [UBS Optimus Foundation](#) as Founding Partners, the [British Asian Trust](#) as the Programme Leader and [Central Square Foundation](#) as the Design and Technical Partner.

9 Central Square Foundation. (2023). [Bharat Survey for EdTech \(BaSE\) Report 2023](#)

10 Central Square Foundation. (2023). [Bharat Survey for EdTech \(BaSE\) Report 2023](#)

11 Annual Status of Education Report (ASER). (2022). [Annual Status of Education Report \(Rural\) 2022](#)

12 Global Learning X Prize. (n.d.). [Global Learning X Prize: Executive Summary](#)

13 Angrist, N., Bergman, P. & Matsheng, M. (2022). [Experimental evidence on learning using low-tech when school is out](#) *Nature Human Behaviour*, 6, 941-950

The Accelerator aims to catalyse the supply of contextually relevant and pedagogically sound learning solutions, generate compelling evidence on their efficacy, work with state governments to enhance the efficacy of EdTech adoption and create public goods to address systemic challenges in the ecosystem.

The Accelerator aims to support eight high-quality EdTech solutions for two years through impact-focused grant funding, dedicated mentorship and capacity-building support to unlock the full potential of the EdTech solutions. The solutions were onboarded into three cohorts, each addressing key challenges in the Indian EdTech ecosystem. The cohorts focused on:

- 1) **Scale** – products looking to discover and unlock new pathways to scale - [ThinkZone](#)
- 2) **Engagement** – products seeking strategies to deepen engagement with the users - [Chimple](#), [Ei Mindspark](#), [Pratham](#), [Rocket Learning](#), [Top Parent](#)
- 3) **Product Contextualisation** – products developing pedagogically sound and contextually relevant solutions specifically for low-income India - [Amira Learning](#) and [Sesame Workshop India \(SWI\)](#)

On the demand side, the Accelerator focuses on driving the adoption and institutionalisation of tech- based home learning for FLN within state governments, while also exploring innovative pathways for EdTech integration through partnerships with retail channels, such as gig economy organisations and self-help groups (SHGs).

To tackle the challenge of limited existing evidence on ‘what works’ in EdTech and to allow for ongoing innovation and progress, the Accelerator’s evidence generation agenda includes

- 1) **Learning Outcomes Evaluation** – to assess the impact on student learning outcomes
- 2) **Impact of Acceleration study** – to capture the effectiveness of the strategies implemented within the Accelerator
- 3) **Insights on User Experience Study** – a qualitative analysis that gathers feedback from end users on key aspects of the EdTech programme lifecycle, including acquisition, onboarding, engagement and retention



Student doing an activity using *Rocket Learning's* learning content in Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh

Photo Credits: CSF

These evaluations are currently being conducted under the supervision of the Principal Investigator, [Prof. Tarun Jain](#) (Associate Professor of Economics, IIM Ahmedabad and the Reserve Bank of India Chair in Finance and Economics) by experts from [Sambodhi Research](#) (qualitative study) and [Educational Initiatives](#) (quantitative study), and will provide actionable insights to inform future interventions and improvements.

This report provides insights from the Impact of Acceleration (IoA) Study for all the LiftEd EdTech Accelerator products.



2 Impact of Acceleration (IoA) Study

2.1 Description of the Study

The *Impact of Acceleration* (IoA) study is a qualitative inquiry designed to evaluate the effectiveness of the Accelerator's support strategies in enabling eight partner organisations to meet their goals. The study aims to extract actionable insights into the programme's impact, focusing on three core objectives:

- 1) **Nature of Support Provided:** analysing the structure, relevance, intensity and alignment of the support offered with partner expectations and needs.
- 2) **Organisational and Operational Outcomes:** identifying outcomes at both strategic and operational levels, including contributions to organisational direction, scaling initiatives, product improvements and the development of partnerships.
- 3) **Best Practices and Learnings:** highlighting Accelerator-wide best practices and partner-specific insights to refine and enhance future support packages for EdTech partners.

Through this study, the Accelerator seeks to generate a robust evidence base to inform the design and delivery of support mechanisms, ensuring they effectively address the unique challenges faced by EdTech solutions in low-income contexts.

2.2 Accelerator-level Theory of Change (ToC)

The Accelerator-level Theory of Change (ToC) provides a comprehensive framework delineating the pathways through which the Accelerator aims to achieve its overarching impact. Extending beyond the programme's immediate goals, this ToC reflects the Accelerator's broader contribution to strengthening the EdTech ecosystem. Serving as a foundational 'backbone', ToC ensures that the support strategies delivered through the Accelerator empower partner organisations to advance their individual ToCs. This collective progress contributes toward the long-term objective of fostering a sustainable ecosystem of EdTech solutions capable of driving improved FLN outcomes for children from low-income households. Annexure 4.1 contains a detailed depiction of the Accelerator-level ToC.

To realise the vision outlined in the ToC, the Accelerator employed a multi-dimensional approach, offering targeted financial, technical and strategic inputs.

Onboarding

- The onboarding process involved calling of proposals and selection of eight EdTech partners with support offered in terms of aligning cohort match, refining proposals, defining goals and communicating the resources and guidance that would be provided as a part of the Accelerator.

Thought Partnership

- Dedicated grant managers and CSF experts offered ongoing support through regular check-ins, collaborative problem-solving and idea exchange. These interactions facilitated cross-pollination of knowledge and ensured adaptive monitoring of partner progress.

Financial Support

- **Year 1:** Innovation grants of ₹75 lakhs were allocated to eight EdTech partners.
- **Year 2:** Scale-up grants of ₹1.5 crore each were awarded to two partners, while innovation grants were awarded to others.

Mentorship

- Domain-specific mentors provided tailored, one-on-one guidance to address partners' anchor challenges.
- Mentors were carefully matched with partners based on defined problem statements and progress was tracked through structured communication schedules.

Capacity Building

- Curated learning sessions, led by industry experts and thought leaders, focused on key elements of designing, scaling and delivering impactful EdTech solutions.

The Accelerator also supported partners in systematically articulating their vision and strategies through the creation of three key knowledge products - Intended Impact Statement, Theory of Change (ToC) and Results Framework (RF).

These products provided a structured, evidence-based foundation for monitoring progress toward defined outcomes and key performance indicators. The development process involved iterative co-creation through in-person and virtual workshops, fostering an approach that was not only evaluative but also capacity-building.

By refining strategies and data systems, this participatory process ensured that partners could clearly articulate their goals and define metrics for success. The outputs, which reflect partners' aspirations and measures of success, along with a description of the co-creation process are detailed in Annexure 4.1.

2.3 Study Design Process of IoA

An inquiry framework, structured as individual templates, was developed for each stakeholder category, including partner programme team members, grant managers (CSF) and mentors assigned to each partner. These templates were aligned with the strategic components and inputs outlined in the Accelerator-level Theory of Change (ToC) — namely, onboarding, thought partnership, financial support, capacity building and mentorship. The detailed framework can be referred to in Annexure 4.2.

To gather comprehensive insights, the evaluation process included staggered check-ins with stakeholders. Initial conversations with grant managers provided foundational insights into the core challenges, types of support extended and progress achieved by partners. These discussions informed the refinement of questions for subsequent conversations with partner programme teams and mentors.

This sequential approach facilitated a holistic, 360-degree understanding of the Accelerator's support mechanisms. Check-ins with grant managers illuminated overarching challenges, specific interventions and their alignment with partner needs. Mentor conversations provided a granular view of the support offered, highlighting partner-specific challenges and the tailored strategies employed to address them.



Student learning at home using the EdTech application *Chalo! Sesame Street* in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh

Photo Credits: CSF

Insights from grant managers and mentors were subsequently validated through independent conversations with partner programme teams. These discussions captured partners' expectations, areas of impact, progress milestones and suggestions for improvement. Conducted independently by the evaluation team, the multi-stakeholder conversations ensured a triangulated and robust assessment of the support provided under the Accelerator to identify 'what is working, what is not working?'

3 Accelerator-level Findings

This section consolidates insights from partners to deliver a comprehensive analysis of how the Accelerator's support translated into on-ground outcomes. It examines the effectiveness of various Accelerator components, identifies challenges encountered and assesses their differential impact across partners. The findings delineate what strategies proved successful for specific partners, what fell short and the underlying reasons for these variations. By offering a nuanced perspective, this synthesis underscores the Accelerator's role in advancing partner objectives and driving intended outcomes.

3.1 Onboarding

All partners reported that the application and onboarding process for the Accelerator was both structured and highly supportive. Following a call for proposals in October 2022, a rigorous screening process culminated in the selection of eight EdTech partners across different cohorts by April 2023. Partners consistently highlighted the proactive support provided by the CSF team throughout key stages, including validating cohort fitment based on anchor challenges, refining proposals, defining goals, and maintaining open communication to address process-related delays.

This support was particularly beneficial for organisations collaborating with CSF for the first time. For instance, Sesame Workshop India's engagement led to a re-definition of its anchor challenge, enabling the organisation to sharpen its strategic focus and align with the Product Contextualisation cohort instead of the Engagement cohort. Similarly, ThinkZone, a member of the Scale cohort focusing on unlocking Business-to-Government (B2G) pathways, emphasised the value of the goal-setting process in precisely defining its objectives and metrics under the Accelerator. Amira Learning, a newcomer to the Indian market, appreciated the structured, step-by-step process, which necessitated a clear articulation of goals, thereby refining its positioning and expectations of support.

For organisations with prior engagements with CSF — such as Chimple, Ei Mindspark, Rocket Learning and Top Parent — the onboarding process leveraged existing familiarity, facilitating alignment with the Accelerator's offerings. Across all partners, the onboarding experience was characterised as smooth and well-structured, with clear communication regarding the core support areas of the Accelerator: funding, mentorship, evidence building and scaling. CSF's guidance during onboarding was instrumental in establishing clarity, setting expectations and aligning partners on goals and metrics.



Parents being introduced to the *ThinkZone* program in Odisha

Photo Credits: CSF

3.2 Thought Partnership

One of the primary areas of support provided through the Accelerator was assisting partners in setting clear and actionable goals to enhance strategic planning, facilitate decision-making and enable systematic progress tracking. This responsibility was largely undertaken by the assigned grant managers, whose role extended beyond oversight to include problem-solving, providing tailored feedback, facilitating cross-learning among partners and fostering connections with experts and organisations within the EdTech ecosystem. The grant managers also ensured accountability to the defined goals while supporting partners' operational and strategic needs.

Partners acknowledged that the focus on setting strategic goals as part of the Accelerator not only aligned their efforts with broader organisational objectives but also fostered more structured planning beyond the Accelerator's immediate scope. For instance, the **Ei Mindspark** team highlighted how proactive engagement by CSF, including rigorous data reviews and constructive feedback, refined their approach and strengthened accountability. Similarly, **Amira Learning** credited CSF's field visits and goal-setting exercises with aligning expectations and guiding their product development, significantly aiding their entry into the Indian market.

The grant managers' support was consistently described as tailored and contextually relevant. For example, **Top Parent** noted that data-driven recommendations from CSF led to optimised live class durations, improving user engagement. **Amira Learning** appreciated cross-pollination of ideas facilitated by the grant manager, such as leveraging WhatsApp for direct parent communication through progress reports, bypassing traditional school-based distribution channels.

Regular and timely engagement by grant managers was universally commended. Partners emphasised the importance of structured check-ins, including monthly reviews involving CSF leadership and ad hoc consultations addressing emergent challenges. For example, **Top Parent** highlighted the high frequency of interactions with their grant manager, who provided weekly support on both strategic and product-related matters. This accessibility ensured that the guidance remained timely and practically applicable.

The Accelerator's role in fostering connections within the broader EdTech ecosystem was another key highlight. Partners such as **Sesame Workshop India** benefited from connections facilitated by CSF, leading to exchanges with **Top Parent** on engagement strategies and **Rocket Learning** on leveraging WhatsApp nudges. **Chimple** gained actionable insights from a CSF-recommended tech expert on integrating generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) into their platform. These collaborations significantly enhanced partners' ability to refine their solutions by tapping into the collective expertise of the Accelerator network.

Despite these strengths, partners identified areas for improvement. **Sesame Workshop India** pointed to a misalignment between Accelerator goals and their operational stage, particularly highlighting the need for longer timelines to test and iterate digital products effectively. **Ei Mindspark** expressed a desire for more product-specific and pedagogical feedback, especially from FLN experts within CSF, as much of the input received was perceived as process-focused. **Pratham**, on the other hand, noted a mismatch between the evaluation's emphasis on learning outcomes and their organisational focus on improving delivery mechanisms and user engagement.

3.3 Financial Support

The Accelerator provides financial support to partners for allocating resources to targeted areas of intervention in product and programme development, as needed, to achieve specific goals. Under the Accelerator, each EdTech partner received ₹75 lakhs in the first year and in the second year, two EdTech partners received scale-up grants of ₹1.5 crores and the remaining partners received innovation grants.

All partner organisations reported that this funding was essential in meeting their Accelerator goals. Each partner utilised the funding differently, based on their unique programme models and strategic priorities. For instance, Top Parent used the funding for personnel, digital marketing, platform costs and server expenses, while ThinkZone allocated the funds toward personnel, content bank enrichment and dashboard enhancements, which helped solidify the proof of concept for government collaboration. Chimple, on the other hand, used funds for personnel, product and content development.



Students using the *Chimple* application in Satya Bharati schools in Ahmadpur, Haryana

Photo Credits: CSF

While all partners recognised financial support as an essential component of the Accelerator and acknowledged its utility in achieving Accelerator-level goals, a few noted challenges in the same. For example, Sesame Workshop India expressed concerns surrounding the cadence of grant disbursement — with a grant duration of two years, any delays in disbursement could disrupt the product development cycle and halt the distribution process, leading to setbacks that would need to be addressed once the cycle resumes.

Ei Mindspark also noted delays in the onboarding process — originally scheduled to start in April 2023, the finalisation of the contract for Ei Mindspark came from the Accelerator in October 2023, with contracts signed in January 2024. This delay compressed the planned timeline from one year to six months, impacting resourcing for the partner’s programme team. Amira Learning’s programme team also reported that funding-related issues led to a six-month delay in delivering on aligned workstream goals. However, both Ei Mindspark and Amira Learning noted that goal realignment mitigated the challenges posed by the shortened timeline.

While the Accelerator has provided significant support, securing diverse funding sources remains crucial for ensuring long-term sustainability across all partners.



Mothers discussing 'Idea Video' activities shared by *Pratham* in Nagpur, Maharashtra

Photo Credits: CSF

3.4 Mentorship

Another pivotal area of support under the Accelerator was the provision of tailored mentorship, designed to address the specific needs and challenges of each partner. Once Accelerator goals were defined, mentors were matched to partners based on their expertise and the partner’s problem statements. Mentorship included one-on-one advisory sessions, strategic connections, ideation and ongoing guidance to support strategic planning, decision-making, intervention execution, progress tracking and necessary course corrections, ensuring alignment with the Accelerator’s objectives.

The mentorship component was widely regarded as a critical enabler of progress. Mentors offered domain-specific insights across key areas such as fundraising, government partnerships and product development, effectively advancing partners' strategic objectives. For instance, **Top Parent** highlighted mentorship in fundraising as transformative, gaining valuable guidance on pitch development and connections to potential funders. Similarly, **ThinkZone** benefitted from a mentor with deep contextual knowledge of Odisha, which enhanced their local engagement and strategies for government partnerships.

Mentors' contributions to strategic guidance proved highly impactful. They supported partners in refining product designs, optimising offerings, improving programme alignment and addressing challenges in government or market engagement. For example, **Rocket Learning** leveraged technological insights from its mentor to integrate AI and improve data strategies, resulting in more efficient product design and engagement. **Pratham** utilised mentorship to enhance data visibility on WhatsApp groups, addressing gaps in monitoring and reporting metrics. **ThinkZone** received strategic input on aligning content with state education standards, securing government buy-in and advancing scaling efforts. **Sesame Workshop India's** mentor offered actionable advice on aligning the product with NIPUN Bharat goals and the National Curriculum Framework (NCF), thereby meeting government requirements.

Mentors also played a significant role in facilitating connections with critical stakeholders, including government officials, which expanded ecosystem engagement and fostered cross-learning opportunities. For instance, **Chimple's** mentor facilitated introductions to APS networks and the National Independent School Alliance (NISA), enhancing deployment opportunities. **Amira Learning** benefitted from mentor-led connections to government stakeholders, which enabled them to explore implementation models with public partners. These relationships were instrumental in helping partners navigate partnership challenges and expand their reach.

The mentors also commended the partners for effectively utilising the guidance provided. They noted that partners consistently communicated progress, shared preparatory materials and demonstrated openness to feedback, which maximised the mentorship's impact.

However, challenges in mentorship arose in cases of unavailability or inconsistent engagement. For example, **Ei Mindspark** experienced disruptions due to a mentor's temporary unavailability, leading to inconsistent interactions and delayed problem resolution. **Sesame Workshop India** faced limited strategic input in Year 2 due to sporadic communication with their mentor, which hindered product iteration and led the partner to rely more heavily on CSF for support. These instances highlight the importance of sustained and proactive mentor-partner engagement to fully realise the benefits of mentorship.

3.5 Capacity Building

Under the Accelerator, partners received tailored and contextualised capacity-building support through workshops focused on key organisational development areas, such as effective fundraising strategies, leveraging government pathways for scaling, utilising AI in education, ensuring digital safety for children in EdTech and adopting data-driven decision-making. These workshops not only provided access to innovative solutions for product development and programme deployment but also served as networking platforms and offered best practices in organisational growth.

All partners recognised the value of the workshops, though their relevance and applicability varied according to the specific context of each organisation. The diversity of workshop topics enabled partners to gain insights across different dimensions of organisational development, benefitting both immediate programme needs and long-term strategic planning. Workshops on digital safety and leveraging government pathways for scaling were particularly well-received, as they addressed immediate concerns. For example, **Chimple**, **Pratham**, **Rocket Learning** and **Top Parent** found the digital safety workshop invaluable for addressing user data protection issues. **ThinkZone**, **Top Parent** and **Sesame Workshop India** found the B2G pathways session especially pertinent to their scaling ambitions, while **Top Parent**, **ThinkZone** and **Amira Learning** found the fundraising workshop particularly useful for strengthening their funding strategies.



Capacity-building workshop on ‘Leveraging B2G Pathways Effectively for Unlocking Scale’ for all portfolio partners of the LiftEd EdTech Accelerator in New Delhi

Photo Credits: CSF

Despite the overall appreciation of the workshops, partners offered several recommendations for improvement. While organisations like **Ei Mindspark** valued the flexibility to nominate relevant team members for specific sessions, enabling targeted learning, **Sesame Workshop India** suggested increasing workshop capacity to allow more team members to deepen their technical understanding. Additionally, **Rocket Learning** and **Top Parent** recommended that future sessions place a greater emphasis on practical applications. **Rocket Learning** specifically proposed a focus on case studies and real-world examples to facilitate hands-on learning, while **Top Parent** suggested that the digital safety workshop would have been more beneficial if it incorporated EdTech-specific case studies.

Although most partners appreciated the networking opportunities, some expressed a desire for more structured and frequent networking events. While peer-to-peer connections were helpful, partners highlighted the need for more systematic, structured opportunities for cross-learning, as ad hoc interactions did not fully leverage the potential for sustained knowledge exchange on operational and fundraising challenges.

3.6 Integrated Outcomes

The support provided by the EdTech Accelerator significantly advanced the progress of all partner organisations, driving key improvements in their intended outcomes over the 2023-24 period. The quantitative and qualitative progress is described below:

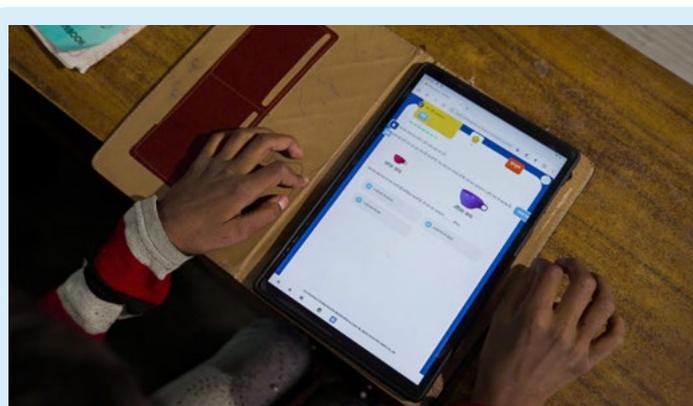
EdTech Partner	Cohort	North Star Goal for FY 23-24	Key Outcome
Top Parent  टॉप पेरेंट <small>सीखने सिखाने के नए तरीके</small>	Engagement	Committed goal on Acc engagement: 8k weekly engaged users engaging for an average engagement time of 50+ mins/week	Engagement Unlocked: ~8.3k weekly engaged users engaging for an average engagement time of 36 mins/week >100% goal met on the quantum of engaged users and 66% goal met on engagement time unlocked
Rocket Learning  Rocket Learning	Engagement	Committed goal on Acc engagement: 24% of users who are activated engaging for an average engagement time of 125 mins/week	Engagement Unlocked: 22% of activated users engaging for an average engagement time of 125+ mins/week >90% goal met on the quantum of engaged users and >100% goal met on engagement time unlocked
Pratham  Pratham	Engagement	Committed goal on Acc engagement: 60% of users accessing WhatsApp bot for an average engagement time of 30 mins/week	Engagement Unlocked: Pratham worked on creating a WhatsApp bot to track meaningful engagement and arrived at an engagement taxonomy to be able to track engagement in FY 24-25 reliably
Ei Mindspark 	Engagement	Committed goal on Acc engagement: 45% of users who are active engaging with an average engagement time of 35 mins/week	Engagement Unlocked: 51% of activated users engaging per week with an average engagement time of 100+ mins/week >100% goal unlocked on both quantum of engaged users and engagement time unlocked

EdTech Partner	Cohort	North Star Goal for FY 23-24	Key Outcome
Chimple 	Engagement	Committed goal on Acc engagement: 57% of users who are activated engaging for an average engagement time of 40 mins/week	Engagement Unlocked: 14% of activated users engaging for an average engagement time of 34 mins/week 25% goal met on the quantum of engaged users and >75% goal met on engagement time unlocked
ThinkZone 	Scale	Committed goal on Acc scale: 5k users unlocked with ~100 govt schools adoption in Odisha	Scale Unlocked: Deployment to ~11k users through a new business to government (B2G) pathway across 2 blocks in Odisha in 200+ schools >100% goal met on the quantum of scale unlocked through new scale pathway

* Amira Learning and Sesame Workshop India were part of the product contextualisation cohort and the key outcome was the readiness of the contextualised product.

Rocket Learning made substantial strides by tailoring the learning experience for individual users through the use of user profiling and the development of personalised content recommendation systems. Early achievements included the implementation of behavioural nudges, which led to a notable increase in engagement, with participation rising from 100 to 125+ minutes per week. The introduction of gamification elements, such as emoji badges, further contributed to higher levels of engagement, marking a significant early milestone in the programme.

Ei Mindspark gained critical insights into the contextualisation of their product for foundational learning. Their tech development cycle revealed important nuances, such as the need for oral instructions instead of text-heavy content for younger learners and the necessity of incorporating conversational Hindi in their approach. The partner recognised the learning process as a significant one, with valuable knowledge gained throughout.



Student learning through an activity on the *Ei Mindspark* application in Ghazipur, New Delhi

Photo Credits: CSF

Top Parent achieved significant improvements through the introduction of live classes and a WhatsApp chatbot. These innovations resulted in a 40% increase in average engagement time to ~36 mins/week and a ~5% improvement in retention rates. Many other partners also saw increased user engagement and retention through features like gamification, personalised content, and real-time feedback.

Amira Learning successfully contextualised their product by developing an Indian content bank aligned with the Indian curriculum and parent reports in Hindi, which facilitated better understanding of children's progress by parents. Similarly, **Sesame Workshop India** leveraged their existing content to develop a personalised app. For several partners, the focus on content customisation and pedagogical support — such as culturally relevant content and curriculum design — proved instrumental in creating effective learning experiences for children.

Data-driven decision-making played a central role in the progress of all partners. Collecting and analysing data allowed partners to track their progress and gain valuable insights into user behaviour and engagement. For example, **Chimple** used real-time feedback and data insights to refine their product features, while **Pratham** initiated data collection via their WhatsApp bot, using the data to generate insights on user engagement and refine their strategies for more efficient tracking.

The contextualised support offered by the Accelerator also led to new partnerships, experimentation with business models, and the development of effective scaling strategies. **ThinkZone** successfully expanded their programme in Odisha, allowing them to experiment with government partnership models.

3.7 Future Areas of Focus

The future priorities of the EdTech partners reflect a diverse array of strategic objectives that extend beyond the immediate scope of the Accelerator. While some partners seek



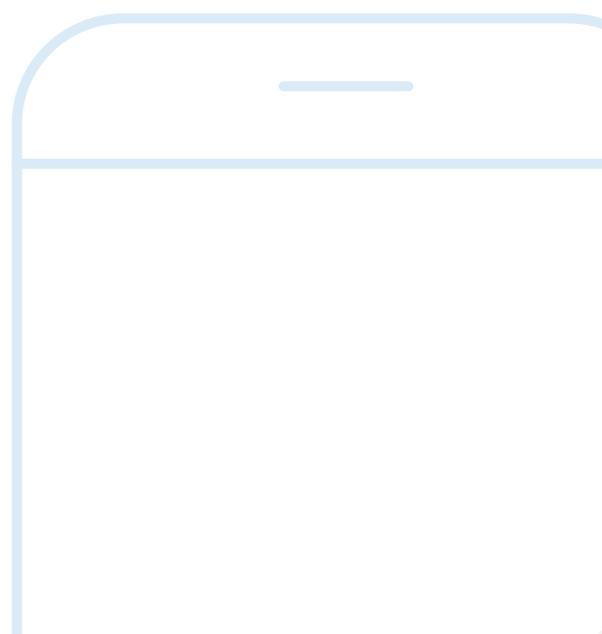
The 'Live classes feature' on the *Top Parent* application built as part of the LiftEd EdTech Accelerator

Photo Credits: Top Parent

specific support from the Accelerator, most are focused on organisational goals such as technological enhancement, evidence generation, partnership development and continued fundraising.

Several partners, including Rocket Learning, Ei Mindspark, Chimple and Top Parent, aim to refine their personalisation models by integrating Generative AI to improve product delivery. Ei Mindspark also plans to enhance parent and student engagement to achieve better outcomes, while Chimple is working on strengthening data protection policies and expanding localisation capabilities to address diverse state-specific needs. Both Chimple and Sesame Workshop India are exploring new pathways for scaling their reach, particularly through government partnerships. ThinkZone is prioritising geographic expansion and deepening its impact in recently secured government collaborations, with a long-term goal of institutionalising its programme within school systems as a measure of sustainability. On the evidence generation front, Top Parent intends to conduct a Randomised Controlled Trial (RCT) and Ei Mindspark will leverage A/B testing to improve engagement strategies and learning outcomes. Pratham is employing a hybrid experimentation approach to test personalised nudges and content in its mother-group WhatsApp channels, aiming to transform them from content dissemination tools into vibrant learning communities.

Across all partners, sustained fundraising efforts remain essential to support their shared mission of advancing foundational learning for all children in India. These diverse priorities underscore a collective commitment to innovation, scalability and impact within the EdTech ecosystem.



4

Annexure

4.1 Description of Knowledge Products and Process of Creation

Intended Impact Statement	An intended impact statement is a statement that the partner organisation holds itself accountable to achieve within the time frame of the Accelerator (i.e. 2023-2025). It captures the 'who' (target population), 'where' (target region), 'what' (results or outcomes), 'how' (mode of achieving results or outcomes) and 'when' (time) of the intended impact.
Theory of Change	Theory of Change is a visualisation of programme logic which outlines the rationale for the programme, causal pathways linking strategies or approaches with envisaged intermediate and long-term outcomes while also delineating the assumptions and preconditions underlying the causal pathways.
Results Framework	Results framework is a results chain that outlines strategies-outputs-intermediate outcomes-outcomes. While outputs capture activity or process-related indicators (e.g. number of teachers trained, number of teachers using the app); intermediate and long-term outcomes capture key performance indicators (KPIs) that measure change on the ground (e.g. increase in time spent by parents doing activities or worksheets with their children). The RF also defines each indicator and modalities of data collection.

4.1.1 Partner-level Knowledge Products

Process of Designing Intended Impact Statement and ToC

- The evaluation team reviewed documentation and had initial conversations with CSF and partner teams to gain an understanding of the EdTech models. Based on this, a list of guiding questions to develop a draft intended impact statement and ToC was developed and disseminated to the partners. The questions revolved around the interventions under the Accelerator, strategies to drive these intended impact changes; assumptions, risks, envisaged challenges in achieving outcomes and possible mitigation strategies.
- In the first workshop, an intended impact statement and contours of the ToC were developed. The first half of the workshop focused on co-creating an intended impact statement. For example, for Rocket Learning, the statement developed

was, “Increasing engagement of parents of children aged 4 to 8 (WHO) in the Government school/Anganwadi system (WHAT) in Delhi (WHERE) from May 2023 to MARCH 2025 (WHEN) through AI for personalised nudging and mitigating drop-offs, automated worksheet acknowledgement and correction and creation of a personalised learning map tagged to worksheets with the goal of improving learning outcomes and early childhood education (HOW)”. In the second half of the workshop, a draft of the ToC was created. Over several weeks, both these products were finalised through discussions and inputs from the Sambodhi and partner teams.

Process of Designing Results Framework

- Post the finalisation of the partner-level ToCs, the evaluation team conducted a second workshop to develop the results framework for each EdTech partner. As a first step, the evaluation team collaborated/ worked with each partner to understand their data capture processes (i.e. their MIS – what data is being collected, from whom, by whom and at what frequency). This discussion was guided by the Accelerator-level MIS, serving as a reference point to identify additional data requirements beyond what was already being reported. As a second step, these indicators were then refined to create a results framework.

4.1.2 Accelerator-level ToC



Figure 1: Accelerator-level ToC which details each partner's strategies and inputs to arrive at the desired outcomes and impact

Process of Designing the Accelerator-level ToC

- The development of the Accelerator-level ToC followed a consultative and iterative process with the CSF team. The creation process began by backtracking from the desired long-term impact (contribution to the EdTech ecosystem), then identifying intermediate outcomes—the goals the Accelerator is directly striving to achieve within a 2-year timeframe (the duration of the LiftEd EdTech Accelerator).
- From there, short-term outcomes were defined, which can be observed and tested at the one-year mark.
- Finally, the Accelerator’s strategies and associated inputs were outlined, capturing the dynamic relationships across all elements of the ToC.

4.2 IoA Enquiry Framework

Themes	Sub-themes	Grant Manager	Mentor	EdTech Partner Programme Team
Anchor challenge	What is the challenge, how will this be addressed, what has been tried in the past, successes and challenges in addressing the challenge	Y		
	Expectation of support	Y		Y
	What is the nature of support (e.g. goal setting, strategy development, design, deployment)	Y		Y
Type of support provided	Frequency of support	Y	Y	Y
	Financial support	Y		Y
	Capacity building workshops	Y		Y
	Masterclass	Y		Y
	Mentorship (connecting partners to mentors)	Y		
	Mentorship (areas of support - e.g. strategy, curricula, tech, user experience, fundraising)		Y	Y
	Peer-to-peer learning			Y
Contribution of support to changes made by partners	Changes that have been made (e.g. product, design, deployment)	Y	Y	Y
	Early successes	Y	Y	Y
	Challenges, reasons for the same	Y	Y	Y

5

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Design and artwork: Sanjay Chaurasia

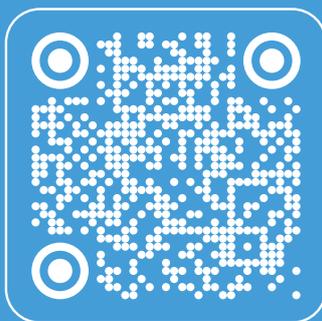
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