

Annual Report

Teach To ELICIT '23

Kashmir chapter



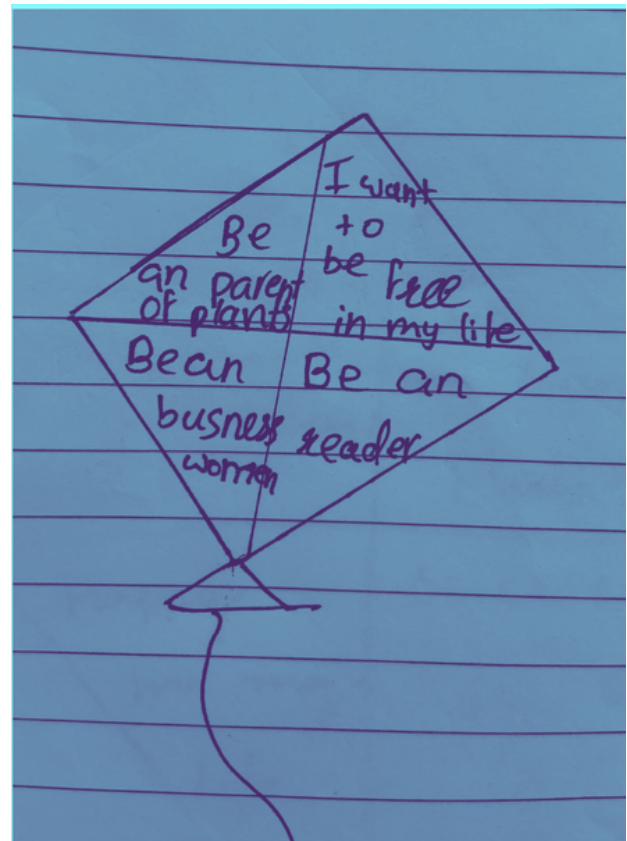
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EDUCATION - LIVELIHOODS IN CONFLICT IMPACTED TERRITORIES
FOUNDATION

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A note from our founder-director

In the valley of Kashmir – our current location of work – well-being is compromised for political gains and conversations on non-negotiables don't move beyond territories. Children struggle to find meaning in academics as their daily experience of violence illustrates 'hope-help'-lessness rather strongly. Besides, minimal alternative exposure, interrupted education and growing unemployment, has given rise to inhibited, uninvested teachers, who struggle to inspire them towards constructive resilience. And hence I find it pertinently urgent to work through the realms of mainstream education in institutionalising well-being and co-building cultures with teachers and school leaders to contain practices of inclusion, exposure and alternatives within classrooms, especially as one in six children in the world today, live in and suffer through regions impacted by conflict.

With the skill to design responsive education and the will to disrupt conformity of thought, action and mindset, Teach to ELICIT, our flagship programme, leveraged channels of experience and practice based research to expand perspectives on conflict, fragility and transformative education for young individuals living outside of Conflict spaces and for stakeholders in education situated in regions enduring high volatility – in three districts of South Kashmir.

We are a small team of educators, artists, thought builders and change enthusiasts, driven to address challenges and opportunities concerning education in regions impacted by conflict. As a core policy the organization collaborates with local leadership to co-build responsive programs. Currently for Kashmir we have a senior local leader with 25 years of experience in policy making and management of educational institutions. Our program manager is an artist and facilitator, who has chosen to ground himself in Pulwama to better understand and facilitate our fellows in schools. Our communication designer is an educator and design thinker who helps build advocacy. We have an incubatory support system in Ahmedabad to help us navigate through operational challenges and a solid support system in the Kashmiri community to realize the vision on ground.

This year was nothing short of a 10 part series filled with ounces of experience to make learning from. I hope this document helps you dive into some. As you do indulge, I urge you to receive and evaluate with radical empathy for the stakeholders still persisting through the volatility of the space and its impact on their psycho-social health.

Lopa Shah
Founder Director,
ELICIT Foundation

About the document



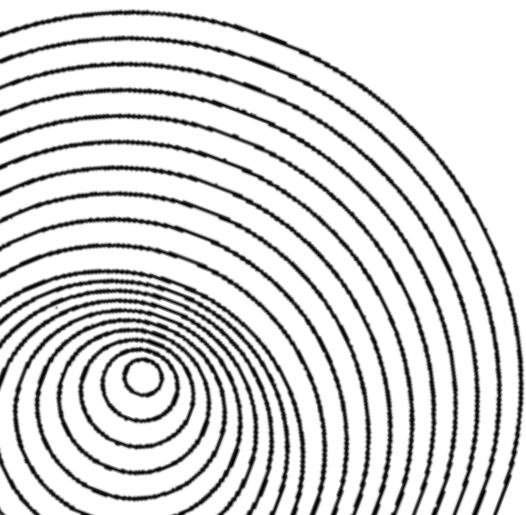
This is to document the experiences of running the Teach to ELICIT fellowship with its pilot cohort in three districts of South Kashmir during the year of 2023. The impact of the fellowship program will be audited keeping in mind our curriculums designed for both fellows and students and through self assessments, observational notes, reflections, feedback, learnings, and anecdotes from our work.

Teach to ELICIT: The fellowship

Teach to ELICIT Fellowship equips a community of educators/advocates in conflict impacted territories, who work in mainstream school structures with teachers, school leaders and children to integrate skills of well-being and constructive resilience within classroom teaching. Our fellows are teaching enthusiasts from across the country, who commit to teaching in chosen schools for 2 years through regular curricular material.

During the first year of the fellowship, we engaged 7 teachers as fellows, 60+ teachers through training, 500+ children through classroom teaching, 5 school leaders, with 4 schools in three districts– Pulwama, Budgam and Shopian in South Kashmir, in various capacities and time periods in one academic year between March and November 2023. We involved 10+ individuals and organisations by collaborating with them to design and execute in-person and online workshops for students and teachers.

Like a boat in a river, navigating winds, waves, depths, boulders and meanders we went through the year in Education and Livelihood of a Conflict Impacted Territory called Kashmir. This year was not only about planning and executing interventions, but a journey of working with a community to work on a classroom and on oneself in the process. Through planning, designing, facilitating, conversing, noting, reflecting and continuing it in moments of volatility is how everyone on-ground responded with resilience. We look forward to another year having charted the course of the river once, knowing the space better, having forged relationships at work and residence, and better skilled to find connections in times of uncertainties.



People of Teach to ELICIT



film photographs by Vijay and Manas
Illustrations by Manasvini

Lopa Shah (Founder-director,
ELICIT foundation)

Farooq Fazli (Teach to ELICIT,
Kashmir Head)

Manas Daxini (Program Manager)

Ashini Shah (Communications
Designer)

School Heads:

Arshid Khan (National Innovations
Public School, Zainapora, Kashmir)

Nazar Ul Islam (Life School,
Chirar-i-sharief, Kashmir)

Fellows engaged:

Participated during Year 1

Aamina Hamid (Srinagar)

Abhinav Mishra (Goa)

Uzma Fayaz (Srinagar)

Shivani Dhama (Haryana)

Shafqat Nazir Akhoon (Srinagar)

Prutha Jain (Chhattisgarh)

Continuing Year 2

Bilal Wani (Pulwama)

Sreejith K (Kerala)

Resource persons hosted:

Manoj Kumar (One All)

Antara Shah (Documentation
Intern)

Patrick Sanders (Permaculture)

Aleena Varghese (The Gender Lab)

Vijeta (The Gender Lab)

Purwa Bharadwaj (Nirantar Trust)

Zoya Mir (Clinical Psychologist)

Nihar Bhagat (Facilitation)

Aditya Dhingra (Actor/Theatre
maker)

Vijay A. Human (Photographer)

Teach to ELICIT '23 Timeline

December 2022

Finalising pilot cohort through interviews and group discussion
Manager undergoes FiTCoDeP 2023 teacher coach training
Lopa participates Initiatives of Change's Caux Scholars Program

January 2023

Final cohort announcement
Introductory call and icebreaking meet of full cohort

February 2023

Fellows prepare Life Map
Teach to ELICIT team including fellows arrive in Kashmir
Induction training part-1

March 2023

Induction training part-2
Placement of cohort in partner schools
Planning lessons, syllabus division, and induction in school system
Aamina drops out

April 2023

Classroom teaching and observations begin
Abhinav terminated from fellowship
Weekly sharpening circles and reflections
Zoya Mir, clinical psychologist onboarded
Narrative ideas and practices 2 day workshop for fellows
Manas begins year long MHTP training
FGD- ELICIT+Forbes

May 2023

Lopa, Ashini, Antara, Nihar visit
Nihar's 'who am I as a facilitator?' workshop
Weekly sharpening circles, collective reflections, classroom observations
Antara conducts fellow assessments and interviews
Learning circles at all schools by Lopa with teacher community
Manoj begins working with students on sports with skills- OneAll ultimate frisbee
Prutha onboarded mid-fellowship
Shivani and Uzma drop out

June 2023

TtE pivots to teacher trainings and culture building with NIPS Teacher community
Second month of Manoj OneAll sports with skills for students
Facilitation with frisbee- Manoj with Fellows
Zoya collective session- challenges and intention setting, wellbeing practices
Aditya visits all three schools, takes a class on storytelling
Weekly sharpening circles, collective reflections, classroom observations

July 2023

Summer vacation training- GSR, plans as friends, Classroom management, SM for celebration,
TtE collaborated with TGL to conduct their HWROB workshop under their redefining masculinities' campaign with 22 teachers of 4 ELICIT partner schools
Weekly sharpening circles, collective reflections, classroom observations
Shafqat drop out

August 2023

Lopa visit
Patrick Sanders- Permaculture and agri ethics with students of all three schools
Weekly sharpening circles, collective reflections, classroom observations
Student baseline self assessment
Fellow sem 1 self assessment
Learning circles at NIPS

September 2023

Forbes fellowship training in Mumbai- Ashini and Manas
TGL HWROB part 2 online with. Purwa from nirantar
Vijay documents through 35 mm
Weekly collective reflections, classroom observations

October 2023

TFix- People and performance management attended by FS, LS, MD
Weekly collective reflections, classroom observations

November 2023

Prutha drop out
School annual programs, students showcasing learnings
Fellow Sem 2 self assessment
Student endline self assessment
Year two campaigning
Documentation

December 2023

Reports
Analysis, documentation etc



Opportunities and Learnings

What worked well?

- Even without regular fellow-facilitated learning circles with the teacher community, because of the curiosity driven conversations between fellows and the rest of the community, wellbeing language and classroom culture became part of their vocabulary and staffroom conversations. **A sense of community of teachers** was built in collaborations in classroom activities.
- Fellows had ample opportunity to connect with each other and **celebrate regularly** even while being at schools in separate districts.
- All **training, for students, teacher community and fellows** were received well by participants. Even when it was difficult for the school systems to incorporate long-term associations, the participants made the most from these experiences and were **always curious to know various perspectives**.
- Having the framework made it easier for the fellows to plan and document, once they found the rhythm of the routine. They also incorporated learnings from their own notes in the following classes, and even made their own **frameworks** with their students and their manager responding to contextual needs.
- There was a lot of mistrust in the air between fellows, their students and teacher community. With **regular culture building engagements and activities**, they were able to also build trust and relationships in the classroom and school.
- The program manager participated in **trainings to keep their skills sharpened** and find new ways and opportunities to negotiate with disablers and continue movement. This helped him in both personal and professional aspects of living in a conflict space. They also learned many modules to train and be able to work with fellows.

What are some long struggles we faced?

- Since the fellows are reporting to both the school supervisor and the program manager, it took time for them to find a **balance between fellowship responsibilities and school duties** while negotiating with the teacher community, school authority, their program manager and fellow cohort.
- Because of this, Lesson planning, especially closing the plans with rubrics, took time to become part of their routines. They found **difficulty in creating long term plans**, and were able to plan weekly at most.
- School administration was not helpful in teacher community building. Fellows have to put in much **more effort to facilitate system and culture level change-making** at their schools.
- Even with all frameworks provided, documentation and reflection were **activities that faced some resistance**. They acknowledged the long-term value of doing that, but were unable to indulge in these activities themselves. Throughout the year, reflection and documentation activities had to be done in collective virtual sessions facilitated by the manager.
- Wellbeing sessions with Zoya were sparse, instead of the consistent regular engagement that we envisioned during collaboration. Travelling to Srinagar only seemed possible after school hours and the schedules never matched. Because of this, no one apart from one fellow availed the provision of personal sessions with her. We could not build that **relationship and trust between a wellbeing professional and the fellows**.
- School compliances with **JK board** of education is a struggle ongoing since time immemorial. One instance is during their winter breaks, teachers are busy taking online classes since they declared board exams for 5th and 8th grade students along with 10th and 12th.





What didn't work?

- **Hiring:** We have had a fairly good response to our call for applications for the number of fellows we were looking at recruiting. Yet, it was a challenge to create a cohort of 6. To work in conflict spaces needs not just a drive but radical acceptance of the truth that they need to both- find and operate in. More than talent, the right mindset that at least begins with faith and is backed by family support is a challenge to find.
- **Fellow attrition:** Our system and processes provide opportunities for self-development. However, it takes special courage to live amidst chaotic routines, fight every day challenges, complete tasks and also find energy for self-development consistently. More often than not, both local and migrant fellows give in to familial/societal/personal pressures and leave. We started with a passionate cohort of 7 fellows. We even hired a fellow mid fellowship. At the end of the first year, we continue with two fellows from the first cohort and an extensive hiring process to find our next cohort. One Kashmiri and one non-localite continue their fellowship at Dolphin International school, Pulwama. Nips and Life school have no fellows as of now.
- **Co-teachers:** sometimes co-teacher dropped out, sometimes they were busy with arrangements. We are not continuing the co-teacher aspect next year onwards. At this point, it is difficult for the school systems to dedicate two teachers to one class. It also created a distance and separation between teacher community and Teach to ELICIT fellows.
- **Manager's routine:** tried many routines, two days at each school every week didn't work because of Friday *Jumma*, plus using public transport is 4 hours of daily commute. Because of the drop-outs, it took time to set new routines for continued collaboration with each school, especially the ones with no fellows. Engaging the teacher community for 45 minutes a week that we could find time to work together was not enough.
- **Burnout:** Working as a teacher in conflict involves doing persistent inner work of unlearning biases and critically reshaping narratives in our own minds first before elsewhere, and this process is exhausting. Besides, the biggest effort goes in practising slow progress in education; knowing that the result of our persistence will show in unexpected ways in its own time.

A black and white photograph of a river scene. In the foreground, there are dark silhouettes of buildings and trees. The river flows through the middle ground, reflecting the sky and the surrounding landscape. In the background, there are rolling hills or mountains under a bright sky. The overall mood is serene and contemplative.

Highlights from weekly fellow reflections

Self + Class + Community

What were some reflective practices you used?

self evaluation
tracker

participating in
agricultural activities
(Mustard harvesting)

discussions with teacher
community

Started playing cricket
with kids living nearby

Writing a journal, holding
discussions with teachers

Composing write
ups, Drawing images

Delaying judgement

taking a walk alone in the
fields


Discussions with
students, writing
poetry, drawing images
based on imagination

having a tea after school
from outside, sitting there
for some time

Cooking

spending time in the
conference room in the
free time

after school eating a
"chikki"

The background image shows a large, leafy tree on the left side of a field. In the lower right, a dog is visible, partially obscured by tall grass. The sky is overcast and grey. Several white text boxes are overlaid on the image.

Projector as facilitator in learning new concepts

Creating peer groups for inter-dependency, self help and responsibility

What were some new learnings you incorporated in your teaching practice this week?

Patience and affinity towards students during confrontation with low performing students.

Helping in understanding historical time lines, more story based narratives easy to understand

Build a context to the chapter im teaching, making new connections and a flow of teaching.

Visual representations of geographical features helping the students to understand things which they have not seen in the context they are living in.

Started preparing diagrams and simple notes for lecturing to make students understand the concept better

What were some challenges you faced this week?

Physical problems with change in weather

Want teacher to trust my classroom practices and not consider them as a threat to Islamic ideas.

students getting bored with long sessions

Classroom behaviour of kids affected me, I feel defeated when I don't get the response I put in the effort for

Not getting enough time and energy to reflect my own work due to lot of responsibilities

Not able to specify any particular challenge
(There are a lot of challenges)

Not able to create a routine for doing the daily task for both school and the organisation


Students speaking in Kashmiri language, not listening to the class, making fun of me, some students not understanding English, the ELICIT structure is too complex to internalise and it takes time, losing confidence

Shuffling of classrooms and different sections of girls and boys

Student gave feedback, said I was rude in class, I agree and I'm working on it

making students more expressive to share their feelings

Lack of willingness to learn or participate despite positive encouragement



Taking a round of ten minutes to school ground and talking to any student there about anything they like

Taking a nap after designing a lesson plan

Carrying lunch to school that I always ignored

Enjoying gazetted holidays

How are you taking care of yourself?

Doing things that the place prohibits in my private space makes me more tolerant in the public sphere.

took a day off, Sleeping as much as possible

Went to Srinagar with friends

Spending time with parents in fields while harvesting

writing daily reflections in Malayalam, singing songs

Started watching movies regularly. made it a part of the routine

Making illustrations as it helps me fight small battles

Any new dreams or aspirations for yourself?

Getting an art club started in school

That I can facilitate a state of flow in and outside class.

students getting bored with long sessions

to play any sport regularly

controlling my anger in the class

professional dreams started integrating with personal dreams . patterns are not very clear

trying to play the role of a motivator to work together for the community wellbeing

eating good food regularly

Not compromising on my values brings respect

students getting bored with the classes, sometimes using fear as a tool to make the students listen which is making me feel bad as a facilitator

Seeing children try to copy my language and habits gives me hope that every small action is slowly unknowingly adding to their behaviour.

I should be a good listener always

A group of 8th class girls approached me in order to just have a conversation because it seemed to them that they could speak to me. Grasped a certain sense of captivity which they communicated, they were the first group of girls who communicated. It was fulfilling, in the sense that they felt comfortable enough to approach me.

My pace is too quick sometimes, I want to communicate in a lucid pace

Self belief is a key to move on

teachers started asking doubts regarding lesson plan making and implementation.

parents engagements are really encouraging

A class was on a strike when I entered the classroom because they feel that no one in the school understands them or respects them. Convinced them to talk to me at least or share their concerns because they refused to speak to anyone, got them to write formal letters on their grievances, got them to put up posters in their classroom, and explained how everything is a two way street.

Any reflections on your actions this week?

Teaching community continue to assert their rights . showing the impact in meetings conducted by the school.

Dividing the content into smaller sections so that equal time can be given to wellbeing goals has helped to finish the classes within the given time.

While other teachers use tactics of threat, Students appreciate that I am polite and smile in my classroom.

the idea of pair group discussion is working, able to create evidence from the students for the rubrics

number of students in significant learning is increasing. visible from rubrics

Any reflections from class execution or planning?

shared weekly plan with the students. they seem more responsible in doing classwork, students asking questionn on lesson plans and agenda

worked in rubrics, was considering only one criteria

Shift to outside classroom activities. Students are showing more engagement and had fun, brought certain sense of newness

Engaging students to channelise their ideas through paragraph writing

Privilege point system is working really well in most of the classes. Students start listening and engaging



From journaled anecdotes, what are some patterns you observed in student behaviours?

Students tend to be shy while sharing their doubts in front of the class.

sharing responsibility with students to help one another in the class really helped

very few students are able to present their ideas in english

Students are able to reflect on imaginary concepts

Those who are on board with my classroom conduct assume it their responsibility to make sure their friends pay equal attention .

Few students can hog the class and not give others the space to participate . Few are able to grasp the chapter in a day and few need much more time.

Most of the students are in basic level

Students start expressing their ideas in theMy story segment of class (Revealing the unspoken)

lower order thinking skills needs to be addressed - Describing, memorising

As a colletive a classroom is able to recognise how each of them are a part of the class and how the only way they can move forward is together. Building more sense of comradery within themselves.

low performing students are sharing their problems with their peers

working on fear from the authority,
not motivated

They find it patronising
when they are being
subject to change.

Teachers believe they are the same as
ELICIT teachers. They are developing
trust and respect for us

Teacher community is
concerned about
supervisors beginning to
check their lesson plans.
They are using GPT to
upload in drive

Most of them feel
demotivated as they
are continuously
being forced or told to
do things apart from
their regular duties
which creates a
burden on them.

What have you seen in the teacher community as passive observer?

teacher's coming
together to create
solutions to their daily
problems. a free spaces
can be formed

different conflict situation arising inside
the school regarding more meetings, work
load and pressure. I think it's a suitable
time to think of teachers council

There is a little confusion about ELICIT,
but they have trust on ELICIT. They're
speaking more in English rather than
Urdu or Kashmiri. I want they should
understand more about ELICIT and be
a part of our methods as well

Coordinators
confiscate junk
food from kids
only to share it
with teacher
community or
have it with
evening tea

planning to collaborate
with co curricular
coordinator of the school
and getting students to
the makers lab

meeting with sports
teachers for effectively
implementing class room
culture of privilege point

trying to create discussion circles
atleast once in a week for making
better class room cultures

Any plans to collaborate with your teacher community?

to bring in a space of teachers inside
the institutional framework to discuss
about their issues

going to conduct a
debate competition
for 6th both section
collaborating with
English teacher.

discussions started with teachers
on dealing with students who are
completely disengaged from the
class

planning for a collective
constitution for the
teachers, staffroom
practices to be followed

Have been attending Nasir
sir's class as he is able to
maintain a perfect balance
of strictness and openness in
the classroom .

As I take classes 4th in the absence of my co teacher, he has often asked
me suggestions for activities for his classes, the most recent being
holding elections as they are beginning to understand the formation of
elected government.

I'm a little conscious about everything as an influence of the community on me. I'm still absorbing the context

not able to identity whether the influence of community is effecting me positively or not. Every now and then, some teachers try to influence my thoughts about the students and idea of Kashmir, and Kashmiri students how they're 'Khatarnaak' looking at our approach with them. I remain confident in my viewpoint.

The collaboration is very limited from their side. Creating interest in learning programmes is a challenge for me. There is an oppurtunity for creating a common space among teachers to discuss about collective challenges they are facing

My co-teacher used one of my classroom methods of quizing in one of his classes. Another teacher came to me asking my suggestions on her lesson plans .

What is your influence on the teacher community and it's influence on you ?

curious about knowing me and why iam i here

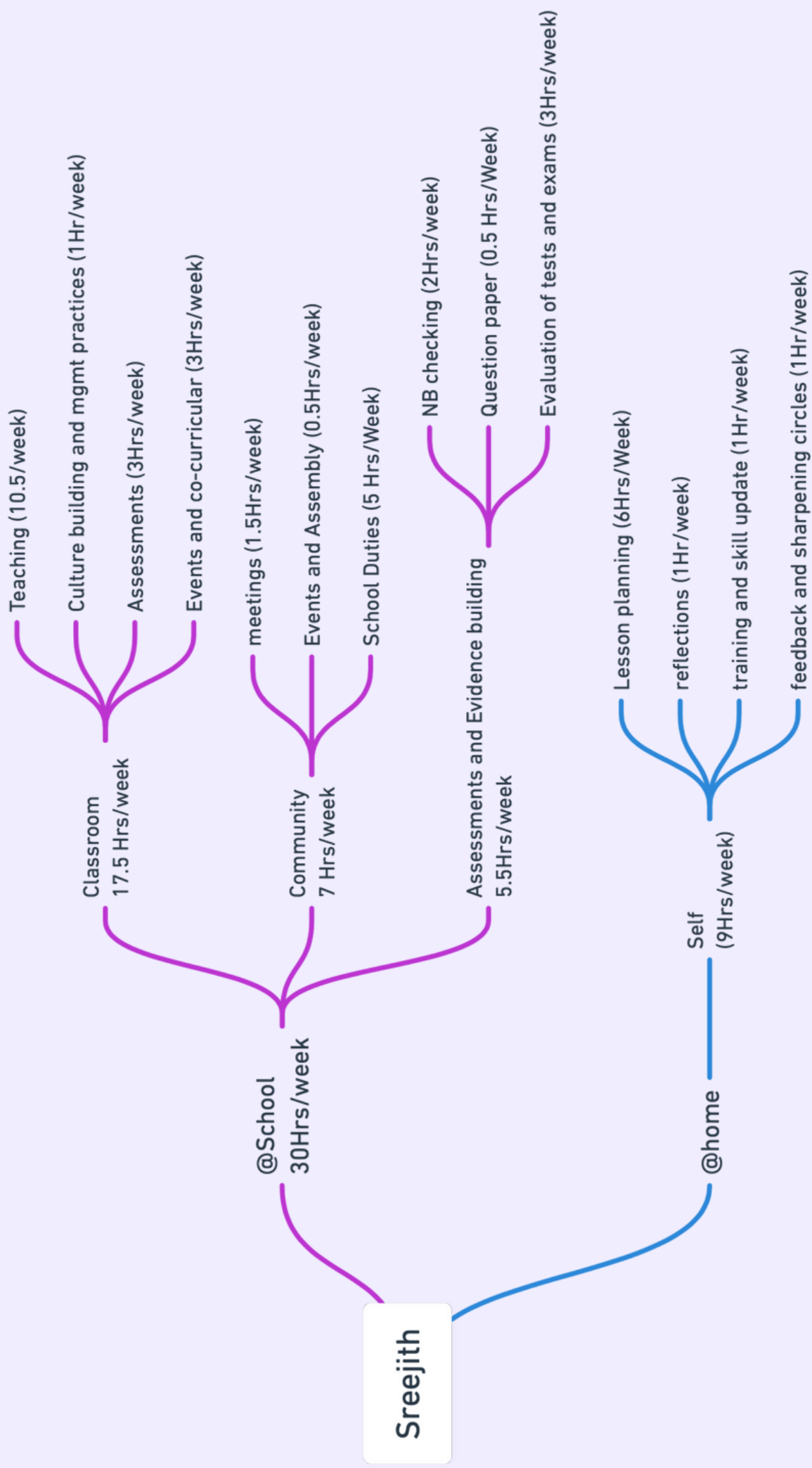
Teachers seem to think that having an exposed tattoo on my wrist is motivating girls to have the same as they have been copying it with pen on their arms and it is not permitted by the religion to have that.

Teachers get engaged with one another to find solutions for their issues

The collaboration is very limited from their side. Creating interest in learning programmes is a challenge for me. There is an oppurtunity for creating a common space among teachers to discuss about collective challenges they are facing

Time-scape -Year 2023

Fellows
Program Manager



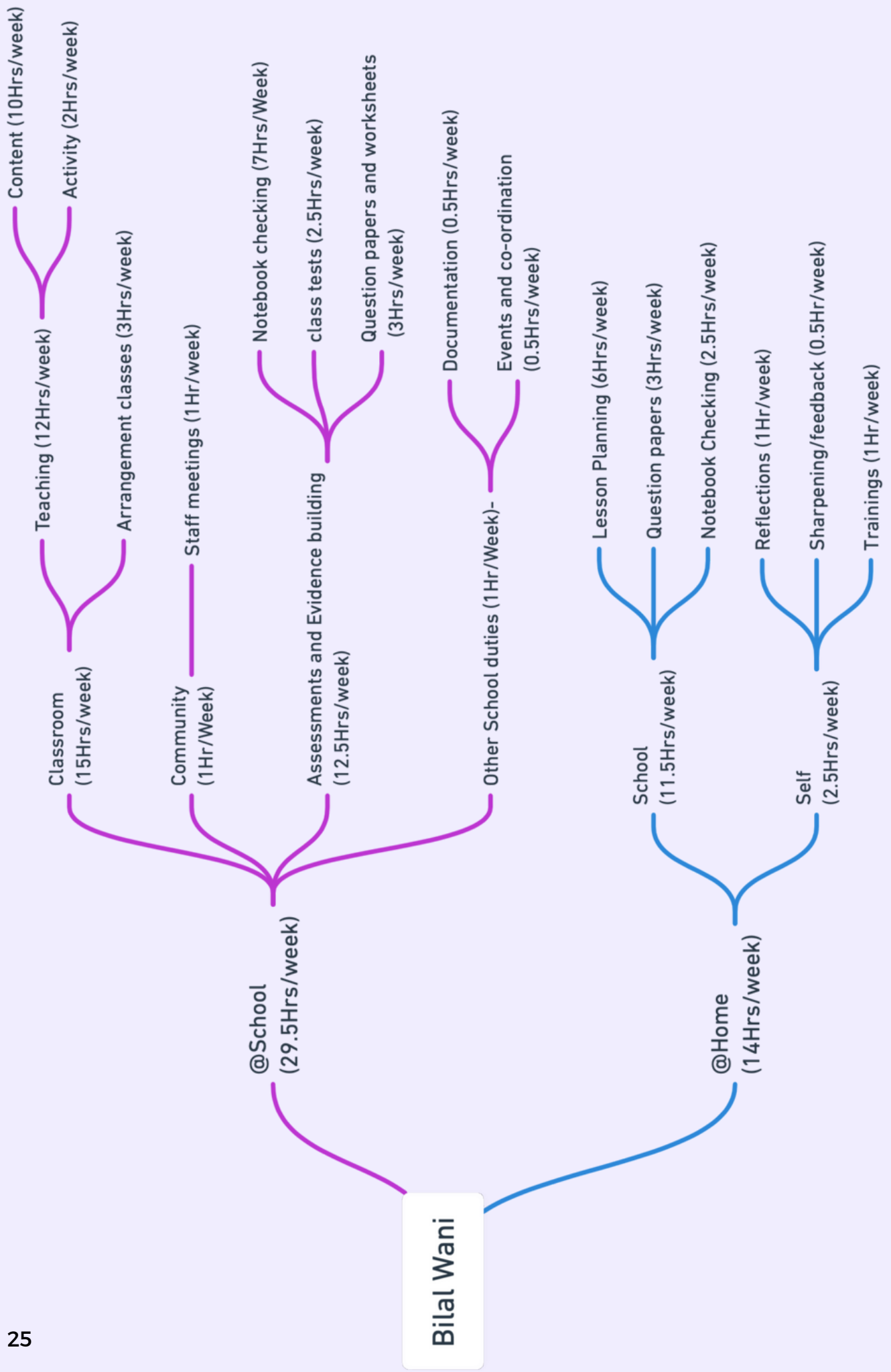
What are your key takeaways from the experience? What did you learn about your work, your students, your school, your communities, and yourself? What do you think you were able to achieve from the Year 1 tasks and goals?

Sreejith:

A year that passed by with extraordinary challenges and excitements , this was year one of Teach to ELICIT fellowship for me as a facilitator. The journey started with an on field training in Dolphin International school at Pulwama,Kashmir with facilitators and co fellows. As a person from kerala studied in delhi with no exposure to the conflict space of kashmir the training was the best way to understand about the experienced realities and narratives. As the journey shifted from training to classroom things changed dramatically. Initially it was very difficult to work and survive in this conflict space due to many reasons ,the major one was the cultural differences that include language and behavioural patterns in the society.its very difficult for me to compartmentalise my journey as self and classroom because for me teaching is an emotional activity which is an integral part of my self.

The most important learning takeaway of this year was about acquiring the professional skills of lesson planning and classroom management which is the primary necessity of a facilitator. Initially it was very difficult to find the connections between curriculum wellbeing habits and skill goals of the content which I was dealing with in the classroom as a mainstream school teacher. Later with continuous practice and mentorship from the organisers it became comparatively easy . The role of self reflection as part of the routine in understanding the limitations and strengths of classroom practice was huge. Next challenge which was very big was to create a democratic classroom culture which upholds values of ELICIT and me as an individual and with lot of trial and error methodologies finally reached to the system of privilege points as a positive reinforcement strategy to engage and motivate students in and out of the classroom ,and it really worked with most of the students by creating a space for mutual responsibility and collaboration in the classroom also with their academic performance.

The community building workshops were very limited this year due to several personal and technical reasons .To create a rapport with the teaching community was a difficult task most of them were not showing any interest in collaborating and learning but at the second half of the academic year one learning session was conducted and it had surprising impact which was not expected from my side .This experience is giving a positive approach to create more plans in the next year for the teachers . Apart from this a lot of informal engagements happened in the working space which created a huge impact within the teaching community in asserting their rights and duties as a facilitator.



What are your key takeaways from the experience? What did you learn– about your work, your students, your school, your communities, and yourself? What do you think you were able to achieve from the Year 1 tasks and goals?

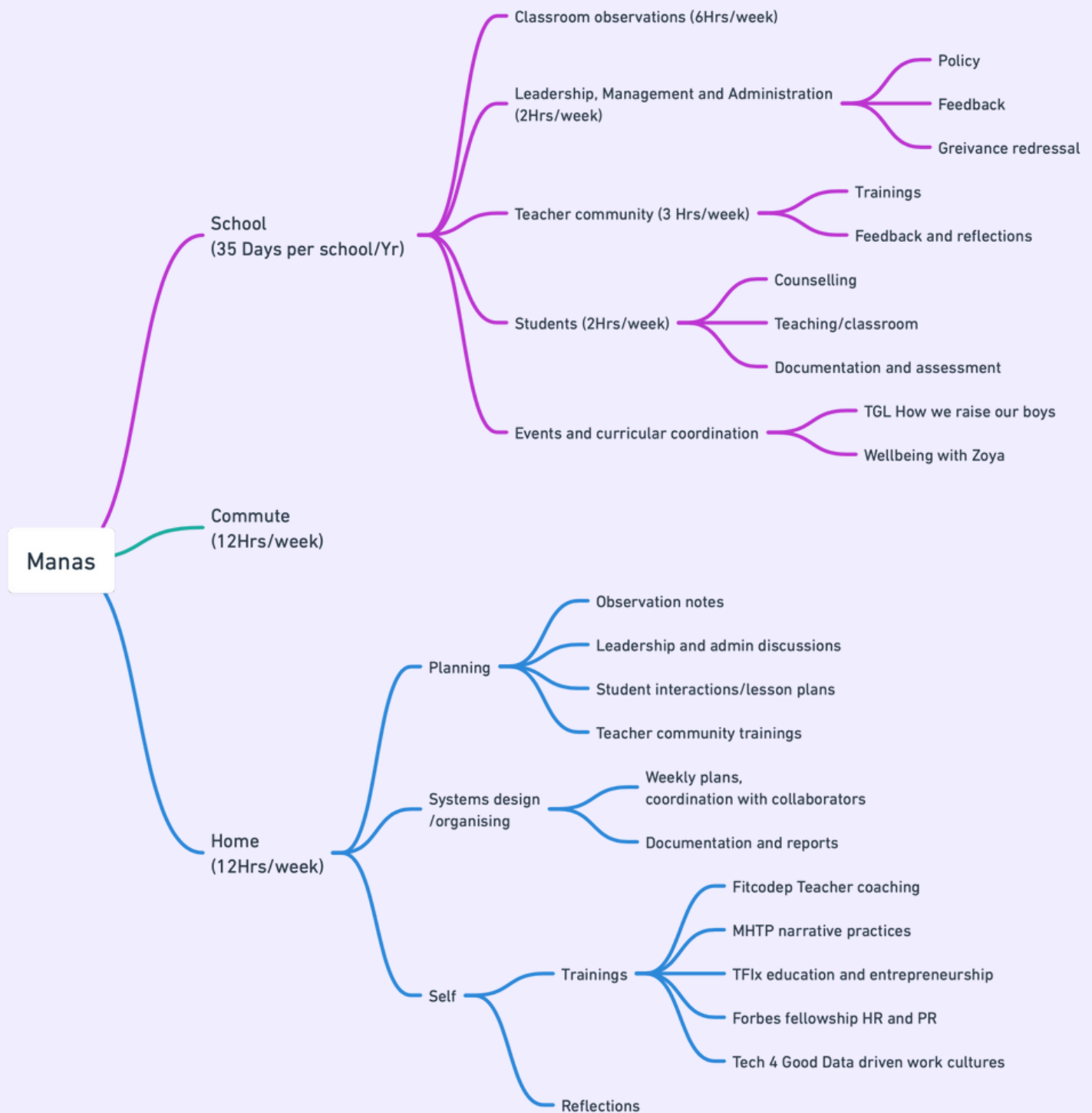
Bilal:

A year , full of stress and strife, passed under the aegis of ELICIT. It started with no ideas and ended with known ideas. The novel ideas like well being, student active engagement and teaching community collaboration paved a way for more opportunity and aspirations.

My classes before ELICIT used to be a teacher centered activity without any student engagement. It was a complete overhaul of my teaching practices, modifying from teacher centered to student centered class. The regular mentorship from the organization helped me to sharpen my skills as facilitator. My patience got much improved while interacting with the students and listening to their problems. I learned new tools for assessing students using different tools.

There was a huge improvement in the classroom management techniques I used this year which started from the deep understanding of ELICIT student curriculum. With the help of ELICIT, I created two major classroom cultures like 'Self Help Group' and 'My Story'. The former was created to help the low performing students and the latter to listen to the personal stories of the students.

In the community space I was able to collaborate with mathematics and english teachers to analyze the structure of lesson plans and evaluation. To build more connections with the teaching community, a comprehensive session was incorporated to assess the low performing students.



Reflective note from Program Manager:

This year was pivotal for my overall evolution. Having moved to Kashmir for work, through the ELICIT frameworks, I was able to not only hold space for my processes, but also for fellows, teachers, students and school leadership that worked with my organisation. The trainings I underwent unlocked agency in me that I used to navigate change and facilitate experiences that were needed for perspective and mindset shift that was needed for myself and people that I crossed paths with this year. The journey of truth-making revealed workings of my inner landscape and the outer landscape that I now influence with much more awareness and compassion.



Reportage from resource persons and collaborators



Thank you all for the amazing opportunity to work with Dolphin, NIPS, and Life School teaching permaculture principles. Coming in to this volunteer position, I was a little nervous because of being an outsider in Kashmir.

"I had heard stories of how there is violence and foreigners can be targeted. And this was also my first time working alone and creating my own curriculum. It forced me to step outside of my comfort zone, but that is the area where we truly grow, so it was healthy and I learned a lot."

I sincerely enjoyed my time there, I feel like the children I met were some of the nicest and most inquisitive students I have ever worked with. Quite a few of them were very passionate and kept asking questions, wanting to know more. The concepts I chose to talk about in the classroom were probably already understood by some but completely new to others. I think putting it into terminologies and teaching the thinking behind the decisions of farmers could make it more interesting to them. I hope to have at least inspired a few of them to follow a more sustainable model of agriculture in their future. However, I did find it difficult to handle group management with such a large number of students at once. Especially when we went outside into the field, things turned chaotic at times, with me running around trying to get kids involved or back on track. That was the most stressful part and I felt like the learning objectives were lost on a lot of them.

There were not enough tools for everyone, or not enough space for everyone to work, and I think some of the students did not fully understand my directions before we started. So maybe it would have been better if we could have had a small meeting with the teachers where I communicated exactly what I wanted to have happen in the field, and then they can talk to the students in Hindi or Kashmiri and explain the directions. In the future it could be nice to have more than two days with each school so we can go deeper into the topics. Overall, I appreciate my time working with you so much, and would be happy to return to check in on how the gardens are doing and reconnect with the schools. Best wishes for your new year!

-Patrick 'Pine' Sanders

Backpacker, freelancer, and a resource person on permaculture and farming ethics, after working with 300+ students over two-day workshops with each Teach to ELICIT partner schools.



Overall experience was wonderful because it was the first time we were also doing something like this, and that too in a region like Pulwama which was exciting. The highlight of the experience for me was that the space was really open to learn and engage, which is not the usual response one receives in a lot of such spaces from teachers, from the school, so its a matter of a lot of hope that people of an education system within a school space have a vision and they are willing to engage, and they're actively seeking to collaborate on these fronts.

Coming to the participants, the teachers were all engaging and open to learning and it also brought forward learnings for us from all the activities. Small transformations and shifts in participants and us and team ELICIT, the standpoints people come from, the regions, its histories was all interesting to learn from.

In terms of the workshop , a broad spectrum of learning was observed among the diverse group of participants. I remember Bilal Wani being a man who was trying to reflect and be vulnerable in the group. The relationship with violence and corporal punishments, looking at classroom cultures at the school made it interesting to learn about the systemic aspects of learning

We went back with a lot of reflections and questions to think about.

The conflict between faith and gender was visible. The conflict always remains across regions. How do we learn to navigate and learn to look at gender without challenging faith and belief systems, but look at it critically.

we thoroughly enjoyed, and it was fun to engage, and felt supported by team ELICIT that enabled us to do what we did.



"conflict between gender and religion, I think, would be the highlight of insight for us to think about, learn from and keep exploring in the time to come. We would like to collaborate for a longer term with ELICIT to unpack and address this collectively"

- Aleena Varghese

Facilitator, The Gender Lab, on conducting a workshop with 22 teachers from 4 ELICIT partner schools, on 'How we raise our boys' under their 'redefining masculinities' campaign.

Did you learn anything new from the discussions? Were your expectations met?

I learn a lot of things from this workshop. Everybody has right to talk and everybody listens carefully. Everybody was given their safe space.

Learnt new things. Expectations were halfly met. I would create an inclusive atmosphere in classroom where everyone's choice will be respected.

Yes, I did. I will let every children to share his/her choice openly

It was a great experience, for me that will help me in classroom while delivering lectures. I learned to give personal space to people to accept people as they are

I learnt in this workshop is that gender is a fluid concept. So it is inclusive. In my class from now onwards I will give a safe space to students so they could express themselves.

Create inclusive spaces in the classroom is an ongoing process which cannot be done in a day

Yes, I learnt many things and my expectations met. I will like respect everyone's opinion and let them learn at their own pace

How to handle situations differently. I learnt it, yes, my expectations met with the workshop. To respect childrens feelings

Yes, the thing I learnt is to give ample space to another person or individual while engaging with in whatsoever the set up is and this thing I really include in my work onwards

I feel safe because there is no judgment

Sexulaity is natural so why most of the people hesitate discussing it openly.

The workshop was in conflict with my ideology when we talked about the need to change the deep rooted notions regarding gender in the society

Anything else you'd like to share from your experience of having attended the workshop?

I accepted each and everything will all my heart. Because I know perspectives change from person to person. And I appreciate it.

More respectful to others opinion despite the fact it's acceptable for a progressive society or not

Every time interacting with the community Iam living in makes me more aware of my privilege.

I was thinking about the historical reasons behind the gender roles.

Reflections from participants of The Gender Lab workshop on 'How we raise our boys'



Assessment

Student

Assessing student progress in life skills of constructive resilience and wellbeing which help them respond to their situations of conflict and volatility. These skills are reflected in core habits that children kindle. Students were facilitated on building these core habits through a specially designed curriculum.

Hence this assessment is to gauge progress on various curricular aspects which eventually indicate their growth in these life skills, within self, class and community domains.

Fellow

With fellows, we have assessed their life skills of being able to take care of themselves in a conflict space, having uprooted themselves from wherever they are, and re-orient toward wellbeing and to teach constructively. These skills are reflected in their processes of evaluation, constructive dialogue, reflection and design skills within the domains of self, class and community.

Conducting student assessment



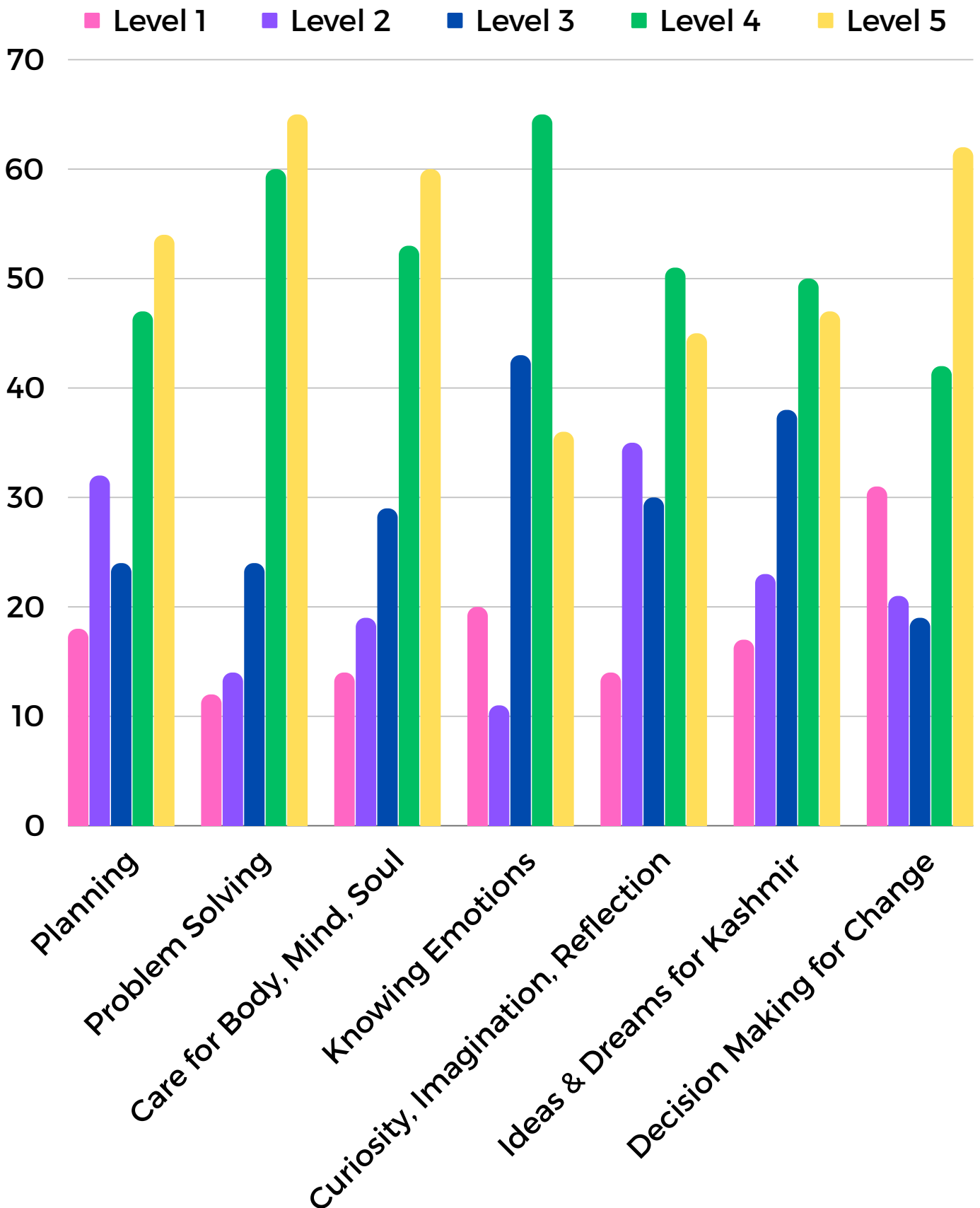
The student self assessment was an important activity carried out to gauge the impact of the efforts of their teachers and where they stand on the scale of 1-5 for all the skills and core habits they are trying to build in them.

Between the baseline and endline, we were able to document assessments of 211 students from 5th and 6th grade of two schools while they were being taught SST and English by three of our fellows each time. There was no assessment carried out in NIPS since the fellows quit around the end of first quarter. Out of 270 children in Dolphin and Life, that our fellows teach, a total of 211 remained present and participated in the baseline and endline assessments.

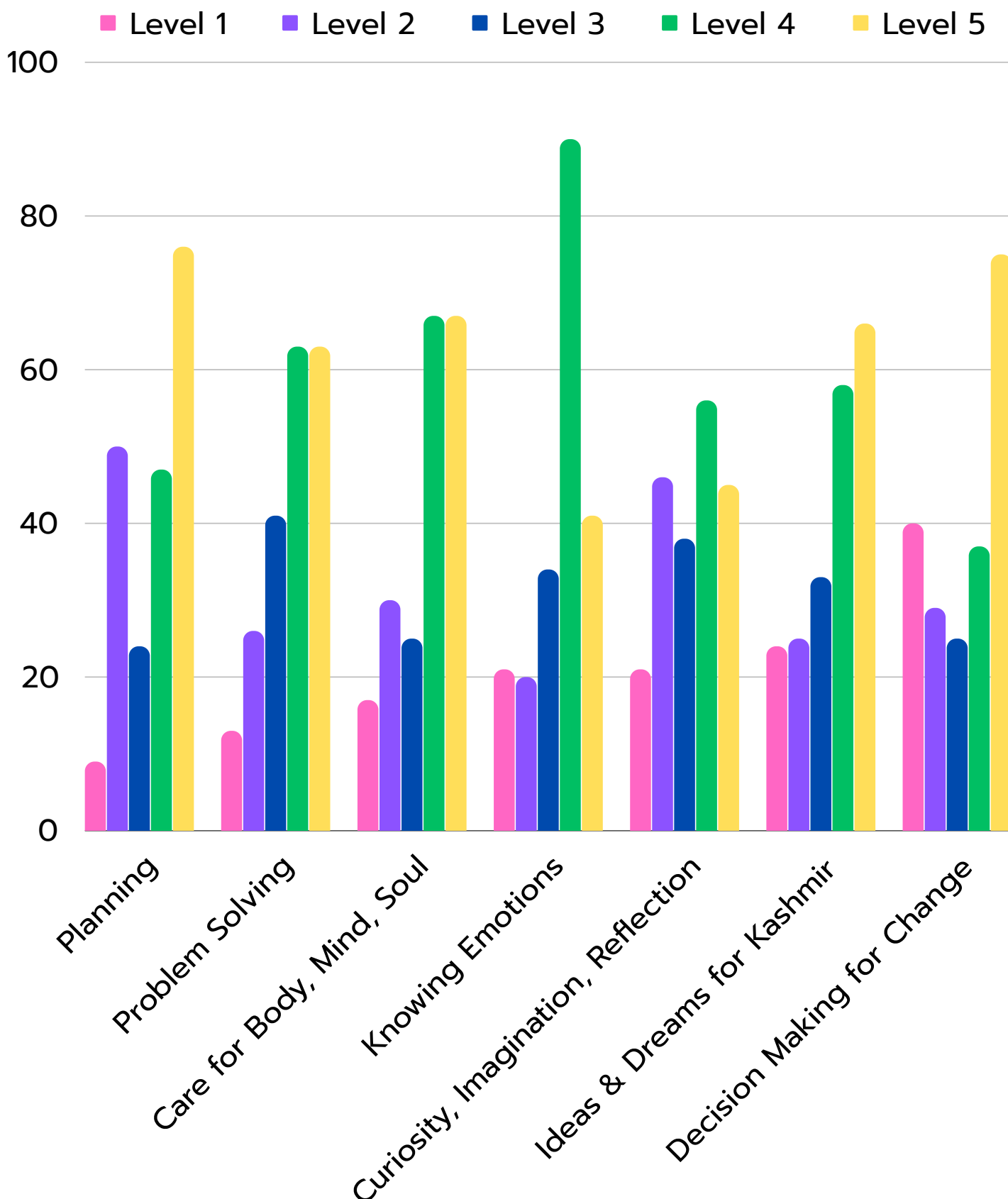
While conducting the assessment and its analysis, there were many insights that we gathered:

- Through self assessment, the students found it intriguing and exciting that they will be giving themselves stars to assess their learning and consciously participate in this reflective activity. They took the liberty to make it as personalised and as messy as possible through symbols and markings.
- There are a lot of children with invisible, unaddressed developmental disabilities that us or the school system don't have the resources to cater to as yet.
- If they had confusions, they were asked to justify their choices making it clear for them as to where they stand. Some of these are documented via video for social media publishing
- All responses have been double checked at the time of data entry to ensure accuracy.
- Students were very peculiar about their choices, asked a lot of questions about where and why they felt they stood, or why it changed.
- During the endline assessment, they had more context to this activity and also more insights from having observed their own actions to reflect honestly.
- There were a lot of students moving down from higher levels to lower levels between baseline and endline, having more awareness of what they are marking. A lot of students overestimated themselves in the beginning, which is why there are lesser students marking themselves at level 5 in the endline assessment.
- There was a lot of shuffling that happened between these two assessments between sections of the same class. Life changed to co-ed and back to gender based segregation between two assessments. Dolphin also moved students between sections after alleging them to have formed romantic relationships in their class. This made it difficult to keep track of assessments acc to roll number changes.
- These assessment sessions were facilitated by the fellow, and moderated by the program manager.
- In Life school, there have been 3 teachers who have taught, all of them not continuing toward the second year. This also created a lot of issues and also explained why the average level is lower at Life than at Dolphin.

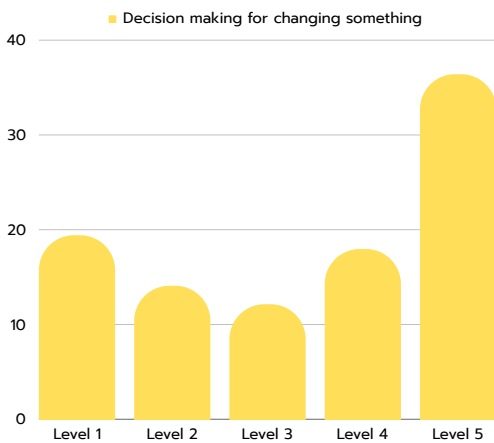
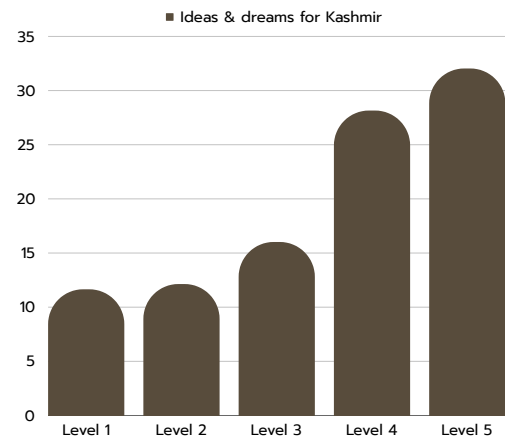
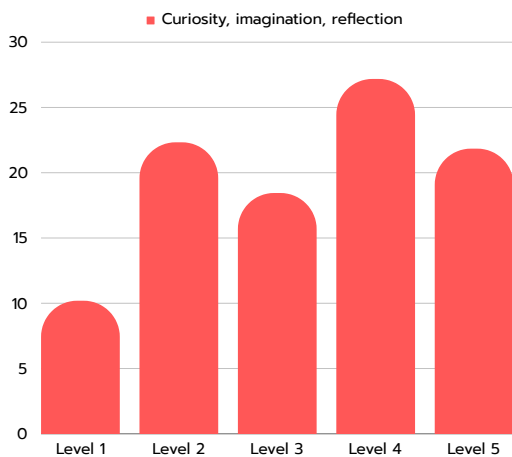
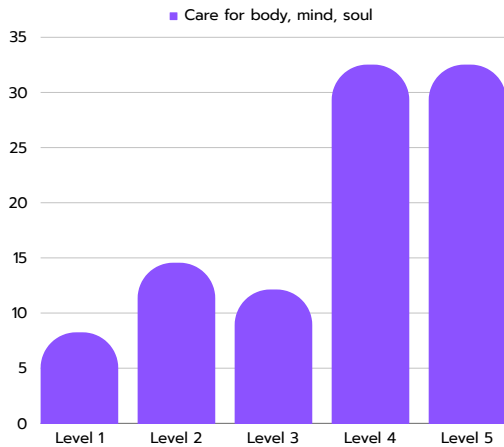
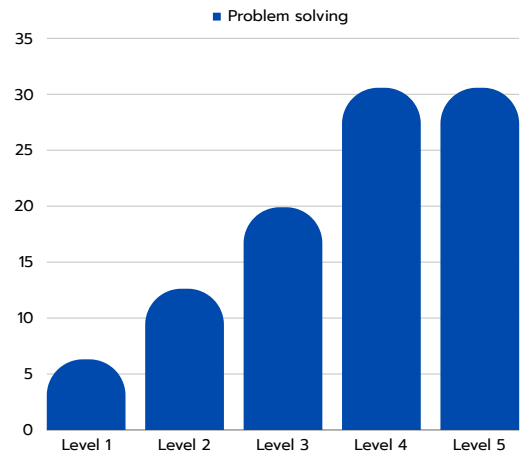
Following are visual representations of findings from the student assessment conducted in our classrooms:



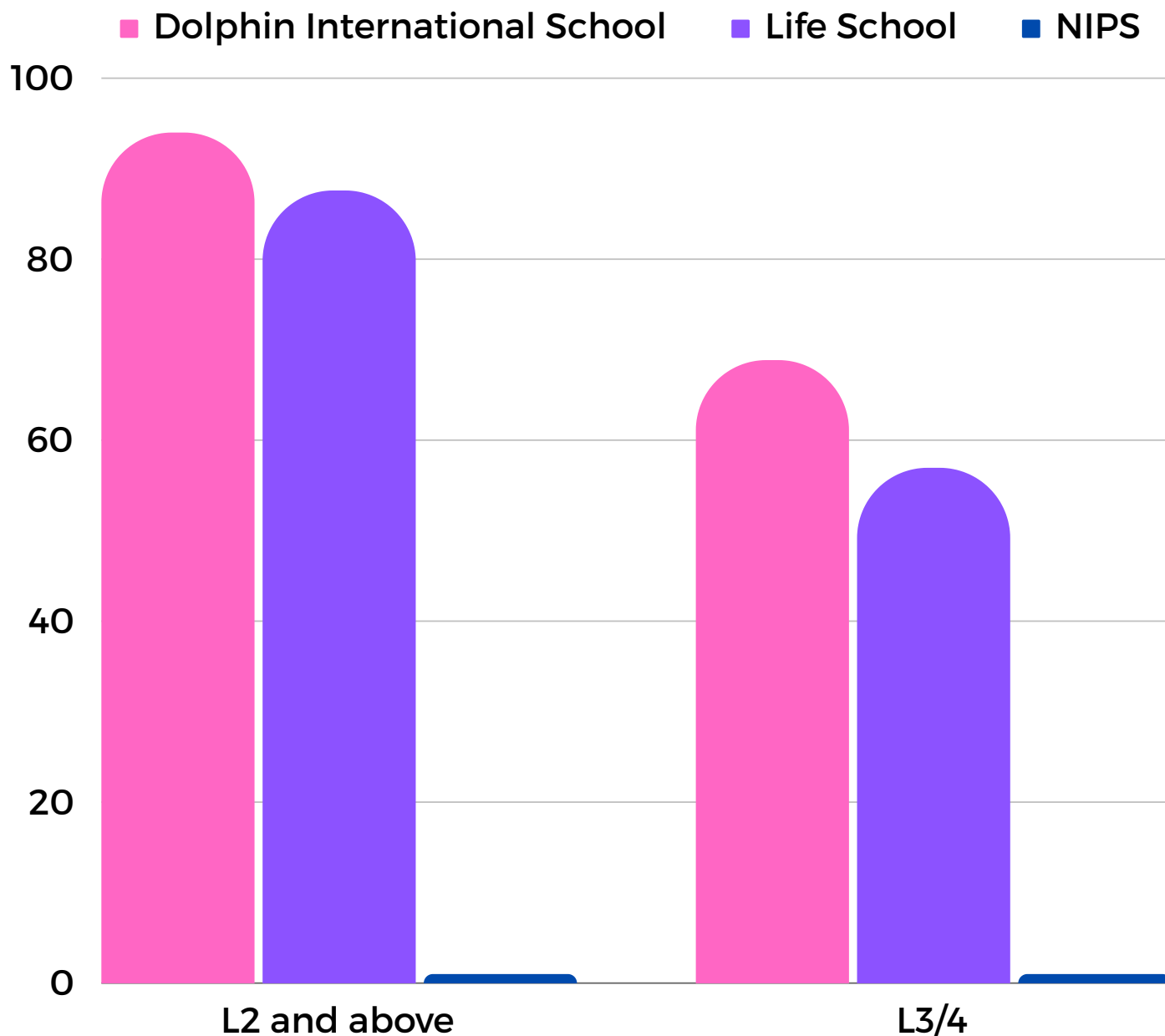
Bar graph representation of where students of DIS and Life place themselves within 5 levels of learning in each aspect during **base-line survey**.
Refer annexure 1.1 and 1.2 for the grade-wise student rubrics.



Bar graph representation of where students of DIS and Life place themselves within 5 levels of learning for each aspect during the **end-line survey**.
Refer annexure 1.1 and 1.2 for the grade-wise student rubrics.



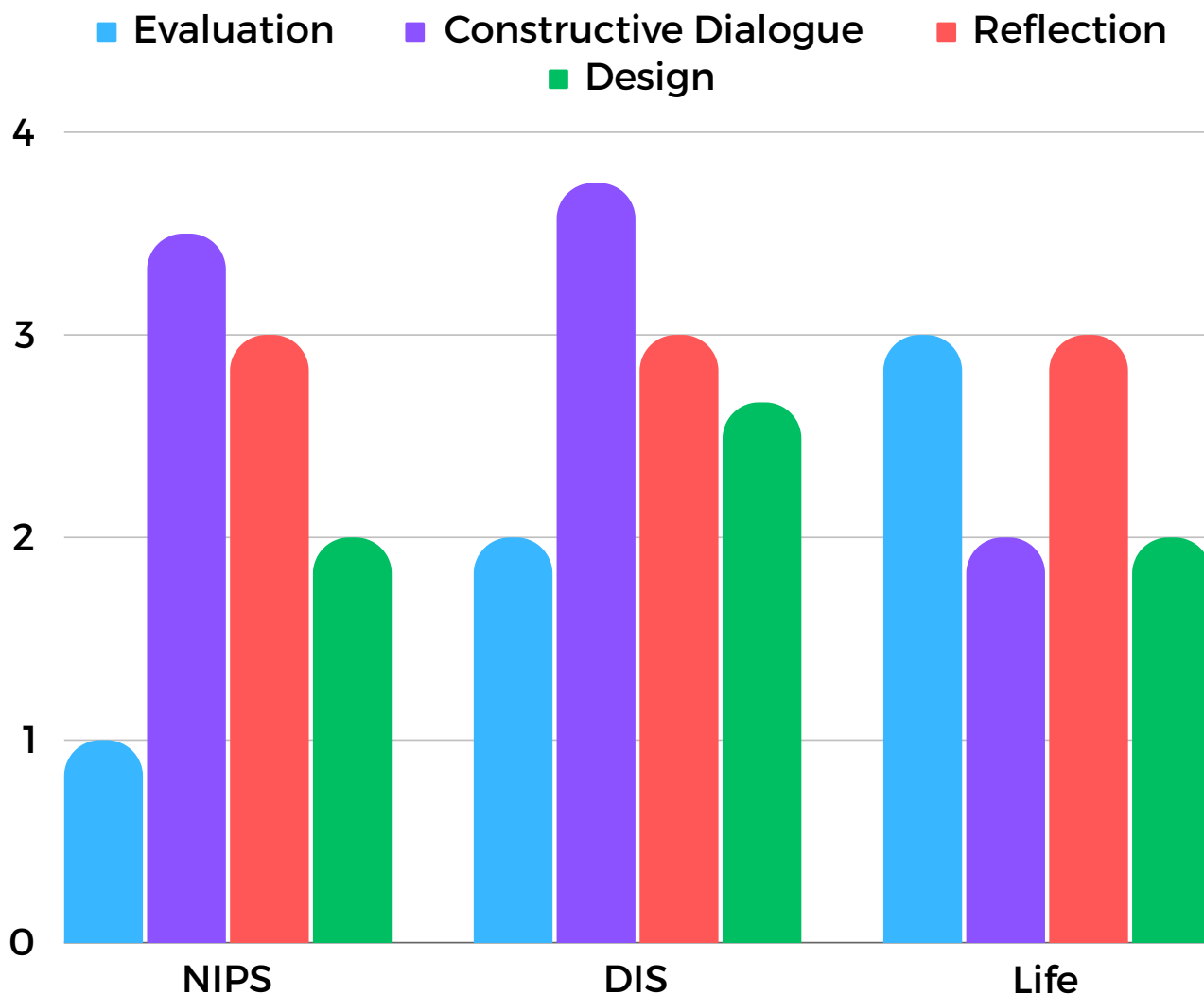
Bar graph representation of percentage of students at each level in every aspect individually during the **end-line survey**. Refer annexure 1.1 and 1.2 for the grade-wise student rubrics.



Bar graph representation of school-wise comparison of percentage of students throughout all aspects

Findings from student survey

- **Total no. of students in each aspect** remain similar during baseline and end line studies. Interestingly, they are not the same students. A lot of students who marked themselves at higher levels of learning during baseline study, moved to lower levels, and students at lower levels marked themselves higher.
- Students at Level 2 or above: **87.9%**.
- Students at level 3 or above: **48.6%**
- Students at level 1: **19%** feel least confident in '**decision making for changing something**', followed by **11%** in '**Ideas & dreams for Kashmir**'.
- Students at Level 5: **36%** feel most confident in **skill of planning**. Classroom cultures like weekly study plans, and transparency of lesson plan and agenda with students contributed to development of this skill.
- More than 60% students placed themselves at level four and five for 'Problem solving' skill which comes from cultures and structures implemented by fellows and students collectively, like classroom constitution, privilege point system for performance and behaviours, rewarded with sports period once a week. 6% students feel they are still at level one of 'problem solving skills'
- Comparing the assessment school-wise, **93.9% students in Dolphin** evaluated themselves to be on level 2 or above throughout all aspects on average, where the percentage stands at **87.5% students in Life School**. Similarly, where 68.8% students show movement towards Level 3 and 4 in Dolphin, 56.9% students of Life School exhibit the same movement. This could be because of the stability of ELICIT teachers in classrooms at Dolphin, whereas in Life, they saw 4 different teachers at different points of time throughout the academic year.



Evaluating community relation work

Assessment on the Community Domain of all three schools was conducted to evaluate efforts put by fellows towards building of a teacher community of change agents as a part of their curricular goals.

The assessment included: Sreejith and Bilal's work at DIS; Prutha's work at Life School + TTE's learning circles at NIPS after the fellows dropped out.

Strengths:

- At DIS and NIPS Fellows' ability to build constructive dialogue in the teacher community are at significant learning
- Reflection is an area of consistently increasing strength
- At Life School the skill of evaluation was most strengthened

Concerns:

- Evaluation as a skill needs work both at NIPS and DIS.
- There is scope for improvement in the aspect of design at NIPS and Life School.

Conducting fellow assessment



Fellow assessments were conducted through one-on-one interviews, self evaluation in the domain-specific rubrics and moderated by Lopa and Manas.

Prutha joined during the mid year assessment, and the rest of the fellows quit the program during the first quarter, leading to Bilal and Sreejith participating in assessments for both quarter 1 & 2.

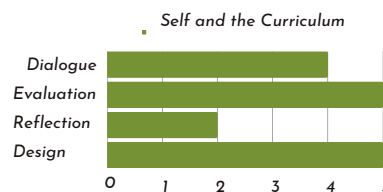
Antara, our documentations intern visited us in Kashmir to note minutes of these meetings and created the following scorecards from insights shared by them.



Shivani is no longer with us as a fellow.
Some aspects that contributed to her leaving:

IMPACT OF SELF PERCEPTION IN CLASS

Shivani exhibited an eagerness for immediate change, which, regrettably, caused her to allocate inadequate time for the children to fully express themselves. Consequently, so me students felt unheard amidst the multitude of voices in her class and the absence of a clear approach to address these concerns. Furthermore, Shivani experienced occasional frustration when confronted with diverse opinions, particularly when she perceived limitations in her ability to resolve or "solve" the personal challenges faced by her students.



CHALLENGES IN TEACHING



In the classroom, there were instances where opportunities to harness the students' energy were missed, resulting in noticeable gaps. While she maintained a certain level of control over the classroom, it was occasionally overshadowed by the use of threats to leave the class as a means of maintaining order.

FOSTERING CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUE

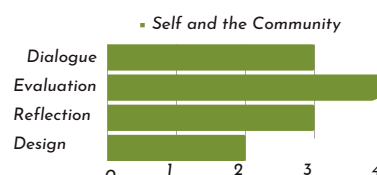
Approaching the situation with a sympathizing perspective, she inadvertently overshadowed the students while attempting to convey her ideas. However, she occasionally introduced captivating improvisations into her lesson plans based on the curiosity displayed by the students. But, there was room for her to further cultivate and leverage this strength.



Untapped potential



Overshadowing





Uzma is no longer with us as a fellow.
Some aspects that contributed to her leaving:

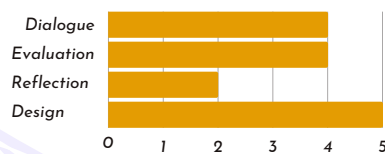


IMPACT OF CONFLICT ON SELF WORTH

Uzma, a former fellow, is from Kashmir. This setting, had a profound impact on how she perceives herself in various dimensions, growing up amidst this environment of tension. Subtle gestures could include, speaking over students and reacting negatively to constructive feedback. In class, we saw how she recognized the significance of preserving a classroom culture but stands as the lone advocate for upholding this. Therefore making it difficult to keep it constantly flowing and involving all the students to uphold basis shared values.

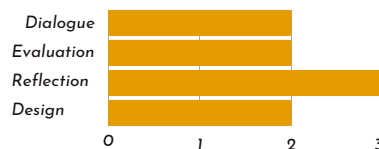


SELF AND THE CURRICULUM



CHALLENGES IN TEACHING

Self and Class

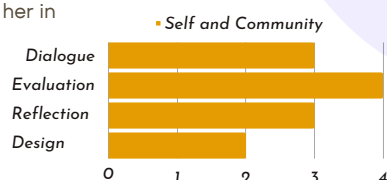


Uzma while working, endeavoured to identify what genuinely excited her students, connected with their interests and created an engaging learning environment that captured their enthusiasm. However, at times, students in the 5th and 6th grades felt patronized by her approach. And there was a need to foster a culture of constructive dialogue amongher students.



FOSTERING CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUE

The activities in her classroom were not challenging enough for her students. Although she incorporated well-being into her teaching practice and content, she struggled to effectively convey the importance of this aspect. Her personal experiences posed challenges for her in maintaining a sense of objective detachment and security when interacting with her colleagues.



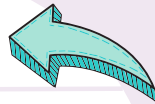


"I choose to
LEARN, EVOLVE and DEFINE MYSELF"

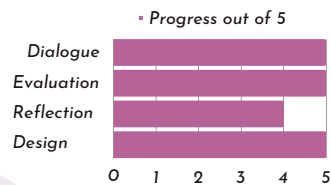
Shafkat endured a bitter experience at school, facing instances of *corporal punishment* amongst others. Regardless, she obtained a Diploma and a Bachelor of Technology in Civil Engineering. Hearing about Elicit, she initially expected her job to focus on assisting specific students. However, ELICITs' *holistic approach* to transforming the educational experience for everyone motivated her further.



SELF AND THE CURRICULUM



My past mindset was one of strong opinions and impatience. But there was a *Positive shift* through the curriculum: View failures and challenges as valuable feedback. Fueling the desire to improve the educational experience for students.



"Pressurised with expectations at school and home, I never experienced the concept of trust. I seek to build that for my students- A relationship of mutual respect"



SELF AND THE CLASS

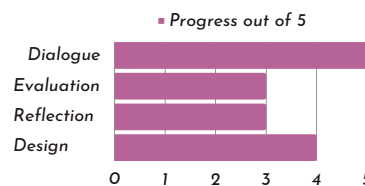
"A boy was curious as to how a girl I gave flowers to got them and asked her. A teacher witnessed their conversation and mistakenly assumed the girl was giving flowers to the boy, slapping the girl. Surprisingly, what stood out was the subsequent class discussion where everyone freely expressed their thoughts without fearing my reaction."



Open Communication

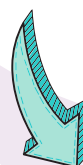


Diverse perspectives and growth



SELF AND THE COMMUNITY

Dealing with other teachers in my school has been challenging. They employ inhumane methods that I personally experienced during my own school years. I created a poster on corporal punishment. "However, someone recently tore down the poster, and now I'm uncertain about the overall progress and relationship with the other teachers."



"This is why I want to keep going. Create a space for both the children and myself that makes us more resilient"



Shift in attitude



Acceptance





Prutha quit the program in November.

"Violence is normalized as a disciplinary tool. Shockingly, even students advocate for its use to bring about change, because that is all they have seen."

Prutha joined this fellowship quite recently and is still navigating moving to a new city and profession. She is a visual artist from Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh, and envisions the fellowship as an opportunity to foster a safe and empathetic co-learning space while actively addressing grassroots issues. By embracing democratized mediums of interaction and collaboration, she aims to facilitate meaningful engagement and dialogue within her artistic practice.

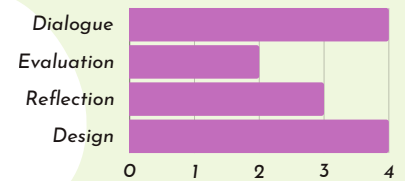


SELF AND THE CURRICULUM

I am actively learning the importance of adapting quickly to different environments. One crucial aspect of this adaptability is being able to handle situations when my planned lesson and the mood of the children do not align, or when unexpected obstacles arise. In such instances, it is essential to know how to effectively manage these challenges within the limited time I have with the class.

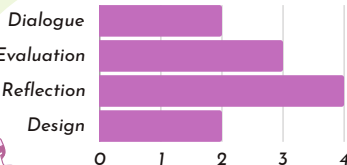


Adapting



SELF AND THE CLASS

"Since the first day, students were curious about my religion as I don't cover my head. To address this, I organized a class activity where we collectively created a new religion through democratic discussions. We established beliefs, rules, and ideas together. Now, the students greet me in their way, followed by a "Namaste." One student even mentioned that this gesture symbolizes the mutual respect cultivated through my kind language and non-authoritative approach in the classroom."



Activity based learning

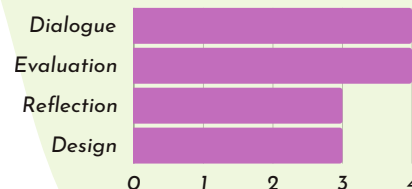


Mutual respect



SELF AND THE COMMUNITY

Some teachers have made an effort to approach me, greet me, and expressed interest in my teaching methods. However, it is only recently that even male teachers have started acknowledging my presence. As a newcomer, I believe there is still a significant journey ahead in terms of building better interactions with my fellow teachers.



"Discipline may be key for other teachers, but it isn't my sole goal. This divergence in focus sometimes creates a gap."



Sreejith, choosing to work instead of pursuing a PhD after graduation, applied for the fellowship. His primary objective was to gain exposure to a new world, but the first induction training led to profound personal stories, overwhelming losses, and a recurring theme of fear being wielded as a weapon against students. It became clear that there was a pressing need for a curriculum that prioritized cultivating a life beyond these stories, empowering individuals to rise above their circumstances.

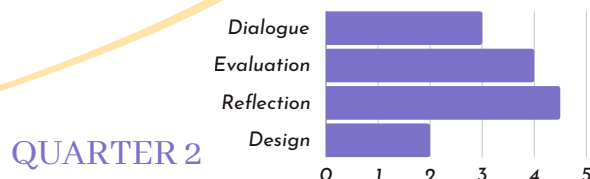
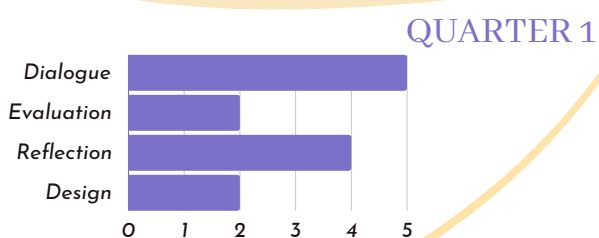
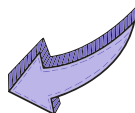


SELF AND THE CURRICULUM

Skill development: creating comprehensive plans and executing them effectively. Including designing reward systems.

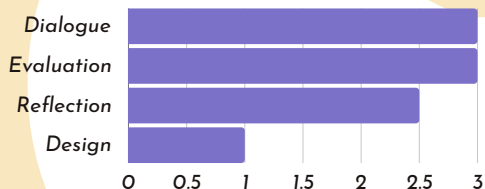
Challenges as an outsider: there remains a slight difficulty in building the exact classroom culture I envision. Finally the exposure to a completely different community and their struggles.

"To reach students, I need the insight of an insider instead of being viewed as an outsider on a pedestal."

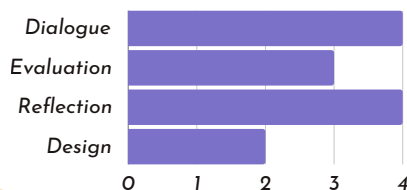


SELF AND THE CLASS

QUARTER 1



QUARTER 2

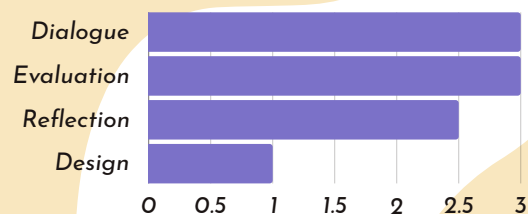


"Well Being is always seen as an extra-curricular however, with this curriculum, well-being becomes a part of the teaching process"

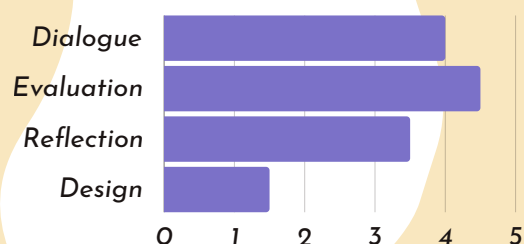


SELF AND THE COMMUNITY

QUARTER 1



QUARTER 2





"At times, my heart resonated with my students, reminding me to reflect upon fairness in my actions."

Bilal dedicated approximately 14 years to teaching in various schools, utilizing his spare time for either working on his land or providing private tuition. Supporting his parents and finance became a significant motivation for him to join the team, but little did he know that this decision would lead to tremendous personal and professional growth. Not only did Bilal witness a remarkable transformation in his teaching methods, but he also experienced profound personal development along the way



Growth

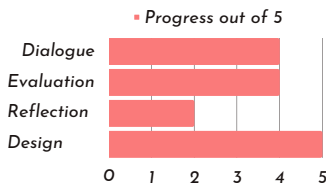


SELF AND THE CURRICULUM

Transformation and Adaptation:

Recognizing that violence, which I was accustomed to, was prohibited by the curriculum, I had to gradually change my methods and find alternative approaches to discipline.

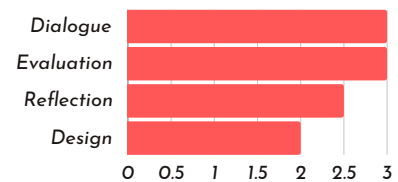
Growth and Adjustments: As a result, I learned valuable lessons on how to better handle situations, gradually transitioning from being rude to students to adopting more positive and constructive approaches in the classroom.



QUARTER 1



Transformation



QUARTER 2



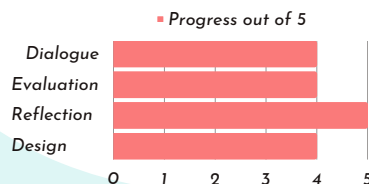
Liberty



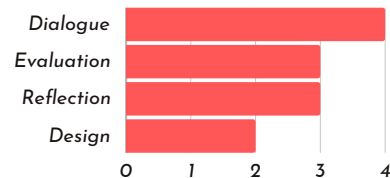
Activity based learning

The implementation of activity-based learning in my classroom has significantly heightened student engagement. A safe and inclusive environment has been fostered, as students feel comfortable approaching both me and the fellows to share their personal stories. It seems that by providing them with the freedom to express their thoughts openly, we have given them a newfound sense of empowerment and voice.

SELF AND THE CLASS



QUARTER 1

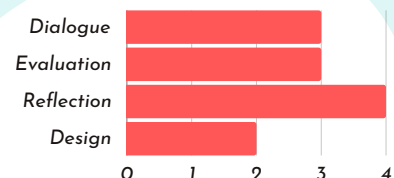
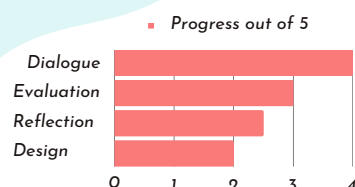


QUARTER 2



SELF AND THE COMMUNITY

"While some of my fellow teachers are still hesitant to embrace these new methods, I can empathize with their initial reservations since I had similar concerns at the beginning. However, it is essential to acknowledge that not all teachers share this resistance. By consistently nurturing a safe and understanding environment among ourselves, we can facilitate a positive change that benefits both students and teachers alike."



Looking back, Going forward

A Fellowship Manual: An onboarding kit, with a tentative timeline, clear compliances and a guide for working in Kashmir is under construction. In this manual, apart from routines like lesson plan opening and closing, daily tracking progress, and weekly reflection and documenting, quarterly assessments and even use of social media for celebration will be a part. Insights from all reports and documentation of the pilot year have given the pilot cohort a perspective of their journey that was difficult to access during the daily grind.

All policies and protocols will help us onboard the fellows with articulated responsibilities during their tenure. This also helps us identify intersections between their dreams and aspirations and our envisioned impact. We plan on unpacking each- code of conduct, child protection policy, the declaration of commitment, and code of ethics to understand the constitution of the project and uphold the movement in every moment spent at the school.



Hiring: for the next academic year that begins in April after their board/final exams in March, we have received 114 applicants, with more applicants from Kashmir. Instead of an interview and a focused group discussion, this time the shortlisted applicants from responses to questions in forms will submit an assignment, lending insight into their perspective and ways of looking at the world, followed by a group discussion observed by a panel, an interview, and an in-person training before they are placed in their schools. We are also looking at placing only Kashmiri fellows in certain partner schools looking at their capacities to host outsiders. These decisions will be made once we review the applicants in depth.

School partnerships: There were a lot of changes in the aspect of school leadership, with Dolphin having changed their supervisors and principal, Life not having a person dedicated to principal duties, and NIPS, where the principal quit right after the fellows points at having a robust collaborative system that runs by onboarding any supervisor or principal onto the program smoothly. Supervisors also need to be oriented towards the ELICIT ways of work so that they can take up more responsibilities of keeping fellow teachers accountable regarding their duties and their involvement will help finding a balance between school duties and fellowship mandates. Having spent one year at these schools, we have better frameworks and tools to keep the school system in tandem with the fellowship progress. Many terms of collaboration are also better understood by all stakeholders to comply and integrate the program with due diligence.

Documentation and research: From research to reflections, every step of any intervention will be categorically documented for our research and knowledge building aspects of the fellowship as we close each project execution. Onboarding of fellows into this process right from the beginning will be another aspect of building a data driven culture.

Contextual trainings: Learnings from executing the first year of Teach to ELICIT fellowship program have already helped us create a blueprint for experiences necessary to be able to work in the context of conflict.



Looking to the future, before we close, what is it that you plan on doing, changing, working on, to be able to sharpen your strengths and work on your weaknesses? How do you feel about the self, class and community goals and tasks for Year 2 of the fellowship, based on your experience so far?

Sreejith

As a Teach to Elicit fellow there is always a space for learning and growth. With a proper design of routine based reflections and documentations, the challenges I faced and the strengths I acquired is very clear, this foundation is helping me to think of the second year of the fellowship which is the most crucial one.

The classroom management practices and culture which is already in place needs modifications because most of the practices started in the second phase of the academic year and had its limitations so a fresh start will help in engaging more with the students. In the first year it was very difficult for me to create a routine for daily tasks and practices but in the next year this problem can be solved, most of the tasks in the first year felt difficult to complete but when looking back with proper routine and structure it will do fine in the coming year. In the classroom, different departments to take care of mutual responsibilities have been set up at the end of this year and students have a limited understanding of the same. This culture can be continued with more participation of the students in the coming year.

Teaching community learning sessions were limited the previous year with a lot of technical limitations and planning. In the coming year with proper planning and practice at least one session per month can be conducted with major focus on teaching community collaboration and formation of a teachers union that will create a democratic space for teachers identifying their needs and responsibilities. A space where communication with the management and teachers can be easy and direct.

Bilal

Although, a lot of skills have been mastered in the initial year yet there is a lot more to sharpen them. A routine based task list has to be built in the next year to reduce the workload from both school and organization.

Some classroom cultures need to be incorporated to push up the low performing students to have pace with higher order thinking skills to improve their behavioral patterns. More emphasis needs to be given to improve the connection between the wellbeing content and the skill goals to cater the interests of the child.

More learning sessions with the teaching community need to be incorporated to achieve better facilitation in the teaching learning process. More attempts to be taken to share the ELICIT based lesson plans and evaluation strategy with the teaching community.

Teach to ELICIT- a visual note

Sreejith talking about his one year journey

Bilal talking about his one year journey

Videologs



In solidarity with the Teach to ELICIT movement



the
gender
lab

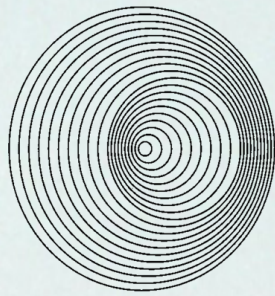


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