

Mid-Year Report 2019-20

Officer Professional Development

January 2020 | Pune



TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of abbreviations	2
Executive Summary	3
Introduction	4
Past Six months	5
People	14
Partnerships	15
Looking Ahead	15
Appendix	15

List of abbreviations

Acronym	Expansion
OPD	Officer Professional Development
LFE	Leadership For Equity
MSCERT	Maharashtra State Council of Education Research and Training
RAA	Regional Academic Authority
PDF	Professional Development Forum
PLC	Professional Learning Community
DIET	District Institute of Education and Training
AY	Academic Year
Samarth	Blended Officer Development Program
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
NEP	National Education Policy 2019
PGI	Performance Grading Index

Executive Summary

The four words with which we can describe the first half of the academic year 2019-2020 are **research, planning, design** and **implementation**. The OPD team works towards developing the capacity of academic and administrative officers in Maharashtra State. In the first half of AY 2019-20, the LFE OPD team worked with the officers at MSCERT and RAA (Nashik, Nagpur, Amravati, Mumbai and Aurangabad). There are two major interventions that our team is working on -

Professional Development Forum: Creating a periodic structure for the officers to come together to learn and share from each other with a focus on knowledge, skills and developing a positive culture

Samarth: implementing a blended officer development program where officers take online courses, participate in online webinars and attend in-person PLCs.

One big learning, that came through our work with MSCERT for the last three years, has been the need to organize periodic structures for officers' continuous professional development. Additionally, the limited time that the officers were able to give for their professional development was a big constraint. To address both the issues LFE team started the year by conducting extensive research to learn from the field and design an effective program.

An intensive need analysis study was conducted, where 987+ officers participated in the online survey and 25+ officers participated in the focussed group discussions, in-person interviews and shadowing visits. The OPD team created a detailed process document and involved more than 15 members of the organization to conduct the focussed group discussion and in-person visits. The study focused on finding out current responsibilities, challenges and support areas required by the officers. The main challenges stated by the officers during the study included **excessive administrative workload, lack of streamlined communication between different stakeholders, unclear job descriptions, lack of personal and professional development opportunities** and a deep desire to **improve the IT skills for data collection and knowledge management**.

In the first half, the OPD team has also conducted a total of 8 PDFs that received an average rating of 4.4 out of 5. Officers in their feedback also appreciated the importance of coming together on a regular basis to share and learn from each other. To be able to understand how to deliver the blended program, the OPD team first conducted a prototype with the MSCERT officers. A total of 20 officers voluntarily enrolled in the prototype batch and took the module on 'how to conduct remote meetings'. The prototype received an average rating of 9 out of 10.

The team, based on the findings of the need analysis, is currently in the process of completing the three courses - Team Management, Designing Effective Online Courses and Monitoring and Evaluation. The course will be launched after mid-February 2020. A total of 120 officers are expected to enrol in the Samarth Program. The OPD team is excited to implement both the programs (Samarth and PDF) in the second half of the academic year.

Introduction

We are a systems change and research organization that supports governments with structural and implementational reforms to improve the quality of education at scale. LFE's fundamental belief is that Public Education Systems are by definition 'gatekeepers' of equity, and effective and sensitive public systems will ensure that quality education is provided to every child. One of the core focus of LFE is to strengthen the academic and administrative cadre of officers in the state with improved knowledge, skills and mindset to design and lead effective academic & administrative programs and drive effective people management structures.

From our extensive but humbled understanding of education departments across the state, district and local bodies in Maharashtra, the 3 broad issues for officer performance seems to be the following:

- Lack of knowledge & skills to design and drive effective people management structures and support their team members to achieve departmental objectives
- Lack of the knowledge & skills to operate standardized processes for designing, implementing and monitoring programmes - both administrative and academic
- Lack of conducive and safe platforms for officers to collaborate, share and learn with other peers (officers) on a continuous basis

LFE through its Officer Professional Development Vertical wants to co-create programmes with the government department to ensure that:

- the officers feel motivated, engaged and aligned with policies and processes and take ownership and drive effective academic improvement programs
- the support structures for teachers are effective, leading to improved classroom practices
- the education programs are effective, thus leading to improved student learning outcomes

This is achieved through the following two programs:

- 1) **Professional Development Forums:** A periodic structure where officers regularly meet to build a sense of community working towards a common goal through sharing their successes and struggles, reflecting on them and problem solving together through knowledge and skill development sessions.
- 2) **Blended Officer Development Programs:** Certification programs where officers take online courses, attend in-person professional learning circles and attend virtual webinars.

Past Six months

The following key activities were conducted in the first half of the Academic Year 2019-20:

A] Officer Need Analysis Study

The main objective of the officer needs analysis study was to identify the challenges that the officers at levels in academic and administrative domains face on a day to day basis. The study also focussed on identifying key enablers and disablers for officer effectiveness. Moreover, the exercise focussed to understand how support, accountability and motivation go hand in hand for officer professional development.

The Following three-step need analysis process was designed to get a 360-degree perspective of the current reality:

- Online Survey: 987+ officers across the state participated in the survey
- Focussed group discussions: 2 rounds of focussed group discussions
- Shadow visits and interviews: 25+ officers opened their doors to us to understand the roles, responsibilities and ways of working of different cadres of officers and to grasp the ground realities and challenges through understanding a typical day in their life.

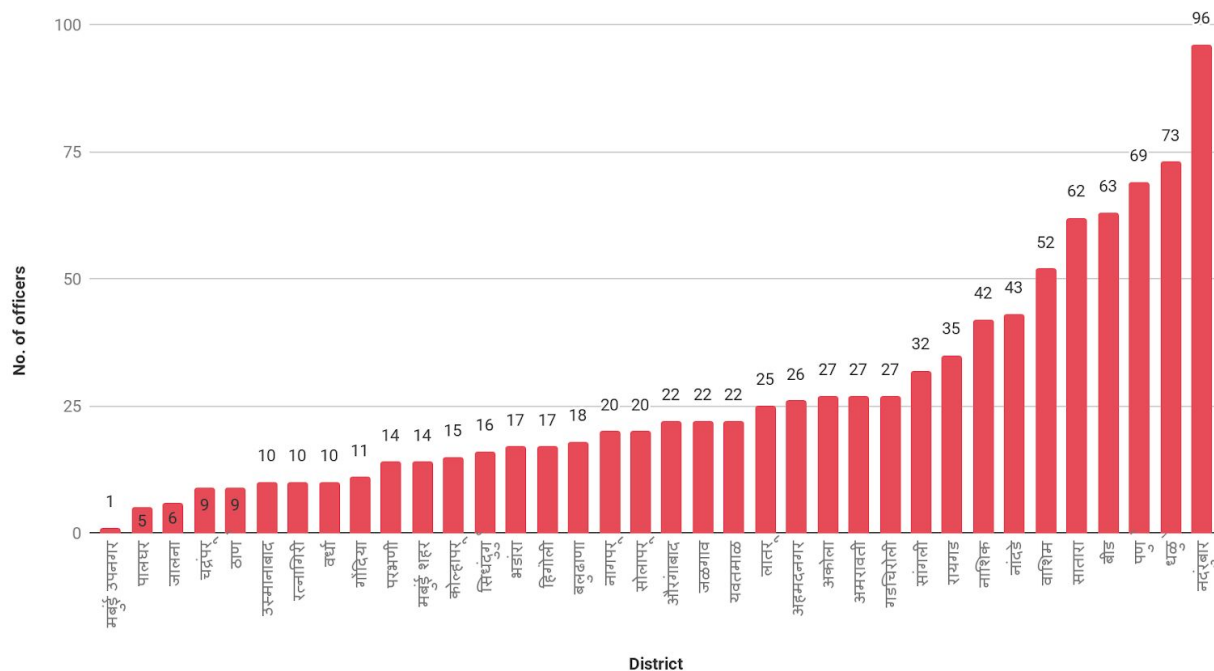
The study focused primarily on data collection in the following 5 broad buckets of professional development These buckets have been driven based on the longitudinal observation of LFE team members working with MSCERT and at district level over the last 2 years.

Program leadership	People leadership	Administrative leadership	Personal leadership	Instructional leadership
All aspects of program design, measurement, operational planning, program review and course correction, communication and coordination	Managing a team, coaching and mentoring, building a positive team culture, Effective feedback, Team reviews	Knowledge and application of standard operating procedures, Documentation, understanding of relevant GR's	Managing self and time, use of technology for improving self-efficiency, self-awareness and reflection	Understanding of tech integrated pedagogy, Classroom observation and debrief, session planning and facilitation, creating resources
RATIONALE				
A Government GR for evaluation of class-1 officers states several parameters an officer should perform well on. The parameters when combined largely fall into 3 main buckets of program, people and administrative leadership.			-We believe the core of professional development is centred out of personal willingness to learn and do more. -Many studies* have mentioned that for maximum achievement, the teacher educators and administrators should also have the knowledge of pedagogy and teaching.	

District Wise participation in the need analysis exercise:

Officers across the state from 36 districts participated in the study through online survey link, shadowing and focus group discussions. The participants in this exercise were chosen across cadres of EO, BEO, Extension officer, KP, DIET lecturer, SCERT HOD, RAA representatives and Vishyasahayaks. A well spread out sample of officers was chosen to reflect the ground realities in the analysis.

Nandurbar district had the highest number of respondents from a total of 987+ responses.

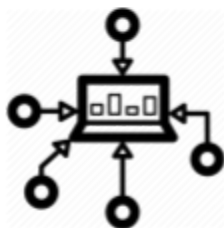


The following areas were identified through the Officer needs analysis exercise:

The major training needs that were requested by officers across cadres are:



Documentation and
Knowledge
management of
existing data



Impact Evaluation of
programs through
effective structures



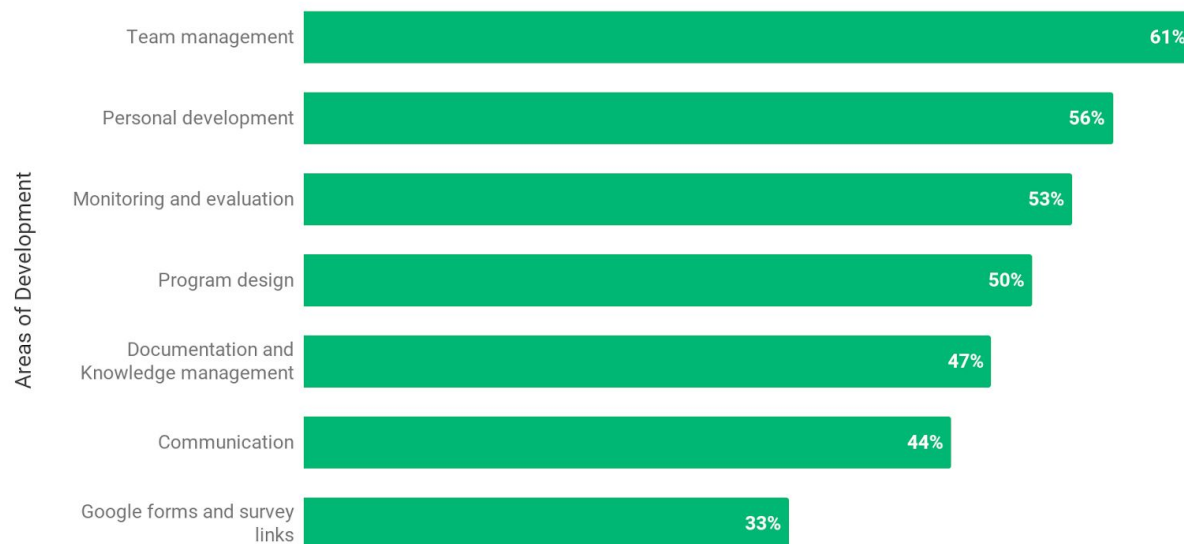
Personal development
through managing self
and time



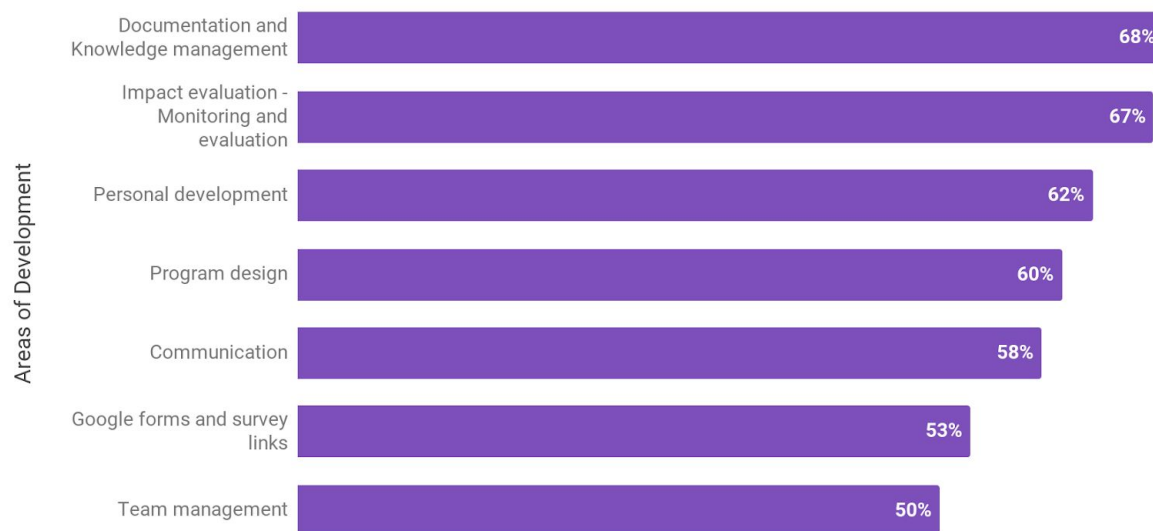
Team Management
through building
effective culture and
coaching

Following were the other key findings of the need analysis exercise:

61% of BEOs find 'Team Management' as a most important skill for their self development.



~70% of DIECPD officers stated MnE and Knowledge management as the top 2 areas of support.



**Structured use of Peer learning for learning and development interested
all cadres of officers.**

~87%

officers find it comfortable to share a learning space with their peers.

~72%

officers were interested in accessing online courses coupled with in-person training

~70%

officers would like to access online courses on their phone/computer

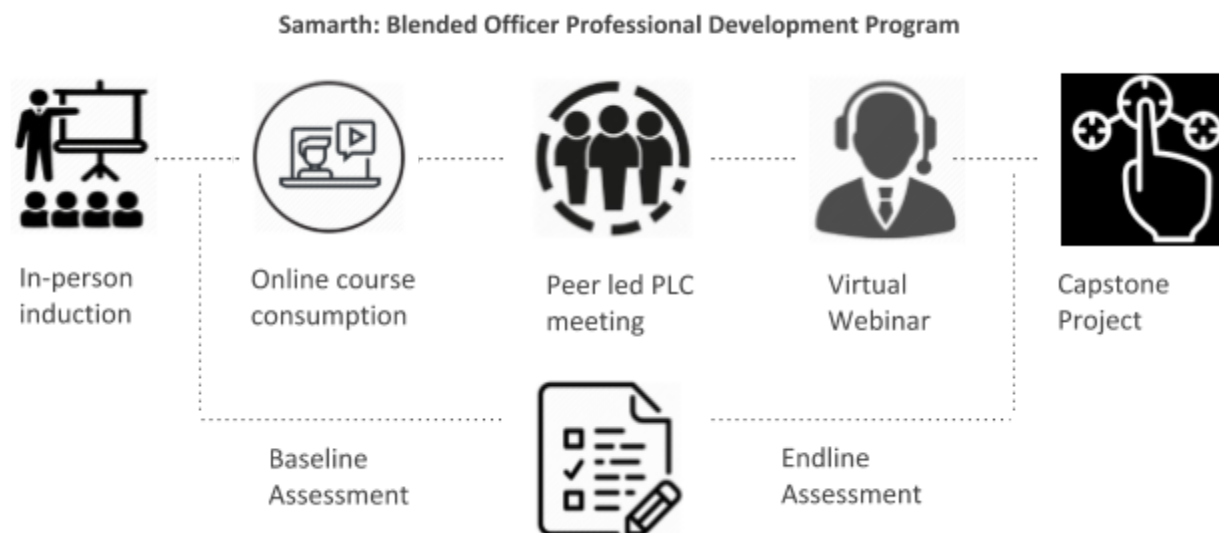
*Calculated for interviewed officers



Image: The Officer Need Analysis Report 2019 was launched by Avinash Bhosale Sir, Joint Director, SCERT on September 16th 2019

B] Samarth - Blended Officer Development Program

One of the key hypotheses that were validated through the officer need analysis exercise was that nearly 70% of the officers were keen to take online courses on their handheld devices. Samarth is a blended officer development program created by LFE with an objective to provide hands-on contextual knowledge and skills to the officers. The Samarth program has the following components:



Samarth Launch:

The Samarth Program was launched by the hands of the Education Commissioner, Maharashtra State. On September 24th 2019.



Image: Samarth Program launched by Mr Vishal Solanki, Education Commissioner, Maharashtra state

Samarth: Online Module Creation & Indicative Timelines

The LFE team has invested considerable time and effort to develop online modules. A total of 3 courses are being developed - Team Management, Designing Effective Online Courses and Monitoring & Evaluation. Each course has a total of 3 modules each. The team is following an 8 step process to develop the storyboard for the courses:

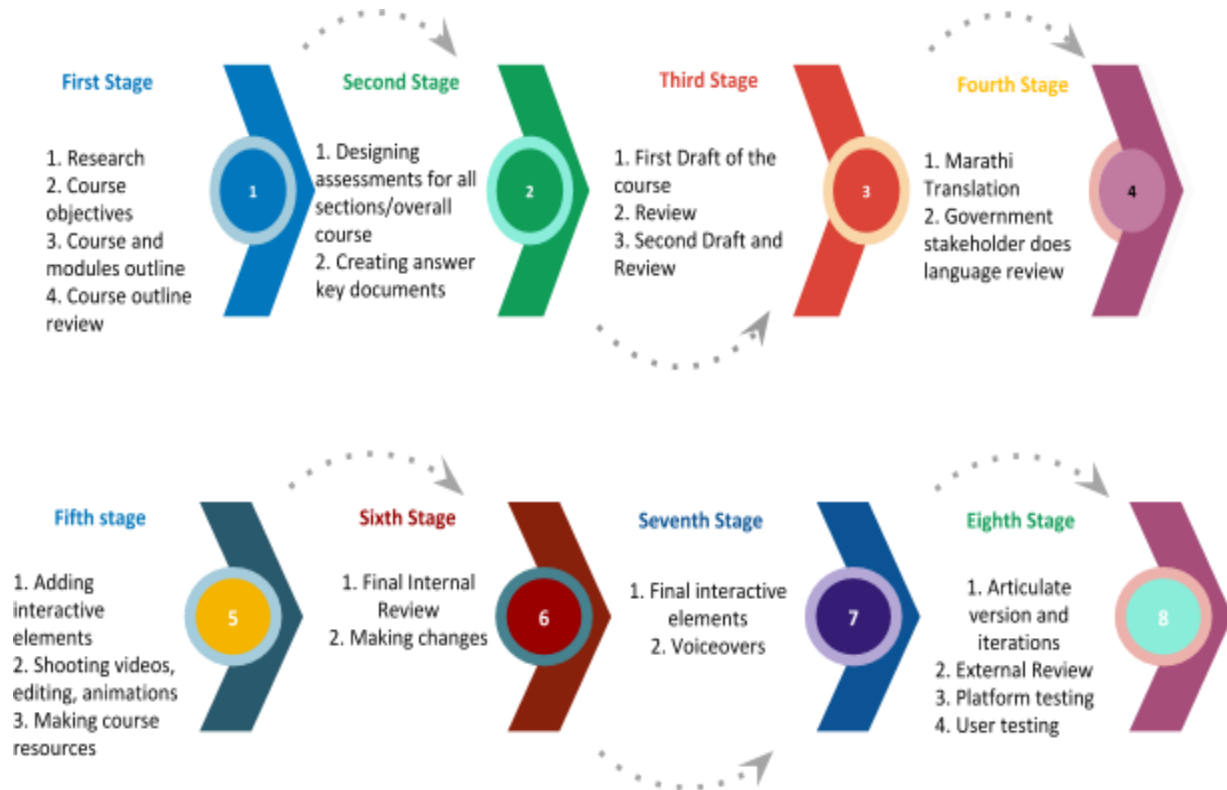


Image: Storyboard development process followed by the LFE OPD team

Online content Creation process

Samarth Prototype:

LFE team conducted the Samarth Prototype with the following objectives in mind:

- Understand the online course consumption by officers and improvements
- Finalise the structure of the overall program
- Understand the implementation of PLC structure and peer learning
- Verify the usage of online platform and finalize

A total of 20 officers enrolled in the prototype batch. The topic of 'How to conduct remote meetings' was selected for the prototype module based on the requests received from the MSCERT officers. The online modules were uploaded on the Firki platform that provided an option to access the course from a portal as well as a mobile application. The output module was created on the Storyline (Articulate). Of the 20 officers enrolled, 17 completed the online module and 13 out of the 20 officers conducted a remote meeting using the learnings from the online module.

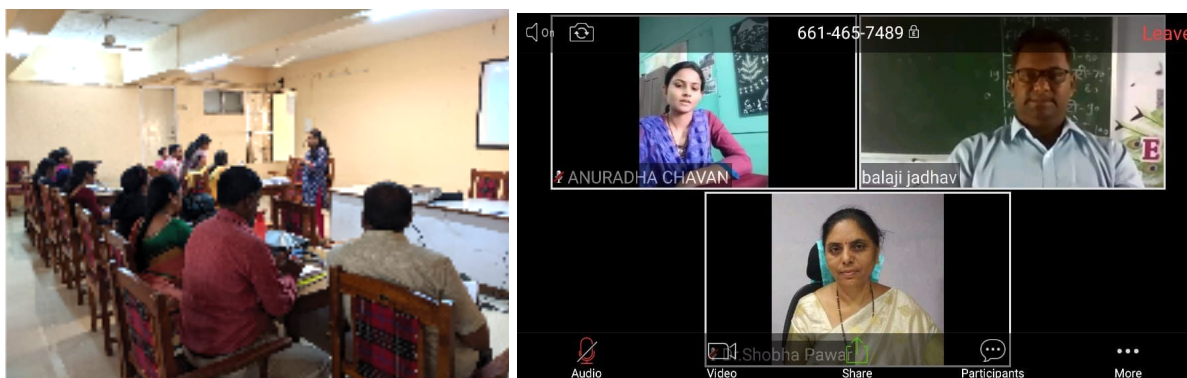


Image: 1 - Samarth Prototype batch in progress. 2 - Officers conducting remote meetings

Samarth: Prototype Feedback

The LFE team conducted a detailed end of the prototype feedback process. The feedback received has been extremely encouraging.

90% officers said they will recommend the program to their peers.



Overall Experience and Support

90% officers

"My queries were addressed immediately and resolved as soon as it was possible during the program implementation."

80% officers

"I learnt from my peers during the PLC meeting."

75% Avg rating

"I Felt extremely supported during the entire duration of the course."

80% officers

"The content covered was delivered in an effective manner to build my understanding."

“Officers Speak

"The whole environment created in the in-person orientation meeting was very good. It focussed on learning together and made us comfortable in our PLC group."

-Mrs. Saraswati Suryawanshi, HOD, IT Department (MSCERT)

"I really liked the concept of using CFU after videos in the course, I have seen certain course of the Urdu department which were mostly in only video format. Having CFUs made sure that we are engaging with the videos and text of the course. It was a good way to build engagement"

-Mr. Tausif Parvez, HOD, Urdu Department (MSCERT)

"The case studies given to us during the orientation person meetings were very useful to relate to our context and helped us understand the overall idea of the course. The templates in the online course were useful for us to plan our meetings later and we still use them actively! I'm looking forward to the next course and would recommend this to my peers."

-Ms. Anuradha Chavan, Equity Department (MSCERT)

"The content of the online course was very relevant to our work and we could immediately apply the learnings. Also, having an in person practice element by actually conducting a Demo online meeting in the PLC helped me realise how much planning goes into conducting a meeting. It helped me clear my doubts."

Mr. Arun Jadhav, CPD Department (MSCERT)

C] Professional Development Forums (PDFs)

PDFs are a periodic structure where officers regularly meet to build a sense of community working towards a common goal through sharing their successes and struggles, reflecting on them and problem solving together through knowledge and skill development sessions. It is a space for officers to work towards their professional development by sharing their learnings and challenges, brainstorming on them with their peers. The platform focuses on peer learning and leveraging the expertise and skills that lie within their group which enables better team coordination and culture as well

LFE team conducted 8 PDFs in the first half of the AY 2019-20. A total of 110 officers attended the PDF across MSCERT and RAA (Mumbai, Nashik, Nagpur, Aurangabad and Amravati). Topics covered included discussions on National Education Policy (NEP) 2019, Performance Grading Index (PGI), developing a positive team culture, etc. All the PDFs have received an average rating of 4.45 out of 5 on the usefulness of this structure.



Sunil Magar Director, MSCERT interacting with officers during a PDF



RAA Mumbai Director and Officers attending the PDF, 13 Sept 2019



RAA Amravati Director and Officers attending the PDF, 5 Oct 2019



RAA Nashik and DIET Officers attending the PDF, 1st Oct 2019



RAA Nagpur and DIET Officers attending the PDF, 5th Oct 2019



PDF structure being appreciated in Mumbai Newspapers

People

The OPD program would not have reached the scale and the depth it has without the support of the CPD Department at MSCERT and the leadership at MSCERT and the State.



**Mr Vishal Solanki, IAS,
Education Commissioner, Maharashtra State**

The support provided by Vishal Solanki Sir has been the key to drive innovation and adoption for technology integrated capacity development initiatives for the officers. Solanki Sir has played an instrumental role to handle any challenges faced on the field. He launched the Samarth program and also has given his video bytes to be integrated into the online course modules. He is a true inspiration for all of us and we look forward to his continued support in the future as well.



**Dr Neha Belsare,
Deputy Director, MSCERT**

Neha Ma'am has been a constant support to the LFE team. She is extremely rooted to field realities. She has been a guide to the OPD team and has played a key role in the design and implementation of PDFs at MSCERT and RAA. Her inputs in the Samarth course design and prototype execution were crucial for the success of the program



CPD Department

The trio at the CPD department - Arun Jadhav (Sr. lecturer), Pradip Dhokale and Mahendra Bagade are the pillars of support to the project. They have been involved in the field executions and have travelled with the LFE team to organize the PDFs. Their investment and involvement in the program has helped us to ensure smooth operations of the program

Partnerships



Maharashtra State Bureau of Textbook
Production & Curriculum Research, Pune



About Firki

Firki, an initiative by Teach For India, is an online platform to host courses, webinars and learning groups. Firki offers an automated system that allows the users to track and analyze their progress, contribution, and learning. Firki has partnered with LFE to host the courses developed by LFE on its platform and provide a closed learning group for the officers enrolled in the Samarth Program.

Looking Ahead

- Complete the online courses on Team Management, Designing Effective Online Courses and Monitoring and Evaluation
- Enrol 120 officers in the Samarth Program
- Conduct at least 4 cycles of PDFs with the academic and administrative officers

Appendix

- [OPD Theory of Change](#)
- [Officer Need analysis report 2019](#)