

Mid-Year Report 2019-20

Advisory and Advocacy

December 2019 | Pune



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List of abbreviations

Abbreviations	Full form
LFE	Leadership For Equity
MSCERT	Maharashtra State Council of Educational Research and Training
DIET	District Institute for Education and Training
RAA	Regional Academic Authority
AA vertical	Advocacy and Advisory vertical
EO	Education Officer
GR	Government Resolution
RTE Act	Right To Education Act 2009
Govt	Government
Dept	Department
BEO	Block Education Officer

Executive Summary

Leadership For Equity (LFE) is a systems change and research organization that aims to help strengthen the effectiveness of public education systems. At LFE, the fundamental belief is that Public Education Systems are by definition ‘gatekeepers’ of equity; and effective and sensitive public education systems will ensure that quality education is provided to every child. We work closely with Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC), Pimpri Chinchwad Municipal Corporation (PCMC), Nashik Zilla Parishad, Maharashtra Education Department through SCERT and Balbharati.

Along with project verticals of LFE like Students Learning Development (SLD), Officers Professional Development (OPD), Teacher Professional Development (TPD); LFE has two cross verticals also whose main role is to support project verticals for creating a healthy and supportive atmosphere for project outcomes. The names of the cross verticals are Advocacy and Advisory (AA) and Research, Monitoring and Evaluation (RME).

In the past 6 months, the AA vertical has been working with a focus on 3 key ideas that includes -

- **Co-creation** - We as LFE, co-create government programs by leveraging existing resources
- **Multiplier Effect** - We as LFE, work on capacity building of officers and teachers, so as to multiply their impacts
- **Rooted on - ground** - We as LFE, continuously incorporate the learnings from our existing and past projects into our future programs

The Mid Year Report 2019-20 is focused on presenting the key priorities, goals, activities for the period of **June 2019 - November 2019**.

Introduction

The Advocacy and Advisory vertical (AA) of LFE has dual functions. The first one is ensuring the smooth functioning of the currently running verticals and the second is establishing LFE as one of the core and important stakeholders in the education sector. The larger goal of the vertical is to engage with policymakers to multiply the impact of our existing programs and process by institutionalizing at the highest levels of policy. It works with an understanding of the following three major objectives -

- a) Ensuring **smooth relationships with different govt.** bodies and doing a health check-up of LFE's relationships with govt. stakeholders
- b) Propelling the impact of LFE's projects through our govt influence, and thus in-turn **influencing the govt. to have policies which include learnings from the ground**
- c) **Influencing the larger ecosystem** (of NGOs and CSRs) through mutual learning forums, conferences, communication, and project learnings

Past Six months

The focus of the Advocacy and Advisory vertical for the last six months was divided into four main areas

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a) Project Management –

This was mainly focused on regularising the project activities by getting all actions in a place, like getting all needed permissions from government departments, stakeholders on board for project objectives/priorities, etc. The result of this was that all the verticals of LFE have started on time and are now being smoothly executed.

b) Stakeholders Management (internal and external) –

This is a focus area of advisory and advocacy vertical, where LFE has regular touchpoints with all stakeholders within government as well as with the partners to not only get current reality checks but also inputs for the next course of action. Thus it was also projected into a good progression of all verticals. With external stakeholders, LFE had contributed to various conferences. LFE was one of the members of the RTE forum from Maharashtra which is an informal group of where different NGOs from the education sector come together to discuss current education affairs. Recently, LFE participated in a debate organized by the RTE forum, Maharashtra on presenting inputs on the proposed National Education Policy 2019. It was a great learning experience for LFE to get to know the functioning of various NGO's and partners and their valuable inputs on the policy.

As an organisation, we invest heavily in the role of the teacher and firmly believe that a teacher is central in ensuring educational equity in public education systems. Keeping this as a focal point, on the occasion of Teachers Day, we celebrated by sharing some of the best practices of the teachers we are closely associated with and emphasizing on the need for corporate partners and non-profit organizations to invest in the public system. Mr Atul Kulkarni - Noted Marathi Actor and Trustee of QUEST, Mr Vishal Solankhi - Education Commissioner, Maharashtra State, Mr Ujwal Thakar - Chairman Of Educate Girls and Mr Murugan Vasudevan - Head of Innovation & CSR at CISCO India were our chief guests for the conference. They shared their views on the significance of the teaching profession in the 21st century with the participants at the event.



Mr. Atul Kulkarni, a renowned film actor and Trustee of QUEST had chat with participants at the event



(Panel discussion on the Role of Teacher and Teaching profession in the 21st Century with Mr Vishal Solanki, Maharashtra Education Commissioner, Mr Ujwal Thakar, Chairman of Educate Girls and Mr Murugan Vasudevan, Head of Innovation & CSR at CISCO India)

c) Support on Policy creation –

As of now, LFE has established the credibility of its work among Government stakeholders thus we have always been invited by government bodies to support and co-create various policies on state levels. Within the last 6 months, LFE has helped the education department through SCERT in drafting 8 Government Regulations (GR) on various subjects out of which 6 have been passed by the state government are now being executed across the state. Some of these are as follows -

- 1) E-Governance Cell
- 2) School Twinning
- 3) Urdu Shikshan Parishad
- 4) Seasonal Hostel Guidelines
- 5) SMC and SMDC - Three months meetings subjects
- 6) Activities in schools for Child rights and safety

LFE has also drafted the School Management Committee (SMC) Policy and Child Policy for the state along with creating job charts of all officers from SCERT, Education Department and DIET which is in the pipeline to be approved.

d) Support Government Officials as per need/demand –

As Government officials are the key stakeholders of LFE's work, we support them on academic level and capacity building level. In lieu of the current, Draft New Education Policy 2019, LFE helped SCERT in organising seminars for officials to discuss the proposed policy and drafted recommendations which were submitted to the centre. These included recommendations from all the 33 DIET's officials, SCERT officials, Education Commissioner and Principal Secretary of Education Department, Maharashtra state. This was submitted to the Human Resource Development Ministry (HRD), Central Government in Sept 2019.

In Sept 2019, one of our team member Rahul Suvarna was invited to assist the local administration in conducting SMC meetings, Shikshan Parishads and Gram Sabha meetings in Panchgani and Mahabaleshwar. In total, Rahul helped organise 8 SMC meetings, 4 Shikshan Parishads, and 2 Gram Sabha Meetings. This was highly appreciated by the Education Department, Satara.



(Mr Rahul Suvarna, LFE team member while talking with officials and SMC members during one of the school visits at Mahabaleshwar, Satara)

Unique Performance Review of Officers from SCERT, Maharashtra state

The Government Resolution dated October 18, 2017, on the restructuring of SCERT identifies the need for strengthening SCERT, RAAs, and DIET's and building their capacities to support the changing nature of leadership and assistance expected from them. It also establishes the grounds for conducting performance reviews as a pivotal component of ensuring staff accountability at the apex body for policymaking in school education and its district-level outfits.

The Second Officers Professional Development Review for class 1 and class 2 officers from SCERT and RAA were conducted in Oct 2019, where the following process followed. The main objective was to build a healthy work culture at the office level by implementing the same performance expectations through the review process.

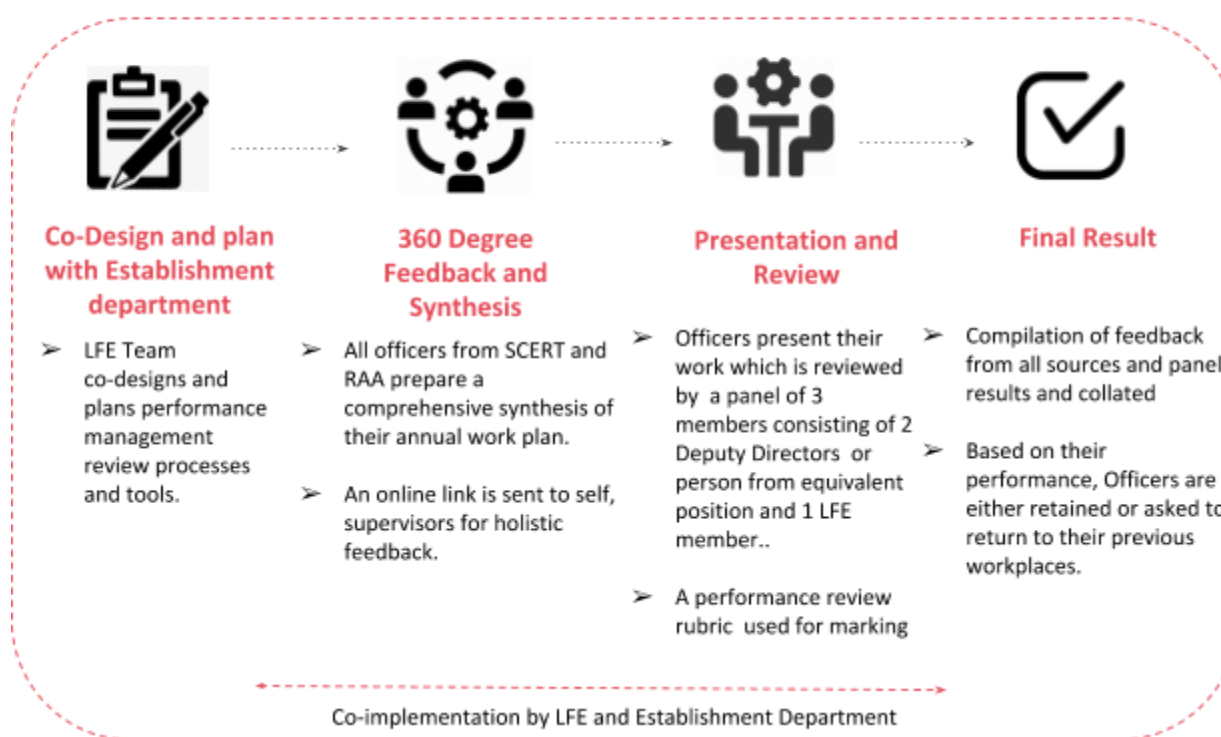
Continuous Improvement and learning were incorporated into the original process on the basis of the feedback and analysis of the previous review meetings. The following scoring strands and weights were used to come up with the overall evaluation scores:

Scoring strand	Weight
Self-evaluation	30%
Senior 1 evaluation- Immediate supervisor	30%

Review Presentation	40%
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Particulars	Nos.
<i>Class 1 and Class 2 Officers reviewed</i>	34
<i>Officers recommended for extension</i>	34
<i>Officers opted out of the deputation</i>	00
<i>The cut-off score for extension</i>	80% of the scaled total scores

PERFORMANCE REVIEW PROCESS FOR OFFICERS DESIGNED BY LFE



We also focused on the sustainability of the process by ensuring that the government stakeholders are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to conduct the process by themselves independently.

Overall, **LFE has together spent approx 140 + hours with the officers** to either create or review a policy or co-working with government officials.

Nashik Collective Conference

Nashik Collective, an initiative under the leadership of Hon. CEO Ms Buveneswari S., and Hon. Education Officer Dr Vaishali Veer of the Nashik Zilla Parishad in its attempt to facilitate collaborative efforts in developing the education ecosystem of Nashik with the support and collaboration of leading corporate, business and social leaders had organized its first-ever conference on Friday, 30th August 2019, at the social innovation lab of the Digital Impact Square at Indiranagar in Nashik. LFE's team in Nashik facilitated the entire conference to assist in their advisory and advocacy work in the district in its quest to streamline and align the work on CSRs and NGOs working in the Nashik district.



(Members of the LFE team in Nashik along with guests and participants of the Nashik Collective Conference along with Hon. CEO Ms Buveneswari S., and Hon. Education Officer Dr Vaishali Veer of the Nashik Zilla Parishad)

The Nashik Collective **envision**s to **provide a common platform** to the corporates, NGOs, members of civil society, academics, and government leaders to share their expectations, aspirations, and responsibilities. The objective of this conference was to understand the work being done by different organizations in Nashik, give them an idea about the work being done by the administration, to identify the most critical challenges that the district is facing in education and to weave a collective to act together on these challenges.

The Nashik Collective Conference identified the following as its immediate objectives-

1. Promoting collaboration amongst CSRs, NGOs and Education Department of Zilla Parishad Nashik for holistic interventions in ZP schools.
2. Introducing Nashik Collective- the CSR for Education initiative, and its objectives.
3. Sharing the work being done by NGOs and CSRs in Nashik.

4. Communicating the expectations of Government by identifying needful areas in the field of education.
5. Building common goals for the district's educational development towards focused intervention

This initiative saw the participation of more than 40 leaders in Nashik's development ecosystem who shared their ideas on what best can be done for improving education and further discuss options of collaborative projects between their organization and the administration of the Nashik district. This event witnessed the presence and participation of the Hon. Zilla Parishad President Smt. Shital U. Sangle, and Hon. Chairperson of Education Shri. Yatindra Patil of the Nashik Zilla Parishad along with Hon. Education Commissioner of Maharashtra Shri. Vishal Solanki joining the event via video link from Pune. The conference also witnessed active participation from teachers, officers of the district administration, and representatives of villages as equal stakeholders in the formation and functioning of this collective.



(Moiz Sheikh and Shilpa Sharma of LFE leading a group-activity discussion with members of CSRs, Officers of Nashik Zilla Parishad and representatives of communities at the Conference)

Launch of the Nalanda Project by Prime Minister Shri. Narendra Modi

LFE's Teaching with Technology project that aims to identify a model of integrating technology effectively in day to day teaching to provide students with differentiated support for improving learning was launched in Nashik in partnership with Nalanda Project and Nashik Zilla Parishad. We have been working with 10 Semi English medium schools across Nashik. Each school has received 40 tablets, a charging cabinet, 40 headsets and a laptop as a donation from MFE. In order to officially kick start the project, the Advisory and Advocacy team organized a grand launch event in which the President of

Nashik Zilla Parishad Smt. Sheetal Sangle along with the District Education Officer Dr. Vaishali Zankar handed over the tablets to HMs and teachers of each of these selected schools along with an orientation for teachers selected for the project. This project is one of the top two technology interventions undertaken by Nashik Zilla Parishad and was appreciated by Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri. Narendra Modi during his conversation with the Zilla Parishad President.



(Zilla Parishad President Smt. Sheetal Sangle, Chairman of Education Shri. Yatindra Patil, Education Officer Dr. Vaishali Veer along with LFE's Siddesh Sarma and Block Education Officers of concerned Blocks during the launch event of Nalanda Project in Nashik)



(Nashik Zilla Parishad President Smt. Sheetal Sangle along with Hon. Prime Minister of India Shri. Narendra Modi sharing the report drafted by team LFE on technology projects in Nashik)

You can access the complete report [here](#).

Block visits by LFE Nashik team

Our team member, Mayur Shinde has conducted visits in 12 out of the 15 blocks of Nashik district to understand the advisory needs of the Block Education Officers (BEOs). He has been a part of interactions with teachers, cluster heads and extension officers to understand existing best practices in the district. Going ahead, his work will be aimed at improving the effectiveness of the Block Quality Cell meetings and support Block Education Officers to improve the implementation process in Nashik.



(Mayur Shinde and Damini Mainkar, LFE team members, during one of the Block visits)

Quarterly Reviews by Education Officer Dr. Vaishali Veer

Dr Vaishali Veer, Education Officer, Nashik Zilla Parishad, has conducted 2 quarterly reviews of our team's work, giving the team a chance to share the work being doing in Nashik and also to understand the areas on which we can complement her vision for Nashik. Each member shared what priorities they have been working on and the work they plan on doing in the coming months. Dr Veer shared videos, articles, and ideas she wants us to work on and share with teachers thorough Shikshan Parishad. The team also showed her glimpses of the OPD content, the Nalanda Project newsletter, Transformation Model with Shikshan Parishad and our new office.

Advisory and Advocacy team has been supporting her by aligning the team's work to complement her vision for Nashik.



(Dr. Vaishali Veer interacting with the team on the work being done by different verticals during the November 2019 review)

Looking Ahead

As part of AA vertical, LFE is continuously engaged in stakeholders management, supporting government departments, and officials whenever required. For the next six months, our team will leverage the best practices and implement learning from our fieldwork at various platforms.