

# 'Are good results enough?

Thinking systematically about  
identifying factors that influence the transfer and scale-up of  
programs'

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# External Validity & Impact Evaluation: Traditional Thinking

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Policy  
relevant  
evaluation



Replication



Policy Pilots



Scale-ups

# External Validity & IE: Thinking Beyond Replications

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“I want my evaluation to inform decisions in different regions/contexts. What information do I need?”

- 1) Problem/Need and Context (Institutional, Political, Social)
- 2) Hypothesis: Academic literature, local understanding, conventional wisdom
- 3) Theory of Change: Implementation + Theory
- 4) Enabling and Hindering Factors (Implementation, Context)

## A Good Data Collection Plan!

# TEACHING AT THE RIGHT LEVEL: HARYANA EDUCATION STUDY TEACHER-LED MODEL

# Background

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- 96% of children (ages 6-14) are enrolled in school, but being in school does not imply children are learning
- 53% in grade 5 cannot read a grade-2 level text and 47% cannot do basic arithmetic (ASER 2012)
- What could be the problem?
  - Lack of inputs (textbooks, etc.)
  - Shortage of teachers
  - Teaching/pedagogy
  - Health
  - Lack of demand
  - Distorted beliefs



# The proposed solution/hypothesis: TaRL Pedagogy

## The Pedagogy

1. Assessment to create groups according to competency.
2. Re-group according to level rather than standard or age
3. Teach according to actual learning levels using level appropriate activities and materials
4. Ongoing monitoring, assessment of student learning levels so that they can continue be taught according to actual learning level

**STORY:** able to read a story, std. 2 text

**PARA:** able to read a paragraph, std.1 text

**WORD:** able to recognise words

**LETTER:** able to identify only letters

**NOTHING:** unable to recognise letters

# Support for hypothesis

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In school pull out classes for lowest-performing students led by local volunteers yielded substantial improvements in learning outcomes (Gujarat, Maharashtra)

❖ Balsakhi remedial tutoring (Banerjee et al. 2007)

In school and after school classes led by local volunteers, and summer camps led by government school teachers showed substantial impact, but government teachers failed inside regular govt. classrooms (Bihar & Uttarakhand)

❖ Read India (Banerjee et al. 2010, Walton et al. 2011)

Will a teacher-led TaRL model (a) have a positive impact and (b) have the necessary characteristics to be transferred to other states?

# **TEACHING AT THE RIGHT LEVEL: HARYANA EDUCATION STUDY TEACHER-LED MODEL**



# Problem/Need and Context (Institutional, Political, Social)



## ❖ Study Areas

- 2 districts – Kurukshetra & Mahendragarh
- Chosen in consultation with the GoH

	Student Learning Outcomes	Economic Development
Kurukshetra	Low	High
Mahendragarh	High	Low

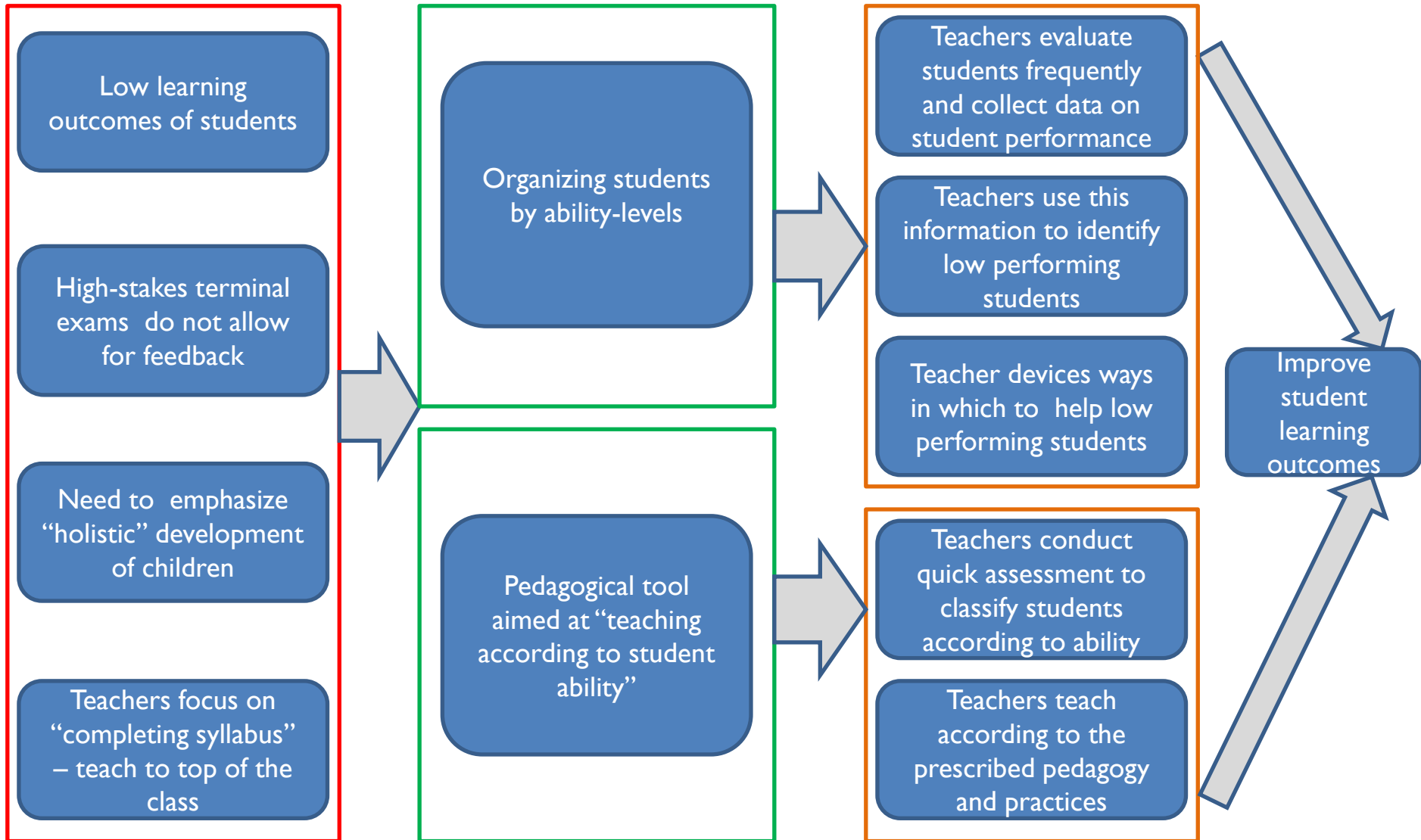
# The Program

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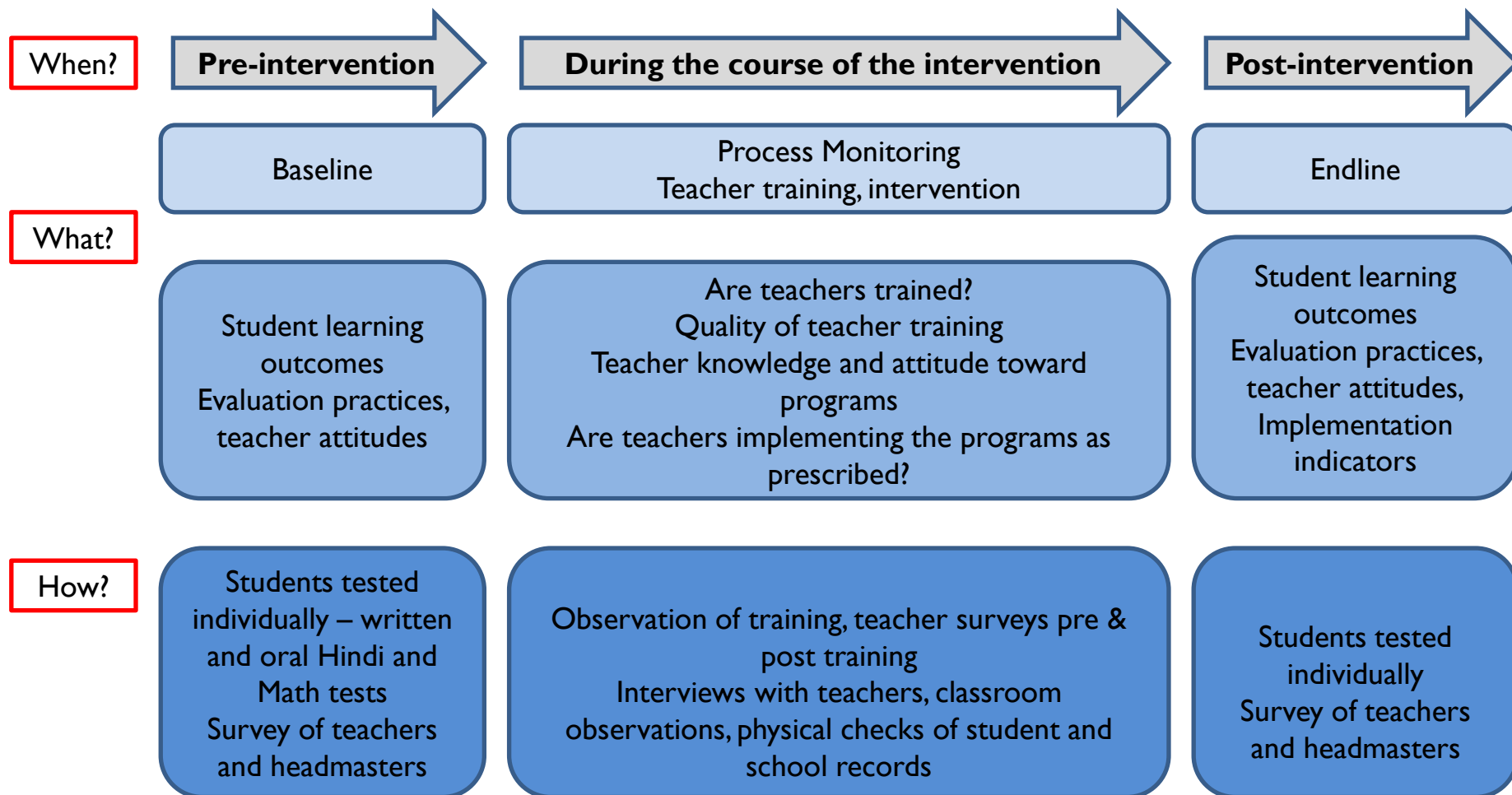
Government teachers with monitoring, inside regular classrooms

- For 1 hour in each school day students learned Hindi in their respective group rather than grade level.
- In-program assessments to keep teaching to the current learning level of the child.
- Block officials trained and mentored teachers in-schools.
- Initial and ongoing monitoring and mentoring of block officials and teachers by Pratham staff

# Theory of Change: Implementation + Theory



# Theory of Change: Implementation + Theory



# Enabling Factors: Ensuring strong implementation

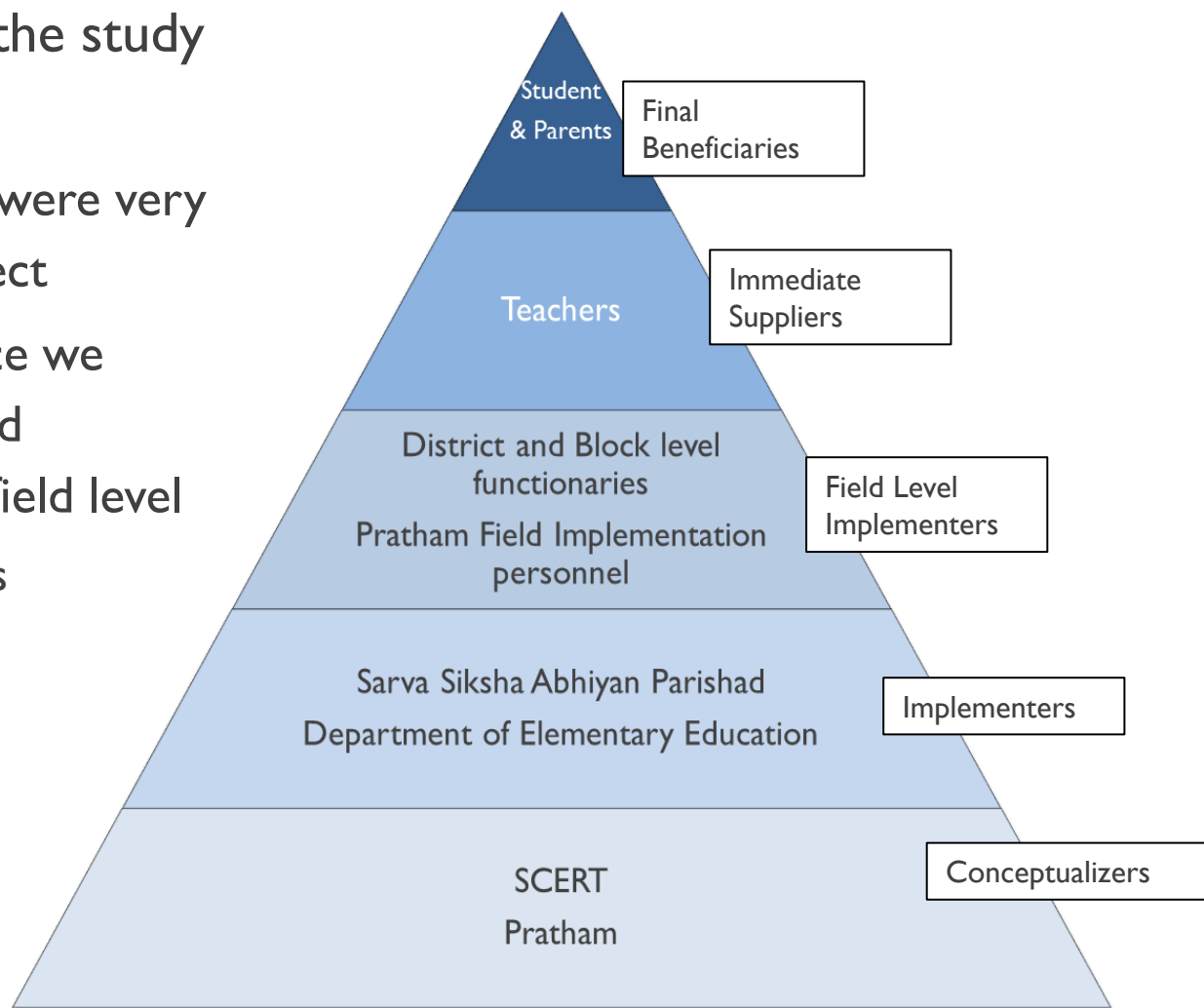
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- ❖ Set-up of school monitoring system
  - Block-level officials trained on monitoring and mentoring
- ❖ Sensitizing field level officials
  - Orientation about the program
  - Training
- ❖ Setting up platform to share progress update, do course corrections
- ❖ Empowering district, block and cluster level officials to take action against non-compliers

# Enabling Factors : Fostering Ownership

## ❖ Many stakeholders in the study and implementation

- Senior level officials were very invested in this project
- From past experience we knew that we needed “champions” at the field level
  - Block-level officials



# Results

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**In-school classes by government teachers, with monitoring support, succeeded in increasing learning outcomes within the official school day (Duflo et al. 2013)**

Will a teacher-led TaRL model (a) have a positive impact and (b) have the necessary characteristics to be transferred to other states?

# **TEACHING AT THE RIGHT LEVEL: HARYANA EDUCATION STUDY TEACHER-LED MODEL**



# Key Learnings

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- Theory Success:
  - The program worked in 2 districts with very different contexts
  - The TarL hypothesis has worked with different implementation models
- Implementation Success:
  - Teacher-led model with strong monitoring
- Positive Enabling Environment:
  - Fostering ownership among stakeholders
  - Fostering ownership among implementers

# Key Learnings

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- In what contexts is this program most likely to work?
  - Low and heterogeneous learning outcomes
  - Satisfactory strength of teachers in schools
  - Existing cadre of local officials for monitoring
- What are key institutional factors necessary for success?
  - Committed champions of the program within the administration

# Where next?

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- Gujarat
- Rajasthan
- Andhra Pradesh
- Telangana
- Tamil Nadu

# Going beyond India?

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- Similar problems with learning levels?
- Sufficient resources in the education system (teachers, infrastructure, etc.)?
- Ability to implement local-level monitoring?
- Similar institutional set-up?
- Enough buy-in within the educational system?
- Political constraints?
- What additional barriers to learning might exist?

# Thinking systematically about external validity

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- Key lessons for evaluators:
  - It will add an additional data collection burden to your evaluation, but provide essential information for learning
  - Implementation is an essential part of the Theory of Change
  - Monitoring, monitoring, monitoring
    - Key factors of your model that can be replicated in other settings

# THANK YOU