

TEACHFORINDIA

First cohort, 2009

4,600 alumni*

901 teachers**
currently in
classrooms for
their initial 2-year
commitment

**Alumni are reaching
50 million children
from various levels
of the system**



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70%

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continue to work in the
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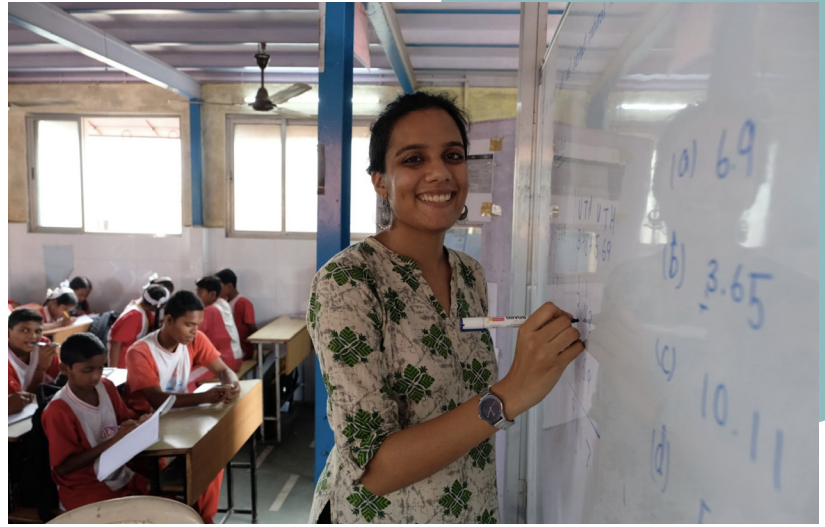
Teach For India

Changing the energy in the system

Since its launch in 2009, **Teach For India** has developed more than 5,500 leaders.

Studies have shown that students of Teach For India teachers have done better than students of traditionally trained teachers in their graduation rates, and English and math scores.¹ Teach For India's model enables the same cohort of students to be taught by Teach For India teachers throughout their school. Many of its students have gone on to prestigious universities and to exert leadership in their communities. The first of them are now joining the Teach For India Fellowship themselves. "When I go back in time and imagine myself in the second standard, I would never have thought that I'd be doing the things that I'm doing right now. Without Teach For India, this wouldn't have been possible," says Arshad Ansari, a Teach For India student alumnus currently studying for a Bachelor of Management Studies at Rizvi College in Mumbai. Vanshika Godawariya, another student alumna echoes similar sentiments, "I was such an introverted kid. I used to be shy, wouldn't really answer or take part in my classes but [Teach For India Fellows] came into my life and from average, I went to the top."

The teachers themselves are 55 percentage points more likely to work



in education following their two-year teaching commitment than those who applied to the fellowship and barely missed getting accepted.² 70% of alumni continue to work in the social sector — leading classrooms and schools, working in nonprofits, leading organizations, training teachers, designing policy, and working in government. Alumni are reaching 50 million children from various levels of the system — that's one in 10 of India's children.³ Collectively, they've founded more than 150 organizations.

"When we think about our alumni in India, the first thing that comes to mind is what they're doing. Those things are all really significant, but what stands out to me the most is just the value systems that our people operate with," reflects Teach For India's CEO Shaheen Mistri. "What does falling in love with a group of kids do? What it brings out in people is something remarkable. That's what stands out to me."

“Teach For India is putting hundreds of people into the system who put kids at the centre and feel ownership for how students do, who show up and persist, and bring an unusual level of passion and commitment.”

— **Tarun Cherukuri**, CEO of Indus Action and Teach For India alumnus

How is that alum so compassionate? How has that alum been so brave? How does that alum have such an evolved understanding of what it means to work together and collaborate?”

In the cities where Teach For India works—Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Chennai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Mumbai, and Pune— there is growing momentum for change. Many forces have contributed to this progress, but it is hard to imagine there would be the same energy in the system without the leadership exerted by so many Teach For India alumni.

In Pune, one of Teach For India’s first placement cities, more than 90% of the 7,400 students reached by Teach For India’s 80+ teachers meet the bar at grade 10 to progress to secondary education. Many of these students have been accepted into selective private high schools, including the United World College schools. Meanwhile, alumni have led numerous initiatives to strengthen the system—in a city where there were no English medium secondary schools, they’ve established 14, to make it possible for students to continue attending English medium schools

and have a high-quality pathway to post-secondary options. Alumni run several initiatives to support the development of thousands of other teachers and headteachers in the system. They’ve opened community centers and launched social enterprises to supplement what’s offered in schools and provide students with holistic development, including sports and arts education, and also to engage parents in their students’ learning. The Pune Children’s Zone was developed by alumni to connect early childhood education and vocational education to schools.

In Delhi, Teach For India has placed more than 1,500 teachers since 2011. Over the last ten years, a reform-minded government in partnership with a number of NGOs including Teach For India has generated significant system-wide progress. In 2016, only 25% of grade 6 students could read their textbooks and 33% could do simple division⁴, but by the end of 2019, 63% of grade 6-9 students



were able to read their textbooks and 73% could solve a grade-level math problem.⁵

The momentum in Delhi has come from many places, including from the hundreds of Teach For India teachers and alumni. Alumnus Tarun Cherukuri served as Teach For India's Delhi City Director in its early years and now leads Indus Action, which supports low-income families to access the public services they have rights to. Drawing an analogy from adaptive leadership literature to explain the impact he's seen Teach For India have, Tarun explained: "If you get the right mix of people and energy on the dance floor, the energy changes. Teach For India is putting hundreds of people into the system who put kids at the centre and feel ownership for how students do, who show up and persist and bring an unusual level of passion and commitment—and that's changing the energy of the floor and leading the system to dance differently."

In Tarun's words, there are "TFIers everywhere." There are 14 alumni working in the Delhi government. At one point this included the chair of the Delhi Commission for Child Rights who played a significant role in writing, and shaping policies to improve child welfare. Dozens of alumni work at NGOs serving the cradle-to-career continuum, tackling issues ranging from early childhood education to health and sanitation to college readiness. Alumni hold senior roles at the influential Central Square Foundation, advising the government and public on issues such as education



policy, research, and technology. As in Pune, they've founded and led many initiatives that invest in empowering parents, enriching education and fostering students' holistic development, and investing in the development of thousands of other educators.

There is much more to be done to ensure all children in these cities and in India more broadly fulfill their potential, but there is a great deal of momentum in the right direction, a new mindset that it is possible to significantly expand the outcomes for students, and a growing force of leaders and allies to pioneer progress throughout the ecosystem around children. ●●●

1 Teach For India (2021), Alumni Impact Report 2009-2021, p. 8

2 Conn et al. (forthcoming), "The Impact of a Service-Focused Teaching Corps on Participants' Career Pathways and Aspirations: Evidence from Teach for India"

3 *ibid.*, p. 15

4 The New Indian Express, "74 percent of class 6 students in Delhi government schools cannot read Hindi textbook", August 9, 2016

5 Dialogue & Development Commission of Delhi (2020), Delhi Government Performance 2015-2019, p. 31