

# Leh Wi Lan

Improving Secondary Education in Sierra Leone



# TEACHER RESEARCH

## FACILITATION GUIDE



These materials were produced by Cambridge Education with lead author Professor Rama Mathew. They were produced and delivered as part of the UK aid-funded Leh Wi Lan project for training teachers in government assisted junior and senior secondary schools in Sierra Leone. Materials can be shared and adapted for use as long as they are not used for commercial purposes.

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# Getting Started

## FACILITATION GUIDE



# Introduction

This Facilitation Guide gives guidelines and instructions for a programme of teacher research to help teachers carry out classroom-based research. It consists of a range of materials for three workshops, which correspond to three phases of teacher research, and is divided into seven modules to be delivered across a full, academic year. A full list of resources is included, as well as an explanation of how the materials should be used together.

The Facilitation Guide is aimed at those who wish to set-up and coordinate teacher research, including but not limited to government agencies with a mandate on education and/or development partners. Read through this introduction before continuing and discuss with whom you plan to use the guide.

It is a result of a programme of teacher research in Sierra Leone that enabled mentors<sup>1</sup> to facilitate the programme and, in turn, teachers of mathematics and English to carry out classroom-based research in their secondary schools.

## What is teacher research?<sup>2</sup>

Research involves seeking answers to questions, with evidence. Teacher research is research *by* teachers *for* teachers (and their students and schools). It is a valuable tool for ongoing professional development; a way for teachers to address important classroom issues and develop their practice accordingly.

- Teacher research contributes to knowledge generation for the wider profession, effectively sharing ideas for addressing real teaching issues. There are several benefits for those involved:
- Teachers become better able to understand and address teaching challenges, feel more empowered and motivated in their work.
- Learners' engagement in learning is enhanced. They feel more trusted, take more responsibility for their learning and become partners in research.
- Schools or institutions provide continuing professional development (CPD) which meets teachers' specific needs and see increased commitment to CPD from teachers.
- Those who mentor the participating teachers support a process with clear value for participants, learn new skills, and gain new knowledge.

## The teacher research process

The teacher research process is a year-long programme that any interested teacher can participate in, alongside their regular teaching in school. It brings together theoretical and practical aspects of carrying out classroom-based research, interspersed throughout the academic year.

The workshops are first led by teaching and learning experts for those who wish to be mentors and will, in turn, facilitate the workshops for participating teachers, with support from teaching and learning experts, as needed. Participating teachers then implement what they have learned in the classroom, with ongoing support from their mentors. For this to work, teachers must have enough time to do their research when schools are in operation. It is not a good idea to offer all the modules first and then let the teacher carry out the practical part of the work in their school.

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<sup>1</sup> Mentors are people who, once trained, will deliver the teacher research workshops to participating teachers and work closely with them to support teacher's research. They can be fellow teachers but they do not need to be.

<sup>2</sup> Source: Smith, R. (2020). *Mentoring teachers to research their classrooms: a practical handbook*. New Delhi: British Council, pp.6-7.

Between one workshop and the next, clinics, individualized sessions for small groups to address specific questions or issues can be helpful for them gathering data for their study, reviewing findings, and presenting it. They can be held in whatever grouping makes the most sense for those who are delivering it.<sup>3</sup>

Between one workshop or clinic and the next, teachers should be closely monitored and supported by mentors, who visit the teachers in their classrooms to set up the study and work on it in phases.

After the third and final workshop (and approximately 2-3 months of time spent in school for research), teachers should be ready to share their work with others. In Sierra Leone, this took the form of a conference along with all the other teacher researchers and a research report which was published in the form of a book.

Each workshop starts a new phase of the teacher research programme:

- Phase 1 aims to give an understanding of what teacher research is and of the initial stages of doing research.
- Phase 2 goes a little deeper to equip teachers with the knowledge and tools to do research in their own classrooms.
- Phase 3 helps to put together the various strands of the work and get a presentation and/or a report ready for the conference and a possible conference publication.

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<sup>3</sup> For the teacher research programme in Sierra Leone, this was in regional or district clusters.

## Timeframe

The entire programme is expected to span one academic year with normal breaks/holidays, examination periods and other school-based activities. The timeline shows the three phases and the different activities of the programme, beginning in August and ending with a conference in September. The actual starting time can vary, but it's highly recommended that the programme lasts at least one academic year.

	Aug	Sep-Nov	Dec	Jan-Mar	Apr	May-Jul	Aug	Sep
	Phase 1: Understanding teacher research		Phase 2: Equipping teachers with the tools to do classroom research		Phase 3: Reporting back on classroom research			
<b>Mentor Training followed by TR regional workshops</b>	Workshop 1 (3 days, modules 1-3)		Workshop 2 (2 days, module 4)		Workshop 3 (3 days, module 5-7)			
<b>Teacher Clinics in Districts</b>		Individualised support to teachers		Individualised support to teachers		Individualised support to teachers (1 day)		
<b>Ongoing Support</b>	Regular classroom visits and meetings with teachers in the school							
<b>Ongoing Support</b>	Remote 1-1 phone conversations with experts							
<b>Ongoing Support</b>	Remote networks for professional discussion between mentors and teacher researchers							
<b>Writers and presenter's clinic</b>							Clinic (1 day)	
<b>Conference and book publication</b>								

We would recommend a gap of a few days between when the mentors participate in the workshop and when they lead them, to allow mentors to get a better grasp of concepts and ideas in the materials before they facilitate them themselves – especially when they are newcomers to teacher research. The seven modules are recommended as essential inputs for mentors who will, in turn, use the same modules meant for training the teachers but they can be adapted as necessary.

## The mentoring model

The training of mentors – those who will deliver the training to participating teachers and support them throughout the year – is also important. There are specific activities intended to give the mentor hands-on experience of becoming more competent, trusted and sympathetic in their role (see: Module 3 and one activity each in Module 5 and Module 6).

For the Teacher Research Programme in Sierra Leone, mentors were Lehigh school support officers and worked very closely with teachers in their schools. Deputy directors from Sierra Leone's Teaching Service Commission (TSC) also supported the teachers. In addition, there were four national teaching and learning experts, one for each region, who supported mentors and teachers in workshops and regional clinics. The international teacher research expert was responsible for content development, the design of materials, delivering workshops to mentors and then supporting them to deliver their workshops to participating teachers. The national experts and mentors had no prior experience of teacher research and learned as the programme progressed, they were however very familiar with classrooms, teaching and learning in Sierra Leone. It is reasonable to expect each person who takes up the mentor role to support up to seven or eight teacher researchers.

## How to use this guide

This guide should be adapted to suit the context it will be used in, including: the level of education, subjects the teachers who participate teach, and if those facilitating and participating have prior experience of teacher research. It explains how to conduct the different activities for the workshops throughout the programme. It should be used alongside:

- Presentation decks (PowerPoint/PPT)
- Hands-on activities for participants (handouts)
- Other, supplementary materials (including videos and links to online, published books) as needed.

The guide outlines what should be done to lead the workshops. It includes information on what is needed for each session, including the related PPT and handouts for participants and instructions to help you. They also include:

- Tips for facilitators (things to remember or consider as you adapt the materials for your own use).
- Learning points (key information you want to ensure participants have understood).

Where relevant answers to questions or activities in handouts and on PPT slides is clearly marked and included in *italics*.

Module 7 ran as a clinic, with a communications specialist designing and delivering the session, rather than in a cascade like the rest of the programme. Because of this, there is no facilitation guide. However, the PowerPoint slides and handouts have been included and can be adapted for use. These materials were informed by a comprehensive review of all the teacher research reports and highlighted key issues and considerations that were common across the cohort of participating teachers. Time allotted for each module activity is an estimate, based on the experience of the teacher research programme pilot in Sierra Leone where no one had done teacher research before. It is a good idea for all workshop facilitators (the experts who deliver the training the first time and then the mentors who run the training for participating teachers) to plan the time in relation to the level of participants.

There are a couple of optional activities intended to clarify concepts further but may not be necessary. A few of them could also be given as tasks to do later or at home after an introduction and instructions for how to carry out the task individually. Workshop facilitators need to get a rough idea of how much time participants take to complete an activity satisfactorily and budget the available time appropriately for completing the modules in each workshop.

This guide and the accompanying materials can also be used by the teachers themselves as self-instruction materials.

The pilot of these materials involved English and maths secondary school teachers and therefore examples used

throughout tend to be focused on these subjects. These examples can and should be changed, depending on who is participating.

COVID-19 meant that the teacher research programme was modified to accommodate a mix of face-to-face and more remote delivery. These modifications are not specifically reflected here but the guide and materials can be adapted to accommodate different modes of delivery depending on what is practical.

## Contents

	Module	Handout	PPT	Additional resources
Phase 1/ Workshop 1 – Understanding teacher research	<a href="#">1 Understanding classroom-based research</a>	H1	PPT1	<a href="#">Bangladesh TR Video 1.</a> <a href="#">Bangladesh Teacher Research Video 2.</a> Sierra Leone Teacher Research Video <a href="#">Sierra Leone Teacher Research Book</a> <a href="#">Bangladesh Teacher Research Book</a>
	<a href="#">2 Understanding the initial stages of teacher research</a>	H2, H3, H4, H5, H6	PPT2	
	<a href="#">3 Mentoring teacher research</a>	H2, H3, H4, H5, H6	PPT3	
Phase 2 / Workshop 2 – Equipping teachers to do research	<a href="#">4 Understanding ways of doing teacher research</a>	H5, H6, H9, H10, H11, H12, H13, H14, H15	PPT4	Teacher research books and teacher research articles Mini-research studies
Phase 3 / Workshop 3 – Reporting teacher research	<a href="#">5 Analysing and interpreting data and presentation preparation</a>	H16, H17A, H17B, H18, H9, MH4		
	<a href="#">6 Preparing for the conference</a>	PH1, PH2, PH3, H20, H10, MH2		Presentation template
	7 Writing and presenting	PH4, PH5	PPT5	



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FACILITATION GUIDE

## Module 1 - Understanding classroom-based research



# Introduction

Before you begin, make sure you have read through the introduction to this facilitation guide – this is part of a series of materials available for those seeking to deliver a programme of teacher research. This is the first of three workshops.

By the end of this workshop, participants will have a better understanding of what teacher research is, how to start their own classroom-based research and about the role of mentoring.

	Workshop	Modules	No. of days	For mentors	For teachers
<b>Phase 1 - Understanding</b>	1	1 & 2	4 days	2 days	2 days
	1	3	1 day	1 day	-
<b>Phase 2 - Equipping</b>	2	4	4 days	2 days	2 days
<b>Phase 3 - Reporting</b>	3	5 & 6	6 days	3 days	3 days
	Clinic	7	1 day	1 day	1 day



## Handouts and other materials needed for Day 1

**Handout 1** - One example each of TR and reflective practice

**Video 1** from Bangladesh available [here](#)

**Video 2** from Bangladesh available [here](#)

**Video 3** from Sierra Leone

**PPT 1** - Exploratory action research and action research

**Books:** *Teachers' voices: Capturing the dynamics of change* (2017) (Bangladesh) available [here](#) and *Teachers as change agents: Classroom research in Sierra Leone secondary schools* (2021) (Sierra Leone) available [here](#).

# Activity 1: What is teacher research (TR) and why should we engage in it?

**Objective:** To demystify research for participants and to enable them to understand the importance of carrying out TR

**Time:** 45 minutes

**Materials required:** Writing paper and pens

## Methodology

1. Ask participants to get into groups of 4-5 and discuss what research is. They can note down points in note books if they wish (10 minutes)
2. Ask participants to think of two examples of research that people do in their everyday life.
3. Consider sharing relatively clear/simple definitions and examples with participants, to show that research is a part of 'normal life', and can be part of classroom life, not just something that only professional researchers do in universities or labs etc. You could give them the following example (or make up your own).

"When I returned home from a short break, I was shocked to see that the garden had been almost fully destroyed. I was quite sure this must have been the neighbours whose children somehow found their way in. They didn't have of a garden of their own.

Then when I went inside, newspapers and letters had piled up behind the front door. As I picked them up, the front page of one days' paper caught my attention. There was a picture of a storm that had uprooted many trees, knocked off small houses and buildings. That sent me thinking.

Could it have been the storm that upset our garden? I went out into the garden again. I noticed that all the plants in bloom were all tilting to one side. Ah, it may have been the storm after all...

I looked over the compound wall and saw the children and asked them about the storm. They were in fact very upset that the garden had got badly spoilt in the storm and they looked quite helpless!"

4. Ask participants what elements of research they see in the example.

[Summarise answers: *While I made unquestioned assumptions, I was quickly able to rectify them when I looked for evidence and inferred because of that. I then looked for more evidence before I could conclude that it was not the neighbour's children who had done it.*]

5. Ask participants for one or two examples of how this might be applicable in their classroom life.

## Learning points

We often take a 'research approach' in our everyday life to come to conclusions and to take next steps. Even in our professional lives if we are research minded, it will help us to be more rational, more sympathetic and understanding towards our pupils, colleagues, and ourselves (!) More importantly our decisions will be based on evidence from various perspectives and are likely to lead to better results.

## Activity 2: Distinction between TR and reflective practice

**Objective:** To understand that reflective practice is fundamental to doing classroom research; TR includes reflective practice, while being a reflective practitioner does not necessarily involve doing TR.

**Time:** 60 minutes

**Materials required:** Handout 1- Two teachers' stories: one example each of teacher research and reflective practice

### Methodology

1. Put up this question on the board/your slide and ask participants to discuss in their groups (15 mins):

"What distinguishes teacher research from reflective practice? Can you think of two examples from your own experience?"

2. Distribute Handout 1 and ask participants to use the following two examples in the handout to answer the question.

*[Answer: (a) is an example of reflective practice and (b) is an example of TR.]*

3. Find out from some of them what examples they have.

4. Underline the point that we need to be reflective to be good classroom researchers.

### Learning points

As we learnt in the earlier activity, research is a planned, systematic activity where you gather evidence for what you think is happening and based on that you get a better and deeper understanding of the situation. Then you can also modify an aspect of the situation and again look for any evidence of improvement. Reflective practice may not follow all these steps.

## Activity 3: Why do teacher research?

**Objective:** To understand why we need to get teachers to explore/investigate their classrooms – Benefits and difficulties of doing TR

**Time:** 60 minutes

**Materials required:** Video 1 and Video 2

### Methodology

1. Ask participants to brainstorm some ideas on why they think teachers should do research
2. Show Video 1 (TR in Bangladesh) and ask everyone to watch, they don't need to write anything down.
3. Play it again and this time, ask them to note down/add the benefits of doing teacher research.
4. Display the responses on the board/slide.
5. Ask participants to pair up and discuss the following question: What might be some difficulties teachers may face while doing TR?
6. If time permits and/or you feel they would like to see another video, you can show Video 2 and have a discussion. You can also show this video towards the end of the day or just before lunch to round off a session.

### Learning points

- The defining feature of teacher research is that it is research carried out – and usually initiated voluntarily – by teachers themselves into an issue that concerns them, for their own benefit and that of their students. It is a form of practitioner research – research done by those practicing a particular profession or job role, with the intention of understanding and perhaps improving their practice. Action research is practitioner research which seeks to effect change and evaluate the consequences.
- Most teacher research is centred on what happens in the teacher's own classroom. If the research study is mainly done by an outside or external researcher, it isn't teacher research.
- Difficulties teachers may face while doing teacher research:
  - Lack of understanding. They may need to learn about it – which is what this workshop is aimed at.
  - Time. They might need a little extra time outside their class hours.
  - Endorsement from managers and leadership. Their Heads/Principals would need to support it for it to be successful.
  - Ongoing support. They need ongoing support from a mentor to carry out TR which will be provided.

# Activity 4: Exploratory action research (1)

**Objective:** To understand the value of exploring a situation before trying to change it

**Time:** 45 minutes

**Materials required:** PPT 1 - Exploratory action research and action research

## Methodology

1. Show Slide 1: There are many types and terms for TR with minor differences. The defining feature of this is that it is carried out by the teacher and for the teacher.
2. Show Slide 2 and ask them to study the figure closely and identify the different stages of doing research:
  - (i) Reflect on a problem/issue you're facing in class
  - (ii) Plan and design an action plan
  - (iii) Implement the action plan and collect evidence
  - (iv) Analyse results and draw conclusions
3. Show Slide 3 and ask them to study the figure and identify the different stages:
  - a. Which part of the figure is the same as the first slide?  
*[The second part of the figure is the same as the earlier one].*
  - b. What about the first part? What are the stages involved here?
    - (i) Reflect on a problem/issue you're facing in class
    - (ii) Collect evidence about the issue
    - (iii) Analyse the evidence and see what action you may want to take
4. Ask: What is the difference between the first and the second diagrams? Between exploratory action research (EAR) and action research (AR)?  
*[There are two phases to AR, while in EAR, there is only one phase.]*
5. You can show the next two slides to show
  - a. a comparison of AR and EAR and;
  - b. how from EAR to AR it is a continuous process.
6. Show slide 4 and ask: What are the advantages of including an exploratory phase?

## Learning points

- Teachers may attempt to solve a problem by immediately leaping into action. However, taking a decision too quickly and without exploring the situation further can involve acting on incorrect assumptions (remind them about the story of the garden that was ruined by the storm).
- Exploring the situation helps a teacher to uncover the 'real' reasons for the situation and to plan appropriate solutions. It is important for teachers to consider whether they're acting 'right', especially for important decisions. Also, by establishing a clear picture of the current situation, they can easily assess the effects of any change they attempt to bring about. Exploring the nature of a situation before attempting to change it is usually a good idea.

## Activity 5: Exploratory action research (2)

**Objective:** To think of an example of EAR from teachers' own experience

**Time:** 60 minutes

**Materials required:** A4 size sheet for each participant

### Methodology

1. Based on the example discussed in Activity 4, ask teachers to think of an example from their own experience individually and put down the three stages of EAR they may have gone through. Note that the stages may be distinct or may overlap a little, but it is important to ensure that they identify the three essential stages.
  - a. Reflect on a problem/issue you're facing in class
  - b. Collect evidence about the issue
  - c. Analyse the evidence and see what action you may want to take
2. After they have all done their work, let them discuss this in groups of 4, focusing on the stages they went through. Don't worry too much if some of them don't have all the stages clearly spelt out.
3. Participants share this up for others to read. Allow them to move around to read others' work. They can answer clarification questions where necessary.



## Activity 6: Critical reading of teacher research stories (1)

**Objective:** To understand how teachers can write an account of their one-year long work within a given format. They will especially see how the articles are structured, i.e., essentially capturing the way the research study has been carried out.

**Time:** 45 minutes

**Objective:** To understand how teachers can write an account of their one-year long work within a given format. They will especially see how the articles are structured, i.e., essentially capturing the way the research study has been carried out.

**Materials required:** A few copies of Teachers' voices: Capturing the dynamics of change (2017) (Bangladesh) and Teachers as change agents: Classroom research in Sierra Leone secondary schools (2021) (Sierra Leone) and other books with teacher research reports if available.

### Methodology

1. Circulate the books/links to the books with teacher research reports and ask them to browse, paying attention to the following (30 minutes):

- a. How is the book structured? What are the different subsections? What does each subsection focus on? Are the reports from a teacher research conference or project?
- b. How is each report presented? What are the sub-headings?
- c. Do they give a clear picture of why the research study was carried out and how it was carried out?

2. Start a discussion around the points above and ensure that all participants get a fair idea of the work that is presented in the book.



#### Tip for the facilitator

At this point the intention is to get the participants to browse through the book and get an idea of how teachers' research is reported and can form the basis of other similar work.

In the next workshop (Module 4), teachers will be asked to read an article or two to get an understanding of how a one-year long research work can be reported in each format and to learn from the kind of tools used, data collected and the way it is analyzed.

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FACILITATION GUIDE

## Module 2 - Understanding the initial stages of teacher research



	Workshop	Modules	No. of days	For mentors	For teachers
<b>Phase 1 - Understanding</b>	1	1 & 2	4 days	2 days	2 days
	1	3	1 day	1 day	-
<b>Phase 2- Equipping</b>	2	4	4 days	2 days	2 days
<b>Phase 3 - Reporting</b>	3	5 & 6	6 days	3 days	3 days
	Clinic	7	1 day	1 day	1 day



### Handouts and other materials needed

**Handout 2** - Socratic questioning

**Handout 3** - Teacher reflections

**PPT 2:** Developing research questions, **Handout 4** - Teacher-colleague dialogue

**Handout 5** - Generating different types of research questions

**Handout 6** - Possible types of data gathering tools

# Activity 1: Active listening

**Objective:** To enable participants to listen empathetically and with full attention and to speak in a reflective way about a classroom issue.

**Time:** 45 minutes

**Materials required:** A4 size drawing paper and some drawing pens/pencils

## Methodology

1. Tell participants they have 15 minutes to:
  - a. Think of their classroom (the one they spend most time in) and
  - b. Draw a picture – try to include something they like and something they find challenging
  - c. Think of it from any angle: with or without teacher, with or without pupils, class in progress etc.
2. Ask participants to turn to the person next to them. There is 5 minutes for one of them tells the other one:
  - a. What they like most in your classroom
  - b. The challenge they face

The other person does not speak, just listens. They are not being asked to offer solutions.

3. After 5 minutes, ask them to swap.
4. Ask a few people what they heard from their partner and check from the partner if what they heard is true – was there any judgment or interpretation of what they heard? (10 minutes)
5. Also ask: what did you like most about the activity? (10 minutes)

## Learning points

Teachers listening non-judgmentally to each other by 'putting themselves in their shoes' is an important way to develop empathy. This is the first step to make a professional friend.



### Tip for the facilitator

The facilitator can demonstrate 'active listening' with a partner to serve as an example (not a model). Ensure that the participants don't repeat it or do a replica of your example.

This will also help facilitators to mentor teachers in a friendly and supportive way. Very often, when you listen without interrupting the speaker by just saying 'umm...' to show you're listening, it goes a long way in building trust.

## Activity 2: Solving a puzzle through yes/no questions

**Objective:** To enable participants to examine different aspects of a phenomenon/puzzle and solve it through yes/no questions.

**Time:** 30 minutes

### Methodology

1. Tell the participants you are going to give them a puzzle and they need to solve it by asking 15 yes/no questions.
2. Anyone can ask a question, but the question should not be repeated.
3. Go around in a circle so that everyone gets to answer one question or nominate someone to start and ask them to nominate the next person to ask.
4. Some questions can be irrelevant. If they ask an irrelevant question, you will tell them so.
5. Read out the puzzle: "It was past midnight. The phone rings. The woman wakes up and picks up the phone. The caller puts down the phone without speaking. The caller feels much better."
6. Why do they feel better?\*

*[Answer to the puzzle: The man and woman are sleeping in two rooms, next to each other's in a hotel. The man can't get to sleep because of the loud snoring noise from the woman. When he calls her number (next room) she picks up the phone and her snoring stops.]*

7. Highlight the learning points below during the discussion after the puzzle.
8. Tell participants that in the next session, they will look at how to ask questions about their classrooms to fully understand it.

### Learning points

There are things we don't understand without the relevant information. We're likely to make assumptions without proper basis and come to wrong conclusions. Many aspects of information are needed to understand a situation. How does this apply to the classroom?



#### Tip for the facilitator

Extend it to 20 questions if the puzzle is not solved.

## Activity 3: Asking deeper questions of an issue/concern teachers have

**Objective:** To enable participants to ask and answer deeper questions: what, when, why, how, where etc. to understand an issue/concern better

**Time:** 45 minutes

**Materials required:** Handout 2- Socratic questioning

### Methodology

1. Demonstrate with the help of another mentor, how you can ask deeper questions by asking questions from Handout 2 as shown below. Ask teachers to observe carefully which questions lead to deeper answers, not just 'yes/no' answers.
  - a. One participant plays the teacher and the other plays the role of a colleague. The teacher explains a challenge e.g. There are too many students in my classroom, the colleague listens and asks appropriate questions.
  - b. The person who is answering the questions should notice the questions when they are asked.
  - c. It may not be easy to answer all of the questions but they should aim to use all the questions.
  - d. Some may be asked more than once, if necessary, but maintain the flow of the dialogue.
  - e. After, swap roles. The person who played the colleague now answers questions. This time, for example, it could be about what students said they liked in their classroom.
2. After the activity is finished, lead a brief plenary to share impressions about the questioning techniques and the outcome.
3. Now, get them into groups of 4-5.
  - a. One person is asked questions about the challenge s/he faces (depicted in his/her drawing).
  - b. Group members take turns to ask questions from the handout.
  - c. Repeat the process once more with another one answering questions using their drawing.
4. Are there any surprises here? Discuss them.
5. In plenary:
  - a. Which questions lead to deep and interesting answers?
  - b. How can they be helpful?

## Learning points

- It should enable the teacher to see different dimensions of the issue and throw light on what the issue really is, how you might take steps to address it.
- We need to ask questions so that we go deep into why things may not be what they appear to be. We need to have a clearer understanding of the issue if we must take some steps to address them.
- Multiple perspectives help in getting a holistic picture of the 'problem'.
- These questions are known as Socratic questions after the famous Greek philosopher, Socrates.

# Activity 4: Teachers' reflections on their work

**Objective:** To enable participants to learn about writing a reflective diary/journal

**Time:** 30 minutes

**Materials required:** Handout 3 –Teachers reflecting on their own work

## Methodology

1. Give participants Handout 3
2. Ask them to read it
3. What does it tell us? (15 minutes)
4. Go through the excerpts one by one and ask for comments from the wider group.
5. Ask participants to do an assignment at home:
  - a. Write a short reflective note about the day's events; something they liked very much or didn't like at all and what they wish to do about it.
  - b. They don't need to share it with others if they don't wish to.

## Learning points

- The at-home assignment is good practice. Writing reflections involves thinking about what happened, why, how etc. We don't always have answers to all our puzzling questions. That's where research is necessary. Keeping notes or a diary, serves as a tool for keeping notes and looking at them at a later point. (Refer to Handout 1 where they distinguished a researching activity from a reflective activity.)



### Tip for the facilitator

If participants are taking a long time to read all the excerpts, ask them to select any three and read them but make sure all are read across the entire group.

# Activity 5: Developing research questions

**Objective:** To help participants to develop suitable and effective research questions from an issue/concern

**Time:** 60 minutes

**Materials required:** PPT 2: Developing research questions

Handout 4-Teacher-colleague dialogue

## Methodology

1. Show Slide 2 of PPT 2 and introduce participants to the need for developing research questions from the issue/concern they have felt.
2. Remind them of the questioning exercise they did by asking what, when, why, etc. questions to expand the issue further.
3. Show Slide 3 and introduce different ways of communicating
4. Distribute Handout 4.
  - a. Read the dialogue where two colleagues are helping each other to understand the situation/concern.
  - b. Find one example of each of these ways of communicating. Write it next to the line in brackets.
5. Show Slide 4 as an example for each type of communicating.
6. After, discuss how the colleague/mentor can help the teacher 'unearth' or 'unpack' the teacher's not-so-explicit ideas, assumptions and observations.
7. Wherever the teacher is uncertain or says 'I don't know' the colleague can make a mental note and propose that as a possible research question.
8. Show Slide 5 as an example of how to turn uncertainty into a research question
9. Show Slide 6 and ask participants to complete the activity.

*[Possible answers are given below (there can be other answers as well)]*

A: So... *What types of writing do pupils dislike, and why?*

B: So... *What reasons do pupils give for not using the dictionary?*

C: So... *During which type of activities do they not participate? Or which pupils don't participate?]*



### Tip for the facilitator

You may notice that the labels in Slide 4 overlap. Go by your common-sense understanding and how teachers can justify a particular label with their reasoning. It is more important to understand that there are different ways of asking questions to go deeper into the problem/issue.



# Activity 6: Different types of exploratory questions

**Objective:** To enable teachers to generate appropriate research questions based on different perspectives: teacher's own perceptions; others' perceptions (pupils, colleagues, parents); or behaviour (teacher's, pupils' etc.)

**Time:** 45 minutes

**Materials required:** Handout 5- Generating different types of research questions, PPT 2 -Developing research questions

## Methodology

1. Show Slide 7. It is useful to consider three perspectives or types of focus while generating research questions from an issue/concern:

- (i) The teacher's own perceptions (TP)
- (ii) Others' perceptions (pupils, colleagues, parents) (OP)
- (iii) Behaviour (teachers', pupils' etc) (B)

2. Discuss the example on Slide 7

3. Distribute Handout 5.

4. Ask participants to do the activity in groups

*[Possible answers are given in blue. Accept other answers if they are appropriate.]*

*A. Students don't pay attention when I give instructions.*

*RQ1: What makes me think they don't pay attention? [TP]*

*RQ2: What do pupils think about my instructions? [OP]*

*RQ3: What do I say when I give instructions? [B]*

*B. Students find it difficult to summarise ideas.*

*RQ1: Why do I want students to summarise ideas? [TP]*

*RQ2: What do pupils think about summarising? [OP]*

*RQ3: What do I say when I tell pupils to summarise? [B]*

*C. Even though I prepare extra activities for fast finishers, it doesn't seem to work.*

*RQ1: What do I think extra activities should achieve? [TP]*

*RQ2: What kind of activities do fast finishers say they would find interesting? [OP]*

*RQ3: What do pupils do instead of working on the extra activities? [B]*

## Activity 7: Preparing to collect data/evidence

**Objective:** To enable teachers to understand that we need to gather evidence/information/data which matches the research questions.

To understand that there are a variety of 'tools' /instruments apart from questionnaires that can be used to match the research question.

**Time:** 60 minutes

**Materials required:** Handout 6- Possible types of data gathering tools, Slides 8 and 9 in the PPT 2 - Developing research questions.

### Methodology

1. Ask participants to brainstorm the kinds of research tools they are familiar with from their experience and make a list.

*[This list should include questionnaires/surveys, interviews, checklists, evaluation sheets]*

2. Emphasise that different research questions require the right tool. For example, if you want to explore your own perception, you can't do questionnaires/interviews to yourself, but you can think of other ways. These could be your own reflections/diaries or recordings of parts of your lesson taken on your phone that you can look back at.

3. Develop a list of possible types of data gathering tools with participants. After they have come up with the list, show them Slide 8

4. Ask participants to recall the teacher's stories in the Teacher Research Books they read and answer the following questions in succession:

a. What data gathering devices were used in those research studies?

b. Is it necessary to use all these types in each of the studies? *[Of course, not]*

5. Show them Slide 9. Some tools are more appropriate to certain types of questions.

6. Give them Handout 6

7. Ask them to complete the second activity, taking each example at a time.

a. Is this about teacher's own perceptions, others' perceptions or actual behaviour/performance?

b. Match them to the tools on the slide – there may be more than one answer for each of them.

*[Answers to activity on Handout 6:*

- *How does a large class affect pupil behaviour? (10,11,1)*
- *How do I get pupils to participate? (9, 10, 1)*
- *How do pupils feel when they speak English? (4, 5, 6, 7)*
- *How do I get girls to participate more? (4, 5, 6, 7)*
- *What teaching methods do pupils like me to use in maths lessons? (8, 9, 10)*

- *What type of tasks/exercises do pupils find most difficult? (12, 4, 6)*
- *How do I give instructions? (3, 9, 10)*
- *Which activities engage pupils most? (10, 4, 5, 6)*
- *What kind of grouping strategies do my pupils find useful? (1, 10, 6)*
- *Do pupils feel they are making progress? (1, 4, 5, 6)*
- *In what area(s) do I most want pupils to make progress? (1, 2, 3)]*

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Improving Secondary Education in Sierra Leone



## Module 3 - Mentoring teacher research

FACILITATION GUIDE



# Introduction<sup>1</sup>

A mentor supports the group of teachers assigned to them in carrying out research in the classroom and helps to maintain the teacher's motivation during the teacher research process. Mentoring also aims to encourage self-development; this is also a major outcome of teacher research. A mentor can usefully provide scaffolding at particularly challenging points in the teacher research process.

## Significance of mentoring

Mentoring can play an important role in the professional development of teachers, nurturing and enhancing autonomous thinking and action. In the context of teacher research, a mentor is needed to help teachers become more conscious and systematic in their reflections, and to guide them to engage in research, thereby transitioning from reflective practitioner to teacher researcher. This transition is a challenging one, and several difficulties in the process can be identified. Mentoring is needed to motivate, support, and guide would-be teacher researchers through these challenging stages and to ensure the overall success of their projects.

Teacher research can be a very good means of engaging and enhancing autonomy and agency. And mentoring has a very similar goal. So, mentoring plus teacher research is potentially a very strong combination for setting teachers on the road to greater autonomy and agency in relation to their own professional development – of course, with an overall goal of improving pupils' learning experiences in the classroom.

## What can mentors of teacher research achieve?

Teachers often reflect on why things are working or not working in their classrooms, making small or large changes to their teaching based on what they experience. However, this process tends to be informal and to some extent unconscious. A mentor can help teachers make this process more conscious, more systematic, and therefore potentially more effective.

Even if they are very reflective, teachers may not (so often) collect data (gather evidence) to help them reflect on the issues confronting them, although some teachers do so, for example by asking students for feedback regularly or inviting a colleague to observe their teaching. A mentor can motivate and guide teachers to develop a focus on specific questions, gather evidence and thus engage in research, not just engage in reflection, to develop their practice. Finally, a mentor can also encourage and suggest ways for teachers to document and share what they find, to the benefit of teachers themselves and the wider teaching community. In sum, whether or not teachers already engage in reflection and/or data collection in relation to their teaching, mentors can help teachers to make evidence-based changes to improve the quality of pupils' learning.

	Workshop	Modules	No. of days	For mentors	For teachers
<b>Phase 1 - Understanding</b>	1	1 & 2	4 days	2 days	2 days
	1	3	1 day	1 day	-
<b>Phase 2- Equipping</b>	2	4	4 days	2 days	2 days
<b>Phase 3 - Reporting</b>	3	5 & 6	6 days	3 days	3 days
	Clinic	7	1 day	1 day	1 day

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Smith, R. (2020). *Mentoring teachers to research their classroom: A practical handbook*. New Delhi: British Council, pp.18-19.



### **Handouts and other materials needed for Module 3**

**Mentor Handout 1** - Quotations on mentors

**PPT 3 on mentoring teacher-researchers and Mentor Handout 2** - A self-evaluation checklist for mentors

**Mentor Handout 3** - Building mutual trust and rapport

**Handout 7** - Work in schools and **Handout 8** - Tracking teacher researchers' progress (Phase 1)

# Activity 1: Who is a mentor?

**Objective:** To understand that a mentor, more than anything else, cares for people, listens and gives a push in the right direction.

**Time:** 30 minutes

**Materials required:** Mentor Handout 1 - Quotations on mentors

## Methodology

1. Cut up each quotation on Mentor Handout 1 separately and give one strip to each one. You may need two copies of the Handout to repeat the quotations across the group.
2. Ask participants to read it themselves and then talk to their partner about it.
3. After about 15 minutes, ask them to share reflections with the wider group.
4. Discussion: Think of a mentor you have had in your personal or professional life. What qualities did they have? Put down the most important qualities of a mentor.
5. Distribute Mentor Handout 1 at this point for them to refer to it whenever they feel like during the project.

# Activity 2: Debunking myths about mentoring

**Objective:** To enable mentors to understand what the general qualities of a mentor of TR are and how one can keep track of one's own development as a mentor.

**Time:** 60 minutes

**Materials required:** PPT 3 on mentoring teacher-researchers and **Mentor Handout 2**-Self-evaluation checklist for mentors.

## Methodology

1. Present PPT 3 to highlight some of the key aspects of mentoring including debunking some myths.
2. After, start a general discussion with participants.
3. Distribute Mentor Handout 2 and do the activity. Later in the programme, we will return to these and see how you have developed so keep it safe.



### Tip for the facilitator

Mentor Handout 2 will be used in every workshop to trace the development of skills and competencies of a mentor. They will need to be reminded for every other workshop to bring the handout, but it will be worth having a few copies available for future workshops, just in case.

Go through as many of the slides for PPT as you can but adapt what you present, based on participant's interest and time.



## Activity 3: Building mutual trust and rapport

**Objective:** To understand that mentors need to build mutual trust and rapport with their teacher researchers and ways of building that relationship.

**Time:** 60 minutes.

**Materials required:** Mentor Handout 3 - Building mutual trust and rapport.

### Methodology

1. Introduce the idea of the affective dimension to participants. Building trust and mutual respect - is a very important basis for mentoring.

2. Ask them: How can you develop a warm, trusting and respectful relationship with the teacher(s) you will be mentoring?

3. Think of a person with whom you have a warm, trusting and respectful relationship - it may be a colleague, a family member, a friend or even a previous mentor of your own.

a. What is that trust and mutual respect built on? What do you think are the three most important ingredients to a trusting relationship?

*[Possible answers: honesty, commitment, dependability, a feeling that others are also as good as you if not better!]*

4. Now think about how you feel in a trusting relationship.

a. Can you think of three adjectives to describe your feelings?

*[Possible answers: secure, happy, feel like working hard, on top of the world!]*

5. How would you seek to build similar feelings in yourself and in the teachers you mentor?

6. Give them Mentor Handout 3 and talk participants through it

*[Possible answers to question 3 on the handout: A sense of mutual respect: You value what they know.*

- *A sense of equality: All of us have strengths and weaknesses.*
- *Honesty: Be transparent and communicate honestly and openly, e.g. when giving feedback (although you need to do this sensitively).*
- *Feeling valued: Be willing to listen; acknowledge positives and strengths.*
- *Feeling supported: Regularly contact individual teachers to ask how they are getting on.]*

## Activity 4: Mentoring plan

**Objective:** To develop a plan for mentoring and supporting teacher research in a systematic way in the next three months (Phase 1)

**Time:** 90 minutes

**Materials required:** **Handout 7** - Work in Schools and **Handout 8** - Tracking teacher researchers' progress (Phase 1)

### Methodology

1. Ask participants to think about their own mentoring plan in groups:

- (i) When to meet / how often? Where?
- (ii) What sort of support are you planning in terms of clarifying research questions, methods etc.
- (iii) Other kinds of support expected?
- (iv) How will you ensure regular communication with TRs?
- (v) How will you make yourself accessible?
- (vi) How will you ensure collaboration among TRs?

2. Give participants Handout 7 and ask them to discuss the grid with others about how you might implement the plan. What changes do you envisage? Why?

3. Give participants Handout 8 – as they visit schools over the coming months, try to complete the grid as much as possible and share comments with the rest of the group (e.g. through the Mentor WhatsApp group) and bring the consolidated report/feedback to the next workshop.



#### Tip for the facilitator

Ask participants to discuss this in groups that will make the most practical sense for how the mentoring model will be applied

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FACILITATION GUIDE

## Module 4 (Day 1)- Understanding ways of doing teacher research



# Introduction

This is part of a series of materials available for those seeking to deliver a programme of teacher research. This is the guide to help facilitate the second phase of the programme and the second workshop. If you have not already reviewed the introduction to this guide and information on facilitating the first workshop (Modules 1-3), it is strongly advised you do so.

By the end of this workshop, participants will have recapped on what participating teachers have done so far, finalized their research question and decided on the tools they will use to collect data. Participants will also have revisited the concept of a research cycle, evaluated their own learning plans and planned for the next three months.

	Workshop	Modules	No. of days	For mentors	For teachers
<b>Phase 1 - Understanding</b>	1	1 & 2	4 days	2 days	2 days
	1	3	1 day	1 day	-
<b>Phase 2- Equipping</b>	2	4	4 days	2 days	2 days
<b>Phase 3 - Reporting</b>	3	5 & 6	6 days	3 days	3 days
	Clinic	7	1 day	1 day	1 day



**Handout 5 and Handout 6** used in Module 2

**Mini-research studies**

**Handout 9** - Tools for data collection

**Handout 10** - Self-evaluation of Exploratory Action Research competencies

**Teacher Research articles**, one each from the [Bangladesh TR Book](#) and [Sierra Leone TR Book](#) and the other two provided in the additional resources.

# Activity 1: Recap work done so far

**Objective:** To gather together work done so far on identifying research questions (RQs) from teachers' own classroom contexts

**Time:** 60 minutes

**Materials required:** Handout 5 and Handout 6 used in Module 2, writing paper and pens

## Methodology

1. Ask participants to review Handouts 5 and 6 (from Module 2) to refresh their memory about how research questions can be studied from three perspectives and what tools can be used for this purpose.
2. Arrange participants into their groups, with their mentors, and collect research questions and discuss details of how they will do their research together.
3. Once the research questions are all on paper, look for repetitions and unmanageable questions. Talk to them individually to see if the research questions need to be looked at from a fresh perspective.
4. Identify those teachers who might need further help with revising the research questions.
5. Summarise for everyone what you did and the purpose of this activity.

## Learning points

Try to avoid very broad questions/problems that cannot be handled individually through classroom-based research. For example, students coming late to class, which is likely to be because of things beyond the teacher's control and outside of the classroom.



### Tip for facilitator

Try to get the teachers to articulate the concerns they have and develop them into research questions. Get them to use 'Socratic questioning' (from Handout 2) to help them narrow down their focus which they can handle in their classroom.

If there are 2-3 teachers from the same school, it may be a good idea for them to study the same concern from different angles. For example, lack of participation in class, which could have several different causes. Support from the school principal can also be useful in these scenarios.

## Activity 2: Looking at mini-research studies to see if teachers can use ideas from the 11 studies

**Objective:** Activity 2: Looking at mini-research studies to see if teachers can use ideas from the 11 studies.

**Time:** 120 minutes

**Materials required:** Set of the mini research studies for each participant

### Methodology

1. Introduce participants to the process of looking at mini studies, which have all the research steps outlined for them to follow. They can either:

- a. Decide which one they may want to use and then look at the study details carefully.
- b. Choose parts of the study that are related to their research question.

2. Distribute a copy of the mini-studies to each participant.

The full list is shown below:

	Title	Theme/focus
1	A diary study	Focus on the teacher
2	A study of group/pair work	Technique
3	Getting feedback from pupils	Pupils' perception
4	Pupils' perceptions of their role and learning	Pupils' perception
5	Pupils self evaluation	Pupils' perception
6	Creating an inclusive classroom	Including pupils in lessons
7	How well did the technique work?	Technique
8	Teaching large classes	Large classes/inclusion /technique
9	Professional development	Focus on the teacher
10	Building class profiles	All stakeholders
11	How can I make my classes fun?	Technique

3. Ask participants to study them in pairs or groups and discuss if they wish to adapt any of them.

4. Show them the table and key question on a PPT to help them to focus their discussion (45 minutes).

5. Go around and participate in the discussion to help participants arrive at their decisions. They should look at the research questions/areas identified and use the following question to guide participants:

- a. Which areas/questions seem similar, repetitive?
- b. Which mini studies might be closest to these teachers' concerns?
- c. Look at those and think of what changes might be necessary in their own studies.

6. Ask some participants to present briefly what they have decided to do after they have looked at the mini studies and provide feedback guiding them appropriately.
7. Ask participants to write down their new set of questions/outlines (if necessary) and ensure you collate them for your set of schools.

**Tip for facilitator**

Try and ensure that there is a good spread of research questions – in terms of study focus and approach.

It may be a good idea to encourage participating teachers to be open-minded about their area of study and look at all the mini-study outlines so they can see if any of the studies or part of studies can help them to address their concern.

# Activity 3: Tools for data collection: selection of appropriate tools and adapting them to suit the research study

**Objective:** Participants get an understanding of different tools: questionnaires, interviews, classroom observation schedule, and learn to adapt them to suit their study.

**Time:** 90 minutes

**Materials required:** Handout 9 – Tools for data collection

## Methodology

1. Distribute Handout 9. Ask participants to read it carefully and look at the 5 different tools individually.
2. Point out the different types of questions included in the tools (closed and open ended) with participants using the tips below.
3. Ask participants to sit in their groups to support each other and discuss which tools might be useful for which research questions and teachers.
4. Ask them to focus on one or two tools to see how they could adapt them for a specific research question. (E.g. Did I involve a majority of my pupils in my class?)
5. Ask participants to present the adapted version of their chosen tool(s), giving reasons why they made the changes. Ensure all the tools are discussed.
6. Review the tools used in the mini studies together. See if participants can define the tools used, why it might have been selected, and how it was used – and ask them to consider if they would like to adapt these tools for their own study.
7. Ask participants to think about their own research studies and the types and number of tools they would like to use, with reasons for their decisions.
8. Ensure the selected tools match the research questions.

## Learning points

- Common closed questions include:
  - a. true/false
  - b. yes/no
  - c. a 3/5 point scale with varying options such as strongly disagree/agree/disagree/strongly disagree, or very interesting/interesting/not interesting.
- Open ended questions require respondent's own answer which will then be qualitatively analysed. They can also be asked in an interview format, especially when you want to probe deeper and are looking at fewer respondents (5-6).



- Teachers can ask a colleague in the school, especially the other teacher researcher or the principal to observe their class and discuss their observations and take notes on that.
- It is also possible to self-observe and take notes. Try audio recording to see if you would like to see how much 'teacher talk' there is as opposed to 'pupil talk'.

## Activity 4: Critical reading of teacher research stories – Stage 2

**Objective:** To understand how teachers can write an account of their one-year long work within a given format. Teachers will especially focus on how tools are used and data is analysed and interpreted.

**Time:** 30 minutes

**Home Assignment:** 60 minutes

**Materials required:** 4 articles; one each from the Bangladesh and Sierra Leone TR reports (pick ones you think would be of interest), and the other two provided in the 'Other resources' folder. Each participant will be given only 2 articles out of which s/he can read any one for discussion the next day.

### Methodology

1. Distribute the articles. Ensure that half the group gets one set of two articles and the other half gets the other set.
2. Put up the questions on the white board or PPT that they should answer when they read the article:
  - a. What is the article about?
  - b. What did you like about it?
  - c. What tools has the teacher researcher used? How? What would you like to do in your study that is similar to this study? Give reasons.
3. Ask participants to make notes on a sheet of paper and bring it to the session on Day 2.

# Activity 5: Self-evaluation of Exploratory Action Research Competencies<sup>1</sup>

**Objective:** To self-evaluate one's progress and learning on the teacher-research journey and to plan future course of action.

**Time:** 45 minutes.

**Materials required:** Handout 10 - Self-evaluation of Exploratory Action Research competencies.

## Methodology

1. Distribute Handout 10 and ask participants to go through it carefully.
2. Let them answer it individually – it's meant for self-evaluation of the competencies they will be developing as teacher researchers. There are no right or wrong answers.
3. In mixed groups, let the teachers discuss what competencies they have developed from the first phase, and which competencies they would like to focus on in phase 2.
4. Ask them to complete the self-evaluation checklist at home and bring it to the session the next day.

## Learning points

- Emphasise that the research journey of each teacher is unique. Progress is crucial but there is no end point participants are required to meet. The important thing is to move from one point to the next on a continuum of teacher research competencies.

## Additional activities/resources

1. Give participants the following questions, and ask them to read either of the additional articles/resources and make notes for discussion the next morning:
  - a. What is this article about? Jot down the main points.
  - b. What did you like about it? Mention only the most significant/important points.
  - c. What tools has the teacher researcher used? How?
  - d. What would you like to do in your study that is similar/not similar to this study? Give your reasons.

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<sup>1</sup> This activity is only for teacher researchers. Mentors should familiarize themselves with the checklist but do not answer them.

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FACILITATION GUIDE

## Module 4 (Day 2) - Understanding ways of doing teacher research





## Handouts and other materials needed for Day 2

**Handouts 11** - From data to charts and **Handout 12** -Turning data into a diagram

**Handout 13** – Things to consider as you design your tools

**PPT 1** on Exploratory Action Research

**Handout 14** – Tracking teacher researchers' progress (Phase 2)

**Handout 15** Important points for mentors to remember from Workshop 2

# Activity 6: Discussion of articles/teacher reports they have read

**Objective:** Participants get an understanding of the way a research study can be written up. They understand how tools are used and administered, and how data is collected and analysed in a research study.

**Time:** 45 minutes

**Materials required:** Participants bring the articles distributed the previous day

## Methodology

1. Ask two people to represent each article and present for 5 minutes on the following questions, with a focus on the third question:

- What is this article/report about? Jot down the main points.
- What did you like about it? Mention only the most significant/important points.
- What tools has the teacher researcher used? How? What would you like to do in your study that is similar to this study? Give reasons.

2. At the end of the presentations, ask for others to give their views and have a discussion. Focus on how the data has been looked at and how the teacher will go on to the next research cycle based on what they have found.

3. Emphasise that they will be writing a similar report of their work – possibly for a conference or a book – and that by reading and commenting on articles, they will be learning to critique other's work with a view to give constructive feedback. This is also known as peer-review.

# Activity 7: Analysing quantitative data

**Objective:** Participants get a hands-on experience of how evidence collected can be collated, analysed and presented.

**Time:** 90 minutes

**Materials required:** **Handout 11** - From data to charts and **Handout 12** -Turning data into a diagram, **PPT 4** Analysing quantitative data.

## Methodology

1. Remind participants about how a questionnaire with closed questions means we gather data that are easily quantifiable – meaning that we can count the number of people who have said yes/no or have responded to a question/statement on a 3/4/5 point scale. The next step is to make sense of these numbers so that we can answer the research questions.
2. Distribute Handout 11 and ask them to read it individually.
3. You can also show the graphs in PPT 4 for clarity.
4. After 10 minutes, ask the following questions:
  - a. What is the difference between the three diagrams?  
*[The answer is 'no information difference' except that they look different. For some data one type of chart may be more appropriate.]*
  - b. Ask what types of data will lend themselves to what types of charts/diagrams.
5. Distribute Handout 12 and ask them to go through it individually first, for 15 minutes, and then discuss their understanding in groups of 3-4.
6. In plenary, ask them to focus on the following:
  - a. What do the peaks mean? *[There are distinct groups, and you will need to probe the reason for the peaks further.]*
  - b. Why is looking at 50% and above number of people crucial in this case? *[They explain two-thirds of the group's understanding which is substantial, and moreover, these are pupils who get the gist of the instructions and manage to do the task unlike others who find it difficult to understand instructions.]*
7. Emphasise that they need to first look at the highlights/major points of any data and then go into the detail/minor points.
8. Highlight that qualitative data has been obtained here, which makes the interpretation possible and meaningful.
9. Note that it is a good idea to ask 'why? /Please explain' questions when you're asking a closed question. This may be difficult for large samples.
10. Let them now read the second example; first individually and then discuss it in groups.

## Learning points

In a general discussion, after the second example in Handout 12, focus on the following:

- a. A lot of teacher talk (the total of the first three categories in the example) does not automatically mean it's a teacher centred class or that this should not to be encouraged. However, it does mean that it is teacher dominated. At this point avoid making any judgements about the type of class it is.
- b. We need to triangulate the data. That means verifying this data with other data, such as teachers' own views about their class and what pupils have to say about the class, in order to come up with a full picture of the class.
- c. Try to avoid making judgements in research. Draw inferences from the different data sources. And then when you have all the data in place you can draw conclusions which all the data point to. Sometimes you may have conflicting data, for example, when all pupils don't say the same thing about the class, or when a teacher and a colleague don't agree, you will need to investigate it further. Avoid coming to conclusions based on partial data.
- d. Try to wear a 'researcher's hat' when you observe a teacher and give them feedback. Your aim is to help them to improve their class, you are not an inspector or supervisor – have a friendly chat around issues you want the teacher to notice.

# Activity 8: (1) Getting ready for data collection (2) Analysing quantitative data: further practice

**Objective:** Participants get an understanding of the importance of piloting the tools and also practise calculating percentages as a first step towards data interpretation.

**Time:** 60 minutes.

**Materials required:** Handout 13 – Things to consider before data collection.

## Methodology

1. Distribute Handout 13 and ask participants to read it individually. Ask them questions such as the following:
  - a. When we pilot/trial a tool, for example, how do we know the tool we wish to use will help us get the right kind of data?
  - b. Why should tools be piloted?
  - c. Who can you involve in trialing?
2. Have a discussion with participants around how the wording of questions/statements can be changed once you've tested them with the same kind of group that you're going to administer the tool to. For example, if the questionnaire is meant for pupils, although you may consult a colleague for the content of the questionnaire, pupils are the best judges and can tell you what is unclear in the questions.
3. Ask participants to read the second page of Handout 13 (Data analysis: an example) and work out the percentages for the questions given. This can be done individually or in groups.
4. Note that this example is just one way of collating data and of taking your findings forward.
5. Make sure all the participants are familiar with calculating percentages (Note: The total number of pupils in class for each question in the handout is different).



### Tip for the facilitator

It's important to get those teachers who are shy/afraid of numbers to engage with this and make some inferences and be able to answer the questions given at the end of the Handout.

*Answers to questions on p.2 of Handout 13*

*1. 62 % of pupils definitely enjoy working in groups.*

*2. 55.3 % of pupils think it's not important to learn maths.*

*3. 52 % of pupils would like to speak in English in future but 23 % of them wouldn't like to and 25 % of them are not sure if they would like to.*



A 1. While 62% of pupils enjoy working in groups, 30% of them like it only sometimes.

2. While about half of them think it's important to learn maths, about three quarters of the class (77%) don't think it's important.

3. While about half the class would like to speak in English, the other half is not sure and wouldn't like to speak in English.

B. Questions 1-3 in the Handout are typical 'quantitative questions' that give a limited range of answers. To get a better understanding of why pupils say what they say, you need to ask other questions. For example, you may need to ask 'qualitative' or open-ended questions such as: why they like or don't like working in groups, why pupils think learning maths isn't important or what kinds of activities they may like doing in the English class. The answers are likely to involve descriptions of feelings, opinions, impressions etc.

This also means that you can't ask all pupils, one after another, for their oral answers. That's too time consuming. You can of course ask them to write their answers individually and then look at them carefully.

# Activity 9: Recap of the concept of a research cycle

**Objective:** Participants revisit the idea of a research cycle and get a clear idea of how research is an iterative process.

**Time:** 45 minutes

**Materials required:** PPT 1 on Exploratory Action Research (Module 1)

## Methodology

1. Refer to the diagram on research cycle in PPT 1 (Module 1) and then ask them why it's important to go through a research cycle.
2. Remind participants that while exploratory action research can stop with one cycle and give a deeper understanding of the situation/context, it always throws up further questions or it suggests that a certain 'action' is necessary.
3. Encourage teachers to go on to the next cycle of research to investigate the issue further. (Refer them to the research reports of teachers they have read from the Bangladesh or Sierra Leone TR books as examples).
4. Highlight that we usually stop research when time doesn't permit us to continue. By the end of the process, some teachers might have done three cycles of research, others only two. Participants should be sensitive to the 'unanswered questions' their study has thrown up.

# Activity 10: Planning work for the next three months including tracking teachers' progress during Phase 2

**Objective:** To plan work in schools during the next three months

**Time:** 60 minutes

**Materials required:** **Handout 14** - Tracking teacher researchers' progress (Phase 2) and **Handout 15** – Important things for mentors to remember

## Methodology

1. Discuss the work plan for the next three months with participants and emphasise that they need to submit their final research questions and a plan of their work to their mentor.
2. Give them a timeframe within which they need to submit this to you.
3. Let them discuss these in their district groups:
  - a. What does your work plan consist of?
  - b. How do you intend to go about your study?
  - c. What tools will you use?
    - (i) Remember your reflective journal will be one source of data.
    - (ii) Who will be your data providers/sources?
    - (iii) How often will you collect data?
  - d. When will you look at your findings to see what the data is telling you?
  - e. What is your next step?
2. Mentors should familiarize themselves with the various descriptors that capture teachers' research work during Phase 2. They can discuss the descriptors with teachers so that they are also clear about the different stages involved in carrying out their study.
3. Remind them about returning to Handout 10 - Self-evaluation of Exploratory Action Research Competencies. Ensure that they all submit it.
4. Distribute Handout 15 as a reminder of important things. Clarify any questions participants may have.

# Leh Wi Lan

Improving Secondary Education in Sierra Leone



FACILITATION GUIDE

## Module 5 (Day 1)- Analysing and interpreting data and presentation preparation



# Introduction

This is part of a series of materials available for those seeking to deliver a programme of teacher research. This is the guide to help facilitate the third and final phase of the programme and the third workshop. If you have not already reviewed the introduction to this guide and materials related to the first two phases of the programme, it is strongly advised you do so.

By the end of this three-day workshop, workshop participants will have reviewed their research studies, refocused their research questions where necessary and/or extended the research cycle where possible, and be prepared to present their research experience and learning to others.<sup>1</sup>

	Workshop	Modules	No. of days	For mentors	For teachers
<b>Phase 1 - Understanding</b>	1	1 & 2	4 days	2 days	2 days
	1	3	1 day	1 day	-
<b>Phase 2- Equipping</b>	2	4	4 days	2 days	2 days
<b>Phase 3 - Reporting</b>	3	5 & 6	6 days	3 days	3 days
	Clinic	7	1 day	1 day	1 day



## Handouts and other materials needed for Module 5 (Day 1)

**Handout 16, 17 A and 17B** – Kinds of data gathered

**Handout 18** – Refocusing the study

<sup>1</sup> This workshop requires most, if not all, those who are mentors to have sent

# Activity 1: Review of work done so far

**Objective:** To review work done so far on the research questions and data that will help answer the research questions

**Time:** 120 minutes

**Materials required:** Research questions from all research studies and the corresponding data collected by teachers (This should have been submitted and each mentor has a copy of this document) Handout 16, 17A and 17B.

## Methodology

1. Ask participants to sit in their groups (for Leh Wi Lan this meant district groups).
2. Ask groups to look at their research questions, the data collected and discuss where each of them are at.
3. Give participants Handout 16.
4. Go through the table on the handout and clarify any questions.
5. Look at the example of the research study on Handout 16 and read it together.
6. Help participants to think through the kinds of data this researcher has collected. Remind them to use information from all the three columns and mention the number of times the data was collected.
7. Clarify that this example describes only the exploratory action research stage (EAR) but hints at going on to the next stage which is action research (AR).

*[Answer to example on Handout 16: Pupil perception through open ended questions (1), Classroom observation by a colleague using a checklist (1), Discussions with the colleague about what she and I had observed (1), Self-reflections (throughout).]*

8. Ask mentors to individually fill up the grid for all their teachers (Handout 17A). They should begin from the exploratory phase (EAR).
9. When they are doing this work, those who are supporting the workshop (in Sierra Leone, this was national experts) go round the groups and help them with any question participants might have (20 minutes). Note that Handout 17A is for those have carried out ONLY EAR at this point. If they have gone on to AR, then their details will have to be entered in Handout 17B. For each mentor therefore, both 17A and 17B will together give the full picture of all their teacher researchers.
10. Mentors can now think of the teachers who have gone on to the second stage which is taking action to address the issue they have identified through some strategies, techniques/methods (AR). As they did for the exploratory phase, ask them to complete Handout 17B for the action research phase. (20 minutes).
11. Remind them it is all right if all their teachers haven't gone to the AR phase.
12. After this, in their respective groups, ask them to answer the following questions (30 minutes).
  - a. How many studies are still at the EAR stage?
  - b. How many at the AR stage?
  - c. Which research questions are similar/same?

d. If we would like to form teams of 2 or 3 teachers to present at the conference, how many teams would that be?

13. Have a discussion with the whole group around these points to help understand how many presentations there would be, on what topics and from which regions:

a. If teachers are researching into similar questions, for example, lack of pupil participation, it may be a good idea to team them up and they make a joint presentation, even if they looked at the study in different ways, used different tools, came up with different findings and adopted different strategies to address the problem.

b. In some cases, it may make sense for participating teachers to present individually because their study has a unique focus.

# Activity 2: Does the data collected answer my research questions?

**Objective:** To look critically at the data collected so far to see if the research questions are being answered

**Time:** 90 minutes

**Materials required:** Completed **Handouts 17A & 17B** and **Handout 18**

## Methodology

1. Tell participants that this activity will help them to understand if connections exist between the research questions teachers have asked and the data they have collected, and, if not, how to establish the connection.
2. Distribute Handout 18 and ask them to follow the instructions for the first example (30 minutes).

Answers to the questions related to the first example in Handout 18:

- (i) What is the focus of the study? [*Helping shy students to speak*]
- (ii) What are the research questions the study has addressed? [*How can I get shy students to speak in class without feeling shy? What sorts of tasks might help to achieve this?*]
- (iii) What would be a suitable title for the study? [*There is more than one possible answer, for example: Students shy? Not anymore!*]

Answers to the questions from the second example in Handout 18:

- a. What is the focus of the study? [*Reflecting on my own teaching in the light of what students feel about my teaching*]
  - b. What are the research questions the study has addressed? [*Self-reflection through journal writing*]
  - c. What would be a suitable title for the study? [*Multiple options, no right answer – let participants think of it*]
4. Discuss examples of data from within the group that do not match the existing research questions and how we can refocus it.
  5. Give district groups some time (15 minutes) to discuss which studies might need refocusing.

## Learning points

It was necessary to refocus the study and to give a new title in the first example because the data suggested a different path to take. The teacher in the example began with a specific focus on increasing participation in group work but based on the data collected they shifted the focus to helping students to speak better. Although the initial concern was a genuine one, the data revealed that there was something else happening that affected their participation.

1. Find out if there are studies that need refocusing like this and encourage those participants to think of a set of research questions that they may not have started out with, but that will do justice to the findings of their study so far.
2. Discuss a few examples.
3. Get a rough estimate of how many studies need refocusing that can be adequately justified.

If needed, ask participants to look at the optional example on the next page of Handout 18.



## Activity 3: Evaluating where the study is at

**Objective:** To take stock of the stage the research study is at and making decisions about next steps

**Time:** 120 minutes

**Materials required:** Completed **Handouts 17A** and **17B**

### Methodology

1. Participants (in their districts) look more closely at the completed Handout 17A and answer the following questions (60 minutes):

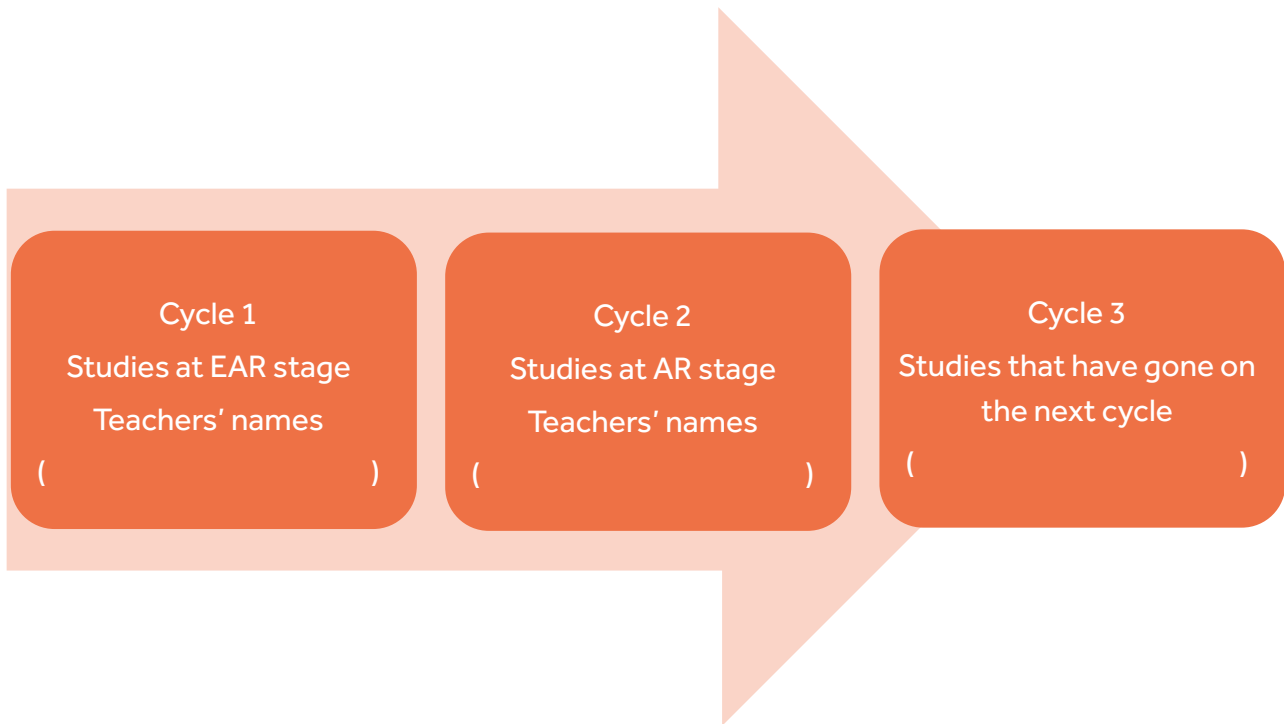
- a. Which studies have at least three types of data: teachers' reflections over 2-3 months, pupil perceptions and another person/colleague's perceptions or observation of behavior?
- b. Do these studies have adequate data to draw inferences that will help us to go on to the next stage, which is doing something about the concern/issue?
- c. What are some of the inferences one can draw based on all the data taken together? Is it justified? If not, should the teacher collect some more data? This could be through another tool or more of the same data.

2. As they work on these questions, go around to clarify questions they may have.

3. Now let participants (in their groups) look at the completed Handout 17B and answer the following questions (60 minutes). Remind them they can look at Handouts 9, 11 – 13 to help them if they need to:

- a. Is the data collected during the exploratory phase from at least three data sources: teacher's reflections over 2-3 months, pupil perceptions and another person/colleague's perceptions or observation of behavior?
- b. Has the data been analysed and interpreted to arrive at how the next step can be taken to address the concern? At this point, ask participants to give some examples of how the data has been interpreted and if appropriate findings have been arrived at and where it hasn't been.
- c. Decide which studies need to go back to the initial stage to get some more/different kinds of data which will need to be conveyed to the teacher during the teacher workshop and give suggestions about what else the teacher can do to make the study more robust.
- d. Now look at studies that have been through a successful EAR stage and gone on to the next cycle: Have appropriate strategies/techniques been implemented in this phase? What kind of data is being collected? Ensure that there is adequate data (as in the EAR stage) to find out if the 'new' strategy is working and how well.

4. Ensure that the mentors are now quite clear about which studies are at the stage of wrapping up at the EAR stage, which ones have gone on to the AR stage and what else needs to be done. They can draw a diagram to show this as below:



## Learning points

- It's important to remind them of the following:
  - It's ok to administer the questionnaire or do interviews of a few of the pupils as the study might be focusing on them, not the entire class.
  - It's better to have more data than less, for example, at least two or three classroom observations rather than just one.
  - If data from different sources give contradictory results, for example, the colleague has observed that most pupils are not able to follow the instructions for a task, while students say they do, it is a good idea to probe this further by asking them more questions and asking the colleague to observe more closely especially those students who have a different perception.
- When enough data has been collected and still the issue persists, it's a good thing to tilt towards students' feelings because we believe that learning can happen better when students feel good.
- By the end of this activity, we need to be sufficiently clear about how many teachers have enough data to be able to present it at the conference especially if they don't manage to continue their research work.



### Tip for the facilitator

For the second part of the activity, mentors should be looking at and discussing actual data – not just what teachers have said they are working on.

# Leh Wi Lan

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FACILITATION GUIDE

## Module 5 (Day 2)- Analysing and interpreting data and presentation preparation





## Handouts and other materials needed for Module 5 (Day 2)

**Mentor Handout 4** – Reflective writing by Holly

**Handout 19** – Samples of teacher diaries

# Activity 4: Learning about writing reflective journals individually and in groups<sup>1</sup>

**Objective:** Using self-reflection and self-evaluation as a tool for teacher development

**Time:** 90 minutes

**Materials required:** Mentor Handout 4 – Reflecting writing by Holly and Mentor Handout 2 – Self-evaluation of mentoring qualities

## Methodology

1. Draw mentors' attention to how many teachers are writing 'notes' or reflective journals in their notebooks
2. Note that we would like to see teachers write on a regular basis about their work – what they planned to do, what they did and how students responded. The focus should be on why something happened the way it did rather than a description of what happened.
3. Ask mentors to think of the following to help them prepare to keep a reflective journal themselves, so they understand the process:
  - a. Reflect on what your experiences have been on this workshop so far, both positive and not so positive.
  - b. Is there something you would like to focus on in the journal? It could be about the activity itself, your role, how others are interacting with you, or whatever.
  - c. It's good to think of some very recent things rather than something that happened long ago.
4. Read the summary of an article in Mentor Handout 4 and answer the questions given at the end (45 minutes).
5. Discuss the questions with the group.
6. Ask mentors to think of writing their experiences of working as facilitators/mentors on the TR programme together and consider the possibility of presenting it at the conference (45 minutes).
7. Tell them to look back at Mentor Handout 2 to remind themselves about what mentoring abilities they have been practising and developing over the last few months. They could choose one or a group of competencies to reflect on.

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<sup>1</sup> This activity is for mentors only, not for participating teachers

8. Ask them to brainstorm in their group about what they might like to write about and put their ideas on the white board.
9. Ask them to think about how they may want to team up and plan for their presentation – is it mentors within or even across districts? Or individually? It could be a friends' group regardless of the region/district you come from.
10. Ask participants to get into their groups and discuss how they would like to go about writing, what aspects they will consider, and what examples they will use from their work with teachers. If they're working with a team, then each will bring their own perspective and they can write about their focus of interest.
11. Remind mentors to keep the 'you' in mind and focus on the self (recall the reading of the excerpt – Mentor Handout 4); how you have evolved from where you were when you first began mentoring teacher researchers to now.
12. **Home Task:** Ask participants to prepare a rough outline of what their team will focus on after the session/at home so they can present it in the next session. They will have 5 minutes to present.

## Learning points

When you get to step 7, you can give an example to participants:

For example, mentoring qualities such as 'I show a positive attitude', 'I show interest in others', or 'I am able to imagine another person's difficulties' are all qualities that show that you're a 'people person' who relates well to others. If you feel you are interested in this area, you could start reflecting on it, and write about it. You can discuss this with your team member(s) and start putting down actual examples from your experience on some aspects of this area.



### Tip for the facilitator

For the second part of the activity, mentors should be looking at and discussing actual data – not just what teachers have said they are working on.

# Activity 5: Practising journal writing

**Objective:** Participants practise writing reflective journals as a tool for data collection

**Time:** 60 minutes

**Materials required:** Handout 19 – Samples of teachers' diary and white sheets of paper

## Methodology

1. Before beginning the activity ensure participants understand the following:
  - a. Some of us keep diaries quite regularly, some of us occasionally, and others may not at all. Diary keeping as a source of data for research has been found to be an extremely valuable source and helps to add a very important dimension, especially when we engage in classroom research. However, to get maximum benefit from personal journals, we need to learn to write them.
  - b. It's a professional diary in the sense that it focuses on all our teaching-learning activities and all things associated with it.
  - c. When we read our own journals it gives a fresh meaning and perspective and that's even more beneficial for professional development.
  - d. Reflective diaries are best written in a personalized way, therefore use the first person, 'I' so that you can convey your views/opinions frankly. It's like a dialogue you'll have with yourself.
  - e. If you wish you may not ask anyone to read it, but yourself.
  - f. Don't worry about grammar or 'good' English but think of expressing yourself freely and honestly. Begin with something that's uppermost in your mind...
2. Ask participants to reflect on this workshop and all the things happening in terms of interactions with peers, facilitators, the materials used, their learning etc.
3. Distribute white sheets of paper and spend 10 minutes clarifying any question they may have on the activity.
4. Tell them they now have 15 minutes to write without any interruption.
5. At the end of 15 minutes, if some people look engrossed in their writing, let them write for another 5 minutes.
6. Discuss how participants found the writing and ask questions:
  - a. How did you like this writing activity?
  - b. For how many of you is this the first time?
  - c. Did you find writing about professional things difficult or different from writing personal things?
7. Ask them if they wish to exchange their write ups and read them. You can allow some time for them to read each other's if they want to share them.



### Tip for the facilitator

Mentors will get teachers to do this activity in their workshop. Make it meaningful and relevant to their work. Show Handout 19 to emphasise there's no one way of writing a reflective journal.

# Leh Wi Lan

Improving Secondary Education in Sierra Leone



## Module 6 - Preparing for the conference

FACILITATION GUIDE



# Introduction

This is part of a series of materials available for those seeking to deliver a programme of teacher research. This is the guide to help facilitate the third and final phase of the programme and the third workshop. If you have not already reviewed the introduction to the guide and materials related to the first two phases of the programme, it is strongly advised you do so.

By the end of this six-day workshop, workshop participants will understand different modes of how to present their research findings, have familiarized themselves with the presentation template and learnt to write an abstract for the conference. They will also have practiced presenting their research and drawn up a schedule of their work for the next three months.

This module was designed and developed to prepare participants to present their research findings at a conference. You may not be organizing a conference but there may be other opportunities for participating teachers to present their work – and this guide and the accompanying handouts should be updated accordingly.

	Workshop	Modules	No. of days	For mentors	For teachers
<b>Phase 1 - Understanding</b>	1	1 & 2	4 days	2 days	2 days
	1	3	1 day	1 day	-
<b>Phase 2- Equipping</b>	2	4	4 days	2 days	2 days
<b>Phase 3 - Reporting</b>	3	5 & 6	6 days	3 days	3 days
	Clinic	7	1 day	1 day	1 day



## Handouts and other materials needed for Module 6

### Presentation Template

**Presentation Handout 1** - Writing an account of your research study

**Presentation Handout 2** – Guidelines for presentation

**Presentation Handout 3** – Writing abstracts

**Handout 20** – Tracking teacher researchers' progress (Phase 3)

**Mentoring Handout 2**- Self-evaluation of mentoring qualities/skills (For mentors)

**Handout 10** - Self-evaluation of Exploratory Action Research Competencies (For teachers)



# Activity 1: Helping teachers to write an account of their research study

**Objective:** To get teachers to see the sequence in which their study must be written up and to fill gaps where necessary.

**Time:** 60 minutes

**Materials required:** Presentation Handout 1 - Writing an account of your research study

## Methodology

1. Distribute Presentation Handout 1 and ask participants to read it carefully.
2. Check if they need clarification before they begin.
3. Point out that the prompt questions help them to make sure they are on the right track (15-20 minutes).
4. Encourage teachers to answer as many questions as possible.
5. Discuss what they might do when teachers are stuck, and they may not be clear as to how they can proceed further. For example: Under 'data gathered', if they cannot answer the questions, how will they help the teachers? Similarly let them suggest some examples of issues they may foresee from their experience of collaborating with teachers (30 minutes).



### Tip for the facilitator

This activity continues from the activities in Module 5, where mentors tried to understand which teachers are at what stage of their research. Mentors can use it to clarify different steps teachers need to go through and help them to see gaps. Teachers can also use Presentation Handout 1 to write an account of the study they have conducted – a modified version of this may be used for a publication.

## Activity 2: Understanding different modes of presentation

**Objective:** To see what is involved in a poster presentation and a talk and decide whether they will do a poster or talk, individually or in teams

**Time:** 120 minutes

**Materials required:** Presentation Handout 2 – Guidelines for presentation, and the Presentation Template

### Methodology

1. Provide context for the presentations if there is one to introduce the activity. This might include information on the type of presentation they will be asked to do, length of time they will have and who will be in attendance etc. For example, for Leh Wi Lan – everyone was preparing for a two-day conference that brought together people from across the education sector.
2. Distribute Presentation Handout 2 and ask them to read it carefully (30 minutes).
3. Encourage them to ask questions about any words/phrases they want clarification on before they do the activity.
4. Go through the rest of the guidelines about the details of the presentation as a group.
5. Highlight that Presentation Handout 2 makes some suggestion on what makes a good poster, but there is no formula.
6. Note that the Presentation Template provides a general structure that may guide participating teachers, but they can ask for help if they feel they need it.
7. Reassure participants that they will be provided with the necessary materials sufficiently in advance of the conference dates based on the number of posters and talks.
8. Confirm that they will receive separate guidelines nearer the date of their presentation, including opportunities to practice.

### Tip for the facilitator



#### Decisions on how to present:

- **Participating teachers should be given the chance to choose how they want to present before you offer advice or help.**
- **Teachers who are confident of standing up and talking to an audience about their topic might be more inclined to opt for a talk. Those who are a little unsure about their work or are a bit hesitant to speak to an audience, might want to opt for posters. This does not mean posters are inferior to talks. Give them a choice and when they express a choice, then mentors can exercise their judgement about it.**
- **Are there some groups where it makes sense to do a joint presentation, either because they are from the same school or are focused on the same topic?**

## Activity 3: Presentations of outlines on reflective writing on mentoring (Mentors only)

**Objective:** To work on a small reflective task on mentoring teacher research collaboratively

**Time:** 90 minutes

**Materials required:** Paper to do a revised outline

### Methodology

1. Remind participants that they had got into small groups and thought about ideas for what to present earlier on in this workshop.
2. Invite each group to give a brief outline of their presentation.
3. Reassure them that it does not need to be polished, and they will be able to work on it further, but the idea is for them to get some feedback from others.
4. Do not worry if what they're trying to focus on overlaps with others' outlines. There will always be some things that will vary according to the specific context.
5. Give them 5 minutes to present, and 5-10 minutes for follow-up discussion, depending on the numbers.
6. Ask them to make notes on the why, what, and how of the presentation outlines they are listening to and to get ready to provide constructive feedback.
7. Ask pointed questions - neither too critical, nor too congratulatory - so that it sets the tone of a fruitful discussion.
8. Ask them to get back into their groups and discuss what changes they would like to make because of the discussion and revise their outline before submitting the revised outlined to you (keeping a copy for themselves).

### Learning points

- Mentors will have some time to work on this further after this session. You should offer for them to contact you via WhatsApp or other channels you agreed to use early in the programme to check-in on how things are doing.
- It may be a good idea to have a team leader who will take responsibility to get the group together every now and then and complete their work and be in touch with you, the facilitator.



#### Tip for the facilitator

This is the second activity when they have begun thinking about their presentation and how to develop reflective write-ups. Assure them that they will get help to develop this further.

# Activity 4: Writing an abstract for the conference

**Objective:** To learn about what the features of a good abstract are and practise writing one based on their study

**Time:** 90 minutes

**Materials required:** Presentation Handout 3 - Writing abstracts, an example conference programme (if you have one) and white paper to do a draft of an abstract

## Methodology

1. Show participants, as an example, a conference brochure that has presenters abstracts printed in it. You could show a hard copy or photograph. If you don't have one, move to point 2.
2. Tell them that sometimes you must submit an abstract to be considered for a conference where you present your research.
3. Tell them that it takes some practice to write a good abstract. The length is short and within that you need to be able to say all the important points in a clear and concise manner.
4. Give them Presentation Handout 3 and ask them to choose the one that they think is doing its job of giving a clear picture of the presentation within the word limit of 60-70 words.
5. Ask them to share why they have made their choice.
6. Remind participants that there is no one way to write an abstract but the important thing to remember is that it must be focused, it should come to the point and talk about the study very briefly, including findings.
7. When facilitating for mentors, mentors will have already had some hands-on experience of writing their outlines, so at this point can try to write an abstract for it. When facilitating for participating teachers, teachers will spend this time studying and analyzing the two abstracts (15-20 minutes).
8. Have a brief feedback session focusing on the following:
  - a. Does the abstract give an adequate picture of the whole study?
  - b. Does it mention the salient findings?
  - c. Does it help to set up readers' expectations?
  - d. If time permits, they can do a second draft of the abstract.
9. Emphasize that the more drafts written, the better it will get, and that peer review is a very good professional development exercise.

## Learning points

When discussing the different options (step 5), highlight the following about each abstract:

- Abstract A: Clearly describes the context for the study (why the study was undertaken), what the study did, and how, and what the findings were. It helps to set expectations by saying what else will be discussed.
- Abstract B: Does not focus on the topic of the study, uses too many words unnecessarily. It is not clear what the study tried to do, how or what the findings are.

# Activity 5: Planning for the next three months

**Objective:** Teachers and mentors will get a realistic idea of what other work they need to do within the timeframe and plan to complete it

**Time:** 90 minutes

**Materials required:** **Handout 20** - Tracking teacher researchers' progress (Phase 3) and paper to do the planning, **Mentor Handout 2** and **Handout 10**

## Methodology

1. Distribute Handout 20 so that teachers become aware of what is expected of them before they present their research findings.
2. With them, work backwards from the date of their presentations so they understand that there will be a clinic that will focus exclusively on helping them to prepare their posters or talks/PPTs, and another where they will learn to revise their written reports as well.
3. Focus them on the following question: Can I complete my study satisfactorily to be able to meet either or both timelines?
4. Ask mentors to complete Mentor Handout 2 or participating teachers to complete Handout 10 at the end of this workshop and submit it to the facilitator.



### Tip for the facilitator

Mentors should help teachers to plan their remaining time before their presentations and get a fair idea of how many teachers in their group might indeed be able to complete the work satisfactorily.