REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA
Ministry of General Education
FROM EVIDENCE TO ACTION

A PRESENTATION TO THE TEACHING AT THE RIGHT LEVEL (TaRL) CONFERENCE 26TH TO 27TH SEPTEMBER, 2018.

BY

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Outline

1. Background
2. Challenge
3. TaRL Inspiration
4. Opportunity
5. The Model/s
6. Getting Started
7. Learning, iterating, adapting and growing
8. What’s next
9. Successes, lessons and outstanding questions
BACKGROUND:

- The 2014 SACMEC Assessment results in early grade literacy and numeracy showed there was a learning crisis in the country.
- 60% of learners performed below their grades.
- Zambia came second from last in the 14 member grouping.
- The EGRA and EGMA results were not good as well.
- This sent alarms to the Education circles prompting an urgent need to reverse the downward trend.
- The Directorate of Standards and Curriculum was directed to come with remedial solutions to the downward trend.
- Provinces were directed to come up with some Remedial/Catch Up strategies that would help slow learners in the schools how to read and do numeracy.
- The national office started searching for solutions and asking questions.
CHALLENGE.

Pertinent questions asked were:
• Are girls learning?
• Are boys learning
• Are poor children learning?
• Are children in rural areas learning?
• Are children with disabilities learning?
• Are children and youth not in the formal schooling system learning?
• Which groups have low learning levels, and what can we do to improve them?
• What approach/system can be used to remedy this situation?
• While in this process, an organization known as Abdul Latif Jamel Poverty Action Lab (J-Pal) offered to help.
• J-PAL Africa connected the Ministry of General Education to an Indian Organisation (Pratham) that was piloting TaRL in Gujarat with success.
• J-PAL and Pratham were engaged and reviewed our Catch Up plan for Zambia and provided useful suggestions and insights to improve learning outcomes.
WHY TaRL?

What problem did the intervention address at the inception of the programme?

The programme solved a number of challenges for us.

- It brought a formalized evidence based remedial teaching methodology system.
- Testing of Grades 3, 4 and 5.
- Testing in both numeracy and literacy skills with contextualized tools.
- Teachers of all 3 grades and school administrators were retrained in handling remedial work.
- Training of Teacher Education Staff at Zone, District and Province.
- Orientation of Parents on their roles in the education of their children.
The following are key issues that are being addressed:

- Literacy; Story, Paragraph, Word and Letter.
- Number Recognition
- Need to be able to do all levels of number recognition: Place Value, Basic Operations, addition and Subtraction, Multiplication, and Division.
THE MODEL

3 hours per day for one month during school time (Chipata, 20 schools)

- *Led by:* Teachers
- *When:* 1.5 hours literacy and 1.5 hours numeracy each day during the school day at the end of third term in November 2016.
- *How long:* One month

3 hours per day for one month during holiday (Katete, 20 schools)

- *Led by:* Teachers
- *When:* 1.5 hours literacy and 1.5 hours numeracy each day during April 2017 school holiday.
- *How long:* One month
1 hour per day for six months (Monze and Pemba, 40 schools)

- *Led by:* Teachers
- *When:* first and second term in 2017 (one hour a day, outside the normal timetable)
- *How long:* Six months
Using the SACMEC and National Assessment results, Provinces and Districts within that performed poorly were identified and recommended to pilot the Indian version of Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL).

For Southern, Monze and Pemba were identified and were to use the one hour a day intensive model.

For Eastern, Katete and Chipata were to use the holiday camp model.

- 40 schools piloted in each Province
- 2 Districts in each Province were selected.
- 240 Teachers trained.
- 80 Head teachers trained.
- 80 Mentors (Senior Teachers) trained.
GETTING STARTED

- **September 2016**, Trainings started

- **Oct-Nov 2016**, Chipata pilot, one month in schools. 20 schools

- **Feb-July 2017**, Monze and Pemba pilot One hour a day for two terms. 40 schools

- **Apr-May 2017**, Katete pilot, one month in school holiday. 20 schools
THE PILOT USED THE MoGE MONITORING SYSTEM WITH SUPPORT FROM AN NGO.

- **District.** District Resource Centre Coordinator (DRCC) visited a small number of schools.
- **VVOB** - One VVOB Coordinator per 20 schools. VVOB Coordinator visited all 20 schools each month.
- **ZONE** - Zone INSET Coordinators visited all five schools in their zone at least once during the pilot.
- **SCHOOL** - Senior Teacher visited each Catch Up teacher in their school a number of times.
Pilot design

Chipata
• 20 schools
• Catch Up lessons for 4 weeks
• November 2016.
• Term-time, during class time
• 1.5hrs literacy, 1.5hrs numeracy a day
• One grade 3, 4, and 5 class per school

Katete
• 20 schools
• Catch Up lessons for 4 weeks
• April/May 2017.
• School holiday
• 1.5hrs literacy, 1.5hrs numeracy a day
• One grade 3, 4, and 5 class per school

Monze
• 20 schools
• Catch Up lessons for two terms
• February to July 2017.
• During term-time, outside class time
• 1hr a day
• One grade 3, 4, and 5 class per school

Pemba
• 20 schools
• Catch Up lessons for two terms
• February to July 2017.
• During term-time, outside class time
• 1hr a day
• One grade 3, 4, and 5 class per school
In all pilots, teacher assessment results were close to the independent assessment results.

Gives confidence that the improvements seen are genuine. Still need to check assessment process is being done right.
We conducted process monitoring to test the theory behind the methodology

Children have low levels of basic numeracy and literacy and are taught in heterogeneous classes.

Teachers assess children and group them by ability level.

There is time dedicated to basic skills and instruction is targeted at the level of the child.

Teachers are mentored during implementation as they learn the programme.

Basic literacy and numeracy skills improve.

Do learners in grades 3-5 have low levels of basic skills? (slides 6-9)

Do teachers assess learners correctly? (slide 10)

Process

Do teachers use the methodology in class? (slide 13-14)

Impact

Are teachers supported by mentors? (slide 16-17)
Teachers used the methodology in class, and improved over time.

This score is made of:
- Was the class arranged in groups? the time?
- Were Catch Up teaching aids in classroom? to children?
- Did children handle Catch Up teaching aids? topics?
- Were more than half children are having fun?

- Was the teacher talking less than half
- Was the teacher sitting/standing close
- Could the children relate to lesson
LITERACY: learners are expected to be able to read a story by the end of grade 2. Most learners in grades 3-5 were not able to do this at the baseline.
NUMBER RECOGNITION: learners are expected to read numbers with 3 digits by the end of grade 2. But at baseline, most learners in G3-5 could not do this.
BASIC MATHS OPERATIONS: Learners are expected to do two-digit subtraction with carrying by end of grade two. But at baseline most learners in G3-5 could not do this.

**Southern Province Baseline**

- **Grade 3**: 14% Can do addition and subtraction, 5% Can do addition only, 81% Beginner
- **Grade 4**: 34% Can do addition and subtraction, 15% Can do addition only, 51% Beginner
- **Grade 5**: 44% Can do addition and subtraction, 15% Can do addition only, 41% Beginner

**Eastern Province Baseline**

- **Grade 3**: 28% Can do addition and subtraction, 11% Can do addition only, 61% Beginner
- **Grade 4**: 48% Can do addition and subtraction, 16% Can do addition only, 35% Beginner
- **Grade 5**: 54% Can do addition and subtraction, 18% Can do addition only, 28% Beginner
SUMMARY

- Do learners in grades 3-5 have low levels of basic skills? YES
- Do teachers assess learners correctly? YES
- External checks still useful at scale to encourage accuracy
- Do teachers use the methodology in class? YES
- Pilot suggests teachers need support on working with small groups
- Are teachers supported by mentors? YES
- Senior teacher is the key mentor as they are based in the same school as the teacher and so do not need funds for transport and can visit regularly.
- Schools need to be flexible about scheduling lessons, particularly during first term when bad weather and co-curricular activities disturb regular lessons.
LEARNING AND GROWING.

- focus should be on continuous assessment,
- greater use of learner centered methodology produce the right atmosphere for learning,
- use of interactive activities enhanced critical and creative thinking,
- there was more peer to peer learning and problem solving among learners,
- TaRL therefor contributed to a stimulation of the learning environment.
- TaRL pedagogical approach contrasted the normal teaching methods our teachers are used to.
What’s next?

- **Pilot**: 40 schools, Eastern Province, 40 schools, Southern Province, 300 teachers
- **2018**: 240 schools, Eastern Province, 230 schools, Southern Province, 2,300 teachers
- **2019**: 580 schools, Eastern Province, 580 schools, Southern Province, 5,800 teachers
- **2020**: 890 schools, Eastern Province, 860 schools, Southern Province, 8,800 teachers