

END-OF-PROJECT REPORT

REMEDIAL LEARNING SUPPORT PROJECT, LEARNOVATE FLIP: ADAMAWA STATE

Oando Foundation Funded Learning Hubs

FEB
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JUL
2025

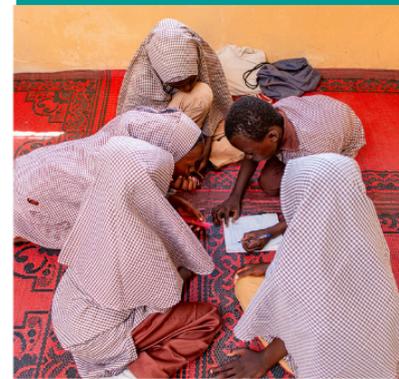




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Table of Abbreviations and Key Terminologies

Abbreviation	Full Meaning
ADSUBEB	Adamawa State Universal Basic Education Board
Baseline	Initial learner assessment before programme implementation
Endline	Learner assessment conducted at the end of the programme
ES	Education Secretary
HT	Head Teacher
LGA	Local Government Area
LGEA	Local Government Education Authority
Learning Hubs	Pilot schools used for testing innovations
Mentoring	Ongoing support for teachers to improve classroom practice
MVP	Minimum Viable Product
PP	Percentage Point
QAO	Quality Assurance Officer
SMO	School Monitoring Officer
SSO	School Support Officer
SUBEB	State Universal Basic Education Board
TaRL	Teaching at the Right Level
TLMs	Teaching and Learning Materials
UBEC	Universal Basic Education Commission

Executive Summary

With the support of the Oando Foundation and TaRL Africa, the Adamawa State Universal Basic Education Board (ADSUBEB) implemented the Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) methodology across 20 schools in Demsa, Girei, and Yola North LGAs. Initially designed to reach 2,400 learners, the programme nearly doubled its coverage, reaching 4,469 learners (48% girls) between February and July 2025.

The initiative tested practical ways of delivering TaRL at lower cost while sustaining quality. Despite reduced inputs, the programme achieved learning gains that exceeded most set targets.

Implementation was guided by a comprehensive review of TaRL's core components, including training, teaching and learning materials (TLMs), and mentoring. This led to two major innovations. TLMs were streamlined to reduce printing costs, with monitoring of their impact on facilitation and learner engagement. Data collection was digitised, enabling head teachers to upload school-level results directly to a central portal. This improved the speed and quality of data flow, supporting more responsive decision-making.

Endline assessments showed significant progress. Hausa literacy improved by 24 percentage points (pp) in paragraph reading, while non-readers declined by 34 pp. In English, paragraph reading rose by 27 pp and non-readers dropped by 35 pp. Numeracy recorded a 35 pp gain in learners solving 2-digit subtraction. These outcomes were achieved within just six months.

Field insights underscored the programme's effectiveness. Learners engaged enthusiastically with activities, often taking learning charts home. Teachers, supported by mentors, used simplified kits and classroom resources to sustain participation. These experiences show that cost-efficient implementation can still deliver strong results.

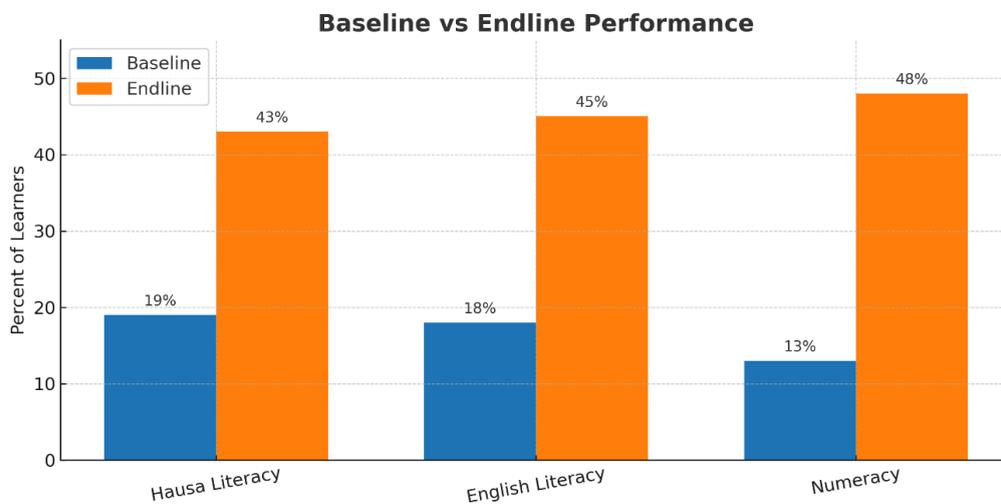
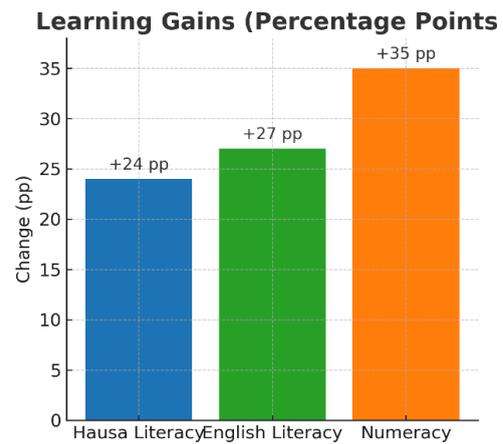
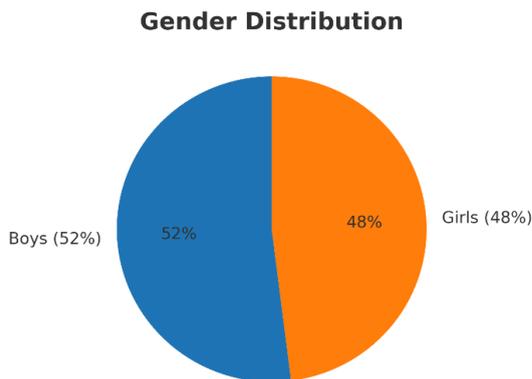
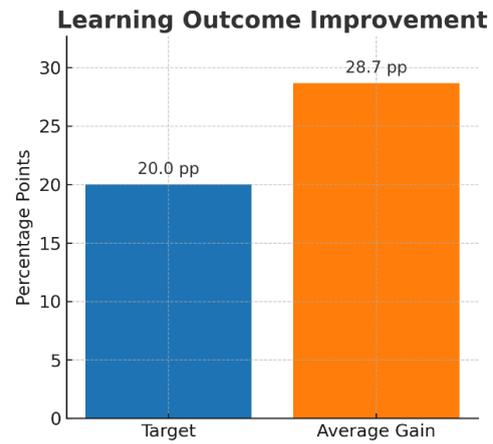
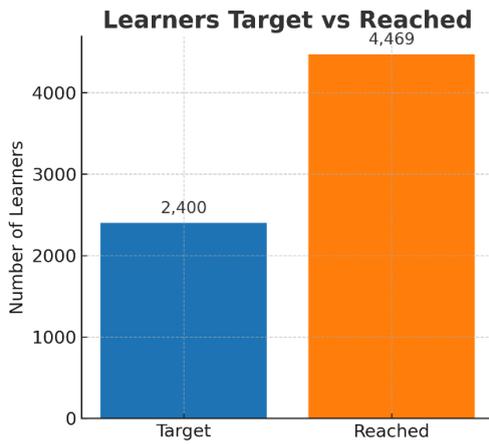
Problem Statement / Justification

Despite decades of investment in universal basic education, Nigeria continues to face a severe learning crisis. National and sub-national data consistently show that a significant number of children in upper primary classes cannot read a simple text or solve basic arithmetic. In Northern states like Adamawa, where poverty, insecurity, and systemic challenges are more acute, learning poverty is even more pronounced. For example, fewer than 10% of children in Primary 4–6 can read a short Hausa passage or perform basic subtraction.¹

This foundational gap not only undermines children's chances of progressing in school but also limits future life opportunities. Addressing these gaps early is critical. The Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) methodology has been globally recognized for its effectiveness in bridging foundational learning deficits.² By adapting TaRL to Adamawa's context, the programme aimed to demonstrate that with targeted, low-cost interventions, learning outcomes can be rapidly improved and scaled sustainably.

1. World Bank (2022). *State of Global Learning Poverty: 2022 Update*. Washington, DC: World Bank.
2. Banerjee, A., Banerji, R., Berry, J., Duflo, E., Kannan, H., Mukherji, S., ... Walton, M. (2017). *From Proof of Concept to Scalable Policies: Challenges and Solutions, with an Application*. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 31(4), 73–102.

Impact Figures at a Glance





*Children learning using the number circle activity.
Image: TaRL Africa*

TaRL In Brief

Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) is an evidence-backed intervention proven to quickly equip children in upper primary school with basic reading and arithmetic skills. For over 20 years, J-PAL and Pratham have collaborated to evolve a strong TaRL approach through experimentation and learning in India. The TaRL approach, when effectively implemented, has consistently improved learning outcomes. TaRL Africa, a joint venture by Pratham and J-PAL has supported TaRL efforts in over 15 countries in Africa, including Nigeria.

At the classroom level, TaRL consists of three simple steps, viz:

- Assessing children one-on-one through a simple oral reading and mathematics tests,
- Grouping children by learning level rather than by age or grade; and
- Focusing on foundational reading and mathematics through activities adapted to each learning level.

However, the approach's strength is derived from key supporting elements including a simple classroom methodology that leverages existing classroom materials, strong mentoring and implementation support systems, and continual tracking of and reflecting on learning progress.

Key Components Of TaRL Programme

- **The Implementation Teams** support the implementation of the TaRL program, assisting with program design and management, material development, measurement and classroom delivery. They are composed of different TaRL actors, depending on the context. In most cases, program teams may be made up of a mix of government officials and other members of the education system.
- **Assessment** is the foundation of the TaRL approach. It assists TaRL implementers in ensuring that the entire system is focused on enhancing each child's learning results. The simple assessment tool is designed based on achievable but aspiring learning goals set by the implementers. Assessments are conducted at baseline - to determine which level the learner is at before the start of classroom activities; midline - after 12 to 14 weeks of implementation to determine levels of improvement and areas of concentration; and endline - at the end of the implementation period to determine improvements and review lessons learned.
- **Classroom Implementation** is designed to group children according to their learning levels, focusing on foundational reading and mathematics skills, and targeting instruction to a child's current level. During this period, children are shifted progressively as they are able to do activities of levels higher than where they began.
- **Mentoring, Monitoring and Measurement**, which focuses on providing real-time guidance, collecting monitoring information, and collecting and analyzing results during implementation. This is a key ingredient for success. The data is used for taking corrective actions and understanding the implementation better. It can be used to understand learning levels, identify program components that need improvement and give support to teachers/facilitators. Outcomes of all this is also built into subsequent refresher training for teachers.

Timelines

The Adamawa TaRL project was implemented between January and July 2025. The timeline below highlights key phases of the programme: the initial design workshop, training of teachers and mentors, six months of classroom implementation, continuous mentoring and monitoring, and the endline assessment with dissemination of results.

Below is the timeline for the TaRL implementation in Adamawa:

Implementation Timeline

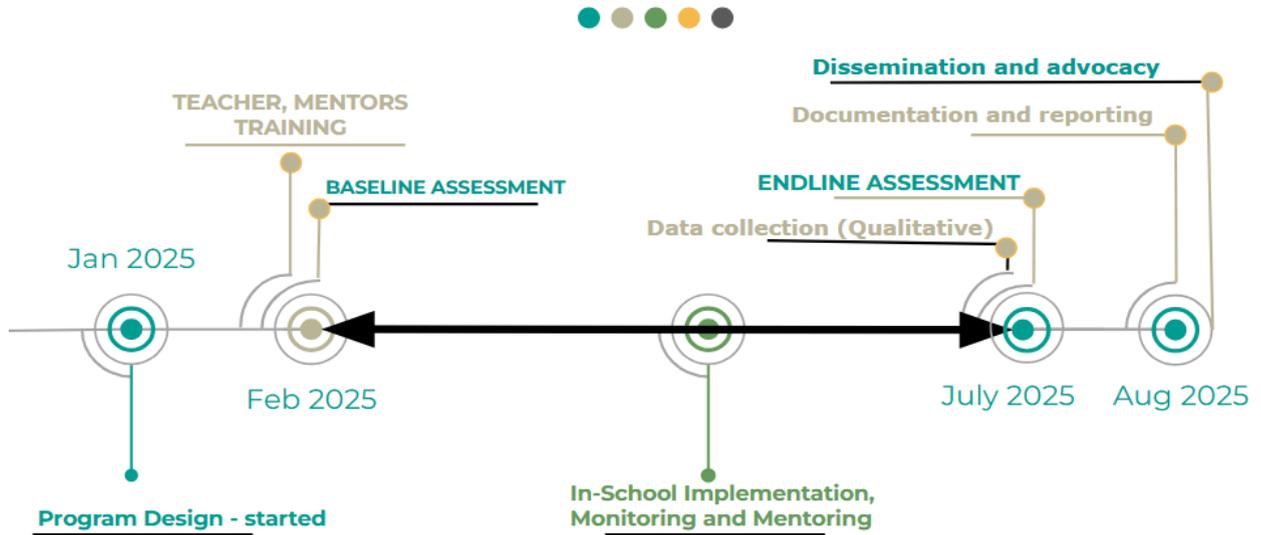


Figure 1: Programme Milestones

Project Background and Objectives

Over twenty years after the introduction of the Universal Basic Education programme, Nigeria still faces significant challenges in ensuring that children not only attend school but also learn effectively. Many learners complete several years of schooling without mastering basic literacy and numeracy, skills that are essential for continued education and future success. Findings from TaRL pilot studies in seven northern states have shown that only a small proportion of children in Primary 4–6 can read a short Hausa paragraph, and even fewer are able to perform simple subtraction. The Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) approach is designed to address this challenge by reorganising classroom instruction around children’s actual learning levels rather than their age or grade. Learners are assessed and grouped by ability, and teachers focus on targeted activities to build foundational reading and math skills, tracking progress through regular assessments. At the system level, TaRL Africa works with policymakers to embed practices that foster effective teaching such as mentoring systems, continuous improvement processes, and data-driven decision-making, ensuring sustainable impact.

TaRL Africa believes that to address the issue of learning poverty at scale, programmes must be government-led. While the TaRL methodology is widely recognised as a cost-effective remedial approach, TaRL Africa developed a Minimum Viable Product (MVP) assumption for key components of the model. The goal was to identify opportunities to further reduce programme costs while enhancing efficiency and effectiveness, ensuring that governments can adopt and sustain the approach at scale.

In Adamawa State, TaRL Africa partnered with the Oando Foundation and the State Universal Basic Education Board to pilot some of the MVP through a network of 20 “learning hub” schools across three LGAs. The hubs served as testing grounds for innovations such as streamlining and merging teaching and learning materials (TLMs) to lower production costs, and digitising data collection to improve turnaround time and quality. Lessons learned from these hubs will inform future iterations of the programme, providing a tested, scalable, and sustainable model to ensure more children acquire the foundational skills they need to thrive.

Pre-Implementation Activities

A successful partnership agreement between TaRL Africa in Nigeria and OANDO laid the foundation for this foundational Literacy and Numeracy improvement program implementation.

a. Program Design Workshop

As a first step to get the program started, a co-design workshop was held on January 23rd, 2025 with TaRL Africa supporting the government partners on the design of the programme. The design workshop plays a vital role in laying the foundation for a successful TaRL program. It provides a structured space where government stakeholders, education officials, school representatives, and implementing partners jointly define the scope, objectives, and modalities of the intervention. This collaborative process ensures that all actors have a shared understanding of the program's goals, target population, and timelines, which is critical for alignment and ownership. By agreeing on the scope of schools, roles of different stakeholders, and learner targets, the workshop reduces ambiguity and sets a clear direction for implementation.



Review Meeting and Training Session with Teachers.

Image: TaRL Africa

Beyond technical planning, the design workshop also strengthens government buy-in and accountability. TaRL Africa emphasizes that the TaRL programs should be government-led involving SUBEB, LGEAs, and schools from the onset so as to foster embedding the program within existing structures, rather than creating parallel systems. It is also an opportunity to identify the program implementation team (PIT) at SUBEB and LGEA levels, composing; education managers, TaRL desk officers, Master Trainers, Mentors, Head Teachers and teachers. Furthermore, the design workshop promotes effective coordination across multiple levels from state to school so that responsibilities are clearly distributed and implementation can proceed smoothly with consistent monitoring and support.

Consequently, the Adamawa Program design meeting provided an opportunity for stakeholders including TaRL Africa and government partners to jointly define the scope and structure of the intervention.

Below was the agreement reached regarding scope of the program

No of Schools	20
No of LGAs	3
No of schools-Demsa LGA	6
No of Schools- Yola North LGA	4
No of schools-Girei LGA	10
No of targeted Learners	2400
No of Teachers	60
No of Mentors	24
Subjects	Hausa Literacy, English Literacy, and Numeracy
Implementation Model Type	In-school, MVP model
Program Duration	February-July 2025 (6 Months)
Contact time	2hrs (5-Days per weekly)

Table 1: Project Scope

To ensure smooth coordination and accountability, a Program Implementation Team (PIT) was established. At the SUBEB level, this team included management staff, Quality Assurance Officers (QAOs), and School Monitoring Officers (SMOs). At the LGEA level, membership comprised Education Secretaries (ES), heads of

sections, and School Support Officers (SSOs), while at the school level, teachers and headteachers (HTs) were assigned direct responsibilities.

Additionally, a target was agreed upon regarding learning outcomes.

Considering the fact that this implementation was basically a nimble learning exercise with the aim of testing out specific theories, a target was set during the design phase to achieve a 20 percentage point improvement at the higher learning levels and a 20 percentage point reduction at the lower levels.

Subject	Targets for Percentage Point Improvement at a Higher level	Targets for Percentage Point Reduction at Lower Level
Hausa	20 percentage points (pp) improvement.	20 percentage points (pp) reduction.
English	20 percentage points (pp) improvement.	20 percentage points (pp) reduction.
Numeracy	20 percentage points (pp) improvement.	20 percentage points (pp) reduction.

Table 2: Agreed Targets for Learning Outcomes (LO).

b. Training

Training Model

A direct training model was adopted for this program, where National Master Trainers who had themselves received training directly from TaRL Africa delivered sessions to both teachers and mentors. This approach was particularly important as it ensured high fidelity in content delivery. By receiving the methodology, techniques, and core principles directly from experts, teachers and mentors benefited from accurate, undiluted training, thereby avoiding the loss of critical details that can occur in a cascading training model.

Moreover, the direct training model created an opportunity for teachers and mentors to engage firsthand with experienced trainers, ask clarifying questions, and build confidence in applying the TaRL approach. Training both groups together in the same space also fostered collaboration, alignment, and consistency in understanding how the methodology should be implemented at

the classroom level. Collectively, this approach enhanced the overall quality of delivery and laid a strong foundation for effective implementation of the program.

In total, 60 teachers (27 males and 33 females), 20 head teachers (13 males and 7 females), and 4 mentors (3 males and 1 female) participated in the eight-day training on the complete TaRL L2F2 methodology content. The training was held at Capital Primary School, Jimeta-Yola, in Yola North Local Government Area of Adamawa State, from 3rd to 11th February 2025.

Implementation Overview

Minimum Viable Products (MVPs) Tested

As part of the program's adaptive learning approach, two key MVPs were tested to improve efficiency, reduce costs, and sustain the effectiveness of TaRL implementation.

Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs)

The project reviewed and adjusted the design of TLMs to reduce costs while maintaining learning quality. Specific changes included:

- The English Calendar Chart was shifted from full colour to black-and-white printing, reducing the per learner cost from ₦1,200 to ₦500 and saving ₦700 per learner.
- Numeracy Charts covering Addition, Subtraction, Multiplication and Number recognition were no longer printed; instead, learners created their own copies in notebooks, resulting in a full cost saving of ₦200 per learner.
- Picture Posters were replaced with illustrations sourced from textbooks, saving ₦1,500 per learner.

Overall, these adaptations resulted in total savings of ₦2,400 per learner across the three categories. Beyond the financial benefit, this approach encouraged creativity among learners and teachers, strengthening active participation without reliance on expensive printed materials.

Material	Adaptation	Initial Cost(Per Learner)	Current Cost(Per Learner)	Savings (Per Learner)
English Calendar Chart	Previously coloured now Black & White	1200	500	700

Numeracy Chart(Addition & subtraction, Multiplication, Number charts)	Previously Printed now Learners copy in their notebooks	200	Nil	200
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Picture Poster	Previously printed now teachers use pictures from text books	1500	Nil	1500
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Total Savings

2400

Table 3: Cost Savings from TLM Adaptation (per learner)



Children reading English calendar charts in groups

Image: TaRL Africa

Data Collection Process

To improve data quality and turnaround time, the project introduced an electronic system for school-level data collection. Teachers and school-based mentors continued to use hard-copy recording sheets to capture individual learner performance during assessments. Headteachers were trained and supported to upload summary data electronically using KoboToolbox, ensuring real-time submission. This adaptation reduced delays in data turnaround, improved accuracy, and cut down the logistical costs associated with transporting hard-copy data across LGAs.

S/N	MVP Tested	Strategy used	Result / Outcome
1	Effect of reviewed content on Teacher Facilitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each school developed and used Numeracy and Literacy kits to aid teachers' facilitation. Teachers were innovative in their improvisation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Teachers became more innovative in improvisation. → Facilitated lessons effectively using materials from the kits. → Utilized the school environment for picture-reading activities, making learning more interactive.
2	Effect of reviewed content on learners' engagement and learning outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners shared materials (five learners per material) and created personal charts in their exercise books. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Learners developed and used charts at home and in school. → Calendar charts supported group literacy activities. → Increased individual practice strengthened comprehension and numeracy skills.
3	Effect of using electronic links to improve data turn around time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Headteachers (HTs) were empowered to use an electronics link (Kobo) for uploading summarized data after assessment results are validated by SSOs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → 100% HTs uploaded their summarized and verified BLA result within 4 days after assessment. → 90% HTs uploaded their summarized and verified BLA result within 4 days after assessment.

Table 4: Results of MVP Testing

Mentoring activities

Mentoring in the TaRL program is a process where more experienced educators, typically headteachers (known as school-based mentors) and School Support Officers (known as cluster mentors), guide and support teachers in effectively implementing the TaRL approach. This support includes regular coaching, classroom observation, constructive feedback, and the sharing of practical strategies that help teachers group learners according to their learning levels and facilitate TaRL classes effectively. Through mentoring, teachers build confidence, enhance their facilitation skills, and strive to help learners acquire foundational skills. This ongoing guidance not only strengthens teachers' capacity but also promotes the sustainability and effectiveness of TaRL in improving learning outcomes.

Consequently, during the program implementation, in-class session observation and mentoring formed a key component, led by 20 school-based mentors (SBMs, 6 female) with support from 4 cluster mentors (CMs, 1 female). Additional mentoring support was provided by staff from the LGEA, SUBEB, and TaRL Africa.

In line with the delivery model:

- SBMs monitored and mentored *at least one teacher per day and five teachers per week.*
- CMs/SSOs monitored and mentored *at least one school per day and five schools per week.*
- LGEA and SUBEB staff shared responsibility for monitoring and mentoring *at least one school per week and four schools per month.*
- TaRL Africa coordinated activities, ensuring *at least three schools per week* (about twelve per month) were monitored and mentored.

Classroom Observations (Kobo Data)

At all levels, mentors were required to use the classroom observation tool (paper or Kobo electronic version) to capture observations and the mentoring support offered during each visit.

Classroom observations provided rich insights into how TaRL classes were facilitated in practice:

Metric	Result
Sampled Schools observed	9 schools (Demsa and Yola North LGAs)
Sampled Classrooms observed	18 classrooms

Distribution	94% Yola North LGA, 6% Demsa LGA (Girls Primary School)
Learners enrolled	890
Learners present	670 (75%)
Learners absent	220 (25%)

Table 5: Classroom Observations (via Kobo Tool)

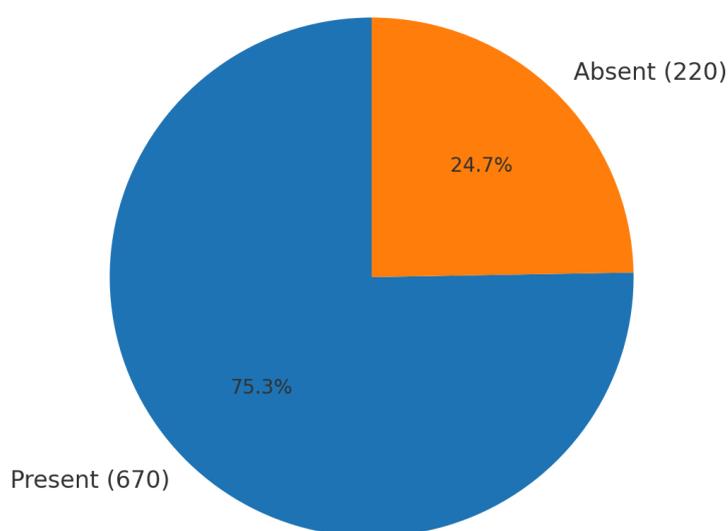


Figure 2: Classroom Observation - Learner Attendance During Classroom Observations

Key Insights

- Teachers demonstrated effective use of Numeracy and Literacy kits, often improvising with local materials.
- Learners actively engaged in group literacy and numeracy activities, using charts and calendars.
- Mentors provided constructive feedback, boosting teacher confidence and fidelity to TaRL methods.
- Use of Kobo tool enabled real-time data entry, with >90% of schools uploading validated results within 4 days.

Profile of Sampled Schools

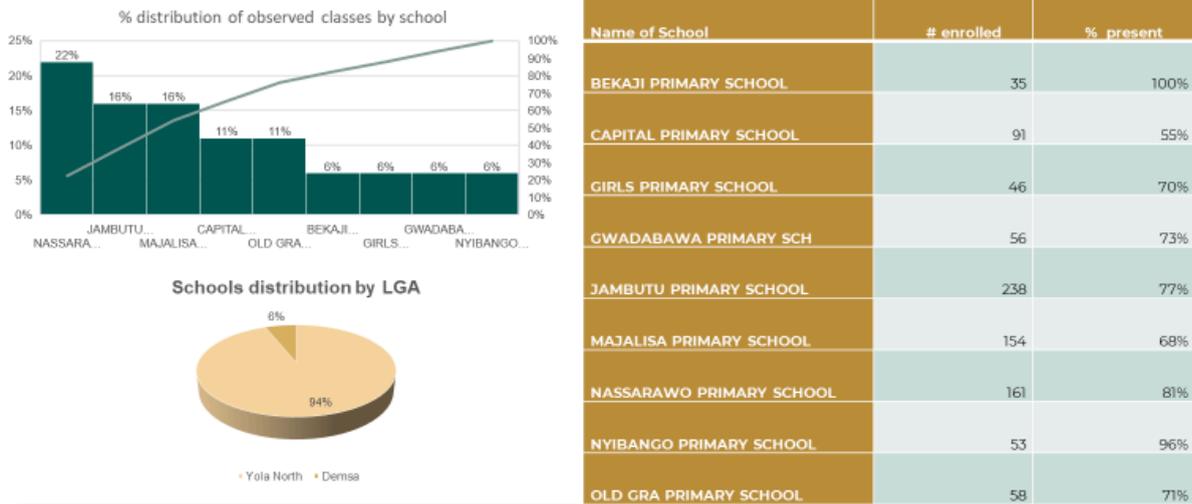


Figure 3: Classroom Observation - Profile of Sampled Schools

Classroom Implementation

Classroom implementation is the stage where actual learning takes place. In a TaRL class, this involves grouping children according to their learning levels and providing targeted instruction that meets the specific needs of each group. Between February and July, learners are expected to receive approximately **120 hours of** contact time, during which they should progress to higher competency levels. Learners received approximately **84 hours of** contact time, during this implementation. Using the Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) methodology, which ensures that learning activities are simple, interactive, and child-centered, enabling children to engage at their actual learning level rather than their grade level.

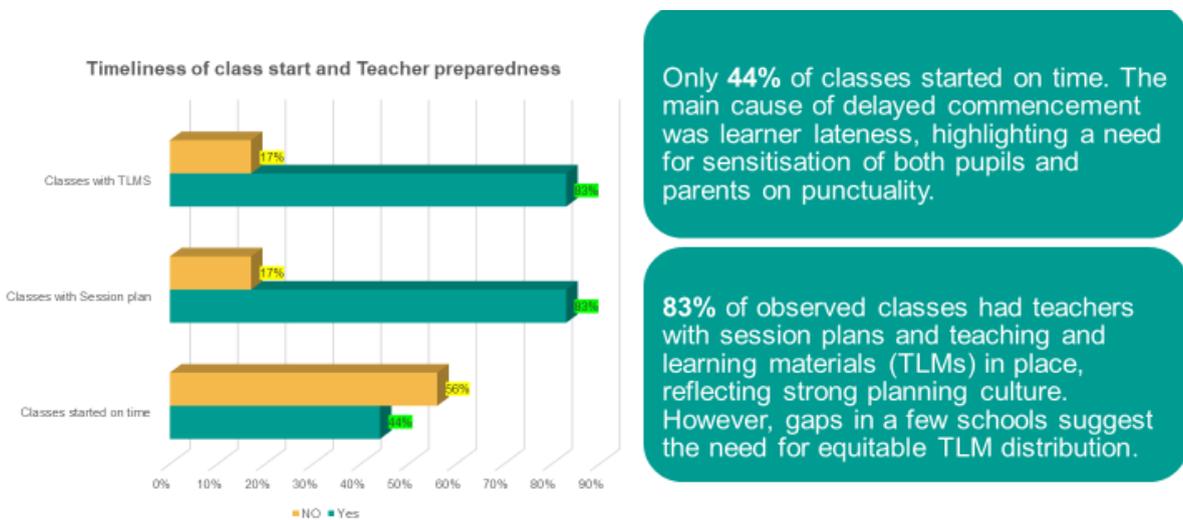


Figure 4: Classroom Observation - Timeliness and Teacher Preparedness

Results and Outcomes

The TaRL pilot in Adamawa reached 4,469 learners (48% girls) across 20 schools in Demsa, Girei, and Yola North LGAs. The intervention demonstrated that with tailored grouping, strengthened teacher capacity, cost-saving adaptations, and digital data collection, significant improvements in learning outcomes can be achieved within a short implementation window (February–July 2025).

Learners Profile

- Total learners reached: 4,469
- Gender distribution: 52% boys, 48% girls
- Learners were assessed at baseline and endline using the ASER tool, grouped into beginner, letter, word, paragraph, and story levels for literacy, and beginner, number recognition, operations, and word problems for numeracy.

Note; although the program was designed to target 2,400 learners, 4,469 learners were reached due to the fact that the design targeted learners in Primary 4, 5 and 6 and this 4,469 represented the number of learners in primary 4, 5 and 6 in the 20 selected schools. The fairest option was to allow all learners in the targeted classes to have access to this implementation.

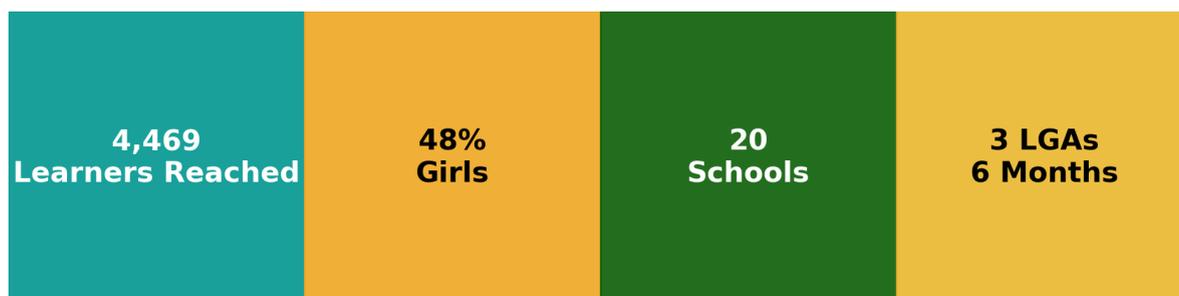


Figure 5: Project reach

Learning Outcomes Achieved

Across the 20 pilot schools, learners showed clear upward movement from lower to higher levels in both literacy and numeracy:

- Literacy: In Hausa, the proportion of learners able to read a paragraph rose from 19% at baseline to 43% at endline (+24pp), while those unable to recognise basic words reduced from 71% to 37% (-34pp). In English, paragraph readers increased from 18% to 45% (+27pp), and non-readers declined from 68% to 33% (-35pp).

- Numeracy: Learners able to solve two-digit subtraction grew from 13% at baseline to 48% at endline (+35pp), while those unable to attempt subtraction dropped from 29% to 10% (-19pp).
- The pace of learning was particularly notable given the six-month timeframe, with endline data indicating that the 20% targets for improvement and reduction were met and exceeded for Literacy while Numeracy, 19% reduction was met instead of 20% reduction.

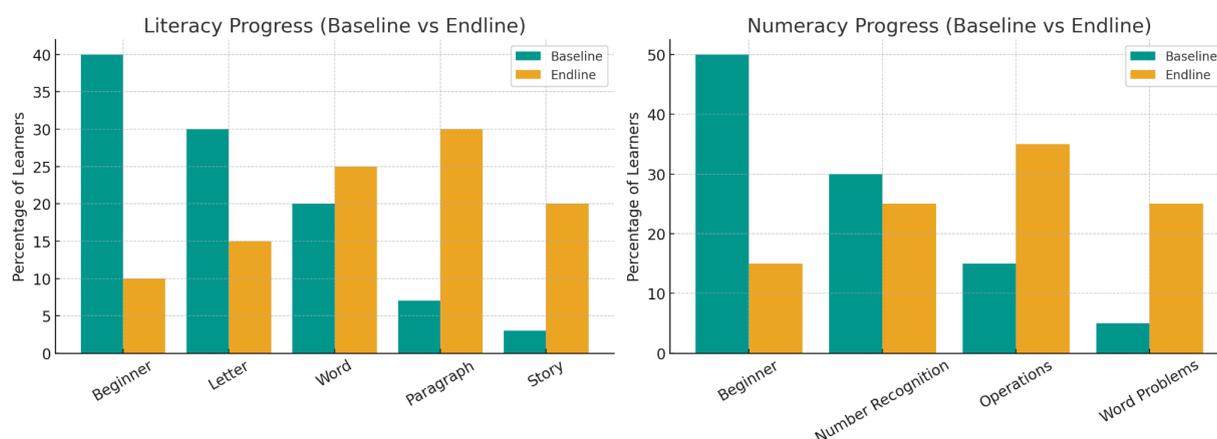


Figure 6: Learner Progress Across Levels

Results by LGA

- In Demsa LGA: Schools recorded the strongest literacy gains, with Hausa paragraph readers rising by over 25pp and English paragraph readers by more than 27pp. The proportion of learners unable to recognise words dropped by over 30pp. Numeracy also improved, with subtraction skills increasing by more than 30pp.
- Girei LGA: Learners demonstrated significant progress in numeracy, with subtraction skills improving by around 35pp and the proportion unable to attempt subtraction dropping by nearly 20pp. Literacy scores also rose, with paragraph reading improving by about 20–25pp, though at a slower pace than Demsa.
- Yola North LGA: Gains were balanced, with both literacy and numeracy improving by 20–30pp. The introduction of cost-saving teaching materials was particularly effective here, enabling broader learner participation.

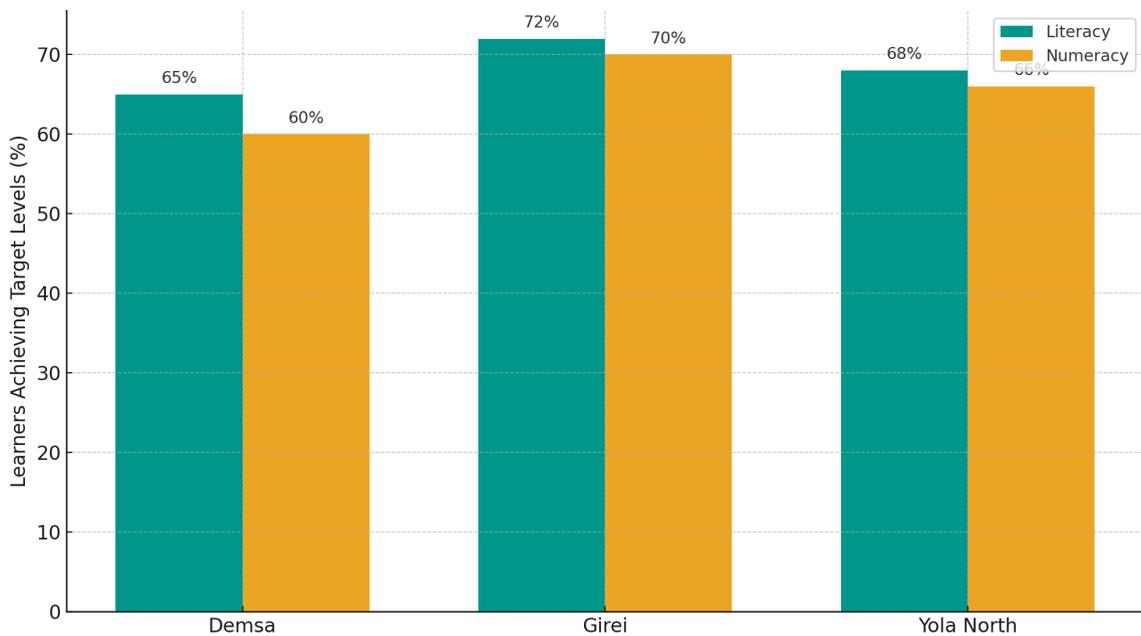


Figure 7: Learning Outcomes by LGA (Endline)

The pilot confirmed that TaRL can deliver measurable improvements in a short time while lowering implementation costs. Learners in Adamawa not only moved up learning levels but also developed stronger confidence and engagement, setting a foundation for statewide scale-up.



Teacher and children practicing reading in groups

Image: TaRL Africa

Learning Outcomes

Endline assessment results show marked improvements in literacy and numeracy compared to baseline.

Subject Area	Baseline Performance	Endline Performance	Change (Percentage Points)	Target	Achievement vs. Target
Hausa Literacy (can read a paragraph)	19%	43%	+24 pp	+20 pp	Exceeded by 4 pp
Hausa Literacy (cannot read words)	71%	37%	-34 pp	-20 pp	Exceeded by 14 pp
English Literacy (can read a paragraph)	18%	45%	+27 pp	+20 pp	Exceeded by 7 pp
English Literacy (cannot read words)	68%	33%	-35 pp	-20 pp	Exceeded by 15 pp
Numeracy (can do 2-digit subtraction)	13%	48%	+35 pp	+20 pp	Exceeded by 15 pp
Numeracy (cannot attempt subtraction)	29%	10%	-19 pp	-20 pp	Met target (slightly below by 1 pp)

Table 6: Learning Outcomes

The main focus of TaRL implementation is **improving foundational skills** towards Higher Levels and **Reducing beginners** to the Lowest Levels. This implementation targeted **20 percentage point** (pp) improvement in Local language, English and Mathematics. Below are the key results achieved;

- a. Adamawa SUSBEB, 3 LGEAs, 4 SSOs, 20 HTs and 60 Teachers were directly involved in the implementation from January to August, 2025.
- b. 4,469 (48% - girls) of primary 4, 5 and 6 learners reached, in 20 schools across 3 LGAs of Demsa, Girei and Yola north.

 Grades
4-6

 School
Teachers:**145**

 Intervention hours:
2 hours daily
(Literacy and Numeracy)

Figure 8: TaRL Implementation Metrics

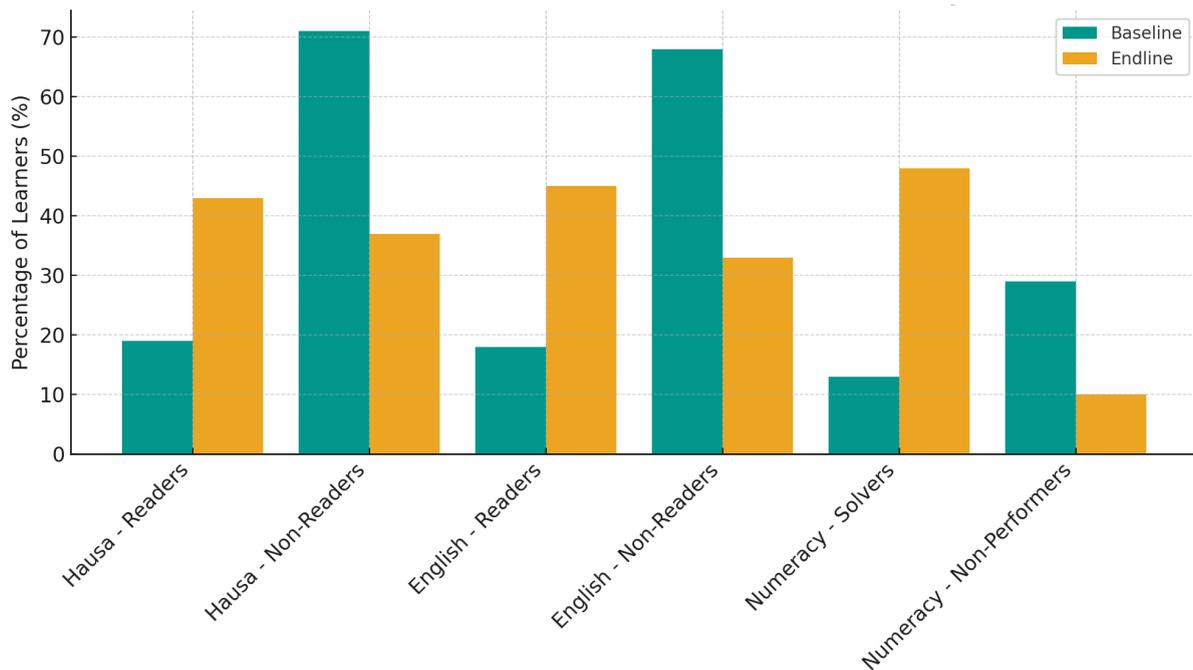


Figure 9: Baseline vs Endline Outcomes

LGA	Learners at Baseline	Learners at Endline
Demsa	588	622
Girei	970	940
Yola North	2,887	2,907
Total	4,445	4,469

Table 7: Baseline vs Endline Learners Assessed

In Local language: 19% learners who could read a paragraph at Baseline **Increased to 43%** at endline, indicating **24 percentage point (pp)** which is **4 pp above the target** of 20 pp. While **71% of learners** who could not read words at Baseline was **reduced to 37%** at the endline indicating 34 pp which is 14 pp more than the target of 20 pp.

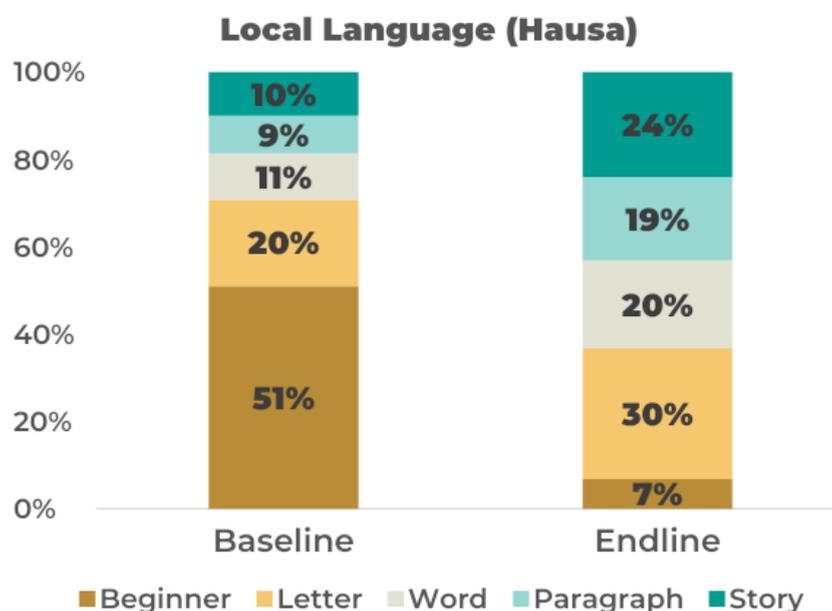


Figure 10: Learning Outcome Improvement at Higher and Lower levels.

In English language: 18% learners could read a paragraph at Baseline **Increased to 45%** at the endline, indicating **27 percentage points (pp)** which is **7 pp above the target** of 20 pp. While **68% of learners** who could not read words at Baseline was **reduced to 33%** at the endline indicating 34 pp which is **15 pp more than the target** of 20 pp.

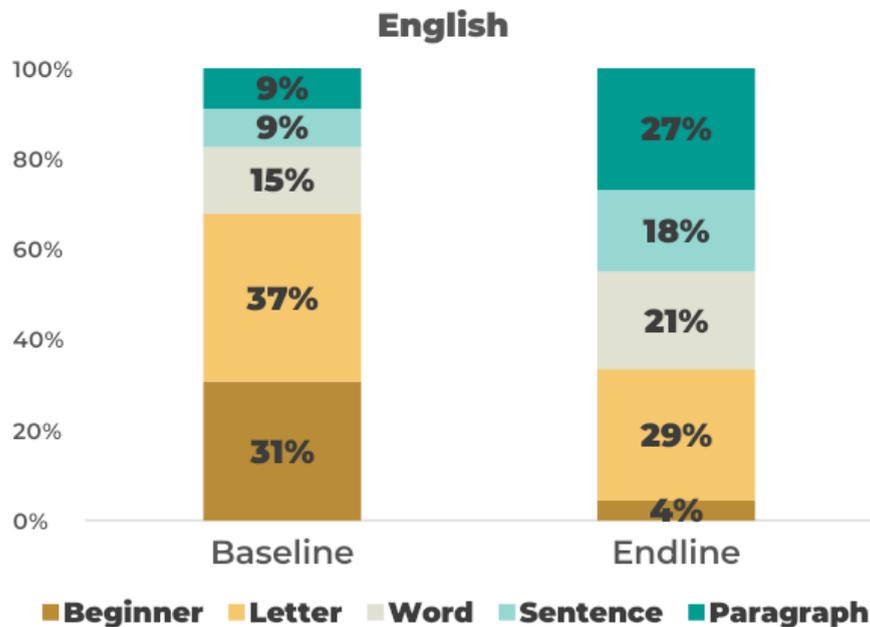


Figure 11: Learning Outcome Improvement at Higher and Lower levels.

In Mathematics: 13% learners could do subtraction at Baseline **Increased to 48%** at endline, indicating **35 percentage points (pp)** who could now do a 2-by-2 subtraction, which is **15 pp above the target** of 20 pp. While **29% of learners who could not do subtraction** at Baseline was **reduced to 10%** at the endline indicating 19 pp which is **- 1 pp less than the target** of 20 pp.

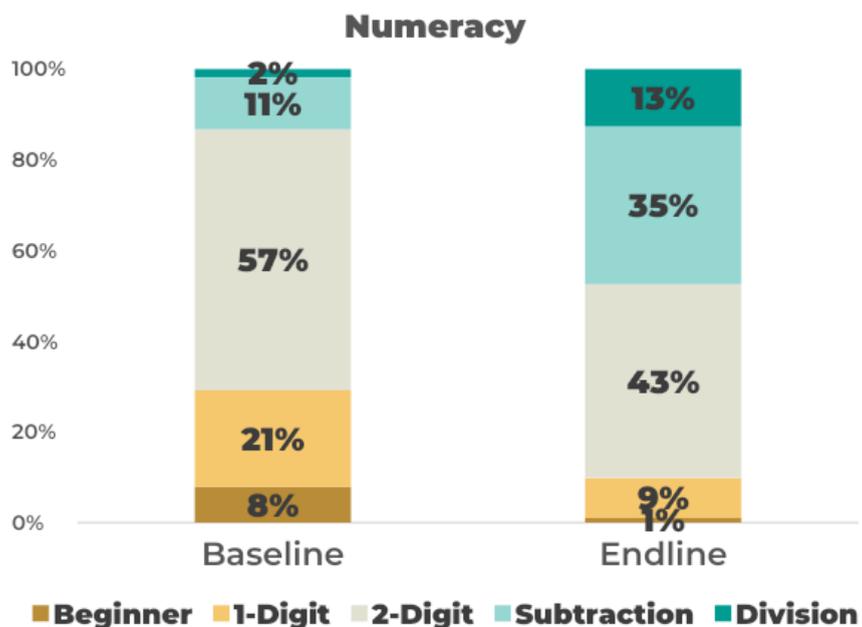


Figure 12: Learning Outcome Improvement at Higher and Lower levels.

Qualitative Insights from the Field

The qualitative component of this assessment was designed to complement quantitative findings and provide deeper insights into how the Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) methodology was received and implemented in Adamawa State. Data was collected through:

- Structured interviews and questionnaires with teachers, headteachers, SSOs, and learners.
- Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with learners (boys and girls separately), teachers, and parents across selected schools.

Respondent Breakdown:

- Teachers & Headteachers: 93 surveyed across 13 LGAs.
- SSOs (School Support Officers): 24 interviewed.
- Learners: 180 surveyed (with disaggregated FGDs for boys and girls).
- Parents: 36 engaged through FGDs in 6 communities.

This diverse respondent mix ensured perspectives from the school, community, and oversight structures were captured.

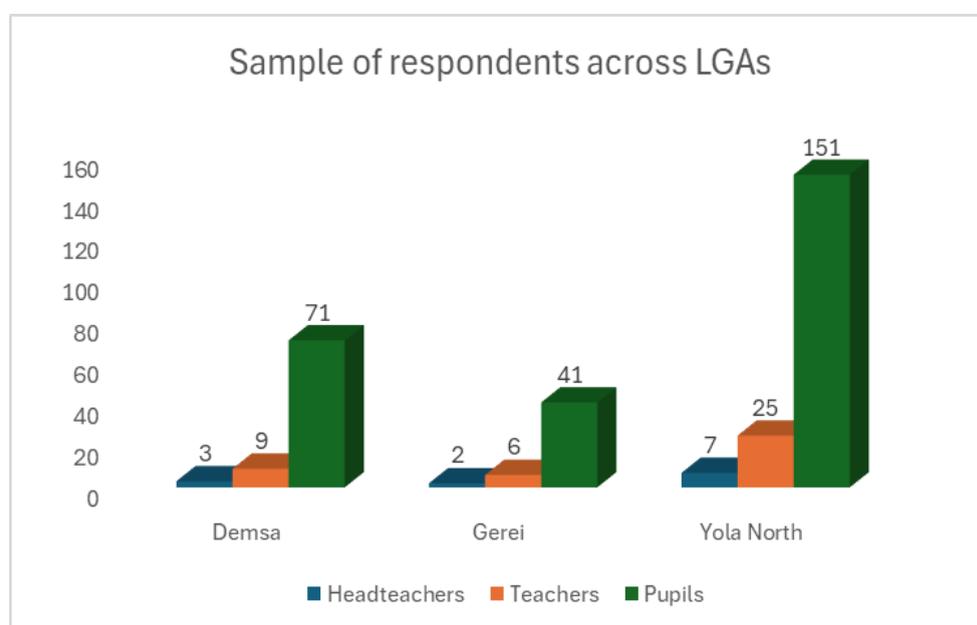


Figure 13: Sample of respondents across LGAs

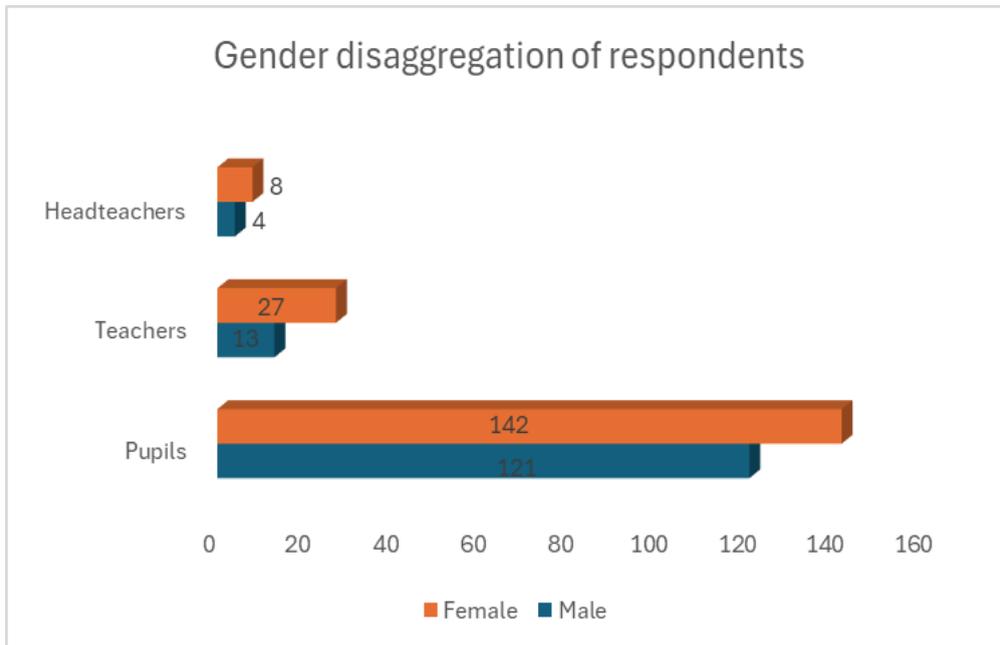


Figure 14: Gender disaggregation of respondents

The findings are presented under five thematic areas:

1. Availability and Use of Low-Cost Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs)

- **Adequacy:** While all schools received TLMs, 72% of teachers reported that supplies were not adequate to meet learner needs. Teachers frequently resorted to improvisation, with 93% producing handwritten learner charts to bridge gaps.
- **Learner Use:** Learners confirmed this trend, with 97% saying they preferred handwritten charts because they could take them home for practice.
- **Perceived Effectiveness:** Despite shortages, 83% of teachers and learners rated TLMs as “very effective”, affirming their central role in improving comprehension.

Qualitative Insight: Teachers described the low-cost model as “empowering,” highlighting how they could reproduce materials cheaply and involve learners in creating their own study aids.

2. Teacher Training and Mentoring Support

- **Training Coverage:** All teachers and headteachers surveyed confirmed receiving training on the low-cost TaRL model.
- **Mentoring Frequency:**

- 58% of teachers reported weekly mentoring from headteachers (school-based mentors).
- 35% of teachers reported monthly visits from SSOs.
- Only 22% of teachers received consistent support from cluster mentors.
- Perceived Usefulness: 97% of teachers rated TaRL Africa staff mentoring as highly useful, while government-led mentoring received lower ratings.

Qualitative Insight: Teachers emphasized the importance of frequent school-based mentoring, describing it as more practical and responsive compared to external support.

3. Learner Experience and Engagement

- Engagement Levels: 100% of learners described TaRL sessions as engaging, and 97% said they learned better than in their regular classrooms.
- Child-Friendly Practices: 77% of learners reported that corporal punishment was not used in TaRL sessions — in contrast to experiences in regular classes. This created a safe learning environment where learners felt free to ask questions.
- Observed Changes: Teachers and SSOs noted improvements in attendance, punctuality, and confidence among learners.

Qualitative Insight: Learners frequently described TaRL classes as “fun” and said they felt “valued” because teachers encouraged participation without fear.

4. Effectiveness of Data Management Innovations

- Headteacher Involvement: All 20 headteachers confirmed they were trained to upload data directly, an innovation aimed at improving accountability and timeliness.
- Performance: By the endline, 100% of headteachers reported proficiency in digital uploads, with SSOs confirming improved data accuracy and faster decision-making.
- Sustainability Potential: Both SSOs and headteachers recommended this practice for future state-wide scale-up.

Qualitative Insight: Headteachers noted that owning the data upload process gave them a stronger sense of responsibility and improved communication with LGEAs.

5. Challenges and Recommendations Identified by Respondents

Respondents across categories identified recurring challenges and proposed solutions:

- Motivation: Teachers called for both financial incentives and non-financial recognition to sustain their engagement.
- Training Needs: A majority (85%) requested refresher training before sustainability rollout.
- TLM Supply: Headteachers and SSOs highlighted the urgent need for adequate and timely provision of low-cost TLMs.
- Learning Time: Both teachers and learners advocated for protected TaRL learning time to ensure continuity and prevent clashes with regular school schedules.

Qualitative Insight: Stakeholders strongly linked sustainability to government buy-in, adequate funding, and consistent training opportunities.

Recommendations from the Field

- **Invest in non-financial teacher motivation:** Recognize and celebrate teacher efforts, as motivation is central to sustaining TaRL implementation.
- **Expand and deepen teacher capacity building:** Increase the pool of trained TaRL teachers and provide regular refresher training to maintain fidelity.
- **Enhance mentoring consistency:** Institutionalize school-based mentoring while strengthening cluster mentor and SSO engagement for balanced support.
- **Allocate more learning time:** Advocate with schools and government for dedicated, protected TaRL learning time to maximize impact.
- **Sustain data management practices:** Continue school-led data entry and uploads while providing ongoing digital literacy support for teachers and headteachers.
- **Encourage TLM supply and innovation:** Ensure adequate provision of low-cost TLMs and encourage continued use of learner-created materials for sustainability.

Field Voices: Highlights from FGDs



"Before, I was shy to read in class, but now I can read small storybooks with my friends."
Learner (Girl, Primary 5)

TaRL changed how I see teaching. Grouping pupils by level, not by class, helped me know where to start and how to support them."
Teacher (Male, LGEA School)



"My child now comes home and shows me how he can add numbers. This was not happening before."
Parent (Female, Gombi LGA)

"Teachers are trying, but we must keep encouraging them. Refresher trainings will help sustain what has started."
SSO



Risk Management and Mitigation

Effective risk management was central to ensuring programme delivery in Adamawa. The following risks were encountered during implementation, with mitigation strategies applied to safeguard learning outcomes:

Category	Risk Encountered	Mitigation Strategy	Outcome
Security & Contextual	Insecurity and unrest occasionally limited movement of mentors and monitoring officers.	Worked with LGEAs to adapt schedules; school-based mentors ensured continuity; virtual/phone check-ins used where needed.	Monitoring coverage sustained, with no disruption to data collection or learner sessions.
Teacher Attendance	Sporadic absenteeism threatened classroom continuity.	HTs and SSOs stepped in to cover lessons; weekly reviews reinforced accountability; frequent mentoring provided motivation.	Classroom continuity maintained, with improved teacher commitment.
Resource Materials &	Reduced-cost TLMs created initial teacher hesitation and fear of weaker engagement.	Mentors demonstrated improvisation techniques (walls, notebooks, local objects); teachers encouraged to innovate and share.	Teacher innovation flourished; learner participation remained high despite leaner resources.
Digital Data Collection	HTs faced challenges using Kobo-based electronic tools for reporting.	Provided hands-on training; simplified Kobo links; SSOs validated data before upload.	90% of schools submitted validated data within 4 days, improving speed and quality.

Community Engagement	Parents were initially hesitant about TaRL's two-hour sessions.	Sensitization sessions held with parents/leaders; shared learner success stories to build trust.	Improved acceptance; parents began reinforcing learning at home.
Programme Sustainability	Risk of donor dependency without strong government ownership.	Engaged ADSUBEB and LGEAs from design to dissemination; involved officials in training, monitoring, and data reviews.	ADSUBEB expressed commitment to adopt and expand TaRL across all 21 LGAs.

Table 8: Project Risk Management Strategies

Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement was a cornerstone of the Adamawa TaRL pilot, ensuring that all actors remained connected from programme design and all through the program implementation stages. Engagement took place at multiple levels, each sharing responsibility, reinforcing ownership and accountability.

- **Community and School Level:**

Teachers, head teachers, and school support officers (SSOs) held weekly review meetings to track progress, discuss milestones, and address classroom challenges. Parents and learners were also sensitised on the approach, helping to build community support for the programme.

- **LGEA Level:**

Monthly review meetings were convened with head teachers, SSOs, ADSUBEB officials, and TaRL Africa representatives. These forums allowed for collation of school-level updates, discussion of implementation challenges, and joint problem-solving, strengthening the role of the LGEAs in sustaining delivery.

- **State Level:**

Dissemination meetings were organised at the state and LGEA levels after each round of assessments. These sessions provided an opportunity to share learning outcomes, review results with stakeholders, and agree on action points for improvement. Monthly updates were also provided to ADSUBEB management to ensure continuous oversight.

- **Donor and Partner Level:**

Oando Foundation was kept informed through quarterly implementation reports and regular virtual meetings. This provided visibility on progress,

challenges, and lessons, while enabling timely technical and strategic support.

In addition to these structured forums, targeted advocacy engagements were carried out to deepen stakeholder understanding of the TaRL methodology, securing wider buy-in for sustainability and future scale-up.

Lessons Learned and Recommendations

The implementation of TaRL in Adamawa provided valuable insights into what works well and where further strengthening is needed. Classroom observations, mentoring reports, and stakeholder feedback highlighted both the impact of the approach and the challenges faced in sustaining it. These lessons are not only important for refining future interventions in Adamawa but also serve as practical guidance for scaling TaRL across other states. The table below summarizes the key lessons learned alongside actionable recommendations for sustainability and scale.

Key Lesson	Actionable Recommendation
Teacher motivation had a strong influence on fidelity; when teachers were recognized, they maintained consistency, but in the absence of recognition, fatigue set in.	Teacher efforts should be recognized through non-financial incentives such as certificates, peer acknowledgment, or school-level celebrations.
Training improved teacher practice, but gaps emerged when refresher sessions were not provided.	The pool of trained TaRL teachers should be expanded, and termly refresher training should be delivered.
Regular mentoring visits helped teachers sustain effective facilitation, while inconsistent visits often resulted in a return to whole-class teaching.	Mentoring support should be strengthened by ensuring consistent visits from SBMs, SSOs, and cluster mentors.
The introduction of digital data collection improved timeliness, but gaps in digital literacy limited effectiveness.	Electronic data collection should be sustained, with additional digital literacy support provided for headteachers.
Low-cost and learner-created TLMs enhanced engagement, but shortages sometimes limited their use.	Adequate provision of low-cost TLMs should be ensured, and learner-created materials should be embedded into routine classroom practice.

Table 9: Lessons and Recommendations

Sustainability and Next Steps

Sustaining progress in reducing learning poverty requires embedding TaRL within public schools. Encouragingly, the Adamawa State government has committed to scaling TaRL across all 2,086 primary schools in 21 LGAs, building on evidence from earlier pilots and this donor-supported initiative.

Key elements supporting sustainability include:

- Government buy-in: SUBEB and LGEA staff actively engaged in mentoring and supervision.
- Cost-effectiveness: Streamlined TLMs reduced printing costs without compromising learning quality.
- Data-driven decision-making: Digital reporting improved responsiveness and accountability.

Oando Foundation has been pivotal in laying the foundation for scale-up, demonstrating that targeted, low-cost interventions can yield measurable improvements in learning. Moving forward, sustained government leadership and partner support will be critical to achieving statewide adoption.



Adamawa SUBEB Management, LGEA Education Secretaries, TaRL mentors and Headteachers.
Image: TaRL Africa

Conclusion

The Adamawa TaRL pilot has demonstrated that with clear strategies, strong mentoring, and cost-efficient innovations, significant improvements in foundational literacy and numeracy can be achieved within a short timeframe. The results from 20 learning hub schools highlight not only the feasibility of scaling TaRL but also the potential to adapt the model in ways that reduce costs while maintaining quality. Lessons from this pilot provide a strong foundation for expanding implementation across Adamawa State and beyond, strengthening the education system's ability to support all learners to acquire basic skills.

These achievements were made possible through the support of the Oando Foundation, in partnership with Adamawa SUBEB, LGEAs, school communities, and TaRL Africa.

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