

# Evidence to Policy: The Journey of Scaling TaRL in Sub-Saharan Africa

## Who is TaRL Africa?

TaRL Africa's mission is to support every child across Africa build foundational skills for a better future.

Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) Africa is a not-for-profit organisation registered and headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya, with teams in Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, and Zambia. TaRL Africa began as a joint venture by Pratham and J-PAL in 2019, with the goal of supporting governments and organisations across Africa to accelerate children's foundational skill learning using the evidence-based TaRL approach. We support governments and partners to design, pilot, and scale up TaRL in over 12 countries in Africa. Together with partners, we have reached over four million children with TaRL programming as of 2022.

## What is the TaRL Approach?

TaRL is an evidence-based approach that builds grade 3-6 learners' foundational skills in basic reading and maths. Grouping of learners is by current learning levels rather by age and grade, based on simple one-on-one assessments. Activities are appropriate for the level and fun.

### Core Components of TaRL Programs



Assessment and Grouping



Classroom Process

- Classroom Methodology
- Activities & Materials
- Session Planning
- Classroom Management



Measurement and Mentoring



Program Implementation Model

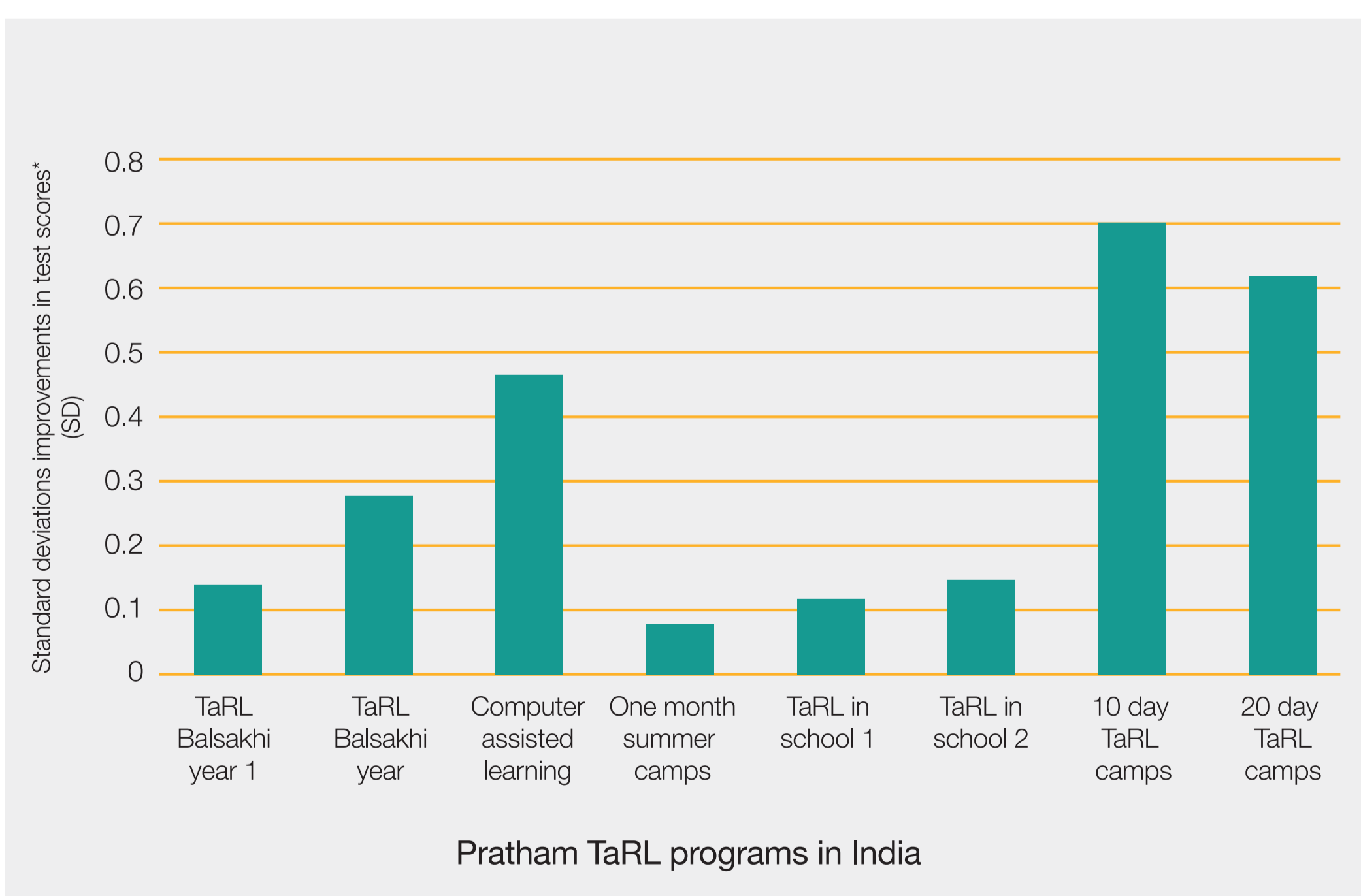


A numeracy activity conducted during a TaRL (locally known as Programme d'Enseignement Ciblé [PEC]) session in Côte d'Ivoire.

## Establishing Evidence and Impact of the TaRL Programme

Since 2001, J-PAL-affiliated researchers have rigorously tested the theory of change underlying the TaRL approach. Through six randomised evaluations in India, as well as a growing body of research in Africa, they find that when TaRL is successfully implemented, learning outcomes improve.

TaRL impact shown in different studies using standard deviations indicates small to very large positive improvements of between 0.08 and 0.7. This is done by comparing SD improvements in test scores for learners who receive TaRL versus a similar group of learners who do not receive TaRL.

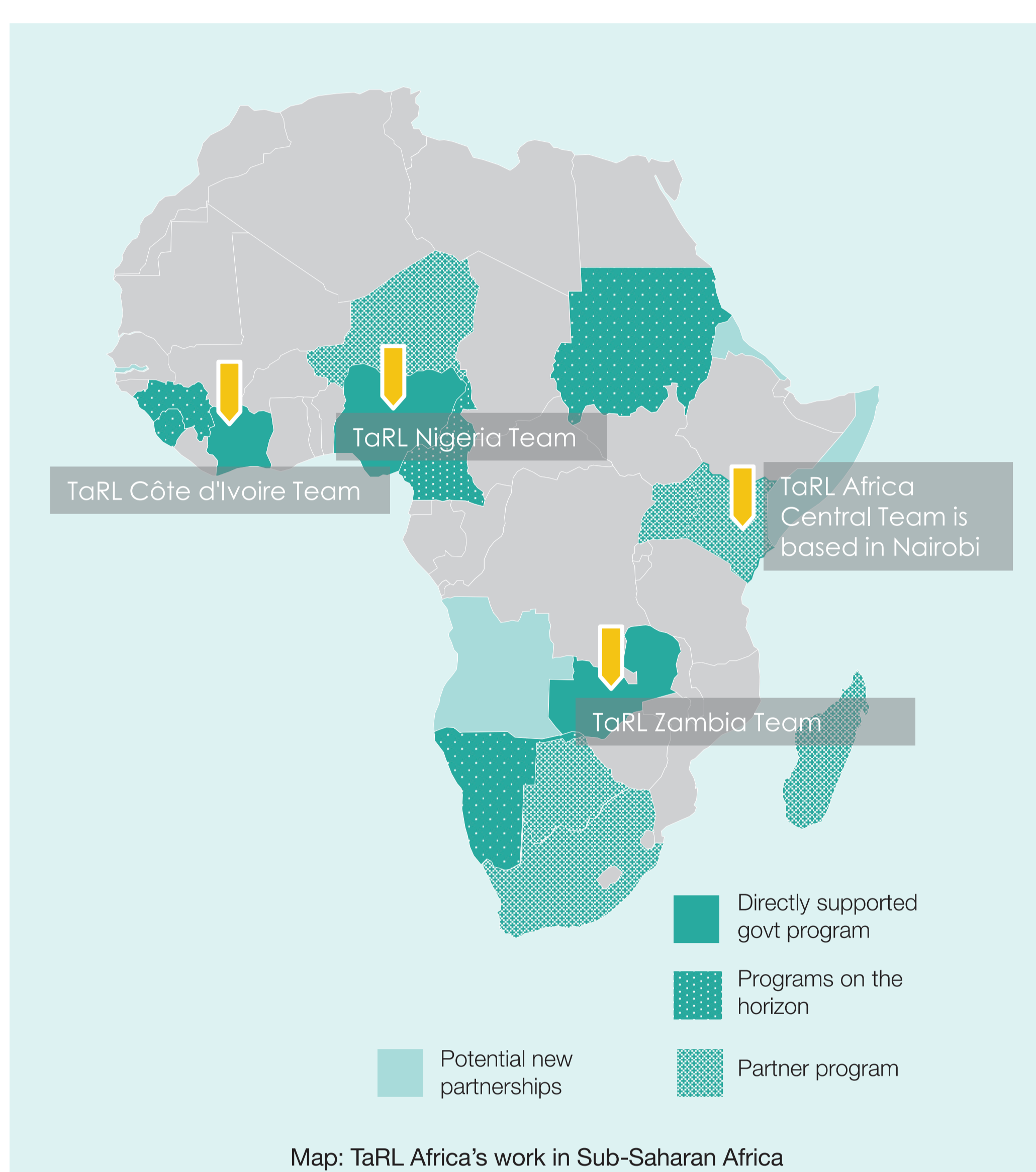
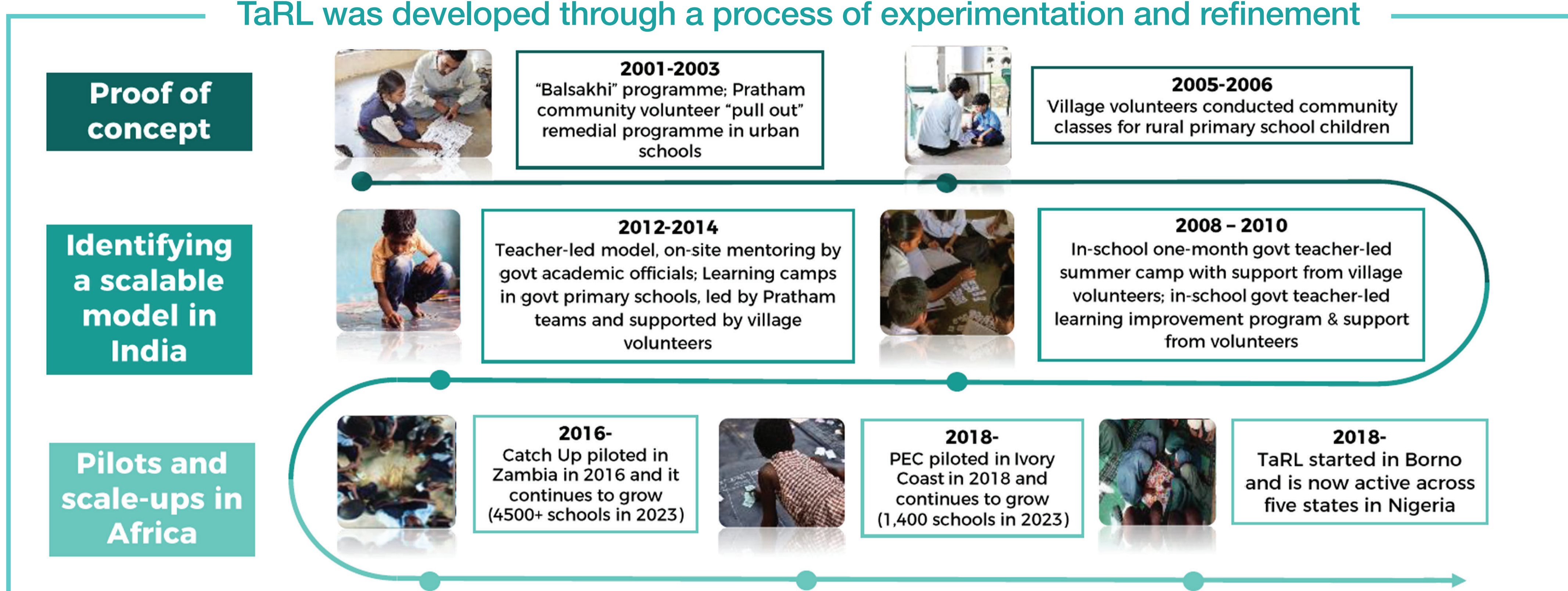


An increase of less than 0.1 standard deviations (SD) is typically considered a small effect. Other categorizations are 0.1 medium, 0.2 large, and more than 0.5 very large.

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Building on the evidence and programme implementation led by Pratham in India, TaRL started in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) as a pilot Zambia in 2015. Since then, the TaRL approach has spread across SSA with governments and partners taking up locally contextualised versions of the programme.

### TaRL was developed through a process of experimentation and refinement



## 12+ Countries

Implementing TaRL programmes in SSA with direct or indirect support of TaRL Africa including Botswana, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Madagascar, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Uganda, Sierra Leone, South Africa and Zambia.

## 4,000,000+

Children benefited from TaRL programmes in Africa in 2022

## What approaches helped TaRL scale-up and influence the government systems?

### TaRL Approach is driven by learning outcomes

- The TaRL approach enables teachers to generate and use data immediately while also equipping them with practical tools and methods to help children catch up in their learning. The data are aggregated upwards through the system to construct the subnational and national pictures of learning.

### It is pragmatic deeply grounded in the local context

- We look for opportunities to connect with and build on locally defined priorities
- We centre on actors rooted in the context and have the mandate to define and address education problems in the long term

### It addresses both technical and human components of the system

- This happens from the ground up, starting with classroom the children and their teachers.



A teacher facilitating TaRL in Zambia



A teacher facilitating a TaRL class in a learning lab in Kenya



A teacher facilitating TaRL (KaLMA) in Nigeria

The scaling journeys of 3 countries show the different pathways in which the TaRL approach has been taken up and expanded by governments.

TaRL in Zambia	TaRL in Côte d'Ivoire	TaRL in Nigeria	Timeline	
<p><b>As of 2023 over 500,000 children</b></p> <p>2016: India learning journey for MoGE officials Nov 2016: Pilot launched</p> <p>2017: Pilot review meeting and decision to scale up to 1,800 schools</p> <p>2019: Jan 2019: Scale up to 1,114 schools</p> <p>2021: Jan 2021: Scale up to 1,900 schools May 2021: GPE emergency response roll-out</p> <p>2023: TaRL continues to grow in over 4,400 schools</p>	<p><b>As of 2023 over 150,000 children</b></p> <p>2015: Nov 2015: Ministry created Catch Up working group</p> <p>2017: April 2017: USAID Div committed funding for scale July 2017: Catch Up pilot concluded</p> <p>2018: Jan 2018: Scale up to 470 schools</p> <p>2020: Jan 2020: Scale up to 1,700 schools</p> <p>2022: Reaching 1/3 of Zambian schools (3,300+ schools) Benefiting more than 500,000 children.</p>	<p><b>As of 2023 over 450,000 Children</b></p> <p>2019: Decision to scale up PEC following external monitoring that identified PEC as best approach to improve FLN skills</p> <p>2020: The MENA signs a PEC decree defining roles &amp; responsibilities regarding PEC within the system</p> <p>2022: PEC is sustained in 1000 schools reaching more than 150,000 children</p> <p>2023: In partnership with Fund for Innovation in Development (FID) and the government, TaRL will be scaling up CIV North</p>	<p><b>As of 2023, over 2,000 Schools</b></p> <p>2017: Nov: 2017 UNICEF Nigeria attends Pratham workshop in India and sees the program in action</p> <p>2018: Sept: Government officials from Kano and Borno States visit TaRL programs in Botswana and Zambia Sept: TaRL program launched in Borno State in 12 schools with UNICEF support</p> <p>2019: Oct: FCDO commits funding to pilot TaRL in Kano State</p> <p>2020: Jan: TaRL Program KaLMA, launched in 180 schools in Kano State</p> <p>2021: March: Schools close in Nigeria due to Covid-19, TaRL Africa supports home based learning in several States</p>	<p>2021: Sept: TaRL grows in the North East (Adamawa, Borno, Yobe) to 536 schools with support from UNICEF Dec: Kano State government develops plan to scale-up to 5 LGAs in 2022</p> <p>2022: Bauchi and Kaduna states launch a pilot, reaching almost 500 schools and more than 47,000 children. Kano government, in partnership with UNICEF scales up KaLMA as an accelerated learning component of the PLANE programme</p> <p>2023: TaRL is now active in over 2,000 schools across 7 states and reaching over 450,000 children</p>

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