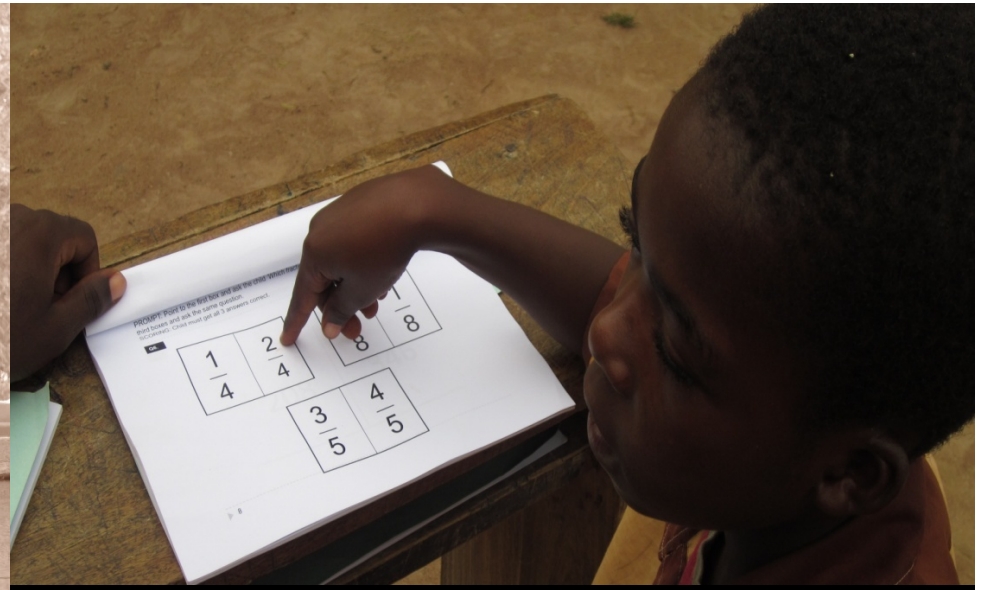


TEACHER COMMUNITY ASSISTANTS INITIATIVE (TCAI), GHANA

PRESENTATION AT THE LAUNCH CONFERENCE
OF J-PAL AFRICA
AT
THE UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

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Teacher Community Assistants Initiative

A project of the Ghana Education Service in collaboration with:

Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT)

National Youth Employment Program (NYEP)

Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA)



Republic of Ghana
GHANA EDUCATION SERVICE

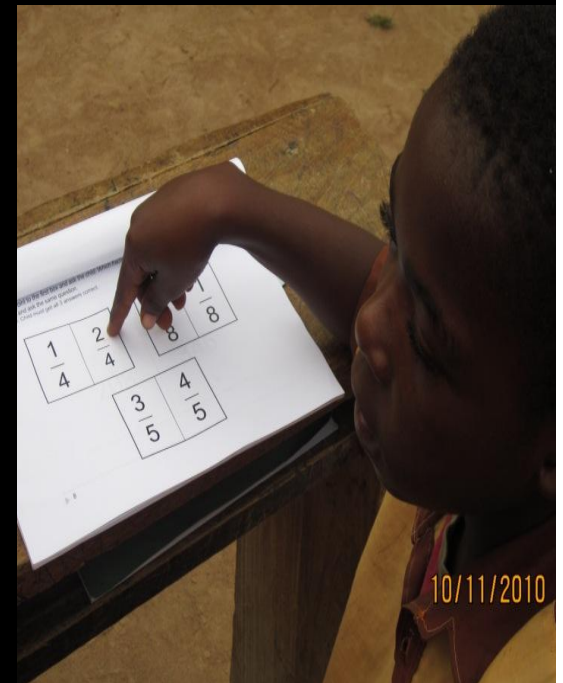
Background on Ghana



- Geographically centermost in the world
- Reputation as friendliest country in West Africa
- Population: ~ 21 million; 40% under 15
- Speak more than 50 languages & dialects
- Constitution mandates free, compulsory, universal basic education
- 2-6-3-3-4 educational system

Addressing Low Learning Levels

- Low learning levels in Ghana
 - <50% of Grade 3 children have minimum competency in reading, writing and basic arithmetic (NEA Results, 2009)
 - 21% P3 students can do 2 digit additions (P2 level)
 - 16% P3 students can read simple P2 level text
 - Pupils engaged for only 39% of instructional time available (World Bank Report, 2008)
- Education budget already 30% of national budget, with basic education getting ~55% – need cost effective solutions
- Large initiative underway: NALAP
- But teachers coping with children at a wide range of levels? → How to address this?



Outline



- TCAI Goals and Objectives
- Adapting Insights from Research Studies
- TCAI Key Components
 - Community Involvement
 - Working with the Existing Systems
 - Child Centered Teaching
 - Innovative Monitoring
 - Career Opportunities for the Youth
- Evaluating Impact and Program Variations
- Towards a National Rollout

TCAI Goals

- Complements existing programs by focusing on the lowest half
- Reinforces the role of the community by using Community Assistants
- Based on results of rigorous evaluations (India, Kenya)
- Consistent with the Strategic Plan's focus on quality
- Cost-effectiveness and sustainability (using NYEP structure)
- Offers effective entry points into career jobs for youth

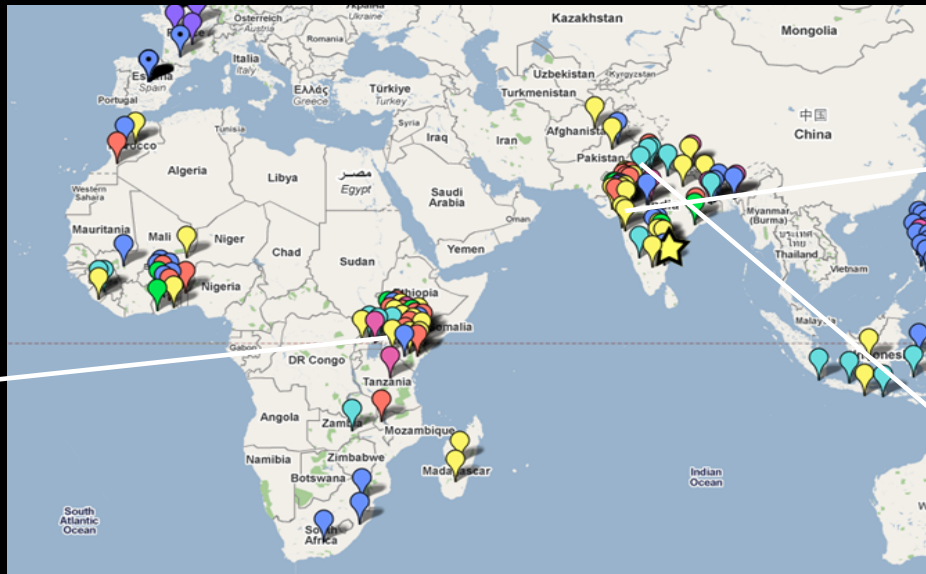


Adapting Insights from Research Studies



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Results from Three Studies



Kenya:
Adding Extra Teachers was most effective when class split by ability and with SMC monitoring

India: Remedial Education by community assistants during school hours was very effective (Pratham)

India: Community-based Volunteers running classes for low performing students in communities (Read India Program)

Three rigorous Randomized Controlled Trials showed cost effective ways to increase learning outcomes in school

Key Insights



- Easy to teach students how to read in a relatively short time, using a simple methodology and low-cost materials
- Key is to focus instruction at the right level. E.g, teaching the students lagging behind separately from the rest of the class
- Critical to have a reliable, easy methodology to identify the level of achievement of all the students
- Low qualified individuals can be trained in a short time (4 to 15 days) to teach basic literacy and numeracy
- Empowering local school committees to hire community teachers and monitor their performance can maximize the benefits for children

How can we adapt these insights to the Ghanaian context, in a relevant and sustainable manner?

Adapting to Local Context



Sound Program Design

- Combines the successful components from different programs
- Involves local partners such as School for Life (training and materials)

Wide Support

- Works with the existing system (GES structure, NYEP)
- Partnership with the Teachers Union

Financially Sustainable

- NYEP: already a system to pay for the assistants
- Relatively low-cost program: Small proportion of education budget

The program

- Teacher Community Assistants hired through NYEP and trained
- Teach basic skills to the lowest half (2 hours per remedial class, 2 classes per day)
- Monitoring by regular system + SMCs



TCAI Key Components

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Community Involvement

- Assistant (TCA) has to be from the community
- SMCs and PTAs: Key roles
 - Identify and monitor the Assistants
 - Contribute to furniture and space if necessary
- Vacations classes held in communities by TCAs
- TCAs trained to sensitize and involve the community



Working with the existing system

- Use of the National Youth Employment Program
- While SMCs identify candidates, joint interview by GES and NYEP (ensure quality)
- Key role of Circuit Supervisors
 - Trained as trainers; Supervision and support role.
- Key role of Head Teachers and Teachers
 - Trained as well; Need to be recognized as key players in the program



Child Centered Teaching

- 5-day training followed by refresher trainings and continuous support by Circuit Supervisors:
 - Identify and track children's level using a simple test
 - Use games and activities (all class and ability groups)
 - Use and create supplementary materials
 - Focus on literacy (syllabic and phonic method) and math (focus on place value)



Innovative Monitoring



- Involvement of Community
 - One community member identified by SMC and PTA
- Cell-phone based
 - Head teachers, community members, Circuit Supervisors, GNAT, NYEP and TCAI Coordinators will all send sms
- Centralized data base with live data, accessible to all stakeholders



Career Opportunities for Youth



- Traditional Challenges:
 - Policies have favored investment & training but this does not lead to job creation
 - Rural youth flood urban centers, where opportunities for youth are few, if any
 - Most jobs available to young people provide no long term career path
- TCAI advantage
 - Jobs created within the community where the young people live (strengthening the NYEP programme)
 - Opportunities to plug into existing programs for a career in the formal education sector (UTDBE programme)

Evaluating Impact and Program Variations

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Some questions

- Will it achieve the desired impact on learning outcomes?
- If so, is it remedial education, or just because of smaller class size?
- Will remedial education work better if done during or after school hours?
- Can teachers achieve the same results without assistants, if trained to do so?

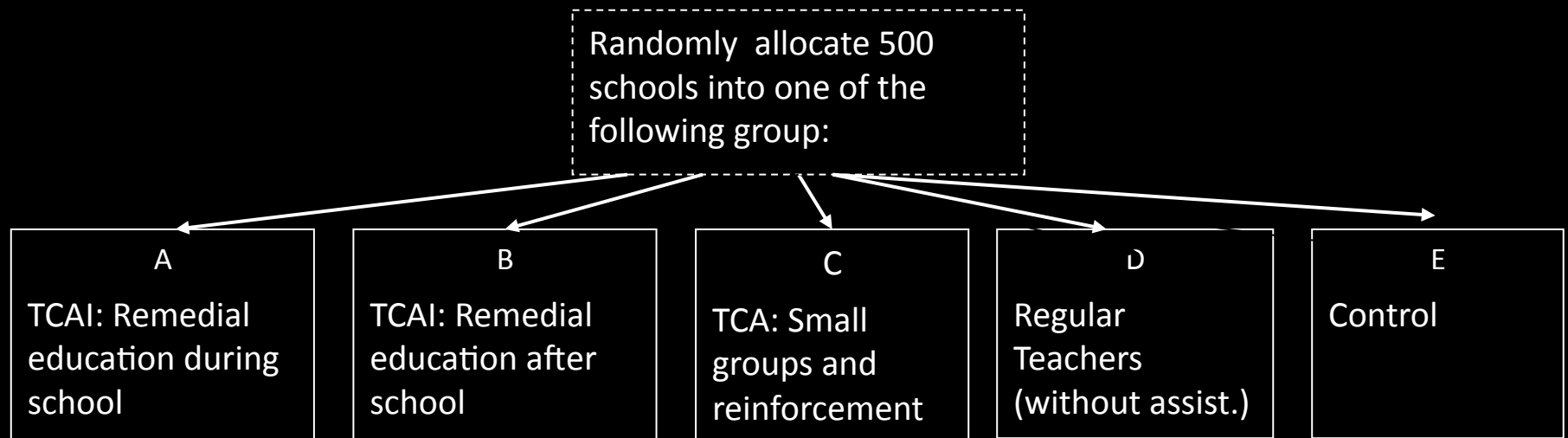


We can test these questions!





Research Design and Program Variations



- Sample: 500 schools across 42 Districts
 - Nationally representative sample
 - Up to 25 students per class (P1-3)
- Methodology: Randomized Evaluation for rigorous results
 - Schools are assigned randomly to a “treatment” or a “control” after the baseline

Data Collection

- Surveys: school, teacher, SMC/PTA and community members
- Testing: Designed in collaboration with IPA and GES (CRDD)
 - Individually administered test: Baseline, 1st and 2nd endline
 - Written test along the lines of NEA: 1st and 2nd endline
 - NEA (administered project-based): 2nd endline
- Administered by IPA through cell phones, with GES monitoring



Towards a National Rollout

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Towards a National Roll Out

Logistics Pilot

May 10 – Dec 11

- Test logistics and teaching methodology
- Start preparations for National Pilot

National Pilot preparations

Aug 10 – Jan 11

- Prepare training plans and materials
- Sensitization
- TCA recruitment and training

National Pilot

Feb 11 – Aug 12

- Evaluate impact of TCAI and variations (500 schools in all country)
- Start Roll-out negotiations and plans

National Roll-out?

- National Roll-out of the program, if positive results



Conclusion



The Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service in collaboration with its partners: –

Ghana National Association of Teachers; Ghana National Youth Employment Programme and Innovations for Poverty Actions, and all other interested development partners, are committed in ensuring the success of the TCAI programme to address “Quality Education for All Ghanaian Children”.

THANK YOU

