



RELI

Regional Education
Learning Initiative

**Competency-Based Pedagogical
Innovations for Strengthening
Foundational Literacy and Numeracy in
Tanzania**

**Annual Joint Education Sector Review
Meeting**

8th – 10th April 2026

Zanzibar

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RELI Africa

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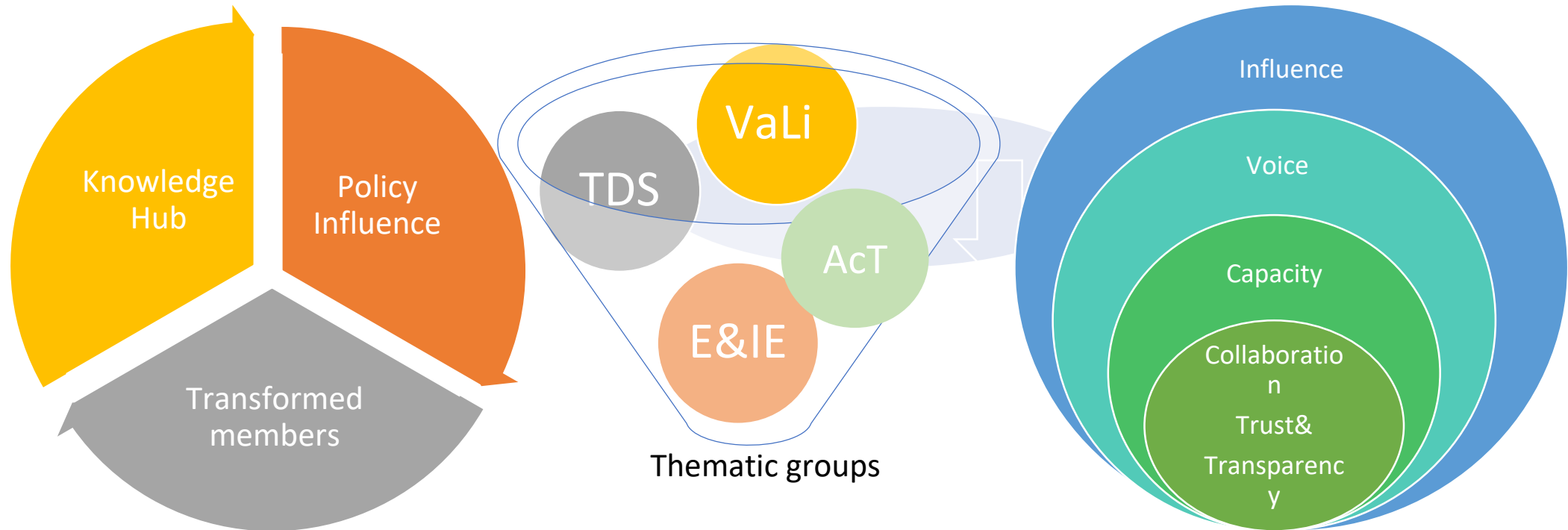


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About The Regional Education Learning Initiative Africa (RELI Africa)

70+ Organizations – One Vision across East Africa region



Why innovative pedagogies for foundational learning?



Persistent inequities and learning crises across East Africa

Education systems continue to face challenges of access, quality, and equity, leaving many learners behind.



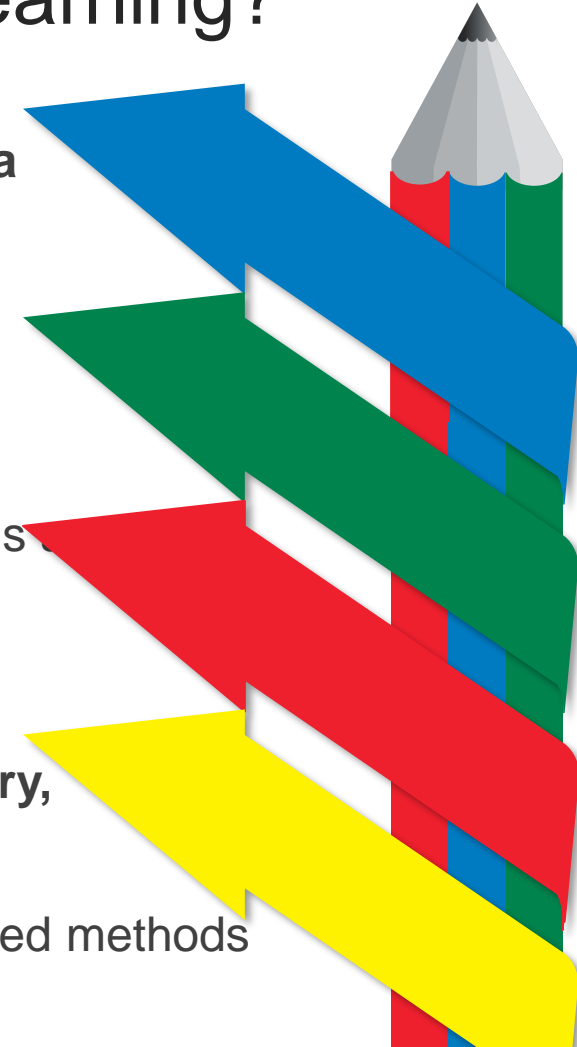
Teachers as frontline actors for equity and social justice

Beyond delivering content, teachers shape inclusive classrooms, foster resilience, empathy, and fairness.



The need for pedagogical innovations rooted in participatory, learner-centered approaches

Emphasizing active engagement, collaboration, and contextualized methods that empower learners and communities.



Foundational Learning as Cornerstone of equity and fairness

Equity at the core:

Foundational literacy and numeracy are gateways to participation, dignity, and opportunity—not just academic skills.

Teachers as agents of equity:

By ensuring every child learns at the right level, teachers dismantle systemic barriers and foster inclusion.

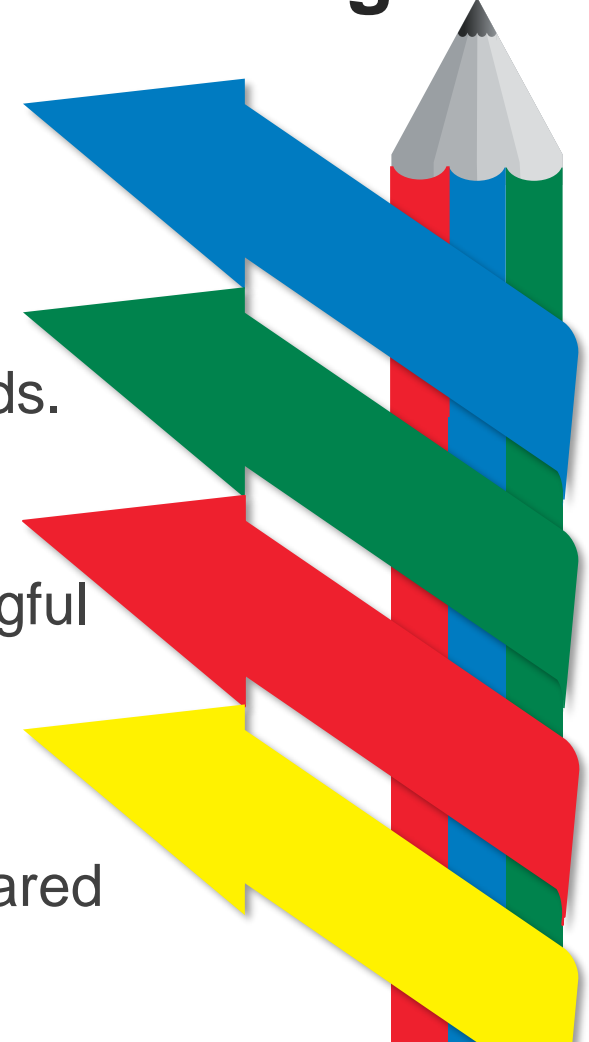
Learner-centered pedagogy:

Approaches like TaRL empower marginalized learners and promote fairness.



Teaching at the Right Level and foundational learning outcomes

- The Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) originating in India, rethinks how learning gaps are addressed.
- Since 2019 it was adapted by RELI members in Tanzania mainland and Zanzibar
- It has been localized to fit diverse contexts and learner needs.
- The core principle is: ***Teach according to learners' actual competencies, not age or grade.***
- Ensures every child is engaged at the right level for meaningful progress.
- Interactive methods: ***storytelling, games, role-play, peer collaboration.***
- Learners build skills through participation, creativity, and shared problem-solving.



The Intervention and Learning Outcomes



Six NGOs implemented the TaRL intervention

Uwezo Tanzania, Organisation for Community Development (OCODE), SAWA, Sazani Trust, Milele Zanzibar Foundation (MZF), and Pastoral Women Council (PWC).



Evidence of impact

Improved literacy and numeracy observed within 30–60 days of intervention.



Children categorized by learning levels

- **Literacy:** syllable, word, and story groups
- **Numeracy:** number recognition, addition/subtraction, multiplication/division



Achievements

- **Enhanced learner performance**
 - ✓ Significant gains in foundational literacy and numeracy skills.
- **Strengthened teacher–parent collaboration**
 - ✓ Improved communication and shared responsibility for learner progress.
- **Teachers nurtured resilience, empathy, and civic agency**
 - ✓ Educators became role models for inclusive values and social responsibility.



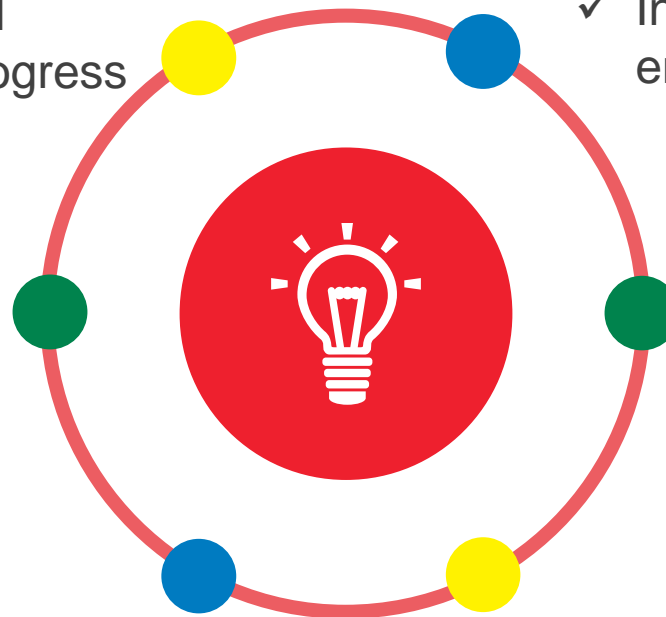
Lessons Learned

Importance of differentiated instruction:

- ✓ Tailoring teaching to learners' varied competencies ensures equitable progress

Culturally responsive materials:

- ✓ Inclusive resources dismantle barriers and empower marginalized groups.



Participatory teacher development:

- ✓ Peer mentoring and reflective practice strengthen teacher capacity and confidence.

Joint advocacy strategies:

- ✓ Collective action is essential for government uptake and systemic change.



Policy Recommendations:

- Institutionalize TaRL in national teacher training curricula.
- Integrate into Teacher Continuous Professional Development (TCPD).
- Strengthen partnerships with government and NGOs for scaling.



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THANK YOU

