

Sourcing qualified passionate candidates for the development sector in Africa



POSITION: TaRL Africa Managing Director

REPORTING TO: TaRL Africa Board

REMUNERATION: Subject to skills and experience

LOCATION: Kenya (with significant regional and international travel required)

START DATE: Early 2020



[Teaching at the Right Level Africa](#) is a new high-profile initiative jointly led by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's (MIT) [Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab](#) (J-PAL) and the Indian Education NGO [Pratham](#).

Context

Despite immense progress in school enrolment in Africa, millions of children in schools across the continent are not acquiring basic reading and arithmetic skills.

Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) is an evidence-backed approach that helps children develop basic reading and mathematics skills, opening doors to a brighter future.

Pioneered by Pratham, TaRL is based on several key elements at the classroom level:

1. Using a simple tool, children are assessed on their ability to read and do arithmetic.
2. Children are then grouped for instruction by level, rather than by grade. For a dedicated time each day the focus is on building foundational skills through activities and materials appropriate for each group.
3. As children progress, they move to the next learning group and continue to grow.

Shifting from “schooling for all” to “learning for all” also requires critical systems-level support. This includes working with stakeholders to adjust the approach to local contexts, developing and supporting a cadre of mentors, continually assessing basic skills, and empowering government officials and teachers to act on data.

Since 2001, J-PAL-affiliated researchers have tested the TaRL approach through rigorous impact evaluations. Six randomised evaluations in India over the past two decades and a growing body of research in Africa have shown that TaRL has achieved some of the most consistent and cost-effective learning gains of any primary education programme evaluated.

Pratham and J-PAL have come together to launch a new team in Africa to support the growth of Teaching at the Right Level across the continent.

In order to support TaRL approaches in multiple countries, the team is working to:

- **Embed TaRL in government systems.** We directly support governments and their partners to develop TaRL approaches that are adapted to local contexts and embedded within existing education systems.
- **Support nimble TaRL innovators.** Several partner organisations are also currently designing, implementing, or supporting TaRL approaches in Africa. We provide both technical support and learn from their programmes.
- **Build a movement.** Across Africa, the education community has recognised a need for focusing on foundational reading and mathematics. We aim to connect and grow TaRL “leaders of practice” who will innovate and spread effective approaches to build a movement for foundational learning across Africa.
- **Learn and improve.** We are crafting an ambitious research and learning agenda to explore how to adapt the TaRL approach in a portfolio of countries and settings such that it can be cost-effectively scaled across the continent.

Role Purpose

The purpose of the role is to drive the mission and strategy of TaRL Africa to improve basic reading and arithmetic skills of children on the African continent and to build a TaRL Africa fit to meet its ambitious objectives

- to scale up the TaRL learning approach to more than 3 million primary school children in Africa over the next five years.
- to build a collaborative, unified TaRL Africa team working effectively across multiple countries and partners to achieve our goal of supporting education systems throughout the continent.

The TaRL Africa Managing Director Position

The inaugural TaRL Africa Managing Director will lead and grow the TaRL Africa Initiative. The incumbent will be passionate about people, partners, evidence, and shifting education systems to deliver on “learning for all”. S/he will be respectful of, and adaptable to different cultures and contexts, excited to build a diverse team, and create a new organisational culture spanning multiple countries. The Managing Director will work with existing staff from J-PAL and Pratham already staffing the [TaRL Africa Team](#).

Responsibilities

- Drive the mission and strategy of TaRL Africa to improve basic literacy and numeracy of children on the continent through enabling systems to deliver quality TaRL programmes sustainably at scale.
- Build TaRL Africa as an organisation which is effectively communicating and functioning as one team across 4 or more countries.

- Recruit, lead and manage the TaRL Africa team to an eventual strength of over 20 staff members based in central and country offices.
- Develop an organisational culture promoting the values and ambitions of learning for all children, innovation and research, scale, and sustainability.
- Efficiently manage an annual budget of more than US\$ 5 million including financial, operational, and legal controls.
- Develop and manage partnerships with key stakeholders, including government and NGO partners.
- Engage with the global donor community and fundraise for TaRL Africa delivery and long-term sustainability.

Experience

The Managing Director will have a minimum of 15 years relevant experience including:

- Building and directing an organisation with a track record of achieving results at scale.
- Leading and managing a portfolio of programs/initiatives in international development coupled with on-the-ground implementation experience.
- Growing and supporting teams across multiple locations to work collaboratively and deliver effectively on a common vision.
- Working with governments to deliver programs and strengthen systems.
- Living in a developing country for at least 5 years.
- Demonstrating contextual knowledge of Africa.
- Building a track record of managing demanding donor relationships and proactively cultivating new donor relationships.

Education

- Master's or advanced degree in public policy, education, economics, business or another related field.

Desired Attributes

- A passion for improving learning outcomes and if no previous education experience, a demonstrated sustained commitment to a cause.
- Deep organizational building and development experience.
- Exceptional strategic thinking and delivery capabilities:
 - Action-oriented, flexible, problem-solver;
 - Ability to manage multiple competing deadlines and dynamically reprioritise; as required by evolving program needs and resources without losing focus on mission; and
 - Outstanding project management skills.
- Exceptional people leadership and relationship-building skills:
 - Skilled in building constructive dialogue and collaboration, developing teams in multiple locations and building organisation; and

- Ability to build strong relationships with internal and external stakeholders at all levels around the globe.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills in English and demonstrated ability to foster strong communication across diverse team members, partners and audiences.
- Availability for and willingness to travel extensively.

Advantageous

- Strong preference for African nationals.
- Experience delivering innovation within large-scale education systems.
- Language skills: French and/or African languages.

How to apply

Interested applicants are to submit the following by e-mail to consultants@ngorecruit.com quoting **reference number NTL001**:

- a **CV** (in Word or pdf format) and
- a one-pager about why TaRL Africa's mission of improving foundational skills for children in Africa is important and a meaningful cause to you personally.

Application Deadline: 4 November 2019. Interested applicants are encouraged to apply ASAP.

Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted and may be required to undergo further screening and an assessment process.

MIT is an equal employment opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment and will not be discriminated against on the basis of race, colour, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, ancestry, or national or ethnic origin.

If you have questions about the position, please email Dela Atubra via delat@ngorecruit.com.

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