

PROGRAM EVALUATION REPORT

Uwezo Tanzania
Jifunze Model

Case Study Evaluation · 2026

A Qualitative Case Study Evaluation of Foundational Literacy & Numeracy Interventions at the Kiwambo Primary School, Mkuranga District

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uwezo TANZANIA

EVALUATION AT A GLANCE

TARGET ORGANIZATION	Uwezo Tanzania (in partnership with PO-RALG)
LEAD QUALITATIVE EVALUATOR	Prof. Martha Baiyee (Eastern Michigan University) Fulbright Sub-Saharan Africa Regional Travel Program (RTP)
EVALUATION PEDAGOGY MODEL	Jifunze Accelerated Learning Pedagogy (JALP)
GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS & SCOPE	Qualitative Case Study – Kiwambo Primary School, Mkuranga District Contextualized within Uwezo's national 286-school, 6-district intervention
METHODOLOGY & SAMPLE SIZE	Qualitative Case Study Design with Stakeholder Triangulation N = 13: 1 District Academic Officer, 1 Uwezo Program Manager, 4 Teachers / 1 Headteacher, 3 Students, 4 Parents

168,599
Children reached by the national Jifunze initiative since 2019

286
Schools across six target districts

N = 13
Stakeholders interviewed across five groups

$13
Unit cost per child (USD)

80% → 30%
Fall in chronic truancy at Kiwambo Primary School

5 of 91
Out-of-school children identified through household mapping and re-enrolled

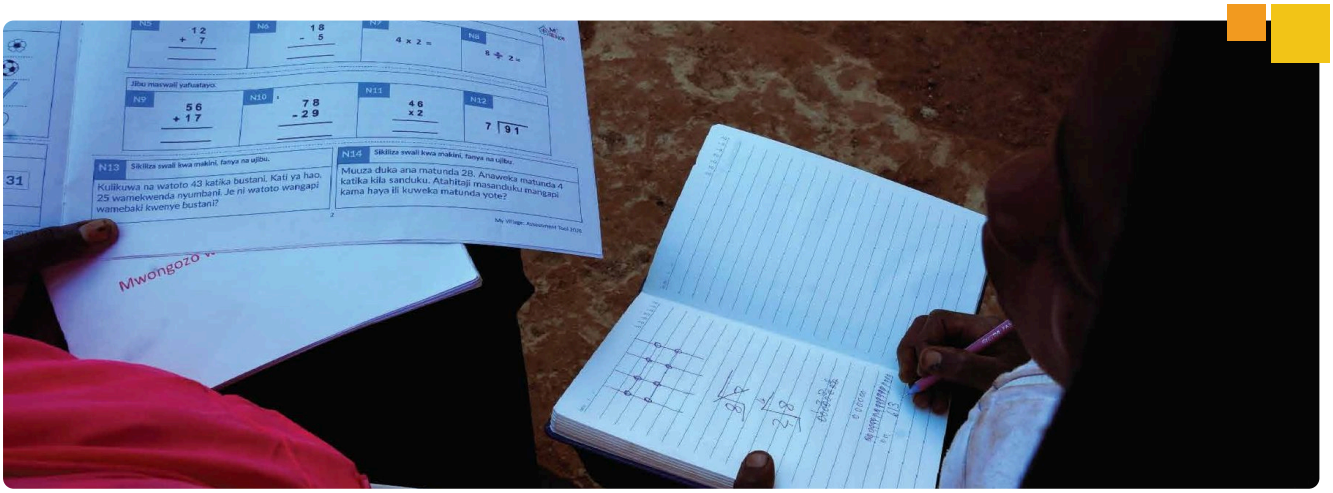


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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

> This program evaluation presents a qualitative, single-site case study examining the implementation mechanics, pedagogical effectiveness, student psychological transformation, and systemic sustainability of the Jifunze Accelerated Learning Pedagogy (JALP) model at Kiwambo Primary School in the Mkuranga District.

By situating Kiwambo Primary School as a focal case study within Uwezo's broader national Jifunze initiative, which has reached 168,599 children in 286 schools since 2019 (Uwezo Tanzania, 2026), this report synthesizes rich qualitative evidence from five core stakeholder groups. The evaluation sample (N = 13) included one district academic officer, one Uwezo program manager, three primary school teachers, one headteacher at Kiwambo Primary School, three enrolled students, and four parents/guardians from Kiwambo Village.

The Jifunze model operationalizes the Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) philosophy through the JALP. Rather than forcing struggling pupils through rigid, grade-level syllabi, JALP conducts 10-day diagnostic assessments to group learners, aged 8–17, by their actual foundational skill tiers in reading, writing, and arithmetic (3Rs/KKK). Instruction is delivered through intensive, interactive 30-to-60-day Jifunze classes that emphasize joyful, game-based, tactile learning modalities.

KEY FINDINGS

1 Profound Pedagogical Transformation & Psychological Safety

Shifting from rigid, grade-level lecturing to 10-day diagnostic level-based grouping fostered an exceptional inclusive classroom environment. The strict elimination of corporal punishment in favor of a non-punitive, positive, encouragement culture (e.g., "good try" feedback, paper crowns) successfully removed physical fear, establishing profound emotional closeness and approachability between educators and learners.

2 Dramatic Truancy Reduction & Out-of-School Re-integration

The headteacher at Kiwambo Primary School documented a sweeping reduction in chronic student absenteeism, with truancy rates plummeting from baseline levels as high as 80% down to 30%. Teacher-led household baseline mapping successfully identified non-enrolled children (i.e., 5 out of 91 mapped children in focal communities), enabling their formal re-enrollment and transition into age-matched primary grades.

3 Instructional Cross-Application in Regular Timetable Classes

Kiwambo teachers actively cross-applied game-based JALP methods (e.g., Sakasaka, number lines, number gymnastics, crossline multiplication) into regular morning classes across Standards 3, 4, 5, and 7. This extended JALP's pedagogical benefits beyond remedial hours, simplifying complex English and Mathematics concepts for all enrolled pupils.

4 High Cost-Efficiency & Deep Community Ownership

Achieving accelerated 3Rs mastery at an economical unit cost of $13 USD per child, the model mobilized robust parental buy-in. Families actively financed community school feeding programs (e.g., Kikombe cha Ndoto), monitored exercise books, and resisted pulling children out of school for agricultural farm labor.

5 **Institutional Sustainability via Local Governance**

District education authorities align JALP directly with the national 3Rs directives. Long-term institutionalization relies on embedding JALP peer-coaching into Tanzania's existing weekly Thursday MEWAKA (In-Service Teacher Professional Development) ward-level resource centers and modifying government School Quality Assurance Monitoring (SQAM) inspection tools.

TRANSFORMATIVE PSYCHOLOGICAL FINDING

Redefining School as a Home-Like Sanctuary

Children clearly indicated that in Jifunze classes, they felt like they were at home where they play and feel free. This reveals a critical psychological finding: primary school pupils hold an underlying traditional imagery of school as a rigid, non-playful, and threatening space. By replacing fear with joyful small-group interaction, Jifunze classes provided a home-like sanctuary that unlocked genuine student participation, confidence, and rapid academic progress.



1. THEORETICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL FRAMEWORK

> To establish scholarly rigor and deep analytical coherence, this evaluation grounds the empirical case study findings of the Jifunze model in four complementary educational, psychological, and sociological frameworks.

Social Constructivism & the Zone of Proximal Development
Bandura, 1977; Vygotsky, 1978
→ Diagnostic grouping meets each learner where they are

Humanizing Pedagogy & Critical Consciousness
Freire, 1970
→ "No punishment, only encouragement"

Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) Theory of Change
Banerjee et al., 2017; Duflo et al., 2011
→ Instruction aligned to actual learning level

The Capability Approach to Human Development
Nussbaum, 2011; Sen, 1999
→ Foundational learning as real freedom

The four lenses are Social Constructivism and the Zone of Proximal Development (Bandura, 1977; Vygotsky, 1978), Humanizing Pedagogy and Critical Consciousness (Freire, 1970), The Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) Theory of Change (Banerjee et al., 2017; Duflo et al., 2011), and The Capability Approach to Human Development (Nussbaum, 2011; Sen, 1999). Together, these theoretical lenses illuminate how pedagogical structures, emotional climates, and social interactions converge to transform foundational learning trajectories.

1.1 SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM AND THE ZONE OF PROXIMAL DEVELOPMENT (ZPD)

Vygotsky's (1978) Social Constructivist Theory posits that cognitive development is fundamentally a socio-cultural process mediated through language, collaborative activity, and structured social interactions. Central to Vygotskian theory is the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) which represents the distance between a learner's actual developmental level, as determined by independent problem-solving, and their potential developmental level, as determined through problem-solving with adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers (Vygotsky, 1978). In developing contexts, traditional primary classrooms frequently fail because rigid, grade-level curricula operate far beyond the struggling child's ZPD, leaving them cognitively stranded (Pritchett & Beatty, 2015).

The JALP operationalizes Vygotskian constructivism by administering 10-day diagnostic assessments that pinpoint each learner's ZPD. By organizing pupils into small, ability-matched groups rather than static-age grades, JALP enables teachers and peers to provide targeted, temporary scaffolding (Wood et al., 1976). Interactive, tactile learning tools (e.g., number cards, Sakasaka sorting games, and crossline multiplication songs) act as social mediating artifacts that make abstract mathematical and linguistic concepts concrete. Furthermore, Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory reinforces this framework by demonstrating that peer modeling within small groups builds collective self-efficacy, allowing struggling pupils to observe, imitate, and internalize success without fear of academic shame.

1.2 HUMANIZING PEDAGOGY AND CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

Paulo Freire's (1970) seminal work, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, critiques traditional educational structures as "banking education" (p. 77), wherein passive students are treated as empty vessels to be filled with rigid syllabus content by an authoritarian teacher. Freire argued that authoritarian, punitive classroom environments inflict symbolic violence, instilling fear, passivity, and alienation. In contrast, Humanizing Pedagogy (Freire, 1970) asserts that true learning requires dialogue, mutual respect, psychological safety, and the affirmation of students' cultural and emotional humanity.

In many Sub-Saharan African contexts, historical legacy and resource constraints have perpetuated punitive classroom management practices, including corporal punishment and public reprimands (Humphreys, 2006). JALP explicitly disrupts this dehumanizing cycle by establishing a strict **no punishment, only encouragement** policy. By replacing physical beatings and public ridicule with constructive "good try" feedback, teacher empathy, and celebratory rewards (e.g., paper crowns for winning teams), JALP humanizes the instructional space. This philosophical shift alters the classroom social contract, giving students agency and creating a low-stakes environment where taking academic risks is celebrated rather than penalized.

1.3 TEACHING AT THE RIGHT LEVEL (TARL) THEORY OF CHANGE

Developed by the Indian NGO Pratham and rigorously evaluated by the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL), the TaRL approach posits a clear theory of change: foundational learning collapses when teachers are forced to cover an over-ambitious, grade-level curriculum regardless of children's actual learning levels (Banerjee et al., 2017; Duflo et al., 2011). When instruction aligns with the child's actual learning level, even for just one to two hours daily, foundational progress accelerates exponentially.

The Jifunze model adapts TaRL to the context of rural Tanzanian primary schools. The theory of change holds that combining the following creates an optimal learning ecosystem:



As Banerjee et al. (2017) found, TaRL interventions achieve large, sustained effect sizes in basic literacy and numeracy at extremely low unit costs, making them uniquely suited for systemic scaling within public education infrastructure.

1.4 THE CAPABILITY APPROACH TO HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Amartya Sen's (1999) Capability Approach, expanded by Martha Nussbaum (2011), conceptualizes human development as expanding real freedoms—the 'capabilities' that enable individuals to lead lives they have reason to value. In this framework, basic education is not merely an input for economic productivity; rather, it is a fundamental "architectonic" capability that unlocks all other social, political, and economic freedoms (Sen, 1999, p. 293). A child who cannot read a basic passage or perform simple arithmetic is denied fundamental agency, remaining trapped in capability poverty.

By targeting marginalized, truant, and out-of-school children, Jifunze restores foundational capabilities. Re-engaging truant children and re-enrolling non-enrolled pupils into primary education directly expands their life choices. Furthermore, by fostering home-school dialogue and empowering parents to track exercise books and fund school meals (e.g., Kikombe cha Ndoto), Jifunze expands community-level agency, ensuring that educational success becomes a shared, sustainable human development outcome.



2. METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

This evaluation employed a qualitative, single-site case study design (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Yin, 2018) centered on the Kiwambo Primary School in the Mkuranga District, embedded within Uwezo Tanzania's broader regional Jifunze implementation across 286 primary schools in six target districts (i.e., Kisarawe, Chamwino, Mvomero, Kilolo, Ludewa, and Mbarali). The study selected a case study design because it enables an in-depth, contextual exploration of a bounded social phenomenon, specifically, how pedagogical, emotional, and institutional factors interact within a real-world rural school setting to influence foundational learning outcomes (Yin, 2018).

2.1 MULTI-STAKEHOLDER SAMPLING AND TRIANGULATION FRAMEWORK

To ensure analytical rigor, the study utilized a qualitative stakeholder triangulation framework. The study systematically cross-examined qualitative interview data gathered at the Kiwambo Primary School and Kiwambo Village across macro-administrative, operational, instructional, beneficiary, and community levels. Table 1 below delineates the evaluation scope and exact sample sizes (N) for each stakeholder group.

TABLE 1. EVALUATION SCOPE AND SAMPLE SIZE OF STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

1	1	4	3	4	13
DISTRICT ACADEMIC OFFICER Administrative & policy	**UWEZO PROGRAM MANAGER** Operational	**TEACHERS & HEADTEACHER** 3 teachers · 1 headteacher	**ENROLLED STUDENTS** Beneficiaries	**PARENTS & COMMUNITY** Kiwambo Village	**TOTAL N** 5 stakeholder groups

STAKEHOLDER GROUP	SAMPLE SIZE (N)	EVALUATION SCOPE & KEY EVALUATIVE CONTRIBUTION
District Academic Officer (DEO / WEO / LGA)	**N=1**	Evaluates policy alignment with national 3Rs mandates, systemic scalability, institutionalization via weekly Thursday MEWAKA teacher resource networks, and SQAM inspection tool adaptation.
Uwezo Program Manager (Uwezo Staff Member, Tanzania)	**N=1**	Provides operational data on implementation fidelity, multi-tiered supervision (Headteachers, Quality Assurers, Uwezo staff), $13 USD/child unit cost, household mapping, and positive community demand management.
Teachers & Headteacher (Kiwambo Primary School)	**N=4** 3 Teachers, 1 Headteacher	Documents pedagogical adoption of Jifunze Accelerated Learning Pedagogy (JALP) level grouping, tactile game tools, non-punitive culture, truancy reduction (80% to 30%), and morning class cross-application.
Enrolled Students / Learners (Kiwambo Primary School)	**N=3**	Explores joyful game-based learning, psychological safety, 'at home' freedom and play imagery, teacher approachability, and peer collaboration in ability-matched small groups.
Parents & Community Members (Kiwambo Village)	**N=4**	Verifies visible home academic progress, exercise book markings, truancy elimination, Kikombe cha Ndoto school meal financing, and advocacy against agricultural dropout.

2.2 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYTICAL PROCEDURE

Data collection included semi-structured individual qualitative interviews, small focus group discussions, and extensive document analysis, including classroom attendance registers, Jifunze 10-day diagnostic tracking logs, student exercise books, and official program evaluation reports. Qualitative interview protocols focused on core evaluation dimensions: policy alignment, pedagogical implementation mechanics, psychological safety, attendance/truancy dynamics, and community ownership. Uwezo staff generated and reviewed interview questions.

Interview transcripts and field notes were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006, 2019) six-phase thematic analysis framework. The team systematically coded the data to generate candidate themes, which they then refined, defined, and mapped across stakeholder groups. Quotes originally recorded in Kiswahili were translated into English and meticulously polished for eloquence and flow while preserving their verbatim meaning, emotional authenticity, and thematic richness.

In addition, program document review provided supplementary data.

2.3 METHODOLOGICAL RIGOR AND TRUSTWORTHINESS

Methodological rigor was maintained in accordance with Lincoln and Guba's (1985) evaluative criteria for qualitative research:

CREDIBILITY

Achieved through multi-stakeholder data triangulation (cross-verifying claims across officers, teachers, students, and parents), prolonged field engagement, and member-checking key qualitative themes with school staff.

TRANSFERABILITY

Facilitated by providing thick, detailed descriptions of the instructional context, school setting, and socio-economic dynamics at the Kiwambo Primary School.

DEPENDABILITY

Ensured through a transparent audit trail of data collection tools, coding schemes, and analytical decision-making logs.

CONFIRMABILITY

Maintained through researcher reflexivity, ensuring that findings directly reflected stakeholder voices and documentary evidence rather than researcher bias. Constantly checking in with Uwezo support staff for consistency and feedback on the report.

2.4 METHODOLOGICAL LIMITATIONS

Two explicit methodological limitations must be acknowledged:

Absence of Direct National Policy-Level Stakeholders. The qualitative sample did not include direct policy-level respondents or curriculum developers from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) or the Tanzania Institute of Education (TIE). While the district education officer provided local administrative insights, the study inferred national-level policy perspectives through policy document analysis.

Inherent Limitations of Single-Site Qualitative Case Study. While an in-depth case study of the Kiwambo Primary School provided rich, nuanced operational insights, qualitative findings from a single school setting cannot be statistically generalized across all primary schools in Tanzania. However, the findings offer valuable analytical generalizability (Yin, 2018) for similar rural public education contexts.

2.5 RESEARCHER POSITIONALITY, INSTITUTIONAL REFLEXIVITY, AND SOCIAL DESIRABILITY BIAS

In line with qualitative research standards for reflexivity (Bourke, 2014; Creswell & Poth, 2018), the principal researcher must explicitly articulate their positional identity. The lead investigator conducted this evaluation as a Fulbright Regional Travel Program (RTP) hosted by Uwezo Tanzania. This institutional affiliation provided invaluable field access, logistical support, and localized cultural mediation across rural educational sites in the Mkuranga District. However, this dual role as an independent academic researcher and an institutionally hosted scholar introduced complex power dynamics and potential observer effects that required continuous critical reflexivity (Merriam et al., 2001).

Crucially, because field visits and semi-structured stakeholder interviews were facilitated in coordination with Uwezo Tanzania, Uwezo staff members were frequently present during data collection activities, including community entry, stakeholder introductions, and interview sessions. This co-presence introduced an inherent methodological risk of social-desirability bias (Nederhof, 1985; Tourangeau & Yan, 2007). Specifically, primary school teachers, headteachers, students, and parents may have felt institutional pressure or a subtle incentive to over-report positive program outcomes, under-report implementation friction, or align their narratives with perceived organizational expectations to secure continued NGO patronage or resource allocation.

To mitigate social-desirability bias and safeguard qualitative data integrity, several proactive methodological strategies were utilized:

- **Framing and Neutrality:** Interviews were explicitly framed to participants not as a high-stakes program audit or performance evaluation, but as a collaborative learning dialogue focused on understanding daily classroom realities, challenges, and instructional experiences.
- **Iterative Probing and Anonymity Protocols:** Participants were repeatedly assured of absolute anonymity, and non-judgmental, open-ended probing techniques were used to tap into operational bottlenecks alongside successes.
- **Empirical Triangulation:** Qualitative verbal accounts were systematically cross-verified against unannounced, direct classroom observations of Jifunze instruction.

3. STAKEHOLDER TRIANGULATION MATRIX

The following structured matrix in Table 2 synthesizes qualitative findings across all five stakeholder groups (N = 13). Every cell is directly traceable to qualitative interview data and documentary evidence, establishing cross-cutting alignment and thematic consistency across administrative, operational, instructional, beneficiary, and community tiers.

TABLE 2. STAKEHOLDER TRIANGULATION MATRIX

STAKEHOLDER GROUP	SAMPLE SIZE (N)	EVALUATION SCOPE & KEY EVALUATIVE CONTRIBUTION
District Academic Officer (DEO / WEO / LGA)	**N=1**	Evaluates policy alignment with national 3Rs mandates, systemic scalability, institutionalization via weekly Thursday MEWAKA teacher resource networks, and SQAM inspection tool adaptation.
Uwezo Program Manager (Uwezo Tanzania)	**N=1**	Provides operational data on implementation fidelity, multi-tiered supervision (Headteachers, Quality Assurers, Uwezo staff), $13 USD/child unit cost, household mapping, and positive community demand management.
Teachers & Headteacher (Kiwambo Primary School)	**N=4** 3 Teachers, 1 Headteacher	Documents pedagogical adoption of JALP level grouping, tactile game tools, non-punitive culture, truancy reduction (80% to 30%), and morning class cross-application.
Enrolled Students / Learners (Kiwambo Primary School)	**N=3**	Explores joyful game-based learning, psychological safety, 'at home' freedom and play imagery, teacher approachability, and peer collaboration in ability-matched small groups.
Parents & Community Members (Kiwambo Village)	**N=4**	Verifies visible home academic progress, exercise book markings, truancy elimination, Kikombe cha Ndoto school meal financing, and advocacy against agricultural dropout.



4. QUALITATIVE EVALUATION FINDINGS AND STAKEHOLDER EVIDENCE ANALYSIS

This section presents the detailed qualitative evaluation findings synthesized across the five stakeholder groups (N = 13). In accordance with qualitative research standards, authentic stakeholder quotes are embedded extensively to provide empirical grounding, with non-English translations polished for rhetorical eloquence, while preserving verbatim fidelity.

4.1 DISTRICT ACADEMIC OFFICER

Administrative & Policy Level

N = 1

At the administrative level, the district academic officer (DAO) confirmed that the Jifunze model aligns seamlessly with national basic education directives, specifically operationalizing presidential mandates regarding foundational 3Rs proficiency (i.e., Kusoma, Kuandika, na Kuhesabu). The DAO emphasized that long-term sustainability hinges upon institutionalizing JALP methodologies directly into existing local government frameworks rather than maintaining parallel external structures.

> **ALIGNMENT WITH NATIONAL 3RS MANDATE**
>
> *It aligns well because it is a national plan that all the children should achieve the 3Rs. In February this year the President reiterated the emphasis of the 3Rs at all levels—from National to county levels. Jifunze aligns well with government education entities. Thankfully, with the help of Uwezo the effort to help learners achieve the goal of the 3Rs is greatly achieved.*

Regarding institutional sustainability, the DAO highlighted the government's existing MEWAKA (In-Service Teacher Professional Development) ward-level resource framework as the potential vehicle for scaling JALP methodologies without establishing redundant systems.

> **MEWAKA WARD-LEVEL INSTITUTIONALIZATION**
>
> *The structure we have is called Mewaka—(in-service professional Dev)—teacher resource center whereby teachers meet around the Ward to share knowledge skills. Meet every Thursday—once in a week. Teachers who participated in Jifunze will share their experiences with other teachers who did not have the opportunity, thereby cascading the impact of their Jifunze experience. Head teachers are going to be providing meal and transport allowance from school service budgets to allow their teachers to participate in Mewaka.*

Furthermore, to ensure monitoring continues beyond Uwezo's direct technical facilitation, DAOs are considering taking active steps to embed JALP indicators into official government SQAM inspection tools:

> **SQAM INSPECTION TOOL ADAPTATION**
>
> *Educational officers are responsible for monitoring and follow up to schools to ensure the Jifunze model. A tool is currently used during these monitoring visits; however, it will be modified to include some Jifunze-specific items after Uwezo exits. This will ensure that evaluation and integration of Jifunze is not left to chance.*

> **DATA UTILIZATION & TRACKING OUT-OF-SCHOOL LEARNERS**
>
> *Yes, data is used. For example, use baseline data to identify out-of-school children and track their progress once they are in school. Track the performance of kids doing the 3Rs and absenteeism... Track children who are supposed to be in school and have dropped out.*

4.2 UWEZO PROGRAM MANAGER

Operational & Implementation Level

N = 1

The Uwezo program manager, a Uwezo staff member, provided operational data on JALP implementation fidelity, multi-tiered supervisory structures, cost metrics, and national policy influence. Program management established that Jifunze achieves accelerated 3Rs remediation at an economical unit cost of $13 USD per child. The manager articulated the overarching vision driving the intervention:

> *Our core vision is to guarantee that every child in society receives a genuine opportunity to learn to their full potential—creating an inclusive educational sanctuary where all children, regardless of baseline skill or socio-economic background, can elevate their foundational learning and life potential.*
>
> — UWEZO PROGRAM MANAGER

The Uwezo program manager provided crucial technical insights into implementation fidelity as maintained through a coordinated three-tiered supervisory framework comprising:

- **Primary school headteachers** who are provided with targeted operational training to understand classroom JALP dynamics, serving as immediate, daily on-site monitors to ensure instructional quality as they conduct daily classroom checks and track attendance.
- **District quality assurance officers** who observe Jifunze classes during routine visits as they integrate Jifunze class observations into their routine school visits, obtaining secondary supervisory feedback directly from headteachers.
- **Uwezo technical staff** who oversee teacher training, baseline assessments, household mapping, and digital data synchronization via KoboCollect and SurveyCTO platforms.

Reframing a key operational observation regarding high classroom turnout, the program manager highlighted that the immense popularity of JALP game-based activities attracted non-enrolled children who voluntarily attended Jifunze classes to participate in joyful learning. Rather than representing an operational defect, Uwezo technical staff viewed this high turnout as compelling proof of organic community demand, providing onsite coaching to help teachers manage large groups while strictly maintaining small-group JALP model fidelity:

> *Our field technical monitoring revealed an extraordinary level of community enthusiasm. The activity-based, joyful nature of Jifunze classes was so compelling that neighborhood children not formally enrolled in the program voluntarily came to school to join the learning activities. Our technical staff worked directly alongside classroom teachers to establish group management strategies, ensuring that this overwhelming enthusiasm was channeled constructively while safeguarding the integrity of small-group, level-based instruction.*
>
> — UWEZO PROGRAM MANAGER

Additionally, teacher-led household baseline mapping proved instrumental in identifying marginalized and out-of-school children, directly re-enrolling them into primary education:

> *Conducting systematic household visits led directly to the discovery of children who were entirely out of school... For example, in our focal communities, teachers identified 5 out-of-school learners among 91 mapped households and successfully transitioned them into formal primary schooling.*
>
> — UWEZO PROGRAM MANAGER

4.3 TEACHERS & PRIMARY SCHOOL HEADTEACHER

Instructional Level — Kiwambo Primary School

N = 4

At Kiwambo Primary School, educators documented a profound pedagogical transition from rigid, syllabus-driven lecturing to adaptive, level-based grouping. Teachers contrasted legacy instruction with JALP's community-centered philosophy, emphasizing that JALP transformed their professional identity and classroom relationships.

> *Traditionally, teaching meant strictly following the syllabus line-by-line, regardless of whether pupils understood. In contrast, JALP resolves foundational 3Rs gaps in direct collaboration with the community—targeting both in-school struggling learners and out-of-school children simultaneously in an inclusive environment.*
>
> — KIWAMBO PRIMARY TEACHER

To eliminate social stigma associated with remedial grouping, educators gave students agency in naming their ability groups:

> *Children were given full agency in selecting creative names for their learning groups so that they would never feel stigmatized or stereotyped. Through our seminar training, we realized that when children learn through play, they absorb complex concepts effortlessly without instruction feeling forced or didactic.*
>
> — KIWAMBO PRIMARY TEACHER

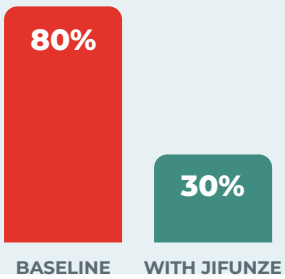
Replacing corporal punishment with positive encouragement revolutionized classroom dynamics, creating psychological safety:

> *The strict policy of 'no punishment, only encouragement' made children remarkably forthcoming, eager to participate, and persistent. Encouragement meant pupils could take academic risks without fear of being reprimanded. When a child gave an incorrect answer, we used 'good try' feedback. We also awarded paper crowns to winning teams, which inspired immense pride.*
>
> — KIWAMBO PRIMARY TEACHER

This non-punitive climate fostered relational shifts and community recognition, transforming perceptions of educators. As one teacher reflected:

> *When we walk through Kiwambo Village, parents comfortably approach us to inquire about their children's progress. Parents openly observe: 'These days you are no longer beating our children; you are truly teaching them.' Pupils even run to approach us during breaks to remind us to conduct our Jifunze class.*
>
> — KIWAMBO PRIMARY TEACHER

The headteacher at Kiwambo Primary School reported a dramatic reduction in chronic student truancy, "We used to suffer from severe, widespread truancy across grades. Since introducing Jifunze classes, chronic absenteeism has collapsed—dropping from baseline levels as high as 80 percent down to 30 percent."



50-point drop

Chronic truancy at Kiwambo Primary School, as reported by the headteacher, before and after the introduction of Jifunze classes.

Furthermore, teachers actively cross-apply JALP techniques into regular timetabled classes across Standards 3, 4, 5, and 7. One Kiwambo primary teacher shared, "Multiplication tables are no longer taught in robotic, intimidating ways. Pupils previously perceived learning English and Mathematics to be impossibly difficult, but applying JALP game techniques makes concepts transparent and fun—they learn with ease."

4.4 ENROLLED STUDENTS & LEARNERS

Target Beneficiaries — Kiwambo Primary School

N = 3

Interviews with primary students at Kiwambo Primary School revealed a profound emotional and cognitive transformation. Children described Jifunze classes as an environment of total joy, psychological safety, and home-like freedom. This shows that joyful, play-based, small-group instruction effectively dismantled the traditional, non-playful imagery children hold of formal school as an intimidating space. Students explicitly articulated that in Jifunze classes, they felt as if they were at home where they play and feel free rather than at school:

> *Participating in Jifunze classes feels as if I am at home because of the total sense of freedom and joy. In regular class, school feels strict, but here we play gymnastic games, sort number cards, and sing multiplication songs. It does not feel like school—it feels like home where I am free to play and learn without fear.*
>
> — STANDARD 4 STUDENT, KIWAMBO PRIMARY SCHOOL

Additional examples of joyful learning modalities were shared:

> *Playing games—gymnastic games, rocking cards games... feel like when I am out of school doing joyful things.*
>
> STANDARD 4 STUDENT

> *Through games and playing through songs... simple techniques of multiplying numbers in ways that I did not learn before... forming words through cards, songs of crossline.*
>
> STANDARD 6 STUDENT

> *Singing songs, reading songs, competition through the gymnastic games... multiplication strategy by using lines, I now know how to get multiplication answers through that strategy.*
>
> STANDARD 3 STUDENT

Psychological safety and deep emotional proximity, as well as teacher approachability between pupils and teachers, was reported:

> *I feel so much closer to our teachers now—both physically and emotionally. I can [go] directly to the teacher anytime I get stuck to ask for help. The participatory games make the teachers so approachable because they join in playing the games with us. Knowing that there is not going to be punishment gives me a sense of freedom to try my best.*
>
> — STANDARD 6 STUDENT, KIWAMBO PRIMARY SCHOOL

Students also celebrated novel mathematical strategies (e.g., crossline multiplication songs, and peer collaboration) in small groups:

> *Learning multiplication through line songs made mathematics so easy. In our small groups, my peers helped me sound out complex syllables and combine consonants. I feel completely free to share ideas with my group, and if we encounter a hard problem together, we comfortably call the teacher.*
>
> — STANDARD 3 STUDENT, KIWAMBO PRIMARY SCHOOL

4.5 PARENTS & COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS

Community Level — Kiwambo Village

N = 4

Parents in Kiwambo Village verified dramatic academic and behavioral growth through daily home observations:

> *My child could not count or read at all previously, but now when presented with numbers or Swahili books, they read fluently and write correctly. I used to see page after page of red marks in their exercise book, but now there are none. My child is so proud of their positive markings that they eagerly run home to show me.*
>
> — PARENT, KIWAMBO VILLAGE

Parents noted that chronic truancy was replaced by personal pride and self-care:

> *Previously, my child would wander the streets and skip school even after leaving home in uniform. Now, truancy is completely gone. My child wakes up early on their own, showers, washes their uniform, and insists on going to school clean and ready to learn.*
>
> — PARENT, KIWAMBO VILLAGE

An unexpected social benefit emerged, as children applied reading skills at home that enhanced family communication. A parent from Kiwambo Village shared, "It has even improved our family dialogue! I now know that my child can read text messages on my mobile phone and read them aloud to his mother who cannot read, which has brought great joy to our household."

Recognizing that hunger hinders learning, parents actively financed school meals (e.g., Kikombe cha Ndoto). One parent from Kiwambo Village noted, "We contributed our own money so that a community cook could prepare warm meals at school. Because we saw real academic success, we happily made the financial contribution to ensure our children never study on an empty stomach."

Direct teacher outreach also persuaded parents to resist pulling children out of school for agricultural labor:

> *Open communication with the teacher persuaded me not to withdraw my child for farm labor. Transitioning to secondary school brings immense hope—knowing my child will not end in primary school but go higher gives me great pride as a parent.*
>
> — PARENT, KIWAMBO VILLAGE

5. PROGRAM LIMITATIONS: METHODOLOGICAL AND STRATEGIC OPERATIONAL BOTTLENECKS

To ensure comprehensive evaluation standards, the findings of this evaluation report must be interpreted alongside explicit operational and methodological limitations:

- **Institutional Boundary Limitations.** The qualitative evaluation sample did not include direct policy-level stakeholders or curriculum developers from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) or the Tanzania Institute of Education (TIE). While district academic officers provided local administrative insights, this study did not include direct perspectives from national curriculum architects.
- **Inherent Case Study Limitations.** As a single-site qualitative case study focused on the Kiwambo Primary School in the Mkuranga District, the findings provide rich, highly contextualized operational insights.

Despite overwhelming empirical success, three strategic operational bottlenecks must be addressed to safeguard long-term model sustainability:

HEADTEACHER OPERATIONAL TRAINING GAPS

While primary headteachers conduct routine monitoring, interviews revealed that some headteachers lacked deep operational understanding of JALP instructional mechanics. Headteachers need comprehensive operational training to align supervisory capacity with trained classroom teachers.

RURAL CELLULAR NETWORK INSTABILITY

In remote rural wards, cellular network instability occasionally disrupted real-time digital attendance and progress data synchronization via KoboCollect and SurveyCTO platforms.

MANAGING HIGH VOLUNTARY ATTENDANCE

The extreme popularity of activity-based Jifunze classes attracted non-enrolled pupils, requiring ongoing teacher coaching to maintain optimal small-group ratios without excluding interested neighborhood children.



6. STRATEGIC POLICY BRIEF AND SYSTEMIC ACTION PLAN (PO-RALG & MOEST)

To institutionalize and scale the Jifunze model nationwide, PO-RALG and MoEST should execute five strategic policy recommendations:

1 **Institutionalize JALP within Weekly MEWAKA Sessions**

Formally mandate that weekly Thursday MEWAKA ward-level resource center meetings incorporate JALP peer coaching, supported by minor capitation grant allocations for teacher travel.

2 **Embed JALP Rubrics into National SQAM Inspection Tools**

Modify official government SQAM checklists to evaluate diagnostic level grouping, game-based tool usage, and non-punitive classroom culture.

3 **Execute Mandatory Operational Training for Headteachers**

Conduct mandatory two-day operational leadership training on JALP workshops for all primary school head-teachers to strengthen onsite supervisory oversight.

4 **Enforce Child-Friendly Classroom Standards**

Issue national guidelines enforcing positive reinforcement/encouragement ("good try" feedback) and prohibiting corporal punishment during foundational remediation.

5 **Scale Community-Led School Feeding Models (Kikombe cha Ndoto)**

Support community-matched funding models for school meals by partnering with village government committees to ensure nutritional support during intensive Jifunze learning classes.

Table 3 shares an implementation roadmap organized in three phases.

TABLE 3. PHASED SYSTEMIC IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP

Phase 1: Alignment Months 1–6	Phase 2: Cascading Months 6–18	Phase 3: Scale-Up Months 18–36
CORE POLICY DELIVERABLES • Update SQAM inspection tools with JALP items. • Execute headteacher operational workshops. • Issue PO-RALG remedial time directives.	**CORE POLICY DELIVERABLES** • Launch Thursday MEWAKA peer coaching. • Allocate LGA capitation grants for teacher travel. • Mandate digital data sync via KoboCollect.	**CORE POLICY DELIVERABLES** • Integrate JALP into pre-service teacher colleges. • Embed diagnostic tools into national 3Rs pacing guides.
TARGET INSTITUTIONAL OUTCOMES • Operational SQAM rubrics deployed across six pilot districts. • 100% headteachers trained in daily JALP oversight.	**TARGET INSTITUTIONAL OUTCOMES** • JALP methods cascading across all rural wards. • Real-time digital progress tracking at district level.	**TARGET INSTITUTIONAL OUTCOMES** • Systemic institutionalization of TaRL/JALP nationwide. • Permanent reduction in early grade 3Rs failure rates.

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APPENDIX A: STAKEHOLDER QUALITATIVE EVALUATION PROTOCOLS

To support future evaluative field deployments across expanded samples, the following semi-structured qualitative interview protocols evaluate the design, process, impact, and sustainability of the Jifunze model.

1 Teachers & School Heads

- **Pedagogical Adoption & Relevance:** How easily were you able to shift from age/grade-based instruction to Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) level-based grouping during Jifunze sessions?
- **Training & Tools:** How adequate was the Uwezo Jifunze training in preparing you to use game-based, experiential learning tools for foundational literacy and numeracy?
- **Classroom Impact:** What shifts have you observed in student confidence, participation, and attendance since introducing Jifunze methods?
- **Integration:** To what extent do you continue applying Jifunze techniques during regular, non-remedial primary school timetable hours?

2 Community Volunteers & Youth Facilitators

- **Assessment & Grouping:** How clear and manageable were the baseline and periodic assessment tools used to group children by learning level?
- **Community Learning Spaces:** What operational or social challenges did you face when setting up Jifunze learning camps under the My Village (Kijiji Changu) initiative?
- **Support & Mentorship:** Did you receive timely refresher training and monitoring support from Uwezo field teams during the 30–60-day learning cycles?
- **Inclusion of Out-of-School Children:** How effective were outreach efforts in identifying, enrolling, and retaining out-of-school children in Jifunze classes?

3 Parents, Guardians & School Management Committees (SMCs / PTAs)

- **Perceived Progress:** What specific changes have you noticed in your child's ability to read, write, and do math at home since participating in Jifunze?
- **Community Ownership:** How active was parental participation in supporting school feeding (e.g., Kikombe cha Ndoto) or monitoring attendance during the program?
- **Value & Satisfaction:** How well did the program communicate your child's learning level and progress to you? Would you advocate for Jifunze to continue in your village?

4 District & Ward Education Officers (DEOs / WEOs / LGAs)

- **Alignment with Local Policies:** How well does Jifunze align with national 3Rs education goals and Local Government Authority (LGA) development plans?
- **Scalability & Resource Allocation:** What structural or financial resources would be required for the LGA to sustain or scale Jifunze across additional wards and schools?
- **Monitoring & Data Utilization:** How effectively is Jifunze assessment data integrated into district-level education monitoring and reporting?
- What is your readiness to scale with your own governmental resources—that means after Uwezo's intervention.

5 Participating Students / Learners

- **Learning Experience:** What activities or games in Jifunze classes helped you understand reading or math the most?
- **Confidence & Motivation:** How do you feel about speaking up or reading out loud in class now compared to before joining Jifunze?
- **Peer Collaboration:** How did working in small groups with classmates at your same reading/math level help you learn?

6 Uwezo Program Managers & Implementing Partners

- **Fidelity of Implementation:** Were the 30–60 day learning camp cycles delivered with high fidelity to the core TaRL principles across all target districts?
- **Cost-Efficiency & Reach:** What was the cost-per-child achieved, and how effectively were marginalized or out-of-school learners reached?
- **Policy & Advocacy Impact:** To what extent has evidence from Jifunze influenced national policy guidelines regarding parent empowerment or foundational learning remediation?



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