

## Transforming Education Systems and Learning Outcomes

Research on Improving Systems of Education (RISE) is aimed at conducting high-quality research to build evidence to enhance children's learning levels throughout the world. RISE aims to gather and interpret data that will lead to education reform and improve learning outcomes on a global level by:

1. commissioning high-quality research on education systems and systems reform that responds to locally-identified challenges;
2. engaging with researchers and practitioners to develop an analytic framework to understand how education systems function; and
3. ensuring that researchers, teachers, policymakers and other education practitioners have access to the most relevant, up-to-date research on the impact of education systems on learning for all.



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### Background

Over the past twenty-five years, the net share of children enrolled in school has jumped to roughly 90 percent. Yet despite the growth of enrolment, the world faces a learning crisis. The 2014 UNESCO Global Monitoring Report stated that 250 million children are unable to read, write, or do basic mathematics, and 130 million of those children are in school. Many students - even those who have been in school for years - lack a solid foundation in the skills they need to be successful adults in their local, national, and global communities.

It is "education," not sitting in a school, that is included in the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights. Many elements have to fit together coherently to produce learning: ministries, teachers, school financing, management and more. The tragic fact is, if one wants to find uneducated children today, the vast majority can be found in schools.

### Why education systems research?

The RISE programme aims to understand how school systems in the developing world can overcome the learning crisis. RISE intends research to go beyond the proximate causes of test score performance to the underlying ingredients of both well-functioning and poorly-functioning systems. Education systems include policies, institutions, and educators, in both public and private sectors, that must work together if they are to ensure children leave schools with the skills they need to participate in society and the economy.

RISE seeks to gain understanding of what features make particular systems coherent and effective in their contexts, and how the complex dynamics within a system allow a policy to be successful.

## Country Research Teams

### Ethiopia

The team will examine the government's flagship education programme, the General Education Quality Improvement Package (GEQIP), a complex and evolving series of reforms intended to facilitate sustainable improvements in learning. The aim is to understand the nature of the political levers that brought about change, the ingredients of sustainability, and the effectiveness of the reform.

### India

RISE will conduct research intended to find ways to improve student achievement in India, where low and unequal learning outcomes have persisted despite a near tripling in public expenditures on education. The team will aim to achieve greater understanding as to why reforms work or fail, and how they can inform policy globally. The reforms' sheer scale offers researchers potential insight into how policy tools can be wielded in enormous and complex education systems.

### Indonesia

The team will investigate how national and district governments support and learn from each other in the implementation of policy towards teachers and national exams in order to improve students' education levels. Additionally, the project will also analyse nationwide reforms that aim to raise teacher quality in the hopes of enhancing students' learning.



### Pakistan

RISE will seek to understand and harness market forces to improve education in Pakistan. Key questions include: What market forces are hampering learning outcomes? What lessons can educators learn from low-cost private schools? Can reforms leverage the interests, incentives and interactions between all stakeholders to achieve educational excellence?

### Tanzania

RISE will examine system-level reforms in Tanzania that include school rankings, annual incentives for schools and teachers, teacher training, and financial/management training for principals (headteachers). The team hopes to understand what made the reforms possible, and how they can be sustained; whether and how the reforms improve student skills; and what insights can inform students' learning elsewhere.

### Vietnam

A systematic evaluation of Vietnam's education system will be carried out by analysing the status and impacts of past, current, and upcoming educational reforms. The aim is to understand how Vietnam's exceptional achievements were possible, and whether new reforms are able to build on the previous success.

## Further information

RISE is managed and implemented through a partnership based in Oxford, UK, between leading international development consultancy Oxford Policy Management and the Blavatnik School of Government at the University of Oxford. Research is led by Professor Lant Pritchett and a team at the Center for Global Development, a non-profit think-tank based in Washington, DC. An Intellectual Leadership Team comprised of world-renowned scholars provides thought leadership and research advice to the programme.

RISE is supported by GBP 29.4 million in funding from the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID), which has dedicated GBP 22.4 million for research in up to five countries, and GBP 7 million to support expert advice and management; and the Australian Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), whose commitment of AUD 9.85 million has allowed RISE to incorporate a sixth country.

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