

# GLOBAL EDUCATION 'SMART BUYS': DEBATING THE EVIDENCE - 'Global' Evidence

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## **Name one example of where a government has used evidence for policy/program reform**

### **Girls' Education Challenge**

There is much evidence here of what works and which elements governments are adopting e.g. Mother Groups in Ethiopia and CBE curriculum reform in Malawi. Both these interventions are by Link Education, but other GEC programmes will have similar examples of success.

Inclusive Education in Uganda  
Ministry behind developing a CPD package on Inclusive Education with Sightsavers, trialled and then scaled up, based on previous research evidence over 5 years

### **CtC Getting Ready for School**

In Ethiopia, one region carried out a comparative assessment of early childhood education approaches - impact and cost, and various other regions adopted a low-cost community-based approach which also became a pillar in the Education Policy document 2020. The role of large agencies was interesting.

**My understanding is that a DFID-supported pilot project in Kenya, to reform textbook policy, was effective in improving supply through decentralising supply and ordering and was scaled up with some success in the 000s.**

### **Sierra Leone's Education Innovation Challenge & Scholarships for Girls Secondary School Enrolment**

**could we apply this question to high income countries as well as low- middle income counties...**

*Yes - you can also mention examples from high-income countries - as background. - ANONYMOUS*

### **Twaweza**

in Kenya the work of coalitions and influencing NGOs like Twaweza have used evidence very effectively to effect change

**Establishment of national network of inclusive schools for children with disabilities in Cameroon due to successful pilot in five schools.**

**Evidence on learning outcomes improvement in Ogun state provided by Teach for Nigeria, resulting in changes to teacher training, community engagement and pedagogy changes**

### **South African Department of Education**

They do a fantastic job of first finding research questions worth studying and then answering them using country and provincial specific evidence, with an eye towards scale-up if and when the interventions work.

### **Capacity of government in LIC Education Ministry**

The capacity of officials in Ministry of education is generally weak to understand complex tools like Best buys. They will be reliant on consultants and may not make the right decision. How

to overcome this?  
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## Literacy in South Africa

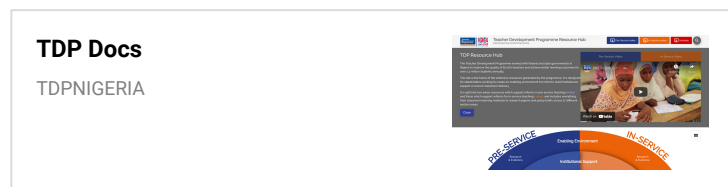
A study which showed that almost 80% of South African children can't read for meaning at Grade 4 level started a national push for literacy programmes in primary schools. Particularly mobile, highly accessible programmes. It also highlighted the problems of \*why\* these learners can't read for meaning. SA, like many African countries uses primarily English as the language of teaching and learning but majority of the learners speak another language. This showed researchers that in fact, language is one of the very important factors to look at when assessing learners' capabilities, particularly in SA.

## Several countries in sub-Saharan Africa and South Africa have seen substantial (remarkable) improvements in learning outcomes in literacy and numeracy programs.

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### Teacher reforms

In Nigeria, various States used evidence to make policy and practice changes around teacher recruitment and teacher development - utilising political will for change.



### MoE in S Sudan - aiming to de-centralise edu system in S Sudan

Michael

UK 1997-2010!

## What innovative ways have you used to share evidence with governments and for which programs?

### National Education Standards, Malawi

Link Education was asked by MoEST to develop Malawi's first education standards resulting in 26 indicators that measure quality education. This came about from a long standing partnership with DIAS where they were regularly invited to see the impact of our work first hand at District meetings and by visiting schools. Impact was also shared within school and district education improvement plans that used data to evidence need.

#### Malawi - Link

Key facts Link has been working to strengthen education systems in Malawi since 2006. In 2015, we partnered with Malawi's government to develop the first ever National Education Standards - a set of minimum requirements for teaching, learning, school leadership, community participation and child protection which every school in the country must meet.

LINK



### Funding pilots and sharing results

Co-designing and funding pilots to both use and contribute to the evidence base on issues that have arisen as a result of decisions made during the pandemic e.g. how to effectively use free platforms adopted by MoEs (like Google Workspace for Education) in teaching and learning, and helping MoEs to share the results as widely as possible.

### Organisations of people with disabilities are the most effective agencies for advocating for increased, targeted investment in the education of children with disabilities - for instance, FEDOMA persuaded the Ministry of Gender to incorporate disability inclusive perspectives in the Early Learning Standards and the pre-service training for caregivers in pre-schools.

### Engaging policy makers and CSOs in developing approaches to improving inclusion/ SEND provision

British Council and partners has brought together policy makers and other actors from four SSA countries, plus UK academics and practitioners. The discussions between the countries, combined with the input of relevant evidence, led to a rich, open and action-oriented discussion over three days (with follow-up in the months afterwards) Programme name: Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning

### CBE programme in Malawi

2004/2005 CBE pilot with detailed M&E directly fed into government policy, resulting in uptake and rolling out of CBE programme under MOE with, crucially, a budget line.

## **CAMFED**

CAMFED operates a programme which is holistic, focusing on access and learning as well as equity issues, supporting the most marginalised as well as other marginalised girls and boys in Tanzania, Zimbabwe, among other countries.

## **Using the delivery approach to use evidence to track progress and identify bottlenecks**

combined with deep dives to understand more about the context of what is and isn't working and why. SESIL Uganda.

## **OCHAR report on children in Nepal**

Carried out by children with children (the leader was a 17-year-old girl) > The voices and insights of children are needed.

## **ongoing engagement - but from a variety of angles. Through formal groups, informal conversations, social-media, presentations from students etc. Drip, drip, drip..**

Bringing TaRL-type intervention to 2 different indigenous groups, but contextualising assessments and activities to their culture and context. Case of test-adapt and hopefully generate evidence (philippines)

## **CBE Ghana**

This programme is well known to the Government of Ghana thanks to the outstanding work led by Professor Akyeampong

## **Involving ministry staff in the initial research design so that they are contributing partners throughout and ensure that the research is focussed on national and local needs....**

## **Small to medium scale interventions implemented in country using government officers and systems leads to country-specific implementation improvement.**

Not me, but UNICEF took parliamentarians to school sites in remote areas in Nepal to actually see (life evidence) the conditions and situation of children. I can't remember the date - maybe 2005

Proper dialogue and listening and respect for context are key - and sadly this shockingly distorted research based on pre-selected outcomes - will lead to very patronising and problematic dialogue with Ministries of Education

## **Michael El**

*Sorry that went off blank. Want to say: by taking senior people into primary schools not 10m from their plush offices and showing them reality. - ANONYMOUS*

*Children's radio programmes in Sierra Leone 2014 during Ebola. The children brought their own evidence to district government officials, especially on sexual abuse when schools were closed for a year. They were trained as young reporters and developed radio programmes. One aspect was asking district government officials about various aspects of their response. - ANONYMOUS*

## **What can be done to increase prominence of research/evidence by Southern researchers?**

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### **Fund organisations in the South**

Locally based NGOs are full of knowledgeable and inspiring people on the ground who know what works. Why not fund them to manage and expand research on programmes they are already implementing? And innovation is important, but there has to come a time when we properly fund and robustly evidence what we already know works. Longitudinal funding is critical for this.

10. In addition, we believe that **there are key messages to be learned from some of the research rated as low-to-moderate in quality in our review. Consideration might be given to trawling this body of work, in particular for examples of good practice which have been found acceptable by local communities and which therefore hold promise. More generally, there are many examples of local research which are valuable but not well documented and which therefore invite replication**

Nag S, Chiat S, Torgerson C, Snowling MJ (2014) Literacy, Foundation Learning and Assessment in Developing Countries: Final Report. Education Rigorous Literature Review. Department for International Development

## Access funds to support authors without publishing grants

### Cohort of young southern researchers

As a young southern researcher myself, I don't know where to start to publish, if I can publish my findings (am I knowledgeable enough to be taken seriously?). I would think that having a cohort of researchers, where young researchers can be mentored and thus publish their data and articles more will allow southern researchers to be more visible and allow the southern lens to provide context for global policy reform.

### Teacher led assessment

Teachers feel disempowered by evaluations "done to" them by external researchers, mostly Southern managed and funded. Therefore, more reliance on local teacher assessment would allow local researchers to get (a) more and (b) better quality data, faster. Would mirror behaviour in OECD countries.

*\* Sorry meant to write NORTHERN managed and funded  
— ANONYMOUS*

### Broad the evidence based

Do not reduce the use of evidence to one methodological approach. Yes, RCT are important, but should not dominate the field.

## Are there effective/innovative ways in which research/evidence can be transferred across contexts? Examples?

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ESSA could be replicated say, for Southeast Asia or South America to reflect evidence from Southern researchers. Then again, depends on whether the database of evidence could be considered a 'smart buy' in itself.



We should prioritise South-South research capacity and exchange -and be wary of paternalistic transfer of selective knowledge from the North that is coercively backed by aid money ,

### Use of local knowledges

It is still the case that the evidence based used for TARL was born out of Pratham and subsequent the PAL-Network. The PAL-Network has used local knowledge to adapt their actions and share best practice. Sharing of knowledge from the PAL Network goes beyond TARL as well.