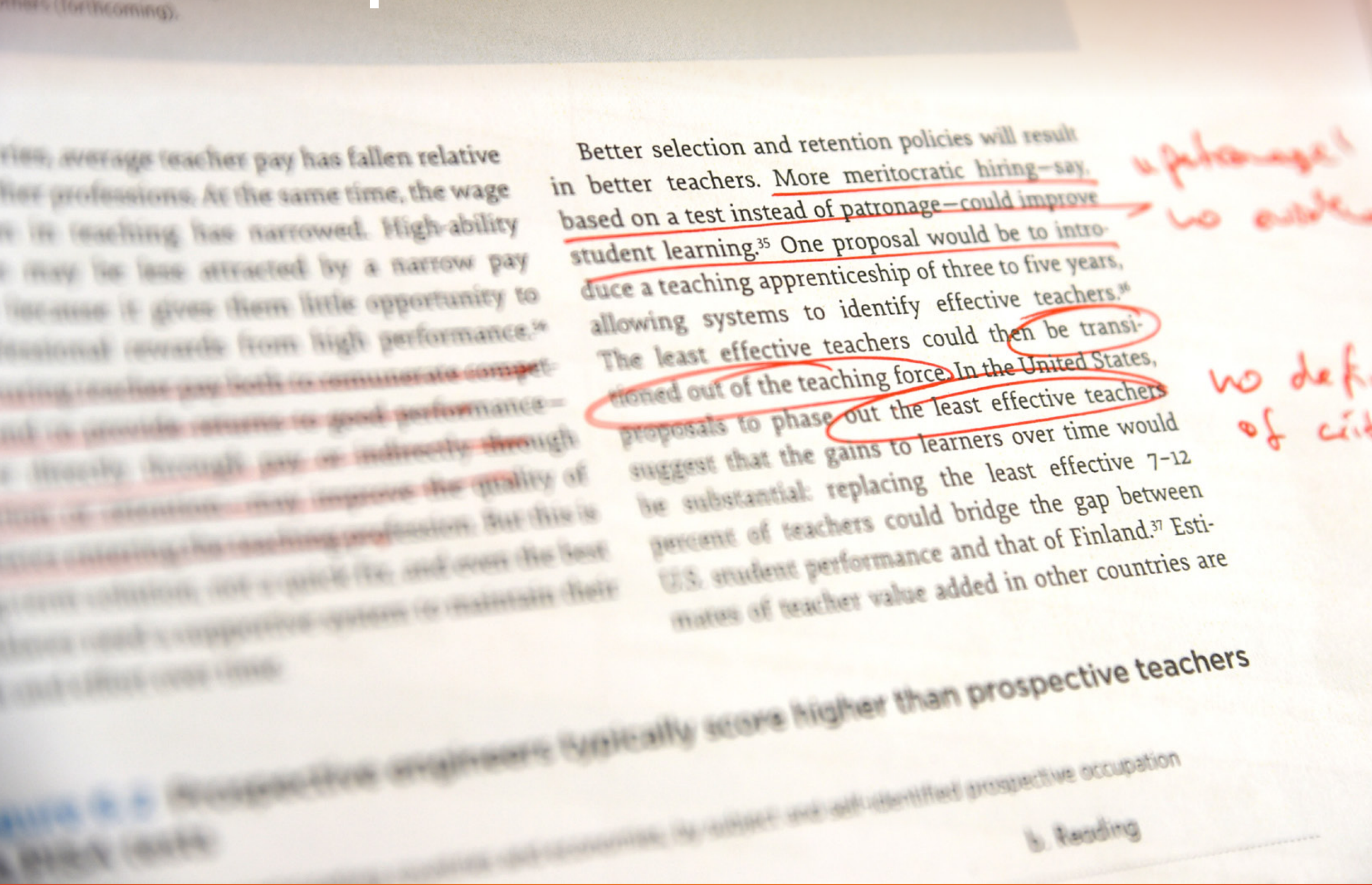
Education International

Reality Check:

The Bank's 2018 World Development Report on Education



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The Bank's 2018 World Development Report on Education

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Is the Bank ready to learn that realising education's promise requires listening to educators?

David Edwards

After 75 years of the Bank's involvement in education as the largest funder and technical advisor to education ministries, education is in crisis – perhaps it is time to question the credibility of the Bank's advice and its legitimacy to steer education policy. As an organisation originally founded to marshal resources for national development priorities, how relevant are the Bank's recommendations in today's world? Do these recommendations improve or exacerbate problems in education?

The World Bank's 2018 World Development Report on Education, Learning to Realise Education's Promise (WDR), concluded with three recommended strategies - assess learning, act on evidence and align actors. Over the past six months, Education International has brought together teacher union leaders, academics and activists in a series of blogs we called #WDR 2018 Reality Check, which unpacks and analyses the recommendations given in the report. Each blog provides a reflection on a certain aspect of the WDR from a perspective that was overlooked or unanalysed. EI has put all the blogs in the series into this publication, which together play a role in demonstrating the extent to which the WDR 2018 was a great missed opportunity.

The report's first key recommendation is that we must assess learning to make it a serious goal. However, as EI has repeatedly pointed out, assessment itself will not improve education. It is adequate investment and sustainable systemic change, alongside formative assessments at the classroom level, which are necessary to improve learning.

The Bank's blind belief in measurement is misplaced as test scores distort the educational process in undesirable ways. This is particularly clear in the case of South Korea; whilst the World Bank's president celebrates Korea's high test scores, the truth behind the scores is unhappy, overworked students and teachers, high student suicide rates, and high proportions of income spent on private tutoring.

The report's second recommendation is that we must act on evidence to make schools work for all learners. However, whose evidence? The evidence that is put forward in the WDR is cherrypicked, and often accompanied by oversimplified analysis, where tentative conclusions to research studies in specific, local, contexts are extrapolated to give generalised, global advice.

Furthermore, the Bank has a history of institutional inconsistency, 'organised hypocrisy' and doublespeak, which raises the question of whether the Bank itself is acting on evidence; there is a stark disjuncture between the Bank's policy advice in the WDR and their lending practices.

The report's third recommendation is that we must align actors to make the whole system work for learning. However, the Bank's notion of alignment appears to promote alignment of all actors around the Bank's agenda. The Bank has for years imposed policies on education ministers through loans tied to conditions, which undermine national sovereignty and democratic processes.

Numerous are the examples of the negative effects of the Bank's education projects in countries – and these are key when trying to understand what has gone wrong in the past. For instance, pressure on countries to reduce the number of students that repeat grades, has resulted in children moving through the system despite not meeting the standards. Another example is the IFC's funding of for-profit education providers undermines efforts to guarantee free equitable, inclusive quality public education, as promised through SDG 4.

Sustainably improving education systems requires that actors have a place at the table and that there is genuine dialogue about education reform. Most importantly, for any educational reform to be successful, teachers must participate in its development and implementation.

The Bank's lack of regard for social dialogue is well-established and perhaps this is where the Bank could stand to learn the most from other global organizations and their reports: the 2018 Global Education Monitoring Report on Accountability in Education and the OECD's Education at a Glance both speak of the importance of listening to teachers and their organizations, and institutionalizing social dialogue. This would require that the Bank revisit its driving assumption and consider that the insights of the people who teach students can be as valuable as those of the economists in Washington who do not.

The WDR is surprisingly quiet on how education will be financed. We would encourage the Bank to focus its energy and resources on helping bridge the gap in financing to meet Education 2030, and leave education policy to the education community. It is paramount that national governments take the lead in defining the priorities and policy interventions that are relevant for their national context, with the institutionalised involvement of teachers and education support personnel.

It is educators who can best use assessment formatively to improve learning. It is educators who can provide the context-specific evidence, that should inform policy reform, of what works and what does not work in the classroom setting. And it is, thus, educators who must have a place at the table to guide policy reform. Education's promise will not be achieved unless social dialogue is strengthened and expanded.

For this reason, Education International asks that on matters of education, the World Bank tries something new, takes a step back, and listens to the education community.

David Edwards,
General Secretary,
Education International

1. A Critical Analysis of the World Bank's World Development Report on Education

Steven Klees

The annual World Development Report (WDR) is the World Bank's flagship publication. In the 40 year history of the WDR, this is the first time its focus has been on education. Many commentators have welcomed this as needed in this time when education systems around the world face so many challenges. I am less sanguine.

While the report has some redeeming features, I see it as part of the Bank's long-term very narrow – even for economists -- view of education.

Despite its 216-page length, the WDR has a fairly simple message. Primarily, the message is that learning in developing countries is seen as in crisis with many statistics given on how so many students are learning so little in basic education. Hundreds of millions of students who have completed a number of years of primary school are illiterate; only 14% meet minimum learning standards in reading and less in mathematics. The sources of this crisis are examined and three solutions are proffered:

1. We need widespread assessments of student learning;
2. We need to act on the "explosion" of evidence regarding what works to improve learning: and
3. We need to remove technical and political barriers in order to align the whole education system towards improving learning.

Below I examine the problematic nature of the Bank's analysis along various educational dimensions.

Learning

One basic problem is that the Bank – and perhaps too much of the rest of the international community -- cannot keep two ideas in their head simultaneously. We have long cycled between attention to education access and equity, on the one hand, and quality and learning, on the other hand. Expanding access often leads to deterioration in quality, and attention to quality too often leads to ignoring access. Yet clearly, access and quality are intricately connected. Access to What? And Quality for Whom? are always the questions.

In its focus on the "learning crisis" the WDR gives short shrift to issues of access. While the 260 million children and youth who are out of school are mentioned briefly, there is no attention at all paid to what is needed to get them an education. And, of course, they are the worst victims of the learning crisis.

The WDR also gets low marks for its narrow focus on what is learning – basically on reading and math. While socioemotional skills are mentioned at various points, other than the repeated reference to problematic narrow blame-the-victim ideas of "grit" and "resilience," there is no attention to what this means for improving a broad idea of learning. Almost all the research they cite to decide "what works" to improve learning is based only on impact on reading and math. This narrow focus compounds the problematic results of attention to early grade reading and math over the last decade that has distorted primary school curricula to focus on what is tested. The massive assessment regime that the WDR recommends will continue that trend and result in the same distortion to tested subjects that we saw in the U.S. No Child Left Behind initiative whose measurement focus did nothing to improve test scores.

Teachers

While there were occasional sensible comments about teachers and teaching in the WDR, the overall tenor of the report is that unmotivated and unskilled teachers are one of the principal sources of the learning crisis. Teachers with too little training is definitely a worldwide problem. But that is a problem in which the Bank has been complicit. For decades, the Bank has criticized preservice and in-service teacher training as not cost-effective. For decades, the Bank has been pushing hiring untrained contract teachers as a cheap fix and a way to get around teacher unions – and contract teachers are again praised in the WDR. This is in contradiction to the places in the WDR where the Bank argues that developing countries need to follow the lead of the few countries that attract the best students to teaching, improve training, and improve working conditions.

There is no explicit evidence offered at all for the repeated claim that teachers are unmotivated and need to be controlled and monitored to do their job. The Bank has a long history of blaming teachers (Klees, 2012) and teacher unions for educational failures. The Bank implicitly argues that the problem of teacher absenteeism, referred to throughout the report, means teachers are unmotivated, but that simply is not true. As anyone knows who has worked extensively with teachers in developing countries, as I have, it is clear that, even under the very trying current circumstances, most teachers are very motivated to do the best for their students. This is true even if they must be absent at times in order to get paid or comply with bureaucratic needs – or even if they miss schools because they are working at other jobs to make ends meet. Teacher absenteeism is not a sign of low motivation. Teacher salaries are abysmally low, as is the status of teaching. Because of this, teaching in many countries has become an occupation of last resort, yet it still attracts dedicated teachers (see my recent study (Klees et al. 2017) with colleagues on teachers in four African countries). Once again, the Bank has been very complicit in this state of affairs as they and the IMF for decades have enforced neoliberal, Washington Consensus policies which resulted in government cutbacks and declining real salaries (Lambert, 2004) for teachers around the world. It is incredible that economists don't recognize that the deterioration of salaries is the major cause of teacher absenteeism and that all they are willing to peddle is ineffective and insulting pay-for-performance schemes.

Finance

The biggest problem with this WDR is the lack of any serious attention to whether and how to finance meeting the learning crisis and other education challenges. Only a half a page of the regular text of the report is devoted to finance, supplemented by one of their 5-page spotlights at the end. I find the tenor of their treatment of finance unconscionable and let me explain why. The title of the spotlight embodies its problematic nature: "Spending more or spending better -- or both?" Spending more gets short shrift – "maybe, sometimes" is their answer, emphasizing that more money (in the research they choose to cite) doesn't lead to more learning (vs., e.g., a recent study (Vegas & Coffin, 2015) of spending and PISA scores). This is an even weaker approach than the tenor of Bank reports for many decades in which they devote a line or two saying that "yes, more money is needed," "but" then spend the rest of the report giving their narrow views of what more efficient spending would mean.

This approach to finance contradicts the most sensible parts of the WDR which lay out all the many very expensive things that have to be done to solve the learning crisis, providing: much better prenatal and postnatal care; tackling widespread stunting and malnutrition; home visits and caregiver programs to support parents of 0 to 3-year olds; daycare centers for the very young followed by three years of quality preschool; making available libraries and recreation centers; eliminating chemically toxic and physically dangerous environments; attracting the best students into teaching; improving preservice and in-service training;

using technologies that complement teachers skills; improving school management; lower school fees and costs; providing cash transfers and psychosocial support; remedial and dropout prevention programs for at-risk youth; and more!

Yet nowhere do they say that implementing this very impressive agenda will be very expensive. Nor do they mention the costs of getting the 260 million children and youth out of school back in school. Nor do they mention decades of UNESCO studies that show that we are facing a vast shortfall in the international assistance necessary to improve the access to and quality of primary and secondary school in developing countries – to the tune of $40 billion per year – 80 times what the Global Partnership for Education has managed to cajole from donors. This is a bank full of economists, finance should be front and center, not forever buried in some "yes, but" asides!

Other Problems

Space limitations preclude me from doing more than mentioning some of the many other significant problems with this report: once again, barely recognizing the right to education instead of elaborating how it could use the 4As approach to frame attention to the learning crisis; a half-hearted brief mention of Sen's capabilities approach (Sen, 1999) whereas serious consideration would lead to a much broader view of learning issues; a very narrow view of what constitutes evidence, privileging problematic RCTs, and essentially treating one study on one topic in one country as universally valid; offering advice on a very narrow view of what good management means from an institution that has been a management morass for decades; promoting a view of higher education that says primary and secondary education are the priority investments, continuing its decades-long relegating of developing countries to compete based on lower-wage labor; a naïve and unrealistic view of politics and political barriers to some distorted view of the need for complete system alignment behind the one (narrow) goal of learning; and the lack of recognition that the two developing country outliers exhibiting very high achievement test scores – Vietnam (mentioned repeatedly) and Cuba (never mentioned) – are outliers because of socialist egalitarian policies.

Conclusions

In its discussion of political barriers, the Bank argues:

> Vested interests are not confined to private or rent-seeking interests. Actors in education systems are often driven by their values or ideology....[190]

Including the Bank! The World Bank prides itself on being evidence- and research-based, but it is not. Its premises and conclusions are based on ideology, not evidence. The Bank selects and interprets the research that fits with its ideology. In this sense, it resembles conservative ideological institutions like the Cato Institute or the Heritage Foundation. However, it differs in two important ways. First, everyone realizes Cato and Heritage are partisan. The Bank, on the other hand, makes a pretense of objectivity and inclusiveness. Second, Cato and Heritage are private institutions with limited influence. The Bank is a public institution (a monopoly at that), financed by taxes, which gives grants, loans, and advice around the world, yielding a vast global influence.[1]

The ideology of the Bank is neoliberalism, a term Bank economists barely acknowledge. In the 1960s and 1970s, liberal education economists at the Bank, like Jean-Pierre Jallade, routinely recommended substantial investments in education access and quality financed by progressive taxes. Without any basis in evidence and with specious reasoning, the Bank, along with the IMF, imbibed and spread so-called Washington Consensus policies for the next four decades through SAPs and their poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSP) successors, delegitimizing government and starving the public sector of resources.

Of course there is a learning crisis. The world is replete with crises of education, health, poverty, development, environment, war, and more. How the Bank and other neoliberal institutions frame these crises, cast blame, and proffer solutions, as we have seen here, reflects their ideology. In education, the WDR privileges a narrow view of learning, separates it from attention to access, blames teachers, and, unbelievably, does worse than ignore finance –

1 The Bank (and other aid agencies) like to say that policies are always country-driven and country-owned. This is belied by decades of imposing conditionalities that, for example, forced countries to cut taxes and social services or by a 1200-page manual to "guide" countries in developing PRSPs.

actually questions whether more resources are needed.

We need to challenge the legitimacy of the Bank – and the IMF. A few decades ago, there was a strong "50 years is enough" campaign that did so. We need to revisit that campaign. We are coming up to the 75th anniversary of their founding in 2019. The Bank and the Fund are undemocratic, technocratic, neoliberal institutions unfit for the necessities of today's world. It is high time for a new Bretton Woods conference to re-think and re-formulate the role and nature of these institutions.

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2. The World Bank's 2018 World Development Report: A Guide to Reading the Rhetoric

Francine Menashy

The 2018 World Development Report marks an important milestone—for the first time in 40 years the World Bank's dominant research publication is dedicated to education. In the context of declining bilateral aid to education, this thematic focus draws much-needed attention to the learning crisis. The Report moreover reflects some significant shifts in the organization's discourse. When in the past the World Bank has envisaged the benefits of education fairly heavily around human capital development, this Report frames education instead around the capability approach. It therefore views education through a broader lens, in terms of not merely economic benefits, but contributions to freedom, agency, and the capacity to make choices for one's own well-being. This is a welcome departure for the World Bank. The World Development Report moreover takes a refreshingly cautious approach to educational technology, in contrast to the widespread and somewhat unproblematic embrace of ICT for education as a panacea of sorts. In contrast to many other organizations, the World Bank notes that educational technology does not always align with student learning.

In many respects, therefore, the World Development Report makes a positive contribution to development narratives concerning education. However, this publication should be read with an understanding of the Bank's institutional history and its past work in education and other social sectors. Scholars from the fields of international relations and development studies have critiqued the World Bank for frequent disjunctures between what it says and what it does, often framed as "organized hypocrisy" (Weaver, 2008) — when an organization states one thing in its rhetoric and policies, while doing something else in practice. This critique of course is not unique to the World Bank; several international organizations (the UN, the WTO, as examples), have been cited for similar behavior (see Lipson, 2007; Hopewell, 2016). Researchers have shown how such disjunctures are reflected in the World Bank's work on anticorruption (Weaver, 2008), on environmental sustainability (Bosshard, 2004), and in education (Mundy & Menashy, 2012).

I suggest reading the World Development Report with an eye out for such disjunctures. For example, in the Report's discussion of learning assessments, there is mention of the need for participatory, local design and argues that contextually-driven assessments "developed with the collaboration of various stakeholders are more likely to be considered valid and relevant at local levels" (p.97). However, the World Bank has long been critiqued (Klees, 2002) for driving educational policy priorities within its recipient countries with only limited local participation. In light of this, it would be important to question if local voices—including not merely governments, but also civil society, teachers, teachers' unions, parents, and students—are being taken seriously through observing the Bank's on-the-ground practices.

The World Development Report also takes a very diplomatic approach to private schooling, which seems to reflect a cautious position on private engagement, noting the "many risks. Private schools may skim off the higher-income students who are easiest and most profitable to teach, leaving only the more disadvantaged students in the public system" (p.177). This position, however, contrasts with much of the Bank's other rhetoric on private sector participation in education, and also some of its recent activities. For example, its SABER (Systems Approach for Better Education Results) initiative includes a process for engaging the private sector, quite explicitly promoting increased private participation in education. As well, the Bank's private sector arm, the International Finance Corporation, and its support to low-cost private school chains, is in clear contrast to the World Development Report's caution that governments "should never contract out the responsibility for ensuring that all children and youth have the opportunity to learn" (p.178).

The World Development Report moreover includes some disjunctures within its own discourse, or what some have described as "doublespeak" (Fontdevila & Verger, 2015). For example, it appears to take seriously the fact that millions of children lack access to education, especially those who are marginalized—minorities, refugees, students with disabilities. Yet the authors concurrently argue that access should not be the focus of the international community's efforts on education: "Attention must now shift to ensuring learning for all" (p.64). Another disjuncture is clear in the Report's discourse on large-scale global assessments, stating in one instance that "*measurement of learning* is not shorthand for international testing such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)" (p.92, italics in original). Yet the Report also touts the value of PISA, and the benefits of the "PISA shock" where several countries participating in the test have initiated targeted reforms following the release of test scores (p.94). Such disjunctures make the positions presented in the Report vague and somewhat meaningless, leaving the reader wondering to what degree the Bank's rhetoric could inform the organization's actions, and in what ways.

To reiterate, there are some very positive elements to this World Development Report, not least of which is its focus on education, attracting attention to and increasing awareness of the learning crisis. My question is: Are the claims made in the report reflective of what's happening in practice? It would be important to understand if the positions and evidence pronounced in the World Development Report have a bearing on what happens in World Bank operations, or if we witness any divide between what the organization says and what it does.

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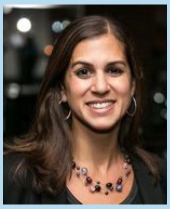

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3. WDR - A sceptic's review

Prachi Srivastava

When the World Bank announced that the 2018 World Development Report (WDR) would be on education, I was sceptical.

I'm not denying the Bank's research expertise. It devotes substantial money and staff and has a trove of reports that are accessible in the public domain.

It's also open to criticism – and receives lots of it, especially on education.

So why the scepticism?

To begin with, the Bank is one of the largest external donors for education in developing countries. 'Managing a portfolio of $US 9 billion with operations in 71 countries as of January 2013', yet the 2018 WDR is the first since the series launched in 1978 to focus solely on education. What took it so long?

Secondly, how the Bank frames problems and assesses 'evidence' matters. It's no secret that the Bank, even if implicitly, favours certain disciplines (i.e., economics) and methodological approaches (usually 'big n' quantitative studies). I'm not debating their virtues or vices. But this propensity has implications for the evidence that gets filtered in and out, and consequences for the 'take-aways'. This is important because it has direct policy influence and signalling power, not only to governments and institutions with years of sectoral expertise, but also to a new community of actors, including private sector donors, with less experience in education.

Scepticism aside, the 2018 WDR Learning to Realize Education's Promise does a few welcome things.

1. It invokes education as a basic right, and makes a strong moral case for prioritizing education and learning. The Report starts with the bold statement, 'Education is a basic human right, and is central to unblocking human capabilities' (p. 1), referencing Amartya Sen's now seminal capabilities approach. Coming from the Bank, this is big.

   It has been heavily criticised (famously by the late Katarina Tomasevski, the first UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education (Tomasevski, 2006)) for distancing itself from the rights-based approach in favour of an instrumental approach, and eschewing the moral imperative to act in education. While the instrumental approach remains, there are also rights-based and moral assertions. The Report even mentions examples of using litigation to claim the right to education in India and Indonesia (Box 11.3), and states that such action can work in the interests of the disadvantaged.

   These are very welcome additions to the business case for education that has been taking hold. We have all heard the oft-repeated mantra (including by senior Bank staff) that education isn't 'just' the right thing to do, it's the 'smart' thing to do. (I'm always left wondering why simply doing the right thing isn't enough). While the business case has become important in mobilising the will to increase education financing from donors, the Report's opening messages on rights and moral obligations may help to reset the tone, or at least open these arguments up to a broader audience. I would have liked to see a stronger attempt at building a moral case for financing education, especially by OECD-DAC donors, many of which have not fulfilled their commitments, but this is a start.

2. It highlights the learning crisis. The Report presents evidence on learning disparities from a range of countries, particularly highlighting differences between children from richer and poorer backgrounds. It underscores the message that enrolment isn't enough. While that message isn't new to education researchers and policy wonks (see EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2013/4), the WDR reaches audiences (internal and external) that are likely to be unaware of the sheer extent of the learning crisis. It could have more fully assessed the evidence on the potential impact of the learning crisis on other skills (e.g., citizenship, critical thinking, creativity, '21st century skills'), which it begins to do (Spotlight 3), but this could have been more fully integrated.

3. It demonstrates the link between neuroscience and education. The Report devotes a substantial amount of space to presenting scientific evidence on the link between deprivation, early brain development, and learning, a point also addressed in previous Education for All Global Monitoring Reports (see EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2009). It highlights the consequences of malnutrition and brain development for children from deprived backgrounds on learning outcomes. 'So even in a good school, deprived children learn less' (p. 10), and early learning deficits are generally magnified over time (p. 7).

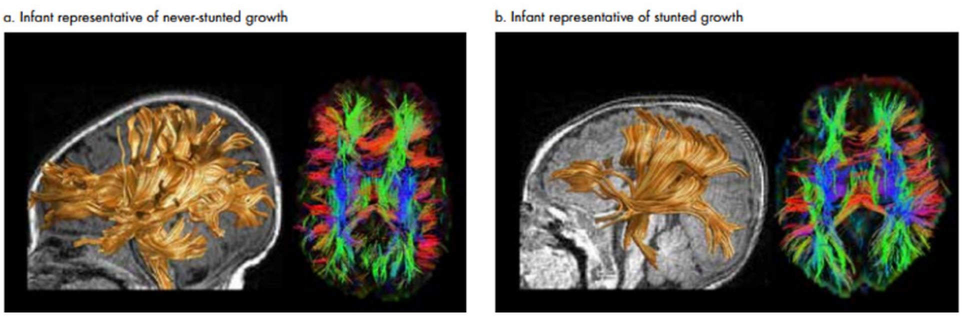
   The MRI images of the brain structure of an infant in Bangladesh whose growth was stunted compared with one whose wasn't, are sobering (p. 115). The discussion and powerful imagery may help to press the urgency of early interventions and a more integrated approach to education delivery for deprived groups, especially in early and primary years.

   Given the well-drawn out arguments in the Report, it is curious that this line of thinking isn't embedded in analysing the evidence presented on school feeding programs in Burkina Faso, Kenya, and Peru (p. 148). It is also curious that evidence on India's Midday Meal Scheme, the largest school feeding program in the world, is not cited. Young Lives' analysis showed significant positive results of the Midday Meal Scheme on learning (vocabulary) in Andhra Pradesh (Young Lives, 2010), contrary to the studies cited.

4. It does a relatively decent (if condensed) job of presenting evidence on private sector provision and private schooling. Cards on the table—I was invited to meet with some members of the WDR Team to discuss this issue during informal consultations on the Report. Firstly, despite the unclear position on user fees the Bank has sometimes been known to take (Kattan & Burnett, 2004), the WDR is explicit about the negative impact of school fees and costs (p. 117). A range of policy interventions to help with schooling costs and fees are presented (e.g., non-merit scholarships, conditional cash transfers), as well as country experiences of eliminating fees (Figure 5.4, p. 118).

While it supports the theoretical assumption that competition increases quality, despite insufficient evidence in developing countries, regarding outcomes, the Report is clear: 'there is no consistent evidence that private schools deliver better learning outcomes than public schools' (p. 176). Huge.

The Report addresses concerns about 'cream-skimming' of students. Also leaving me pleasantly surprised, it is open about the potential of commercially-oriented providers to exploit incentives for profit, 'Some private suppliers of education services...may, in the



pursuit of profit, advocate policy choices not in the interest of students (p. 13).

It is refreshingly forthright in admitting difficulties in overseeing systems with a myriad of private schools, suggesting 'governments may deem it more straightforward to provide quality education than to regulate a disparate collection of providers that may not have the same objectives' (p. 177). Finally, the report considers systemic effects, albeit briefly, that private schooling expansion 'can undermine the political constituency for effective public schooling in the longer term' (p. 177). Massive.

So- the 2018 WDR makes some welcome interventions. However, to fully realise its potential, here are my top two suggestions for what it could have done better (there are others—I haven't touched on teachers—but this post is now resembling an article):

Make the case for financing education less ambiguous. This has been raised as the main point of contention in nearly all the online reviews of the 2018 WDR (e.g., David Archer of Action Aid and Education International). And I would have to agree.

The ambiguity is incongruous with recommendations of high-level fora. For example, the Education 2030 Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action for SDG4 is unequivocal: The 'Least developed countries need to reach or exceed the upper end of these benchmarks [4-6% GDP, 15-20% national budgets] if they are to achieve the targets' (emphasis mine).

The discussion is also somewhat ahistorical. An earlier analysis by Mehrotra (Mehrotra, 1998) of what he termed, 10 'early high-achievers in education' (Barbados, Botswana, Costa Rica, Cuba, Kerala (India), Malaysia, Mauritius, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe) concluded that high public expenditure as a proportion of GDP and as a proportion of national budgets were among the factors that contributed to expansion of relatively better quality primary education in early post-colonial contexts. If the aim now is to universalise education to secondary by 2030 (SDG Target 4.1), surely stable, secure, and increased financing by donors and domestic governments is pivotal, especially in countries that do not meet even the minimum benchmarks.

Focus on learning processes within schools and classrooms and their potential effects on learning outcomes. The Report acknowledges: 'Learning is a complex process that is difficult to break down into simple linear relationships from cause to effect' (p. 178). And it rightly attributes poor learning outcomes to poor quality provision. No one would argue otherwise.

However, 'quality' is influenced by a host of factors, many of which may be normative, socio-political, and micro-political (i.e., informal institutions). The learning outcomes that are the subject of the WDR are produced through learning processes structured in formal schooling processes. And formal schooling processes are embedded in the overt and hidden curriculum of the schools and classrooms (i.e., values and the reproduction of those values in formal schools) that children of different backgrounds have access to, and how those children, in turn, are positioned within them.

For example, research in India (Naorem & Ramachandram, 2013) shows that broader societal caste-based practices continue to affect how children experience schooling even within universalising initiatives. Based on emerging analysis from my current study of roughly 1500 school-aged children in Delhi, I argue that silent exclusion reflects broader societal exclusion and will impede meaningful learning even if children are enrolled (see also Lewin, 2007).

This is messy stuff. Which means that improving quality will be harder than 'aligning all the ingredients' (Box 9.2). These are deep-seated issues that cannot easily be overcome by the 'proper' incentives.

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4. Learning Matters and the WDR

Keith Lewin

"Learning to Realise Education's Promise" is the first time the World Bank has devoted an entire 240 page World Development Report (WDR) to education and learning. It is surprising that it has taken so long given that the main purpose of the Bank is to finance development, and low income countries generally spend more on education than anything else apart from defence. The authors are to be congratulated on the encyclopaedic range of their deliberations and the plethora of descriptive analysis provided. Inevitably not all expectations have been met and how "education's promise" can be realised remains elusive.

The main proposition of the WDR 2018 is that there is a new learning crisis and that most countries need to "show that learning really matters to them". If they succeed they will extract themselves from "the low learning trap" equilibrium of poor learning levels linked to low levels of accountability (p.195). The evidence for this "trap" is patchy given the lack of longitudinal data on learning. If there is a learning trap it did not hold back countries that achieved high levels of performance with 20th Century educational investment strategies. If those countries, who come later have to play by different rules what is the new game and what are its new rules?

The WDR argues that three actions are essential at system level:

- Assess learning—to make it a serious goal
- Act on evidence—to make schools work for all learners
- Align actors—to make the whole system work for learning

Phil Coombs (1968), who first wrote about a World Education Crisis in 1967, would have agreed. So would John Dewey, Ralph Tyler, Lee Cronbach, Ben Bloom, Jean Piaget, Maria Montessori, Howard Gardner, and many other well-known educators who "took learning seriously" but are not cited. Nor are any non-Western thinkers on learning. It is especially odd that the "learning crisis" described makes no reference to China which has raised the learning levels of more learners than any other country in history over the last 30 years. Phil would have asked the WDR what is new about this global learning crisis, who are the educators who (still) do not believe learning is a serious goal, and what have we (development partners) learned since 1967 about effective pedagogies and whole system change?

This contribution to the dialogue around the Report addresses the most striking silence in the WDR. In 240 pages only five pages are spent explicitly addressing questions of finance. If there is a learning crisis then in large part it is a financing crisis. I share with Steve Klees (2018) astonishment that such a substantial report full of interesting detail can simply gloss over the central issue of financial sustainability. It is now eighteen years after the President of the World Bank declared in Dakar at the World Education Forum in 2000 that it would ensure "no government with a credible strategy for achieving Education For All will be allowed to fail for lack of resources". EFA was about learning as well as access.

There are seven issues related to financing that the WDR could have addressed but did not.

First, recent modelling for the GPE (Lewin, 2017) indicates that if schooling were to be universalized in GPE developing country partners, the amounts needed for education would be 6.2 percent of GDP in LICs and 6.3 percent in LMICs[1]. Total public expenditure on education across the LICs is about US$19 billion and for LMICs US$68 billion, representing 3.8 percent and 4.8 percent of GDP, respectively. This includes current aid contributions. To reach 6 percent of GDP would cost at least another US$13 billion per year for the LICs and US$22 billion for the LMICs totalling over US$ 35 billion a year. There is no prospect of such large volumes of additional recurrent finance becoming available so what is plan B? A WDR on Learning should explore the costs of learning and how they can be met within credible plans.

Second, the Education 2030 Framework for Action to which the Bank subscribes "urges adherence to the international and regional benchmarks of allocating efficiently at least 4 – 6% of Gross Domestic Product and/or at least 15 – 20% of total public expenditure to education". But currently 40% of LICs and LMICs spend less than 4 percent of GDP on education (of which about a third is aid-related) and less than 15% allocate more than 6% of GDP. Fewer than 20 percent of LICs and LMICs spend more than 20 percent of their government budgets on education. If the share of the government budget for education was 20% and the amount of tax collected from domestic revenue was the LIC/LMIC average of 16% of GDP then this would result in education expenditure being only 3.2% of GDP i.e. 20% of 16%. It would need more than 30% of the government budget to provide 6% of GDP. This could only be achieved with improbably large cuts to government spending by other Ministries. Learning must be delivered more efficiently and effectively but the WDR does not indicate how, nor what kind of fiscal reforms are most promising.

Third, aid to education has plateaued since 2010 at about USD12 Billion a year and there is no convincing sign that the appetite to increase aid to education is returning. The recent Replenishment Conference of the World Bank's sister organisation the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) raised about USD2.3 billion for disbursement from Donors over three years, or about US$800 million a year. This fell well short of its aspirations and was not much greater than in 2014. The amount is only about 2% of the additional amounts needed for recurrent financing for Education 2030. If it was distributed evenly across 50 countries it would amount to only USD 16 million a year per country. Pledges by countries at the GPE replenishment to increase their spending amounted to USD110 Billion dwarfing the amount of external assistance, and were much more than the USD 26 Billion pledged in 2014. However, past experience has been that the delivery on pledges is patchy, governments have not honoured many pledges, and some aid commitments have not been delivered. If there is a learning crisis it was not prevented by the impact of the 2014 replenishment or the USD 50 billion of World Bank investment in education since 2000 so what lessons can be drawn for future aid?

Fourth, though there is a small industry around identifying alternative methods of financing educational investment in low income countries, it has yet to demonstrate how to generate the volume of recurrent finance necessary to meet needs. This is not surprising. No high enrolment high performance national education systems use innovative finance to fund the bulk of their school systems. Nor is much of their core financing from the private sector. Private sectors in LICs and LMICs are small and unlikely and unwilling to finance and education systems delivering services to those near or below the poverty line. Various reports on innovative finance identify a variety of more or less exotic financial instruments that include debt buy downs, leveraging increased borrowing by Multilateral Development Banks, development bonds, philanthropic contributions, and crowd funding. None of these approaches provide reliable long term investment to meet the recurrent costs of learning. The WDR should spell out the financing options and the impact of different choices on learning and who learns what.

1 This scenario would still leave almost half of all children in LICs without access to upper secondary. Providing universal access to preschool would add about 15 percent to the total cost.

Fifth, whether there really is a low "learning trap" leading to a low learning equilibrium remains to be demonstrated. However, there is evidence of a low income country public expenditure equilibrium for investment in education. This has proved very resilient. According to Coombs in 1985 developing countries as a group increased spending from an average of 2.3% of GDP in 1960 to around 4% by 1979 (Coombs, 1985). The proportion of public spending allocated to education in developing countries increased 12% to 15% from 1960 to 1975. At the time of the Jomtien Conference our analysis (Colcough and Lewin (1990) indicated that on average LICs were allocating between 4% and 5% of GDP to education and about 15% of public expenditure. Over the next three decades up to the present UNESCO Institute of Statistics data show that the averages have hovered around 4% of GDP and 15% of public expenditure on education. This is the level at which many systems have equilibrated over the long term. Setting arbitrary targets for expenditure on education independent of demands for spending in other sectors ignores the obvious. If the education budget as a percent of GDP goes up then something else must come down. If the learning crisis is in part financial the WDR needs a theory that explains this "resistance to change" to finance learning by increasing its share of the budget despite hundreds of billions of dollars of external assistance for development.

Sixth, the quickest way to increase the proportion of public spending allocated to education is to have an economic recession! This can be seen in the UK. The amount of public expenditure allocated to education as a proportion of GDP increased from 4.9% to 5.8% between 2008 and 2010. To the casual observer this could have signalled a sudden enthusiasm to commit 18% more public resources to education. In fact the domestic allocation only increased from about GBP 79 billion to GBP 84 billion, or around 6% at a time when inflation was increasing from about 4% per annum. The apparent increase in educational investment is largely explained by a fall in UK GDP of as much as 20%. The message is simple. The volatility of GDP is much greater than the volatility of most educational expenditure. Measuring the educational effort of governments, and rewarding them with aid for meeting arbitrary and isolated targets, is at the very least risky and may be unwise. The WDR should have devoted more space to developing smarter indicators.

Seventh, the good news is that national revenue raising systems are modernising. This is slowly transforming the landscape of educational financing and the "gaps" between what is currently financed and what is needed. Aid flows peaked in the early 1990s and most low income countries have experienced substantial economic growth. Aid to Africa was greater than tax receipts from 1986 to 1995. Since then it has fallen relative to GDP and tax revenues are now twice the value of aid. This is what is supposed to happen when countries develop and when aid programmes are effective. As countries develop direct taxes become a larger share of revenue and more difficult to avoid with better biometric identification and tracking of transactions.

The evolution of low income countries towards becoming "Fiscal States" that have the capacity to borrow to invest and grow without reference to aid and its conditionalities has immense significance. It creates new avenues for financing on scale. Twice as many African countries (20) took Eurobonds in 2015 as did in 2004. There is the opportunity to make more use of the resources of Africa currently held in Pension Funds (at least USD 334 billon) and Sovereign Wealth Funds (at least USD 164 billion) more of which could be invested in LICs and LMICs. In addition corporate tax evasion and tax fraud is estimated at USD 50 billion to USD 100 billion.

Tax, not aid, is the dominant source of public finance in most countries and this will be even more so in 2030. If there is a new learning crisis it will be located and resolved within the political economies and national curricula of governments accountable to their taxpayers for investing fairly and effectively. The only sustainable solutions will be domestically driven. Achieving substantial increases in educational access and quality leading to greater learning achievement that is sustainable requires serious fiscal reform, much more effective revenue collection, and awareness of the costs of learning. These should all be a major focus of discussions around "realising learning's promise" otherwise learning gains will not be sustained.

The World Bank is good at financing but not necessarily at learning. It should be good at developing sustainable systems of finance for learning. The WDR needs to explain how this can happen so that Phil Coombs academic descendants will not write another book on the Global Education Crisis in 2030.

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5. Say No to for profit experiments in education: support public education

Juliet Wajega

The World Development Report (WDR) 2018, Learning to realize Education's Promise, clearly states that there is "no consistent evidence that private schools deliver better learning outcomes than public schools" (p. 176). It also points out numerous risks of private schooling such as: exclusion of the disadvantaged; social segregation; exploitation of families; and undermining of public education. However, meanwhile, the World Bank Group invests in Bridge International Academies (Bridge), a for-profit edu-business, through its private arm International Finance Corporation (IFC).

Bridge provides so-called 'low-fee' private schooling to children in Africa and Asia. The US-based company has been operating in Uganda since 2015, where it currently has 63 schools. "Schooling the Poor Profitably, the innovations & deprivations of Bridge International Academies in Uganda" (Riep & Machacek, 2016), a research study by Education International reveals the poor quality of education offered by Bridge in these schools: inadequate facilities with poor sanitation put children at risk; teachers 'teach' by reading a lesson script on a hand-held computer that follows an unaccredited curriculum designed in the US; and the company employs a business model premised on affordability and scalability – cutting costs rather than focusing on quality and equity. Though Bridge is portrayed as having low fees, the research shows that the schools are in fact unaffordable for most Ugandans: they charge 129-152 US Dollars a year, meaning that a family with an average income would spend 50% of the annual income to send 2 children to a Bridge school. Moreover, the study reveals that approximately 80-90% of teachers in Bridge schools in Uganda are unqualified and are paid as little as 40-60 US Dollars a month. This undermines the decent work agenda.

When the research study was launched by the Uganda National Teachers Union (UNATU) on World Teachers Day in October 2016, a large variety of stakeholders were present. Parents, local leaders, civil society, politicians (including Members of Parliament, cabinet ministers and the President himself) educators, legal fraternity and the media joined together – united in speaking out against an education provider that was undermining national sovereignty and putting the future of children in danger. This diversity of actors has since continued to speak out about Bridge through various media channels.

On 8th August 2016, the parliament of Uganda ordered the closure of Bridge schools, as the schools did not meet Uganda's Basic Requirements and Minimum Standards (as laid down in Uganda's Education Act 2008). Bridge appealed this verdict, but lost. On 4 November 2016, the High Court of Uganda ordered the closure of the schools. In a press release on 6 February 2018, the Permanent Secretary of the Government of Uganda reiterated that the schools had no authorization to operate.

Relatedly, in an article in the New Vision on 15 February 2018, the First Lady and Minister of Education & Sport, Janet K. Museveni, condemned Bridge's failure to close the schools until minimum standards were met. Despite this, some Bridge schools continue to run illegally, defying Ugandan law.

During a plenary session at the World Bank's civil society policy forum in October 2017, concerns were raised about the impact of Bridge in Uganda. The IFC Chief Executive Officer Philippe Le Houerou's reply was revealing. He said (paraphrased): "If you do not experiment, you won't learn. The Bank is watching outcomes and will scale up if it works".

Every child, whether from a poor country in Africa or elsewhere deserves a quality education. Yet in funding Bridge's so-called "innovations", the IFC are supporting the company to treat the children of Uganda as an "experiment"– one which favours the creation of profit over the provision of equitable quality education.

In order to support every child's right to education, the Bank must learn from their past mistakes as well as the evidence of the risks of private schooling cited in the WDR. A commitment to equity as asserted in the WDR should by definition be a commitment to public education, as it is public education that serves the most disadvantaged. To ensure that non-one is left behind and education's promise is realized, the World Bank Group must divest from for-profit education experiments and and should instead focus on mobilising funding for public education.

According to the so called Education Commission (2016), to reach the Sustainable Development Goal for quality education for all (SDG4), global spending on education must rise annually from $1.2 trillion per year to $3 trillion by 2030. Whilst increased international aid to education will be necessary, the majority of this will come from domestic financing - all governments must devote at least 4-6 % of GDP or 15-20% of national budgets to education (see UNESCO Framework for Action). Governments must also commit to increasing public funds from education by tackling tax evasion. In Africa, over $50 billion (approximately £33 billion) is lost in tax evasion which could have supported all children out of school to get an education.

We must all speak up against low-quality for profit schooling and in support of strong public education systems. For those of us committed to the Education 2030 Agenda, the time for action is now.

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6. Early Childhood Education, Poverty and Privatization: Why is ECE so important and underfunded in World Bank policy?

Carol Anne Spreen

Learning does not begin when a child enters school. It is widely known that from birth to age five the brain develops more rapidly than at any other stage of life, and it is also most sensitive to influences from the external environment (such as cognitive stimulation, language development, care, imagination but also negative influences like hunger and violence). Children raised in households with protracted poverty, who are orphaned, or have limited access to resources and services, start their formal schooling many steps behind their peers. Healthy, stable, enriching early development opportunities affect later cognitive, social and emotional growth, and with increased opportunities there are greater chances for children to thrive.

A significant part of the World Development Report (WDR) report pays attention to the important links between child development, neuro-science, and issues of poverty (see for example Spotlight 1 and 2), and is generally in-line with the current research and thinking about child well-being and the creation of learning opportunities at an early age. However, the underlying logic of the World Bank (WB)'s approach to learning can be seen in the continued reliance on market rhetoric in the WDR report (e.g. education as an investment, 'the poverty deficit', 'skills beget skills' and aiming at 'higher learning trajectories'.

By hanging on to the idea that education (even ECE) should primarily be about improving testing and accountability, the WDR misses the opportunity to create a more holistic approach to learning and thinking about human development throughout the span of a person's life. To prioritize investing in testing and accountability measures over ECE or poverty alleviation, seems to be putting the proverbial 'cart before the horse'. The importance of ECE is not just about improving learning outcomes but about its long term potential to help us thrive as human beings.

Furthermore, critics of the report are concerned that the WDR seems to largely bypass the issue of public support and provisioning of education, particularly under-resourced and largely private sectors like ECE. Despite widespread recognition of its importance, the WDR does not indicate whether and how ECE should be funded. The elaborate discussion of the benefits of ECE, especially for children from poor communities, ends with no policy recommendations about funding or creating universal ECE programs.

The WB's failure to promote government funding, support and expansion of this critical sector

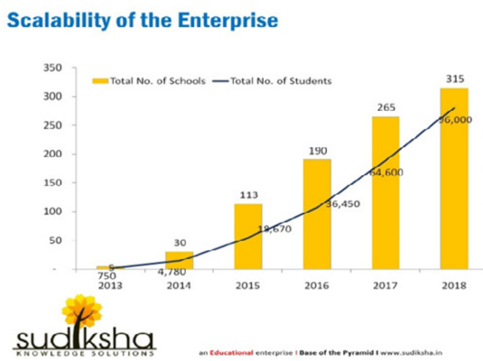
Despite the WB's recognition of the importance of ECE, it has continuously promoted privatization policies (Klees et al., 2012) that undermine equity and give governments a pass on providing important and necessary services (like ECE) for the poor.

The WB is an increasingly influential, yet unaccountable, actor, partner, entrepreneur, and enabler of processes connected to a growing market for private education services. For example, in India there is strong WB support for privately run early-childhood education centers, despite overwhelming evidence that these schools drain students and resources from public systems that could be strengthened, add additional barriers to girls and poor families, and make their profits by cutting corners (such as paying very low wages to teachers) at the expense of students' wellbeing (Spreen & Kamat, 2017).

Similarly, there is increasing evidence that other manifestations of privatization that the World Bank supports such as Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs), tuition grants and voucher systems, often exacerbate rather than reduce inequalities – reducing inequality should be one of the Bank's priorities.

Beginning in 2000, the World Bank (among other organizations) started touting 'private schools for the poor', as the remedy to poor quality government schools. The motives and goals of this hugely profitable industry have been well documented elsewhere (see for instance, "Worlds of Education" Special issue on Privatization), but one rapidly growing sector is for-profit ECE. As shown in our research, "Profiting from the Poor (Spreen and Kamat, 2017), this sector is unregulated - preschools do not have to meet rigorous standards or government regulations in terms of adequate infrastructure, safety and health regulations, teacher qualifications or salaries – making it ripe for profit-making.

The sector also has high potential for growth; the preschool education market in India could potentially serve nearly 800 million children. The table below shows projected enrollments and



'scalability' of one of these fee-based preschool enterprise chains.

Source: https://www.slideshare.net/NaveenKumar95/sudiksha-knowledge-solutions-9675111/10

The World Bank should promote early childhood education as a right, but also a good government investment.

State interventions in ECE are absolutely necessary to balance the playing field – not just in terms of providing ECE for all, but through effective provision of school meals, links to community health programs, and the introduction of subsidies in other services (like transportation). Access to high quality ECE services is not only the fulfillment of a right, investing in ECE is a responsibility of government. This view is in line with the Sustainable Development Goals, as indicator 4.2.5 of target 4.2 measures the number of years of (i) free and (ii) compulsory pre-primary education guaranteed in legal frameworks.

In most OECD countries, public-sector finance is the main type of investment in ECE services. In all OECD countries (except South Korea), investment in childcare and pre-school services for children is made by the public sector, although parents often share some of the cost (UNESCO, 2006). Yet, while 1% of GDP is considered the minimum investment for quality early childhood care and education, low and lower middle income countries spent only 0.08% of GDP on ECE in 2014 (Results for Development, 2016, p.20). And only 1% of total overseas development assistance for education (in 2014) was allocated to early childhood development (Education Commission, 2016, p.112).

Due to fiscal constraints many governments of the majority world still depend mainly on families, international and local NGOs, and private-sector support to provide childcare centers and preschools. Many policy makers in these countries still underestimate the importance of investing in children before compulsory schooling. As a result, ECE tends to lack adequate infrastructure. Schools are run by low-wage, unqualified (usually female) teachers lacking any training or certification. Sub-standard facilities and poor working conditions of ECE educators have been an issue of contention. ECE programs usually also lack national standards, and program quality is rarely monitored. Unless national budgets and international donor aid for early childhood services are expanded significantly, and soon, the social, emotional and cognitive development of children entering schools in most of the world will be unnecessarily stunted.

Even if one were to turn the World Bank's market logic back on itself, it could be argued that government financing of ECE is not only a duty but is also a good investment. Spurred on by the recent SDG discussions and advocacy from various civil society organisations, even leading world economists and finance ministers now rank ECE as the number one national investment in terms of getting a return on investment (Vargas-Baron & Williams, 2015, p.3).

Contributing to the learning crisis

To sum up, the WDR 2018 continues to promote ideas and policies that see education as a marketplace and investment - further exacerbating inequality and placing the duty and obligation of 'realizing education's promise' squarely on the backs of families and children, thereby undermining public education and universal early childhood education as a human right.

The WB's commitment to what it calls the learning agenda is not in service of fulfilling universal human rights if its focus is still on addressing learning and skills through market demands, rather than children's broader learning and developmental needs. In fact, by promoting initiatives aimed at reduced investment in the public sector, the WB has largely contributed to the learning crisis.

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7. The educational "anti-policy" financed by the World Bank in El Salvador

Israel Montano Osorio

The recommendations of the World Development Report (WDR) 2018 show that the World Bank has not learned from its mistakes and continues to offer poor advice regarding education policies. In El Salvador, as in other countries, rather than forming part of the solution, the World Bank is in many ways responsible for the supposed learning crisis. Yet, the WDR fails to analyse the role played by the World Bank's imposed educational agenda, an agenda that does not respond to the priorities of national governments regarding what is necessary to guarantee the fundamental right to free, socially referenced, public quality education for all children.

Between 1991 and 2018, the World Bank made loans of $331m to finance education reforms in El Salvador. Most of these reforms had common aims: to establish a minimum curriculum based on competencies; evaluate teachers and students; distribute funds according to performance and to continue the implementation of parallel educational management structures outside the control of the Ministry of Education. The World Bank currently continues to implement policies that weaken the right to education and the capacity of the State to guarantee it. That is, the Bank finances an educational "anti-policy".

Following almost two decades of war, El Salvador signed peace agreements in 1992. The signing of these accords created opportunities for communities to re-establish their social fabric, for the most neglected sectors of the population to enter into political life and for the State to be be present where, owing to the war, it had been absent for so many years (or rather, where it had exerted violence over the population for so many years). However, it was the neoliberal policies that did so much damage to the country: currently 41% of families live below the poverty line and are subjected to the violence of *maras* (gangs). 36% of girls, boys and adolescents in the country live without their father or mother, or both. This may be due to their parents migrating to the USA, violent death at the hands of the *maras*, or abandonment. Therefore, the children we teachers have in our care do not always have a safe, protective family environment; they live in conditions of poverty and are frequently exposed to various forms of violence.

For us teachers, the first important blow to education struck by the World Bank was the Education with Community Participation (EDUCO) programme. Started in 1991, this programme consisted of giving money to parents in the communities to organize themselves in Community Associations for Education (ACE) and, together with some school directors, to form School Administration Boards and take charge of primary education. By the end of the programme, they were also administering a number of secondary education businesses.

The excuse for launching EDUCO was that after the war, any process promoted by central government would require a long time to organise. The ACEs and the School Administration Boards then had thelegal capacity to hire teachers and decide what type of services and materials would be used in their communities.

The ACEs and the administration boards received the resources from the Ministry of Education in large quantities. It was these groups of fathers and mothers who, without any technical or educational training, were directly responsible for the teachers in rural areas. The handling of the money was not transparent in the case of some community representatives who, moreover, took decisions regarding the educational process with no pedagogical or didactic criteria. Teachers were subject to a hiring system based on whim, servility and political cronyism. Schools were set up in whatever houses or rooms the community had and nobody obliged them to invest in adequate infrastructures with the necessary conditions for sports and games, for laboratories, libraries or school canteens.

According to the World Bank itself, of the almost $59m that were distributed in the communities, 44% was financed by the Bank, 51% by the Salvadorian government, 5% by USAID and 0.2% by UNICEF. A total of $26m came from the Social Sector Rehabilitation Project, which was a loan from the World Bank in 1991. This money could have served to improve a national educational system which guaranteed a fairer educational system, made a genuine contribution to the recovery of the social fabric, and provided quality initial training to teachers and proper in-service training. The reality is that this money was not used to bolster education, but to establish small mafias within the communities.

For us teachers, the World Bank, through its EDUCO program, supported and financed an educational "anti-policy" as its implementation meant that the State and the government did not take responsibility for education. This was extremely serious because at that time, following the war, the country needed a State with a strong presence that would begin to guarantee and make effective the rights that had been denied for so many years, including the right to education.

The Bank continues to prefer inequality in 2018

As teachers, we are currently concerned about an educational reform that will profoundly affect our youth. It is financed by the World Bank through the 2005 Excellence and Innovation in Secondary Education (EXITO) Project loan scheme, for an amount of $85m, and the 2011 Education Quality Improvement Project, for a further $60m. All this money is being used to push through a reform in secondary education aimed at generating two types of secondary education: one for girls and boys who have better opportunities and another for poorer youngsters.

The Bank is financing a model based on a longer school day so that girls and boys spend more hours in the centre. This format is not without its difficulties as the working conditions and infrastructure to ensure the longer day respects the rights and needs of both the pupils and the teaching staff are not being created. Furthermore, the Bank is promoting a flexible model of distance or semi-distance learning for impoverished adolescents and those from areas of greater social conflict. These models focus on providing skills in the subjects of language, arithmetic, science and, in some cases, the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) to support this methodology.

This second model worries us greatly. We understand that El Salvador is a young country, with over 55% of the population under 30 years old, and 26% of young people between 15 and 24 neither studying nor working. However, the Bank's vision of generating a model of secondary education for the poor which moves it away from the education centres isolates this group and arms them with very limited skills with which to enter the labour market.

In a country such as El Salvador which is so affected by violence, education centres must offer a safe space for containment and social integration and cohesion. In addition to attending school to study mathematics and Spanish, these boys and girls come to learn the value of participation, democracy, collaborative work, the history of their country and of their region.

The World Bank continues to seek to impose an education policy on us without understanding the transforming value of education. Or perhaps it is precisely because they do understand this value that the Bank fights against education so much. It is also for this reason that we in ANDES 21 de Junio value the power for transformation and equality that education can generate, and we will continue to defend it as a social right, one which cannot be shaped from the perspective of a bank and its club of consultants and "experts".

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8. School-Based Management: Questions and Concerns

D. Brent Edwards Jr.

One of the primary avenues highlighted for educational improvement in the World Bank's World Development Report (WDR) 2018 is school-based management (SBM). This is not surprising, as SBM has been one of the World Bank's preferred education governance reforms since the 1990s. Indeed, as Dean Nielsen, former Senior Evaluation Officer of the World Bank's own Independent Evaluation Group, pointed out, the World Bank began supporting SBM in its 1999 Education Sector Strategy without offering "any evidence that [SBM] made a difference in valued education outcomes" (Nielsen, 2007, p. 84). While much has changed in the past 20 years, a careful reading of WDR 2018 raises questions and concerns about the World Bank's portrayal of SBM and about the advisability of SBM as a strategy for improvement of education quality.

The first question that arises has to do with definitions. The World Bank does not seem to be entirely clear or consistent with what it means when it discusses SBM. The WDR 2018 states that "providing schools and communities with decision-making power and resources can solve two problems" (p. 149). First, SBM "may make teachers more immediately responsive to student needs" if it gives "local school leaders and parents more direct influence over teachers and other school representatives," though it is not clear who these "others" are (p. 149). Second, the WDR 2018 states that "schools and communities may have better information about the needs of local schools, which, along with access to discretionary resources, means they can more nimbly meet those needs" (p. 149). Despite these statements, the WDR does not actually define what SBM looks like beyond a broad comment on "providing schools and communities with decision-making power and resources." This is a key omission, as it makes it impossible for one to turn these comments or the ensuing discussion of SBM into practical knowledge that is useful for one of the WDR's primary audiences: policymakers in middle- and low-income countries. Although SBM has been defined previously in World Bank publications as involvement by some combination of principals, teachers, and parents in school councils for the purpose of carrying out a range of management tasks, the vague definition provided in the WDR 2018 may necessarily result from the fact that the range of examples mentioned in the Report do not conform to this definition—a fact which reinforces the above concern about what, exactly, the World Bank is promoting in the WDR 2018 beyond a vague claim about the benefits of enhanced decision-making power and resources when placed in the hands of schools and communities.

Relatedly, the second question has to do with the range of examples referenced and how to interpret them. While SBM (or school management more generally) is one of the four core key areas that the WDR 2018 specifies as influencing learning, the Report only dedicates three pages to discussing it (pp. 148-150). In spite of such limited space, numerous examples are mentioned. One consequence of covering many examples in a short space is that the WDR 2018 sacrifices depth. What we have are general comments about community monitoring, school grant programs, the necessity of giving parents time to learn "how to effectively engage in school management" (p. 149), and the importance of parents and communities being "able to harness increased information to hold teachers and schools more accountable" (p. 150). However, in none of these cases is it clear how these strategies should work in practice. We are left with the broad theoretical claims mentioned earlier that the World Bank has been promoting since the 1990s—that is, that SBM should enable relations of accountability, that it should be more responsive to local context, and that it should be more efficient because local actors know what their schools need and can act "more nimbly." Unfortunately, the World Bank has not used the years since the 1990s to carry out research that helps us understand how the theory of SBM translates to practice.

Third, in terms of interpreting the evidence cited, an additional concern arises. First, however, the World Bank should be given credit for the fact that it acknowledges more than once that certain SBM models have had mixed results or have failed to increase parent engagement or student learning. That said, anyone familiar with the literature on SBM will note that the two recently-completed systematic literature reviews of SBM were used scantly or not at all in the WDR 2018 (Carr-Hill et al., 2015; Westhorp et al., 2014). This is concerning because these reviews not only underscore the difficulty of drawing conclusions about the effectiveness of SBM (Carr-Hill et al., 2015) but also highlight the kinds of circumstances in which SBM is likely to work better (Westhorp et al., 2014), with the latter being exactly the kind of commentary that would strengthen the WDR 2018. Given that the above-mentioned reviews have arrived at inclusive results, one wonders about the individual examples highlighted in the WDR 2018. Concern about biased interpretation or partial disclosure of research details is certainly warranted when it comes to the World Bank, given that this institution has a track record of this behavior, particularly in relation to SBM (Edwards & Loucel, 2017).

While there are many studies cited—over 25 in the three pages on SBM—one example from the WDR 2018 is sufficient to make the point that we cannot be sure of any of the interpretations offered in the WDR 2018 about the evidence on SBM. The WDR 2018 references a program from Mexico that is a successful example of a monitoring program that can increase accountability through "feedback loops between multiple stakeholders" (p. 150). We are told that this program is successful because it did "not reach out to only one group, but rather share[d] information explicitly with school leaders and teachers, as well as with communities and parents" (p. 150). And that is all we know from the WDR 2018. However, if one reads the cited evidence on this example, an example for which no name or specifics were shared in the WDR 2018, one learns that the schools in Mexico that participated in the underlying program (known as the Program of Specific Attention for the Improvement of Educational Achievement) chose to implement one or more of four different school management improvement strategies, with SBM being one of the four (de Hoyos, Garcia-Horeno, & Patrinos, 2015). Yet the research does not provide any information on how many schools engaged with SBM, how it worked, or why we should believe that it contributed to improved test scores. Moreover, on this latter point, the study's own findings are unclear. The study employed two different statistical approaches, with one of the two finding no significant effect of the school management intervention when similar schools are being compared in the treatment and control groups. However, if we assume that the program did have an effect, we still do not know what it says about SBM. Even this minimal information about the underlying research on the example from Mexico casts doubt on the already-vague statements of the WDR 2018 when it comes to SBM. We should be hesitant to take any of the Report's claims about SBM at face value.

The fourth and fifth concerns can be mentioned more briefly. For the first of these, the WDR 2018 states that "everything else [in the education system] should strengthen the teacher-learner interaction" (p. 145), yet it is difficult to see how the monitoring and accountability functions that the WDR 2018 envisions for SBM will support rather than undermine this interaction. Although a later chapter of the WDR 2018 indicates that the World Bank believes that all learning challenges can be solved with the correct combination of "incentives, accountability mechanisms, and power relations" (p. 172), there is no practical discussion of how SBM mechanisms operate in practice, in what contexts, under what conditions, etc., nor how these mechanisms will or will not strengthen the teacher-learner interaction (not to mention the fact that the meaning of "teacher-learner interaction" is not defined and seems only to be a euphemism for the ability of teachers to raise test scores). Put differently, the WDR 2018 is short on meaningful discussion of implementation of SBM, a curious absence given the importance that this report gives to a "systems" perspective on education reform.

For the fifth issue, it stands out that equity is not addressed. Intuitively, equity is a concern for SBM because the ability of schools and communities to implement SBM (or not) depends on their capacity. Though the World Bank notes the importance of capacity for the success of SBM, no concern is expressed for the potential that SBM will exacerbate inequity across communities because of pre-existing levels of capacity or social capital and the differential ability of schools and communities to take advantage of (or else suffer because of) SBM arrangements. By extension, no comments are made about the fact that addressing these differences in capacity would require significantly more support and resources from the government and/or international actors. Of course, this is not a popular perspective with World Bank policy specialists, as it does not fit with the preferred framing of SBM as more efficient.

The above comments are not intended to indicate that SBM is an altogether undesirable kind of reform. Rather, in concluding, the message here is that those interested in SBM should shift how they think about this approach to school management. It is argued here that we need to think about community social capital more broadly, that is, that we should think beyond narrow SBM programs to also examine the processes, policies, conditions, and strategies that can reinforce community capacity building, community empowerment, community well-being, and community social capital more generally. In so doing, community involvement in SBM is likely to be more successful in implementation, is likely to be more meaningful in itself, and is likely to lead to more meaningful outcomes. In light of the characterization of SBM in the WDR 2018, the World Bank and other aid agencies are encouraged to shift their thinking in this way, in addition to addressing the issues highlighted above.

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9. The World Bank's Reports and its Practices – Organised Hypocrisy?

Salim Vally

This blog argues that the inconsistencies of the World Bank seen as instances of 'organised hypocrisy' and 'duplicity' are not new nor are they limited to the area of education. On the heels of the WDR, another significant World Bank report, *The Changing Wealth of Nations 2018: Building a Sustainable Future*, was released. I briefly discuss the latter report but also remind colleagues of the devastating impact of the WB and other Bretton Woods institutions on poorer nations – practices which continue today.

Colleagues in previous blogs (such as here, here, and here) have already commented on the 'organised hypocrisy' of the WDR. Some of the critiques – even when they acknowledge the sensible parts of the WDR – refer to the contradictions between the stated diagnosis of what the WB calls the 'learning crisis' and the practices of the Bank, particularly the operations of its International Finance Corporation (IFC), in exacerbating the 'learning crisis'.

The WB's Changing Wealth of Nations (Lange et al. 2018) reports the national wealth of 141 countries over 20 years from 1995 to 2014. Importantly, the report introduces a new measure 'Adjusted Net Savings' which includes the depletion of non-renewable natural resources, air pollution as well as unpaid women's work and community work absent from traditional measures of wealth such as the GNI and GDP. The report provides new evidence of the looting of resource-rich countries, most of them in Africa, by vested foreign interests. Yet, WB practices remain oriented to enforcing loan repayments and transnational corporate profit repatriation, reinforcing plunder through rampant mineral, oil and gas extraction. These resource rich countries face a 'resource curse' – despite the increasing extraction of their natural riches, they are getting poorer. For D. Amari Jackson, this 'curse' is largely facilitated by the World Bank itself (Jackson, 2018). Frédéric Mousseau, the policy director of the Oakland Institute argues, "In its usual schizophrenia the Bank calls for better governance and stronger institutions while also advocating for pro-business policies that would allow the private sector to flourish" and asks, "How can low-income countries build stronger institutions while the World Bank pushes them to deregulate, cut taxes and thereby reduce the resources available for public intervention in their economies?" (ibid). Elsewhere, Inclusive Development International together with others show how the IFC financed some of Africa's most notorious land grabs (Roasa, 2017) and Oxfam has shown (Oxfam, 2016) how 51 of the 68 companies lent money by the IFC to finance investments in sub-Saharan Africa use tax havens to avoid paying taxes for their 'investments'.

Both WB reports ignore the destruction wrought by the Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPs) of the eighties, support for authoritarian regimes and the lifeline given to the apartheid regime in South Africa. Writing of the devastating effects of these policies the report of the UN's Secretary General concluded in 1988, "The most vulnerable population groups, in particular women, youth, the disabled and the aged, have been severely and adversely affected" (Danaher, 1994). The consequences of WB and IMF policies continue to ravage many countries today.

The South African government, under the tutelage of advisors and consultants from the WB and IMF adopted a neoliberal macroeconomic policy in 1996, which has continued to engender massive inequality in all sectors of society including education. I've shown elsewhere (Vally, 2018) that while the WDR takes a dim view of the private provision of schooling, the IFC aggressively supports private so-called 'low cost schooling' in South Africa exacerbating inequality. The IFC participated in the development of the Curro group (the biggest for-profit school group in South Africa) and its expansion (World Bank, 2012).

More recently, the WB promoted ecologically destructive policies such as coal-fired power plants, investments in companies involved in corrupt practices and $ 200m worth of financing to Lonmin platinum mine in Marikana prior to the 'Marikana Massacre' of 34 striking mineworkers in 2012 (Bond, 2014). Two weeks after the massacre, the president of the WB, Jim Yong Kim, visited South Africa but gave Marikana a wide berth, neglecting "to check on his Lonmin investment in Marikana and instead gave a high-profile endorsement to an IFC deal with a small junk-mail printing/posting firm that was prospering from state tenders" (Ibid).

SAPs and support for authoritarian regimes by the IMF and WB has not ended. Mahinour el-Badrawi and Allison Corkery detail how a recent IMF/WB loan of $15 billion to the military regime of Egypt "pushes classic austerity-based policies… which will aggravate poverty and inequality on a large scale" (el-Badrawi & Corkery, 2017). This relationship provides succor to a regime which has jailed under appalling conditions 60 000 people according to some estimates, including a significant number of educators.

Perhaps the inauguration of Jim Yong Kim, largely seen as a critical intellectual and with an important earlier role in Aids treatment advocacy, gave the tarnished image of the WB newfound credibility. A recent flamboyant *New York Times* article, titled *The World Bank Is Remaking Itself as a Creature of Wall Street* (Thomas, 2018), is revealing about Kim's strategy to enlist the support of private capital and the Trump administration. The article is embellished by Kim's earlier work in the slums of Haiti, the influence of liberation theology and Chomsky, how he "devoured Marx as a young man" and recently presented Macron with a copy of Said's *Orientalism*, but also how he golfs with Michael Bloomberg and socializes with billionaires like Leon Black and David Rubinstein. We read how,

> " Kim's mission is to revitalize the World Bank by increasing its firepower and winning over the United States … [H]e is pushing private investors … to pony up trillions of dollars for projects in Indonesia, Zambia, India and elsewhere. His pitch: They can reap rich returns by putting their money to work alongside the World Bank."

The article also details his work with Ivanka Trump and presenting the WB to Trump "as a tool to enhance the administration's "America First" policy." The President of the WB's initiatives come at the same time the Trump administration announced that it was withholding $65m out of a $125m aid package earmarked for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA). Schools run by the latter are lauded in the WDR. I therefore concluded my contribution to a forthcoming moderated discussion of the WDR for the *Comparative Education Review* in the following manner:

> A colleague posed the question: "Is the WDR with some of its progressive statements just a side-show, a sop for the intellectuals within and outside [the WB's] ranks?" I tend to agree with Steven Klees (2017), who exhorts us to challenge the legitimacy of the WB and the IMF as "undemocratic, technocratic, neoliberal institutions unfit for the necessities of today's world."

In other words, nix it, don't try to fix it and don't be deceived by the World Bank and Kim's strategy – a variation of 'talk left, walk right'. We should rather spend our intellectual resources in supporting those grassroots organisations that have to deal with the rapacious practices of the WB, the IMF and the elites they support.

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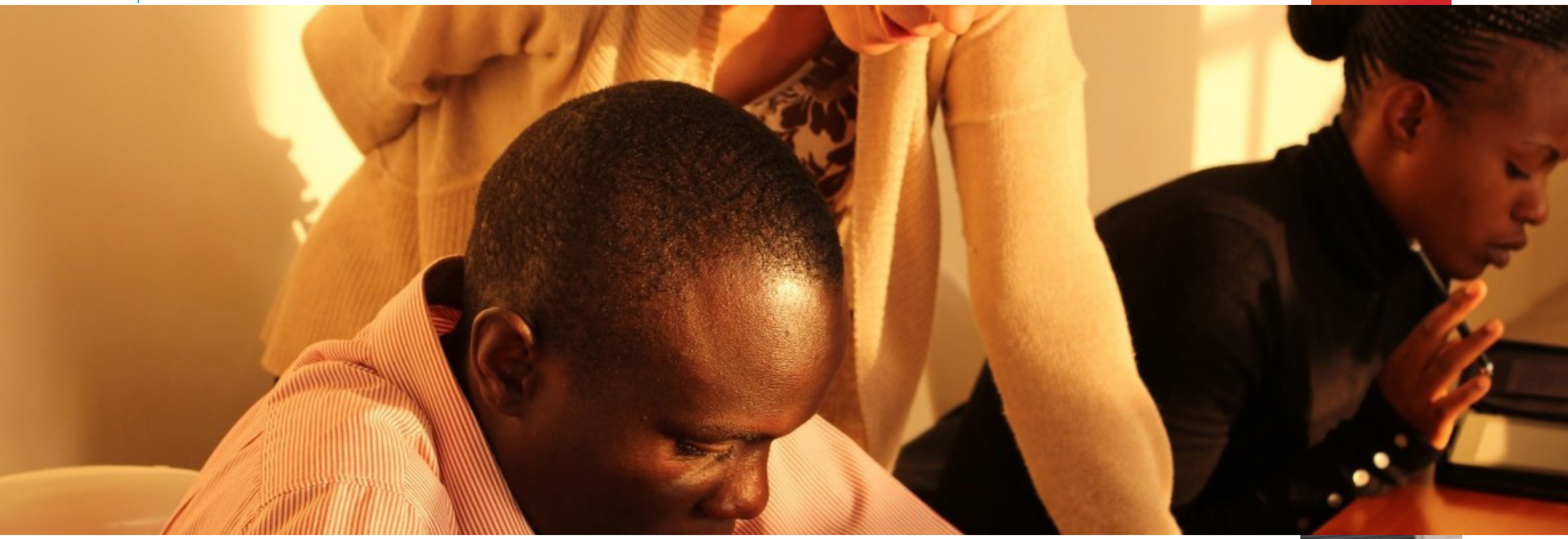

10. It's not a learning crisis, it's an international development crisis! A decolonial critique

Iveta Silova

The 2018 World Development Report (WDR) "Learning to Realize Education's Promise" has been widely praised for placing education at the forefront of the international development agenda.

But while signaling a global commitment to increasing education access and quality in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)[1], the 2018 WDR is also a reflection – and reminder – of what's been historically wrong with the broader international development industry itself. Despite more than six decades of development efforts to eradicate global poverty and inequality through sustainable practices, the results are not promising: poverty is persisting, inequality is widening (see Hickel, 2017), and environment degradation is accelerating. Will education fair better in addressing these global challenges or is it just the latest panacea for the deeper structural problems of the international development industry?

Between 2000 to 2017, the World Bank Group invested more than US$45 billion in education. Billions more have been dedicated to education development by other bilateral and multilateral donors, various foundations, as well as non-governmental organizations. Yet, as the 2018 WDR points out, the global progress towards SDG 4 – ensuring inclusive and quality education for all by 2030 – remains meager. Although access to education has increased, "learning outcomes in basic education are so low, in so many contexts, that the developing world is facing a learning crisis" (p. 71). Drawing on OECD's Programme for International Student Achievement (PISA), IEA's Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), and other international and regional large-scale assessment studies, the report warns that the progress in student learning is either too slow or non-existent in many countries of the world.

Although some countries are making progress on learning, their progress is typically slow. Even the middle-income countries that are catching up to the top performers are doing so very slowly. Indonesia has registered significant gains on PISA over the last 10–15 years. And yet, even assuming it can sustain its 2003–15 rate of improvement, Indonesia won't reach the OECD average score in mathematics for another 48 years; in reading, for 73. For other countries, the wait could be even longer: based on current trends, it would take Tunisia over 180 years to reach the OECD average for math and Brazil over 260 years to reach the OECD average for reading. Moreover, these calculations are for countries where learning has improved. Across all countries participating in multiple rounds of PISA since 2003, the median gain in the national average score from one round to the next was zero (p. 7, emphasis added).

1 For the first time in its 40-year history, the report is devoted entirely to education, putting it on par with such global development issues as poverty and economic growth, climate change and environment, and jobs and markets.

The situation appears to be hopelessly grim.

While the evidence of this 'learning crisis' should be (and has been) seriously debated,[2] the 2018 WDR inadvertently points to another, more urgent crisis, which needs our urgent attention: a crisis of the international development industry itself.

This crisis stems, in part, from the logic of colonialism underpinning the collective work of many international financial institutions, bilateral and multilateral donors, foundations, as well as non-governmental organizations. The colonial logic perpetuates divisions of the world into 'developed' and 'developing' countries, reinforces hierarchies of power and knowledge, and re-inscribes Western 'best practices' as solutions to the so-called 'learning crisis.' Silently unfolding through the pages of the 2018 WDR, this colonial logic reflects the foundations of the international development industry, contradicting the very goals it aspires to achieve. Let's look at some examples.

Perpetuating colonial divisions of the world

The conceptual framing of the report itself - anchored in the idea of a 'learning crisis' in the 'developing world' – openly evokes dichotomous thinking characteristic of the logic of colonialism. This logic maintains the division of the world into North/South or developed/developing countries vis-à-vis learning outcomes, setting low-income and middle-income countries distinctly apart from the West. Furthermore, the report portrays 'developing' countries as trapped in an endless loop of poverty, corruption, and backwardness, while positioning Western countries as examples to emulate. For example, the report explicitly discusses how various "technical and political constraints can trap countries in a low-learning, low-accountability, high-inequality equilibrium" (p. 171). Moreover, it readily points to Western examples for 'developing' countries to follow, citing "Finland's admirable record of learning with equity" (p. 13) and occasionally mentioning non-Western countries which adopted neoliberal reforms, such as Poland's decentralization reform of the late-1990s or Chile's teacher incentive pay of the mid-2000s, which presumably resulted in improved student learning outcomes. Interestingly (but not surprisingly), the report remains relatively silent on education policies and school characteristics of non-Western top-performing countries such as China or Japan, further delineating the contours of the logic of colonialism to a 'Western' geography. (Japan, after all, was a colonial power but has not retained the same level of power as Western Europe, the United States, or Australia.)

Reinforcing colonial hierarchies of power and knowledge

In the section "What is causing the learning crisis?" (p. 78), the 2018 WDR predictably points to the problems of expertise, resources, and implementation at the local level. It argues that "schools are failing learners" because teachers lack skills or motivation to teach (and occasionally do not show up at school), while school leaders lack management skills and resources (p. 9). Pointing to the deeper causes of the 'crisis,' it states that "systems are failing schools" because policymakers are either unaware of the existence of the 'learning crisis' or incapable of managing technical complexities and political forces that "pull education systems out of alignment with learning" (p. 12). The report inadvertently incapacitates local efforts to engage in education reform by positioning education stakeholders in national settings as unaware, passive, corrupt, or simply incapable of meaningful participation in education policy making and school practice. Echoing the now commonplace storyline from Edward Said's Orientalism, it reinforces the power of Western 'experts' who are readily available to offer (and profit from) technical assistance, while facilitating the spread of 'best practices' across the vast array of 'developing' countries.

Reinscribing Western 'best practices' as solutions

Admittedly, the international development rhetoric has become smarter. No longer selling Western 'best practices' wholesale to underperforming countries, the 2018 WDR includes a disclaimer about the need for a more careful transfer of 'best practices' and the risks involved in borrowing system elements from other countries. Referencing

2 We also need to discuss the broader issue of feasibility and desirability of using international large-scale assessments to measure the complexity of 'learning' across different cultural contexts. See for example, Education International's blog essays by Ravitch, 2018; Fischman et al., 2017; Handal, 2017; Pizmony-Levy, 2016; Rappleye & Komatsu, 2017; Bangs & Henry, 2017; among many others.

'PISA tourism' in Finland, the report warns that "lower-performing systems that import Finland's teacher autonomy into their own contexts are likely to be disappointed: if teachers are poorly educated, unmotivated, and loosely managed, giving them even more autonomy will likely make matters worse" (p. 13). While suggesting that "home-grown, context-specific solutions are important" (p. 13), the report nevertheless proceeds with outlining three policy responses "to realize education's promise": (1) assess learning, preferably using global learning metrics such as OECD's PISA; (2) act on evidence, especially "scientific evidence" from impact evaluations or randomized controlled trials; and (3) align actors so that politics do not "undermine well-designed programs" offered by the West (p. 23). Despite the disclaimer, we are clearly back to square one: the 2018 WDR encourages the use of particular Western measurement tools to diagnose problems and therefore sets the stage for Western-inspired solutions, while strictly controlling for any local interference – whether human, economic, or political.

A decolonial reading of the 2018 WDR thus points to the structural problems within the international development industry. Interventions based on a colonial logic – and its unfair principles – will never lead to realizing "education's promise," despite the optimism of the 2018 WDR and good intentions of many donors. Rather than blaming teachers, schools, and local communities for undermining "well-designed programs," we must honestly reevaluate the principles of engagement in international development, acknowledging their deep colonial logic that continues to perpetuate global inequalities. We need to hold the international development industry accountable for the failure of its own work.

It is time to reframe the issue of the 'learning crisis' more broadly to encompass the international development industry itself. Doing so makes it obvious that the 'crisis' we are discussing is not the crisis of the 'developing world,' but rather the crisis of the international development industry. And this requires different and far more radical interventions.

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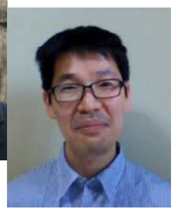
11. Where is the World in the WDR 2018? An Appeal to Rename it the 'American Development Report'



Jeremy Rappleye & Hikaru Komatsu

The 2018 World Development Report "Learning to Realize Education's Promise" provides deep insights into the worldview of the World Bank, the world's most powerful development institution. Instead of critically questioning the Bank's explicit claims – as most of the blogs thus far have done – it is also worth pausing to listen for silences. Among the most deafening of these is the absence of Other views of learning.

Below is a simple chart showing the number of mentions of five countries in the main text of the Report (note this excludes the Foreword, multi-country composite figures, and citations):

Country	Number of mentions in the Report	PISA 2015 - Math (points)	PISA 2015 - Science (points)	Creative Problem Solving (points)	Collaborative Problem Solving (points)
America	64	470	496	508	520
United Kingdom	19	492	509	517	519
Korea	13	524	516	561	538
Japan	2	532	538	552	552
Taiwan	0	542	532	534	527

The overabundance of examples drawn from the United States, while long the modus operandi of Western-led development, now seems oddly out of place in a PISA-dominated education world. Not only have the countries listed – Korea, Japan, and Taiwan – consistently led all international learning assessments from the 1960s forward (FIMS, TIMSS, PISA), but these same countries have taken all the top spots in the newest 'next generation' learning assessments explicitly designed to capture "21st Century Skills": the OECD creative problem solving exercise (2012) and collaborative problem-solving (2015). Meanwhile, the United States (and the United Kingdom) continue to perform well below this average. Would it not make more sense to look to the alternative concept of learning and education in these countries as a guide, rather than place an overwhelming focus on the United States?

What makes this parochialism-turned-silence all the more glaring is that the Report opens by explicitly touting the success of Korea: the Foreword penned by the Korean-national President of the Bank touts the centrality of education to Korea's development. Yet nowhere in the subsequent Report is this followed up with deeper research and analysis. "The most effective systems – in terms of learning – are those that have narrowed the gaps between evidence and practice," the Report argues, "On learner preparation, for example, East Asian countries such as Korea and Singapore have achieved high levels of children ready to learn" (23). Unfortunately, the "evidence" the Reports then highlights is limited to inputs of "new information and communication technology" and "school management and governance reforms" (22-23). Such leaps in logic completely misrepresent the sources of East Asian learning (see Komatsu & Rappleye 2017).

Meanwhile, several of the most innovative policy reforms in the United States and the United Kingdom over the past several years are attempts to learn from East Asian practice. For example, Japanese teacher development practices called Lesson Study have been widely adopted by several American states (Florida) and major urban districts (Oakland and Chicago). In England, there are on-going attempts to adopt Shanghai mathematics. Of course such attempts are often highly problematic (see Rappleye & Komatsu 2018). But our point here is that many in the United States and England are already "looking East" for insights into how to improve learning. Scholarly works like The Teaching Gap (Stevenson & Stigler 1999) that provide rich insights into core differences in teaching and learning worldwide have been run-away bestsellers in the United States. Yet all of this is completely absent from the Report. Here it is hard to avoid the conclusion that the World Bank is still trying to win the Cold War and its analysts are still imprisoned in the logic of modernization theory: the United States leads the world.

The sources of the Bank's image of 'learning' fundamentally come down to only two: neuroscience and the American experience. "Cognitive neuroscience has evolved dramatically with brain imaging," the Report suggests, "revealing new insights into how children learn" (108). The promise of "development solutions" somehow emerging from decontextualized neurosciences are then supplemented with discussions of "what works" drawn from America. For example, consider Box 6.2 where the Report asks: "What Works in Preservice Teacher Training?" (133), then proceeds to answer with an episode from New York City. If such approaches to learning are working so well, what explains America's mediocre performance on international comparative learning assessments?

As Robert Wade (1996) insightfully described over two decades ago in a piece entitled Japan, The World Bank, and the Art of Paradigm Maintenance, the Bank continues to refuse to acknowledge Other views, seeing American practice as universal solutions for the entire World. Yet, it is precisely East Asia that has been the most 'successful' case of development and yet largely chartered an alternative course as that prescribed by the Bank: state over market forces, a heavy focus on welfare and equity, and schooling as primarily a cultural rather than economic project. As a recent article in *The Atlantic* (2017) entitled Japan Might Be What Equity in Education Looks Like underscores, "Japan has different goals for its schools than somewhere like the United States does," leading to this thorough commitment to equity.

So we ask: Is it not thus time to rename the "World Development Report" simply the "American Development Report"? The only aspect that deserves the label "world" is the scope of its ambition, not the ideas that go into formulating the analysis. A future renaming of the Report would help avoid misunderstandings about what it really represents.

And finally, lest we be mistaken: we are not advocating that developing countries copy from East Asia. We quite agree with the Report's somewhat disingenuous claim that "Interventions cannot simply be exported from one country to another" (110). We also agree with Silova (2018) who writes in her article that the purported "learning crisis" is really a deeper crisis of recognition of where the source of the problem lies. Based upon both scholarly research and our first hand experience actually working inside the Bank (see Rappleye & Un 2017), we too see the sorry history of the past six decades of Western-led development as failure. We too would like to see the whole colonial-Cold War artifact eventually dismantled.

Yet, we submit that a first step in this direction is that the Western-led international development industry – most of all the America-centric World Bank – is exposed for what it really is: peddling American practices as universal solutions. Diversifying the potential sources for learning – particularly by including examples outside the Western experience – is one way that we can resist the fallacy of universal solutions.

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12. Behind the Scores; Myths on Korean education

Hyunsu Hwang

The "Forward" of the 2018 World Development Report (WDR) by the World Bank Group's president, Jim Yong Kim, shocked me. It starts: "Education and learning raise aspirations, set values, and ultimately enrich lives. The country where I was born, the Republic of Korea, is a good example of how education can play these important roles (p.xi)." I agree with the first sentence. But I am really doubtful about the second one. I am not sure when Jim Yong Kim left Korea and what kind of experience he had in school, but there seems to be a huge gap between his description of Korean education and that of most Koreans.

Is Korean education a good model? I was taught for 16 years here, from primary to university, and I have been teaching here for more than 20 years. In all this time, I never met anyone, teacher or student, who said that the Korean education system had high quality and efficiency. Most parents say that it was really stressful for them, and now it is even more stressful because they spend a lot of money on their children's private education. To be honest, most people are not satisfied with education here. That is why reading the WDR's praise for Korean education made me uncomfortable. The real situation is totally different to what is depicted by the World Bank.

Education in Korea has often been praised internationally. It is often regarded as a successful model for benchmarking in other countries. As Jim Yong Kim mentioned in his forward, some people even say that education has been a main driver of Korean rapid economic growth. However, I have never read any objective research paper on a close correlation between Korean education and its economic development. This so-called economic development may well result from other factors - such as people's will to overcome poverty and the state-driven economic development.

The international praise for Korean education is mainly due to Korea's test results in the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA). Students in Korea are ranked very highly, along with their counterparts in Finland. However, Korean education is totally different from Finnish education. If education is ultimately about "enriching lives", then Korean education is not education. The PISA test scores don't reflect education quality - it is necessary to look behind the scores.

The most distinctive characteristic of education in Korea is the cut-throat competition. The race to the top universities now starts at kindergarten. Primary and secondary schools are like a battle field to get better test scores. But just high marks are not enough. The important thing is that "my" grade should be better than others' and I should beat my classmates' score. Competition in school is very fierce.

At the peak of our test-centered education, there is the high-stakes national test called

Su-neung, which is an examination for university admission. Students take it for 8 hours on one day. Airplanes can't fly over the Korean peninsula when students take the English listening test on the third period of the test. This shows how important the test is; the result decides students' entire lives. The test is a major event not just for students, but also for family members - the test score determines not only which university students can attend but what profession a person will pursue and possibly even who they will marry. Korean universities have a hierarchical system. Even though former governments have made an attempt to relieve competition by introducing a more diverse university entrance system, *Su-neung* is still vital to understanding public education in Korea. As Diane Ravitch mentioned in this blog series, too much emphasis on test scores "distorts the educational process in undesirable ways", encouraging "cheating, teaching to the test and reduction of time allocated to non-tested subjects". This is exactly what happens in Korean schools.

In Korea, there are huge numbers of private tutors. Private tutoring centers are called "*hagwon*." and are crucial to understanding the Korean education system. Alvin Toffler, one of the world's most famous futurists, mentioned them when he came to South Korea:

> "The most incomprehensible thing about Korea is that their education is going backward. Korean students spend 15 hours at school and *hagwon* to learn knowledge that won't be necessary in the future or for jobs that don't even exist. They are wasting precious time."

Regardless of the intention of his comment, I would like to focus on this part: "Korean students spend 15 hours at school". Is it true? Primary school students' daily schedules can be different from high school students', but the average high school student spends 13 hours to 15 hours at school, usually until 10 pm. Lunch and dinner is served at school. The school hours can be divided into 3 parts: regular classes from 8:30am to 4pm, extra after-school classes from 4pm to 6pm, and night self-study time from 7pm to 10pm. Some high school students go to *hagwon* or meet a private tutor at home to study more after 10pm. They usually go to bed at 1 or 2am. In school, many students fall asleep during classes because of lack of sleep at home.

South Korea is notorious for having the highest suicide rate and lowest fertility rate among OECD countries. In 2015, the OECD reported that South Korea has had the highest suicide rate for the eleventh year in a row among developed countries (OECD, 2015, p.57). Suicide is also the leading cause of death among students. The main reasons for student suicide are stress and heavy pressure from tests and scores; suicidal high school students in Korea reported the most significant stressor in their lives were difficulties with their career choice, low academic achievement, the high amount of academic work, and the lack of rest (Lee et al. 2010). In addition, receiving results on the university entrance exam was reported as a major trigger of suicide attempts.

As for the low birthrate in Korea, it has been one of the big issues among Korean society. It is getting worse and worse. Various indicators related to fertility shows that the problem is reaching a catastrophic level. Why don't Korean couples give birth? Most Koreans think that one of the main reasons for the low fertility rate is education. We know very well how hard it is to raise kids in this society. Korean parents devote themselves to their children's education and parents spend a big portion of their total monthly income on their kids' private education expenditure[1]. So, there are lots of young couples who don't want to have a baby.

Under the Korean military regimes, schools were just centers of propaganda, where the dictatorial military government required educators to enforce its ideologies. Teachers were not permitted to speak about these regimes, and most teachers complied with the governments' dictates. However, on May 28th 1989, teachers gathered to launch the first nationwide teachers' union, rejecting their role as puppets controlled by the dictatorship. They established the Korean Teachers and Education Workers' Union (KTU). The military government immediately made the KTU illegal. Hundreds of members were arrested and imprisoned by the regime, and more than 1,500 were dismissed because they joined the union and they spoke

1 Government statistics show that: "Students spending 500 thousand won and over per month on private education accounted for 15.1 percent, up 0.8 precent from 2014." 500 thousand won is roughly around 500USD. In reality, most parents spend more than that for private education. It usually accounts for more than one fifth of parents' monthly income. http://kostat.go.kr/portal/eng/pressReleases/11/1/index.board?bmode=read&bSeq=&aSeq=352520&pageNo=2&rowNum=10&navCount=10&currPg=&sTarget=title&sTxt

up for teachers, students, and parents. In 1999, after 10 years of struggle, the KTU was recognized as a legal union. The KTU has made an effort to bring a quality education for all with Education International.

In the meanwhile, the former Park Geun-hye government decertified KTU on 24 October 2013 because it did not amend its constitution to ban dismissed and unemployed workers from its membership. This was a violation of international labor standards. The ILO had repeatedly criticized these exclusions, reiterating that, "It urged the Government to repeal the provisions prohibiting dismissed and unemployed workers from keeping their union membership and making non-union members ineligible to stand for trade union office." The ILO Committee on Freedom of Association (CFA) has called on the government to "ensure the re-certification of the KTU without delay" with a much stronger tone. But the government still refuses to accept the ILO's decision. The former President Park Geun-hye was impeached and fired by the Constitutional court because of serious corruption. She is in prison now. It has now been revealed that the decertification of the KTU was a case of political maneuvering performed by the impeached President and her allies in the administration.

The KTU has made big efforts for quality education for all the students in Korea. It has been fighting against competition-oriented education, merit payment, standardized testing, and other neoliberal education agendas. Before it was established in 1989, school was a place for bribes. It was very natural for parents to give an amount of money to teachers because they wanted the teacher to give some advantage to their kids. It was also natural for teachers to take the bribe from parents. The KTU firmly rejected this injustice in schools. The KTU is the most powerful union in Korea. In the nation-wide election for superintendents of 16 provinces in 2014, former KTU chapter heads or KTU-friendly academics were elected in 13 provinces among the total of 16 provinces. These results show that the KTU's progressive policies (such as free school meals, collaborative, student centered learning, and the "innovative school movement) are supported by the public. A very conservative newspaper commented on this result, "This is a victory of the KTU."

South Korean education has been regarded as a good education model for other countries to follow. However, this is based on widespread myths about Korean education.

I want to unveil the truth about education in Korea. Students are not happy in school because of the competition-oriented education. Teaching in class is based on memorization and rote learning. Because of a lack of rest, many students sleep in the classroom in break time and even in class time. Because of excessive stress, school bullying and violence is very common in school. A few months ago, a middle school girl student killed herself leaving a note saying: "I hate school".

Parents and teachers are unhappy with the education system. Parents spend a large proportion of their income on their kids' private education costs. Teachers can't focus only on teaching. As soon as they arrive at school, there is a huge amount of administrative chores waiting for them. Student discipline is very important in school and in classroom. Students' behavior is sometimes beyond their tolerance. Teaching is sometimes very difficult because of exhausted students and some students' indifference in class. Some "smart" students study different subjects such as English, Math, and other major subjects during "minor" subject classes which are not tested in the university entrance exam.

Our teacher union which has protested against the competition-oriented education policies, is decertified because it allowed a handful of dismissed teachers to keep its union membership. 60,000 teachers lost their union representation. Teachers' professional and political freedom is extremely restricted.

These are the reasons we should take a closer look at Korean education. This is the reality behind the test scores.

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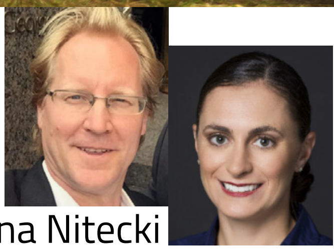
13. Early Childhood in the WDR 2018: Acknowledged, but Still Rooted in Western-Centric and Economically-Focused Thinking



Helge Wasmuth and Elena Nitecki

The *World Development Report (WDR)* recognizes the importance of the formative years, which is a positive step toward addressing many problems facing children and families. It was refreshing to read that issues like poverty, malnutrition, pre- and post-natal care, and parent education (pp. 9, 21, 112) are acknowledged as powerful influences in early childhood and that "education can't do it alone" (p. 44). As other authors have pointed out, the WDR is in line with the current research about children's well-being and learning – but all of this is rooted in a singular way of thinking about Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC). The report's perspective is reflective of the dominant, Western-centric and economically-focused discourse. Voices that have challenged this perspective and its limitations are missing and thus reducing what is supposed to be a "world" report to a reductive account of Western thinking. Such narrowness, together with the striking absence of a vision of what ECEC actually means, compromises the report's recognition of the critical early years.

Early Childhood Perspectives are Dominated by Western Thinking

Currently, much of the research, theory, policy, and practices in ECEC are rooted in Western thinking, specifically focusing on child development, child psychology, and scientific means to assess and measure young children. Children and their development are generally viewed as universal, while the local contexts and environments in which they are raised are minimally valued. In many aspects, the WBR mirrors this dominant discourse.

The insights of Western theorists, of course, are important and have helped practitioners worldwide to improve their work. However, the concern is the perpetual reliance on these theories as the only frame of reference. The report strengthens the primacy of this theoretical perspective. Further, the fact that no alternative thinking is presented leads one to assume that the discourse is unquestioned. Even in the Western world, many scholars and practitioners have started to question this dominance (Dahlberg, Moss, & Pence, 2007), which is documented in the impressive work of Reconceptualizing Early Childhood Education (RECE), an international organization that represents a wide range of perspectives on early childhood (Bloch, Swadener, & Canella, 2014). The report does not acknowledge such voices and as criticized by Rappleye & Hikaru, there is no reference to alternative thinking outside of the Western world. Alternative views of ECEC have much to contribute, especially when applied in an international context. Instead, countries around the world continue to be colonized by Western theories, which has proven difficult and inappropriate. The report will only strengthen the dominance of a Western-based theoretical perspective.

The Limitations of "Investing" in Early Childhood

One aspect of Western thinking that is especially pervasive is the idea that early childhood is an "investment," a means to prepare children for life and prevent future social ills. There is ample evidence that the WDR defines Early Childhood in these economic terms, specifically as a worthwhile investment and preparation for school readiness. The report reinforces the result of such an economically-focused perspective – that ECEC has no intrinsic value of its own, nor do children have a right to childhood.

Thus, the value of ECEC is described in the report as follows: "Children's early years offer a rare window for societies to make investments in their children with extremely high returns" (p. 112). Governments should "promote day-care centers for very young children and preschool programs for children 3–6 years old [...] to improve cognitive and socioemotional skills in the short run, as well as education and labor market outcomes later in life" (p. 21). These arguments can be summarized as Human Capital Theory (HCT), or what Peter Moss describes as the "story of quality and high returns" (2014, 19). This way of framing ECEC has become attractive for policy makers worldwide (Moss, 2014; Penn, 2010). High-quality ECEC, as the rhetoric states, is viewed as "an investment in human capital that will lead to innumerable societal gains and strong economic returns in form of reduced cost for social and educational remediation and a more productive workforce" (Nagasawa, Peters, & Swadener, 2014, p. 284). The report argues similarly: Especially "at-risk children" would benefit from early childhood interventions "well beyond their early years: their school performance, employment, income, overall welfare, and social integration all improved" (p. 114).

Relying on such thinking, it is no surprise that the report sees the main, if not the only, purpose of ECEC as school readiness: "Early childhood education prepares young children for school" (p. 116). Investment, especially in young children at risk, is necessary because too often children "arrive in school unprepared to learn" (p. 9). Although the report casts blame on ECEC, it does acknowledge other contributing factors, such as malnutrition, illness, and low parental involvement. However, the primary emphasis is undoubtedly stressing ECEC as a means to school readiness and an investment in the future.

A Vision of What Early Childhood Means - for Everyone

What is further striking is the absence of a vision of what ECEC actually means; of the variety of ways that young children construct their worlds and how they give meaning to the world in which they live in order to form their own selves. Play as the appropriate means of such a process is only mentioned in two contexts (pp. 69 and 116), for example by acknowledging that "key elements of programs that have led to strong preschool outcomes include curriculums that foster crucial pre-academic abilities (emotional security, curiosity, language, self-regulation) through play" (p. 116). It is notable that the importance of play is mentioned, however, what is missing is the assertion that play is *the* primary means of young children's learning and the perspective that a child's learning and education can take many forms. This is especially concerning if one considers the reality in many ECEC settings worldwide – much of which can be attributed to misguided applications of HCT, as reinforced in the World Bank's work. ECEC settings have become a highly-structured, standardized, and measured preparation for later schooling, its "schoolification" is already reality in countries worldwide. ECEC is turning into a "trivialised idea of learning and knowledge" (Olsson, 2013). Certainly, the report mentions that "overly academic and structured programs for children under 5 may undermine their cognitive and socioemotional skills" (p. 116) and further recognizes the importance of play, but will the report be understood this way when the economically-focused framing of ECEC is unquestioned? The report will likely reinforce the false dichotomy between play and learning that currently exists. Its unquestioned adherence to ideas of school readiness will lead to more academic teaching and learning, even though this is already happening with disastrous consequences. Too often, play is erroneously portrayed as directly oppositional to a more 'worthy' academic counterpart or high expectations. However, learning and play are not contradictory; learning clearly does occur during play. Play *is* young children's means of learning. The reports lacks a strong support of such a thinking, which is worrisome.

It is positive that the WDR acknowledges the significance of the early years and many of the contributing influences in a child's life. However, the very foundation of ECEC remains unquestioned. The report reinforces dominant Western theories of child development and child psychology that are not applicable worldwide. Applications of HCT, which essentially frame ECEC as a commodity worthy of investment, have warped ECEC into a place of preparation that robs children of play and a right to childhood. This should be of concern for everyone advocating for young children and their right to childhood. If the WDR is intended for international application, the dominance of Western, economically-motivated perspectives should be questioned.

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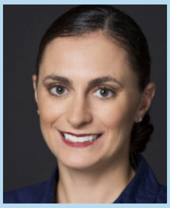

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14. Technical and vocational education and training – realising the potential to transform the lives of millions

Pat Forward

The most striking features of the World Development Report 2018's chapter on technical and vocational training (TVET) are that it is a superficial examination of the role and impact of TVET around the world, and that it persists in perpetuating a very narrow framing of the role that the sector plays.

The tone is set very early on. The chapter opens with a deficit dichotomy – referring to only two paths out of school - "drop-outs" or "graduates" (p. 154). It then goes on to assert the importance of linking vocational education with employer (rather than student) needs. It refers frequently to the importance of workplace training, arguing that it deepens workers' skills, but according to the authors, more critically – raises firms' productivity. It refers throughout to the very narrow construction of "jobs" rather than careers or vocations, despite displaying an understanding of the difference between preparation for careers as a preferred outcome of TVET, not short term jobs and narrowly conceived, employer-determined skills for "just-in-time" work. Employers are requesting workers who have been prepared for the jobs of yesterday not the jobs of tomorrow and certainly not the jobs of the future. Recent work by EI – Global Trends in TVET: A framework for social justice (Wheelahan et al., 2016) describes the dangers of this narrow emphasis on "just-in-time" skills for work, which results in narrow and instrumental vocational education focussing on specific skills for particular occupations. Instead, it is argued, students should be equipped "with broad ranging knowledge and skills they need to engage in fulfilling careers, and contribute to their occupations, families and communities." (Wheelahan et al., 2016, p. 9-10)

The WDR authors do not mention the manifestly obvious public good embodied in TVET, its role in developing people's lives, the importance of a broadly conceived reference point for skills and the critical need to move from a conception which underpins the sector of maximising returns on human capital rather than nurturing people living lives they have reason to value – on nurturing flourishing productive citizens. Again, EI's Global Trends in TVET, in discussing the contrast between narrow conceptions of human capital skills development, and the much broader idea of a capabilities approach, elaborates further on the importance of putting citizens at the centre of vocational education policy. The capabilities approach places human flourishing, and the importance of ensuring women and others experiencing disadvantage and poverty are at the forefront of vocational education (ibid.). More importantly, the capabilities approach emphasises giving students access to the knowledge and understanding they need to develop a broader, adaptive capacity in the rapidly changing world of work. This is a much deeper engagement with these issues than that which is presented in the World Development Report.

Critically, the chapter makes no mention at all of governments' obligations to fund and resource a vocational education sector which can support what must be a key objective for all countries at this important moment in history – the nurturing of flourishing, productive citizens. Throughout the world, TVET continues to languish as the poor cousin of schools and universities because governments fail to prioritise its role in the development of flourishing productive citizens, choosing instead to limit its purpose to the development of narrowly conceived skills for employer determined jobs.

The Australian vocational education system is a study in the destruction of a highly regarded, well-functioning vocational education system, with public TAFE (technical and further education) institutions at its core, and sophisticated networks and relationships between employers, unions and governments underpinning it. For the last two decades, successive governments in Australia have attempted to privatise the sector, offering government funding to for-profit private providers, imposing a narrowly conceived Competency Based Training regime on the sector, withdrawing funds from the public system, replacing funding for institutions with student loans, and continuing to argue throughout that the most important feature of vocational education should be that it is employer-controlled.

As the Australian government's determination to impose market reforms of the Australian vocational education sector peaked in the last five years, funding for the sector collapsed (see Pilcher et al., 2017), the growth of profits in the private sector peaked (Yu & Olivier, 2015) – with all the "profits" derived from the rorting of public funding, close to 4 billion dollars was lost to the system as a result of a failed student loan scheme (Australian Education Union, 2016) – and critically, enrolments and participation in vocational education have collapsed.

The Australian governments obsession with market organisation and design, its rigid adherence to Competency Based Training and the proliferation and commercialisation of literally thousands of Training Packages, the undermining and under-resourcing of teachers, including a failure to resource or develop teaching qualifications, and support teachers preparation and development – all these things are a direct result of a failure to support a sophisticated public vocational education and training sector.

Australia has ruined its vocational education system, undermining the public educational institutions which were at its centre, sacking thousands of teachers, and consigning hundreds of thousands of students to a future of debt, for qualifications and training which were, in many cases, never delivered.

Wheelahan, Buchanan and Yu (2015) pose two important questions about how to approach vocational education policy in recent research into the underpinning of the Australian vocational education sector:

What objectives should we be pursuing, and what is the reference point for skills?

The answer to these questions is relevant to the development of TVET systems around the world.

Should the object of TVET systems be maximising returns on human capital (with a priority on infinitely flexible labour) or nurturing people to live lives they have reason to value (with a priority on nurturing flourishing, productive citizens)?

And what is the reference point for skills? Should it just be competencies derived from current jobs? Or should it be capabilities to adapt to an uncertain future, one increasingly impacted by new technology and unpinned by people's ability to move quickly within and between job clusters or vocational streams? This broader approach to TVET referred to in the EI study demonstrates that people need to have the knowledge, skills and attributes required to navigate, negotiate and engage in these aspects of life; the capacity to be skilful at work emerges from broader knowledge, skills and attributes. WDR spotlight 5 deals specifically with the impact of technology on the world of work, and on learning, and makes the salient point that adapting to new technologies is imperative to preparation for participation in the rapidly changing world of work. However, EI's study also acknowledges that these new technological skills must be built on the foundations of a literacy and numeracy – an approach inherent in a broader approach to TVET, and sadly lacking in the WDR analysis.

The World Bank would do well to approach the TVET sector in a more considered and sophisticated way. As a critical education sector for individuals and for society, it can play a key role in transforming peoples' lives, as well as establishing key relationships with industry and unions in transforming the economy and the future of work. The TVET sector cannot create jobs, but it can transform the way in which the economy works.

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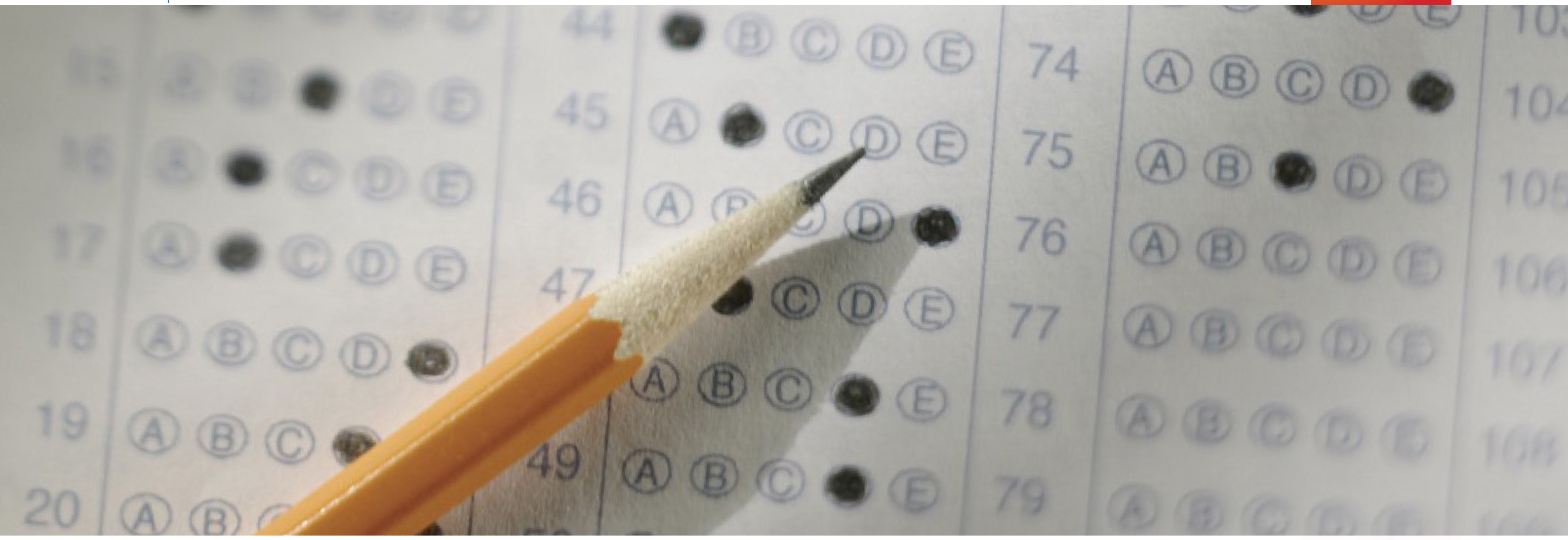

15. Improving Education Requires Much More Than Testing

Diane Ravitch

The World Development Report on Education, "Learning to Realize Education's Promise," contains both promise and peril.

It accurately describes the importance of education in human and social development and eloquently describes the many goals of education. But, it says, the learning crisis of our time is that the quality of education in many nations is so poor that many children are not learning much of anything. The report documents this "learning crisis." In some nations, teachers are poorly educated, poorly trained, and poorly paid. Teaching is not a profession. Education is not a priority. The report urges that learning must become a priority in order for individuals and societies to see its benefits. The report is correct. It is a travesty when children are expected to sit in a classroom, listen to an ill-prepared teacher, and learn nothing at all. This is not education. When teachers are frequently absent and lack any sense of professionalism, children are indeed cheated.

The report offers a few very general solutions to these complex problems.

It says, first, nations must "set learning as a clearly articulated goal and measure it." In most nations, it asserts, there is too little testing, not too much.

Second, build coalitions to emphasize the importance of education.

Third, be open to innovations that strengthen the system of education, relying on evidence to seek improvements.

Fourth, review evidence of success and adjust the system to build on success. Use measures of learning and other metrics of delivery to determine whether innovations are working.

There are many recommendations in the report that are indeed worthy. Teachers must be far better prepared, motivated to teach, and compensated as professionals.

Children need an early start to their education.

Communities must prioritize schooling and education.

Years of schooling must not be confused with successful learning.

However, I must call attention to what I see as the single most important flaw in their analysis.

Its deep faith in measurement is problematic.

Certainly measurement matters. It is often said that what is measured is what matters. But it is also true that what matters most —be it character, citizenship, aesthetic development, curiosity, creativity— cannot be measured by traditional school tests.

Measurement can guide policymakers at the lowest possible levels of learning, such as the examples in the report of whether children can read simple language or compute simple figures.

As learning becomes more complex, standardized tests become less useful.

What is worse, the use of standardized tests as the measure of learning will become the antithesis of learning as test results are tied to incentives and sanctions. Campbell's Law, the axiom framed by social scientist Donald Campbell in the 1970s, says that "The more any quantitative social indicator is used for social decision-making, the more subject it will be to corruption pressures and the more apt it will be to distort and corrupt the social processes it is intended to monitor." Campbell also wrote:

> "Achievement tests may well be valuable indicators of general school achievement under conditions of normal teaching aimed at general competence. But when test scores become the goal of the teaching process, they both lose their value as indicators of educational status and distort the educational process in undesirable ways" (Campbell, 1979, p.85)

From the experience of the United States, we have learned that the pressure to raise test scores in order to win a reward or avoid a punishment produces predictable outcomes: cheating; teaching to the test; reduction of time allocated to non-tested subjects, such as the arts and civics; and gaming the system to give the appearance of progress. Indeed, the report acknowledges that the "high-stakes accountability approach" (p.92) of measuring learning as implemented through the US No Child Left Behind policy "generated various undesirable strategic responses by teachers and administrators" including "reclassifying students as requiring special education, exempting certain students from testing, reallocating resources to students at the margin of passing, and suspending low-scoring students near test date" (p. 93). Nonetheless, the report does not lose its faith in measurement.

Certainly the report should be widely read. It should stimulate discussion at the highest levels in every country about how best to turn schooling into education. It should be read with the caution that high test scores do not necessarily represent high levels of learning. They may only represent diligent teaching to the test.

Educators and policymakers should also be aware of the dangers of standardized testing. Such tests may be used for diagnostic purposes. But using them to rank schools, teachers, and students threatens the risks embodied in Campbell's Law. Genuine learning requires more sophisticated measures, such as essays, projects that demonstrate understanding, research papers, scientific and technological displays, and other evidences of student learning that represent deeper learning than standardized tests ever measure.

Standardized tests also have inherent problems. Nothing about them is standardized other than the scoring of them. Fallible humans write the questions, and sometimes the questions are poorly written. Fallible humans choose the "correct" answer, and the "correct" answer may be wrong. Wise children often choose the "wrong" answer because they thought too much or they knew too much. Sometimes, such tests don't have a "right" answer. There is also a risk in teaching masses of children that every problem has a right answer, and that it is their job to choose from one of four possible choices. This is a way to elicit low-level information. But the lessons that children learn from being subjected to standardized tests over many years are counter-productive to the spirit of learning.

So, yes, read the report, and use it as a tool for discussion. The questions it raises includes not only how to measure learning, but how to recruit and retain dedicated teachers; how to convince government officials to invest in education; and how to assure that the benefits of education are widely and universally shared.

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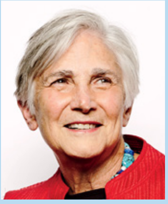

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16. Realizing education's promise: teachers are the solution, not the problem

Howard Stevenson

The World Bank's 2018 world development report, with its focus on education and the need 'to realize education's promise', is a welcome, if perhaps surprising, step forward. The report scores highly on intent, but it must work with teachers, not against them, if the report's ambitions are to become a reality.

The focus on education, and the recognition of how education can transform the lives of learners, is a positive development that should be acknowledged as such. In particular, the recognition that the drive for improved outcomes for all in education is a moral imperative that is much more ambitious than purely economic aspirations is to be warmly supported. However, whilst the report identifies the problems faced, and the need for bold action, the policy solutions presented look little different to a form of re-heated scientific management (or 'Taylorism') in which the teachers are directed how to teach (by setting students into ability groups), trained in appropriate methods using drill-and-repeat methods of training, their 'output' is measured through more testing and finally their efforts are either rewarded or penalised by linking their pay to their students' test scores.

These are not the policy solutions that value, support and motivate teachers and that are likely to lead to the high quality outcomes that the report identifies as its goal. It is why teachers have consistently challenged the policy solutions offered in the World Bank report, and why they expect their unions to speak up for them and give voice to their concerns. Unfortunately the authors of the report see these issues very differently. Teacher unions are criticised for not prioritising student learning, but rather protecting their members' so-called 'vested interests' (p.189). In particular, in specific contexts, they are criticised for challenging the introduction of performance pay and the use of flexible employment contracts. The report refers to specific studies that claim an inverse relationship between union membership and student attainment, and although some caveats are offered, the overall conclusion is clear – teacher unions are bad for student attainment.

There is not the space here to challenge these points in detail but it is important to recognise that the arguments presented are poorly evidenced and undermine the credibility of the report. It is all too easy to identify studies from very specific contexts and give the impression these are generalizable, whilst too little effort is focused in distinguishing correlation from causation in the reports presented. It is interesting to note that the literature from this area that is referenced in the report is drawn from researchers with a long history of criticising education unions, whilst sources that are more positive about education unions are conspicuous by their absence. For example, the recent edited collection by Terry Moe and Susanne Wiborg (2017) is cited, whilst a similar collection, but with very different conclusions, edited by Nina Bascia (2015) is not.

Perhaps of most concern is the manner in which the report's authors too easily counterpose a 'focus on teaching and learning' against the defence of 'vested interests' as though this is an unreconcilable binary. Teacher unions are criticised in the report for eschewing the former and apparently favouring the latter. It fails to acknowledge that it is entirely legitimate for teachers as workers to fight to defend and improve their working conditions. Teachers should not have to apologise for fighting for a wage that reflects the work they do, and on which they can afford to live. Nor should they be made to feel guilty for doing so. Too often teachers are asked to sacrifice their working conditions (and all too often their health) in the name of the children they teach. Setting up a simplistic and naïve tension between a focus on teaching and learning and teachers' vested interests fails to recognise the difficulties teachers face, the complexity of the issues being discussed and how improved working conditions are often a central feature of improved learning conditions.

Second, the authors of the report assume that the 'focus on teaching and learning' is itself an uncontested goal about which there exists a unanimity of views, ie that the choice is between a focus on teaching and learning or a focus on other issues - this is manifestly not the case. Education does not simply prepare young people for their place in a future world, but it develops the people who will create that future world. Such a task is inevitably highly charged, and perhaps particularly so in today's world which is more complex, more fast moving and arguably more unstable than it has been for decades. Teachers must make sense of this world, and think about how they equip young people to shape the future. At the same time they must make sense of all the competing demands that are articulated in wider society, and which education is expected in some way to resolve and reconcile. These competing demands are real and legitimate and cannot be wished away by an apparently neutral appeal to a 'focus on teaching and learning'.

I welcome the World Bank's development report and its focus on education. However, if the Bank really wants to tackle the challenges identified in its report it must first appreciate all the complexities, and diversities and tensions that make education what it is, and that teachers have to reconcile every day in their professional lives. Policy makers must stop treating education systems like some form of economic model, which, when the algorithms are right, automatically produces the correct policy solutions. An evidence informed approach to policy development is to be welcomed, but it is an approach that must be applied critically. A desperate search for 'what works' rarely yields the desired results, whilst simultaneously failing to address the real questions about what matters.

In conclusion, the World Bank, and others, must appreciate that teachers are the solution, not the problem and develop the policy responses that flow from this. Improvement in education is not brought about by working out which switch to press, or which lever to pull, but it is achieved by working with teachers, understanding them and the issues they face, and addressing challenges appropriately. Specifically, it is brought about by working with the organisations that can legitimately claim to represent the collective interests of teachers – teacher unions. Rather than trying to circumvent teachers' collective organisations policy makers need to develop the structures that ensure teachers' voices are at the heart of policy development. Such an approach may not offer a quick fix, but teachers everywhere have experienced too many of those. Genuinely engaging with teachers in an inclusive and democratic approach to policy development is the only method that offers a realistic prospect of securing long term and sustainable improvement.

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17. Unions do contribute to quality education. An example for the Gambia

Marie-Antoinette Corr

The World Development Report 2018 recognises, although briefly, that poor working conditions for teachers can undermine learning (p.138). It argues that the status of the teaching profession has declined over the last few decades, and that as a result, "teachers deserve more from the systems that employ them" (p.138).

It points out that that teachers are challenged as professionals by multiple factors such as oversized multi-grade classes; large workloads; long working hours; the necessity of additional duties outside of the classroom; a lack of school infrastructure and equipment; long distances to travel to work; and the need to engage in additional work to earn enough to support themselves.

However, in contradiction, the report also argues that a concern for teachers' job security is misaligned with a focus on learning. Teachers and education professionals are portrayed as self-interested when they "fight to maintain secure employment and to protect their incomes" (p.13). Teacher unions, as the organizations that support teachers on such matters, are criticized, and it is suggested that on the whole unions have a negative influence on learning (p.191).

In the Gambia, the work of the national teachers' union shows why the WDR is mistaken both in its depiction of unions and in positing working conditions and learning as competing interests. The Gambia Teachers Union (GTU) supports teachers by helping them to respond to some of the challenges of poor working conditions. In particular, two projects have greatly improved the working conditions of teachers: the provision of motor bikes to teachers, and the payment of teachers' salaries by the union.

First, the GTU has provided teachers with motorbikes through loans. By enabling teacher mobility, this project has helped to improve education. As teachers are able to easily and safely travel to school, the project has improved teacher punctuality and reduced teacher absenteeism. Multiple other benefits can be seen, particularly in rural areas. Having a reliable means of transport with which to travel to work and to use to buy essentials from far away markets means that teachers are more likely to accept postings in rural areas. The bikes are then used by these teachers as ambulances during school sessions, to transport sick pupils and colleagues to hospital which may be miles away. They also facilitate movement of teachers during school enrolment periods, when they travel to homes to sensitize parents on the need for education and help increase enrolment numbers.

The second project tackles the government's difficulty in paying rural teachers without losing instructional time. To avoid teachers having to travel to banks (sometimes days away) to be paid, salaries are instead paid through the

Gambia Teachers' Union Cooperative Credit Union (the GTUCCU – a branch of the GTU). This has had numerous benefits for quality education. Enhanced efficiency in the payment process reveals ghost teachers and allows the government to save money and use the savings to recruit more teachers. The project reduces teacher absenteeism drastically, as teachers do not have to leave their schools to go to faraway banks. It also ensures that all teachers are paid on time as the union can pre-finance salaries when the government is late in processing them. The perception of the GTU by government changed when they saw GTU helping them achieve their goals; they now view the GTU as a partner.

A teacher in a primary school extolled the GTUCCU for contributing to the enhancement of their welfare and improving their working conditions in multiple ways. "Teachers are far better now than before," he said. "The GTUCCU has intervened in many areas of development to upgrade teachers' livelihoods. They protect teachers in terms of job security, professional development, provide access to credit facilities, like loans, assets like motorbikes and are now planning to come up with housing schemes to prevent them from being homeless after their retirement".

In hard-to-reach communities, imagine the life of the average child in the presence of a teacher who is now comfortably housed in a solar powered apartment as compared to the teacher who could only settle for a store in the community as his most comfortable means of accommodation. Ponder the life of a parent in a remote village whose child's teacher can use a motor bike instead of a donkey or horse cart as the means of emergency transportation. The status of the average teacher is much better now than it used to be and this has a positive impact on the lives of both students and parents.

The things that teachers need to do their job will also help children learn and grow, for instance, smaller class sizes, a robust curriculum, adequate resources, collaboration among teachers. Ms. Isatou Ndow, the Vice Principal and Head of the School of Education at Gambia College was right when she said "Teachers deserve immeasurable gratitude. Without teachers we would all be floating in the wilderness of ignorance and prejudice, shut out from the wealth of the wisdom, shut out from the rich conversation of the educated and the enlightened".

Rather than seeking to understand how teacher quality can be improved through performance based incentives and punishments (WDR, p. 22), we should instead consider: why do teachers do what they do? What challenges do they face? How can we reduce these challenges and support them to provide quality education? This would enable their views to be taken into account, and will also encourage studies and strategies that respect their motivation to help children learn, but are responsive to their complex practical circumstances.

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18. Teacher working conditions are student learning conditions: Lost opportunities in World Bank education report

Leo Baunach

The dedicated reader of the 2018 World Development Report (WDR) on learning and education will find moments of nuanced discussion. Unfortunately, these gems are brief caveats to flawed headlines and conclusions. The World Bank report valorizes professional teaching while degrading the voices and needs of teachers.

More than halfway through is a three-paragraph section on "one factor undermining teaching: Poor working conditions" (p. 138). It acknowledges problems plaguing the profession around the world, including a multi-decade decline in "pay, respect and working conditions," lack of professional development, "oversized, multi-grade classes," and staff shortages that burden teachers with long working hours, extra shifts and non-classroom administrative duties.

These problems (see Symeondis, 2015) create a downward spiral as teachers abandon the profession, further damaging quality and the efficiency of education spending as teachers with the skills and experience to deliver quality learning outcomes are lost. To support better learning, the World Bank should promote social dialogue and fair working conditions for teachers.

The description of the profound and often unrewarded dedication of teachers is a breath of fresh air in a report that creates a false opposition between working conditions and learning outcomes. This is starkly stated in the introduction: "Teachers and other education professionals, even when motivated by a sense of mission, also may fight to maintain secure employment and to protect their incomes" (p. 13). A table on the following page labels pay, job security and employment as "competing interests" against student learning and a professional ethic.

This is a simplistic and unnecessary conclusion, and it is an especially dangerous message for developing countries that look to the World Bank for advice. Teachers are the frontlines of education systems. To improve learning outcomes, teachers must be better supported with quality jobs, adequate classroom resources and professional development.

The WDR lumps teachers alongside outside interests such as private, for-profit suppliers that disregard learning and seek to glean money. Throughout the report, the Bank describes a lack of motivation, preparation and commitment among teachers, and casts a concerned eye toward spending on teacher salaries. In the real world, teachers sacrifice daily in underfunded systems and pursue the career despite meagre pay. When stretched too thin, they are liable to leave and add fuel to the crisis of learning that the WDR seeks to address.

The report acknowledges the need for better pay but casts this aside as a long-term solution. In the short-term, the report recommends further erosions to job security and measures including performance-based pay that add workplace vulnerability to the challenges facing overburdened teachers.

Decent work for teachers cannot wait. In fact, better learning systems are not possible without it. If reform increases the precarity of teachers, undermines basic labour rights and introduces uncertainty to low-pay regimes, then learning outcomes will suffer as teachers face further struggles inside and outside the classroom.

The report falls back onto politically-motivated stereotypes of teachers' unions as obstacles to reform, failing to see unions as partners in professional development, learning and spending efficiency. Teachers and their organizations are typically ardent proponents of these goals. Professional development and professionalization a particular passion for many unions (Bascia and Stevenson, 2017, p.16), and the WDR describes how these approaches improve learning outcomes. Training and development also promote decent work, respect and good pay by firmly establishing teachers as skilled workers. The WDR could have recommended partnerships for better professional development, in which unions ensure accountability and participation.

There is also a lost opportunity to support social dialogue and the productive involvement of teachers in policymaking. The World Bank itself conducted limited and scattershot consultation in drafting the report. The WDR focuses on engaging parents and other stakeholders in coalitions to support reform, but seems to position broader coalitions as an antidote to unions. The report recognizes the need to have the support of teachers and dialogue with unions, but largely portrays unions as a risk to change. The development of productive dialogue in Chile and the positive involvement of Zambian, Ugandan and Bolivian unions in reform are described as exceptions to the negative impact of unions on education systems.

Most prominent is the example of Kenya, where low-paid temporary contract teachers with little training were hired to reduce class size. In court, the union argued that the contracts violated the constitutional principle of equal pay for equal work. This principle is also an important part of international labour standards and the environmental and social standards of the World Bank (see World Bank 2017). The WDR describes how education can reduce overall income inequality and improve labour market outcomes, but ignores the topic with regards to teachers. In the majority-female profession of teaching, teacher pay also has implications for gender equality and wage gaps.

The Bank argues that the Kenya program failed to improve learning outcomes because contract teachers were no longer in a precarious position, desperate for contract renewal and therefore motivated to work harder. This is not the way to produce motivated and professional teachers. In fact, it does the opposite by degrading and destabilizing teachers (see Education International, 2015), making it difficult for them to focus on learning and plan for successful classrooms. Only in passing is it mentioned that student learning was damaged because contract teachers were paid three months late, on average – a rare but underplayed admission that teacher working conditions are student learning conditions.

Despite its failings, the report vindicates the importance of skilled teachers who have strong relationships with students, and warns against get-rich-quick schemes that promote technology as a replacement. Hopefully this memorandum will be sent to the World Bank's private sector arm, which holds an equity stake in for-profit Bridge International Academies. The company uses untrained teachers who read curriculum from tablets.

The WDR is pessimistic about further funding to education, declaring that "public spending does not correlate strongly with learning" (p. 173), despite recognizing that funding is necessary to achieve quality education for all. The Bank is right to call for better efficiency, especially to ensure that money reaches students and teachers in the classroom. However, the WDR could undermine efforts to address funding gaps and improve education.

Moving forward, the World Bank should disregard the contradictory and divisive tone in parts of the WDR, and instead focus on dialogue with teachers and their unions in pursuit of learning and equality.

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19. We Need More than Just Better Teachers?

Pasi Sahlberg

The World Development report 2018 (WDR2018) is right about the global learning crisis: many children not in school, educational inequity, and low quality of learning outcomes. But it often misses the point when trying to use available evidence to realize education's promise. The problem is that there are so many 'facts' now available about how to fix education, that anyone – including the Bank – can easily gravitate towards data that confirms what they believe, and then select sources that deliver it.

The WDR2018 argues that poor initial teacher education, lack of motivation of and incentives to teachers, and ineffective teaching are some of the key factors behind this crisis. It is surprising, as Steven Klees noted, that the Bank now comes to this conclusion. For years it has rejected teacher education in its own education operations by saying it's not worth investing in. Instead the Bank favours hiring unqualified and contract teachers as a solution to inadequate teacher quality among its clients. The report goes on arguing that there are too many teachers who are not 'motivated' to teach, and that monetary and other incentives would be effective remedies to fix that. According to research, however, performance-based pay doesn't work in schools and value-added measurements of teachers are impossible to employ reliably in practice. Those who teach in or work with schools on a regular basis know that most teachers teach to change people's lives and contribute to the common good, not for incentives determined by students' test scores.

The report falls short in its analysis of the teaching profession in three ways: its use of the human capital view to analyze teachers' work; its narrow view on teacher policies; and the mixing of facts and myths about Finland.

1. Human capital vs. social capital perspective to teaching. The human capital paradigm assumes that performance improves by betterment of people. That is true in education but it is not the whole truth. Research shows that when teachers collaborate, everybody benefits (Quintero, 2017). Furthermore, when schools collaborate and help one another to improve, the pace of change can exceed expectations (e.g. the London Challenge or the Alberta Initiative for School Improvement). Investments in social capital, in other words collaboration, teamwork, and networks, often improve human capital, but not vice versa. It is also true, that investing in the quality of professional collaboration (Hargreaves & O'Connor, 2017) – not just to increase quantity of it – has appeared to be more cost-effective than trying to seek change through investments in human capital alone.
2. Narrow view on teacher policies. It is true that teachers cost about three quarters of the total education spending around the world. But again, this is not the whole truth. In countries ranging from Albania to the United States, inadequate teacher pay is

a significant reason for young people not to consider teaching as a lifelong career. It is easy to ask for better teachers but that is not enough. Teacher policies have to get better. The WDR2018 gives some examples of good policies in successful education systems, but it fails to establish a convincing recommendation to improve national teacher policy frameworks. Teacher shortages and, as a consequence, too many ill-prepared and unqualified teachers is a consequence of poor teacher policies and a lack of properly funded education. Better teacher policies, as research shows (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017), often lead to better teachers and improved educational performance over time.

3. Myths about Finland. On page 13 (and again on page 136) the report explains how Finland's education system gives considerable autonomy to its well-educated teachers and how they can tailor teaching to the needs of their students. It then argues that lower-performing education systems would not benefit from that autonomy because their "poorly educated, unmotivated and loosely managed teachers would only make things worse" (p. 13). Now, let's be clear here. The pedagogical strength of Finnish schools cannot be narrowed down to 'teacher autonomy'. The culture of Finnish schools is based on a system-wide professional collaboration between schools and collaborative professionalism within schools. Instead of consequential accountability that the Bank often requires its clients to embed in their education reforms, Finnish schools have collective autonomy (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012) that makes schools more autonomous from bureaucracy but less independent from one another. Research proves that professional collaboration is particularly beneficial to early-career and less qualified teachers. It is the culture of professional collaboration that improves educational performance in Finnish schools, not teacher autonomy as the report assumes.

   Another myth about Finland is that academic ability would be the best predictor of teacher effectiveness. "To promote effective teaching, Finland … attract some of the most highly skilled graduates from tertiary education into teaching", the WDR2018 argues on page 23. But in reality, minority of those accepted to very competitive research-based academic programs come from the top quintile of the talent pool (Sahlberg, 2017). The WDR2018 also fails to report that student-teachers are carefully selected to competitive academic programs based on combination of multiple talents and personal characteristics. All students go through demanding scientific and clinical training. Therefore, teachers in Finland have advanced pedagogical skills, content knowledge, moral purpose and clear teacher identity that form the core of professionalism.

In search of ways to escape low-learning traps the WDR2018 could have relied more on what we have learned about successful education nations that often prioritize quality, equity, and teacher professionalism in education policies to strengthen public education.

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20. The World Bank and the chalkface: a teacher's perspective

Jelmer Evers

My colleagues in my school probably know the World Bank quite superficially, at least if they teach economics history, geography or social sciences. For the rest of them I would say there is name recognition, but not much more than that. However, they would recognize its policy, the tone and the implicit messages on education and teachers it has promoted for a long time in a heartbeat. New Public Management (NPM) is characterized by marketisation through greater school choice, enforced detailed teacher and students standards, punitive accountability through standardized testing and top-down school inspections, school rankings, performance pay, flexibility of employment and even outright privatisation, many of which have plagued Dutch education and me over the last twenty years (Evers & Kneyber 2013).

I remember well when the Dutch inspectorate visited my school UniC in 2010 and berated us for certain – narrow - outcomes that counted heavily in the accountability checklist. As a team we had already come up with a plan for improvement whilst retaining our progressive vision and pedagogy. But the inspectorate insisted on a more traditional and standardised approach. It took a long fight for us to prevail. And we lost some good teachers along the way. It was a bruising experience, one I won't easily forget.

The World Bank has a history of recommending these policies of distrust, external accountability and privatisation and promoting a narrow view of education (Mundy & Verger 2015; Fontfevila & Verger 2015; Murphy 2007) – a deficit model of the teaching profession. As Clara Fontdevella points out in this blog for *Education International*, the World Bank promotes "the portrait of teachers' organisations as a problem, the absence of a discourse on teachers' welfare, or the fact that teachers are conceived of as human resources to be managed, but not as active agents of educational change".

In its latest World Development Report – which focuses on education for the first time - it takes a somewhat different tone. And that is to be welcomed. However on reading the report worries remain, especially if I look at what the Bank is doing in practice.

First of all it is interesting to see what kind of language the World Bank uses. The report talks about the "learning crisis", "Schooling is not the same as learning" and "learners" whilst moving away from the word "education". It says "schooling is not the same as learning. Education is an imprecise word, and so it must be clearly defined. Schooling is the time a student spends in classrooms, whereas learning is the outcome—what the student takes away from schooling" (p. 45).

However education is not so much imprecise as much as it is multidimensional. According to Gert Biesta, education has several goals - qualification, socialisation and subjectification -

often in tension with one another. Qualification relates to knowledge and skills which students require for their role in society and work, it *qualifies* them, allows them to do things. Socialisation is about internalising the norms, values, culture and history of the society you live in. Subjectification relates to the importance of students as individuals who "come to exist as subjects of initiative and responsibility" (Biesta, 2015, p. 77). The claim that education is imprecise and that learning isn't doesn't hold up. It's more a question of how we deal with the moral judgements that come with the multidimensional nature of education. In his work Gert Biesta has also has critiqued the 'learnification' of education:

> "'Learnification' encompasses the impact of the rise of a 'new language of learning' on education. This is evident in a number of discursive shifts, such as the tendency to refer to pupils, students, children and even adults as 'learners;' to redefine teaching as 'facilitating learning,' 'creating learning opportunities,' or 'delivering learning experiences;' or to talk about the school as a 'learning environment' or 'place for learning.' It is also visible in the ways in which adult education has been transformed into lifelong learning in many countries" (Biesta 2015 p. 76)

And this is problematic. As Biesta (2015) states: "Whereas the language of learning is a process language that, at least in English, is an individual and individualising language, education always needs to engage with questions of content, purpose and relationships" (p. 76). It requires the judgement of those engaged with education - in schools just as much as from those who make policy or those who research it. Learning is focused on outcomes, but "such theories in themselves do not give us access to and insight into the construction and justification of these contexts and settings themselves. For this, we need theories of education and educating" (Biesta 2015 p. 77). The language of learning and its focus on outcomes makes education easier to manage and measure. And although the World Bank is more restrained in the WDR than it used to be it still pushes the report and policy in a certain direction, one which is part of a bigger trend.

The report still resorts to the failing teacher and schools narrative. "Schools are failing learners" is the heading of one the sections (p.80). It goes on to say that "Teachers often lack the needed skills and motivation" (p. 80). This is actually the first thing mentioned, highlighting their lack of knowledge, expertise and motivation. That they don't show up for work is framed as a "loss of instructional time." It is argued that "This problem is particularly concerning because the bulk of national education budgets goes to teacher salaries (...) Reducing absenteeism in these schools would be over 10 times more cost effective at increasing student-teacher contact time than hiring additional teachers" (p. 80). The suggestive heading "Teachers may perceive low effort as being justified" is given to a prominent box and graph (p.81). Teachers are in general portrayed as unmotivated and under-skilled, and teacher absenteeism is mentioned over 30 times. That this challenge is more nuanced is clearly shown in Marie Antoinette Corr's WDR article for EI.

As a teacher at the chalkface I've become cautious of international institutions driving education policies. The World Bank has a very troubled history when it comes to education reform, and I have a heavy dose of distrust for the Bank as an institution. For a long time it didn't have the best interests in mind for my students and my profession. There are many positive things in the World Development Report, but its practice remains very troubling. It is now promoting a global learning metric, (p. 97) but I wouldn't trust any organization that is pushing for surveillance policies like the World Bank to be involved in such a metric. I've heard and read similar positive rhetoric from Dutch policy makers so often, whilst they were continuing bad practices which de-professionalised teachers and increased inequities in the system. As long as that disconnect remains, I remain wary. And that should worry the World Bank. With post-World War institutions and liberal democracies rapidly decaying it should build trust in those that it serves. If the profession does not have a fundamental say in the shaping and implementation of policy in the Global South and North I think it is time we consider building new institutions.

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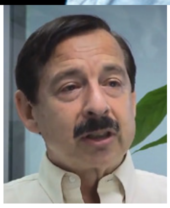
21. WDR: Half-Hearted Commitment to Teacher Learning



Mark Ginsburg

I recently completed work on a moderated discussion (Ginsburg et al., 2018) for the Comparative Education Review (CER) focused on the World Development Report 2018: Learning to Realize Education's Promise (WDR) (Filmer et al., 2018). In the moderated discussion I muted my voice in order to facilitate a conversation among colleagues representing a range of perspectives and experiences. However, I feel the need to express my views about some issues addressed in the WDR.

Like my colleagues participating in the CER moderated discussion, I was pleased to see that the WDR 2018 focused specifically on education, for the first time in its 40-year history. I was also encouraged to see that the WDR paid attention not only to student learning but also to teacher learning. Unlike the World Bank's (2011) Education Strategy 2020 document, which devoted no attention to teacher learning (see Ginsburg, 2012, p. 86), the WDR goes further than merely calling for in-service training to build the "human capital" of teachers. Noting that "[a]fter prepared and motivated learners, equipped and motivated teachers are the most fundamental ingredient of [student] learning" and that "education systems often lack effective mechanisms to mentor and motivate teachers," the WDR (Filmer et al., 2018, pp. 131-132) identifies "three principles that are key to achieving learning success through teachers [including]: To be effective, teacher training needs to be individually targeted and repeated, with follow-up coaching ..." This principle appears to take seriously the idea that teachers are individual learners, although I would use a different term than "targeted" and give more attention to teachers own views on their learning needs. Moreover, the WDR refers to two of the key principles for organizing in-service teacher education: 1) it should be an ongoing process (my interpretation of "repeated") and 2) workshops or "training" activities should be followed up by supervisory guidance and support in the school setting (i.e., "coaching").

However, the WDR could have elaborated on these as well as discussed other principles for organizing in-service teacher education. For example, attention could have been given to: a) involving teachers in planning and implementation of programs, b) focusing on pedagogical content knowledge, c) using adult-oriented models of active learning, d) incorporating reflective practice and action research, and e) ensuring that successful participation in in-service programs receives official recognition (see Craig et al., 1998; Feiman-Nemser, 2008; Hammerness et al., 2005; Leu & Ginsburg, 2011; Schwille & Dembélé, 2007; Sprinthall et al., 1996; Villegas-Reimers, 2003). Nevertheless, we should acknowledge positively that the WDR mentions that conducting "follow-up visits to teachers' classrooms to provide ongoing support" is a "good practice of in-service teacher training" (Filmer et al., 2018, p. 133).

So, why do I say that the WDR's commitment to teacher learning is only half-hearted? It is because the Report (Filmer et al., 2018) recognizes that "[i]n-service professional development requires significant time and resources" (p. 132) and that "[m]any countries will protest that high-quality in-service professional development – repeated, with follow-up visits in school … – is beyond their budget to deliver at scale" (p. 133). However, the Report in its "Spotlight 6: Spending more, spending better – or both?" seems to put as much, if not more, emphasis on the efficient use of financial resources than on increasing the amount of resources devoted to educational expenditure:

> While there is a strong rationale for public investment in education, the relationship between spending and learning outcomes is often weak. … There are five main reasons why spending does not always lead to better and more equal student learning outcomes: [a] Spending is not allocated equitably. [b] Funds do not reach schools or are not used for their intended purposes. [c] Public spending can substitute for private spending. [d] Decisions on the use of public funding are not coherently aligned with learning. [e] Government agencies lack the capacity to use funding effectively. (p. 184)

Thus, the WDR follows in the tradition of the World Bank's *Education Strategy 2020* document (World Bank, 2011),[1] which emphasizes the more efficient use of insufficient financial resources by governments and the World Bank's SABER-Teachers framework document (World Bank, 2013),[2] which calls for greater effort by teachers, despite inadequate compensation and supervisory support. In the WDR the World Bank calls on governments (and perhaps teachers) to increase their activity designed to enhance teacher (and student) learning, either with existing levels of financial support or, at best, only a relatively modest increase in funding (Filmer et al, 2018):

> Education funding is sometimes inadequate and often allocated in ways inconsistent with a goal of providing equitable opportunities for effective learning. (p. 171)
>
> The weak link between spending and learning is a feature of the different environments in which education systems operate. … These simple correlations also suggest that many education systems are delivering learning outcomes well below what is possible given current levels of funding. (p. 173)
>
> Good teachers, conducive learning environments, reliable assessment systems, and innovative learning technologies all cost money. And as more students progress further in school, financing needs will rise. Yet more funding leads to better learning only if it is used well … (p. 183)
>
> Decisions on how to use public resources often lack coherent alignment with learning. The evidence on ways to improve learning is growing, suggesting ways to use funding more effectively. (p 186)

Of course, such advice is particularly problematic for the low-income countries, whose average student scores on international assessments of literacy and numeracy – Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) and Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) – the WDR recognizes as being below "95 percent of the students in high-income countries" (Filmer et al., 2018, p. 5). For instance, one estimate of the amount of international finance required on an annual basis to support lower-income countries' achievement of Sustainable Development Goal #4 in 2030 is US$89 billion (Education Commission, 2016, p. 22). However, this amount is what would be necessary to address the expansion of primary and secondary enrollment without specifically focusing on enhancing the quality, frequency, and scope of in-service teacher education. To its credit, the WDR does note the need for external actors to address the funding shortages in lower-income countries, but it does so while devoting as much, if not more, attention to the effective use of such funding:

1 For example, the World Bank's Education Strategy document states that "getting value for the education dollar requires *smart investments*—that is, investments that have proven to contribute to learning" (World Bank, 2011, p. 4, italics added).

2 For example, the SABER Teacher framework document states that "high-performing education systems achieve good education results using different combinations of teacher policies. Some systems may focus the bulk of their policy efforts on building the capacity of their teacher force through strong teacher initial education and teacher professional development programs, and give teachers ample autonomy to make decisions regarding instruction. Other education systems, instead, place a greater policy emphasis on managing in detail various aspects of teachers' work, focusing on evaluating teachers and providing *incentives targeted to elicit specific behaviors*" (World Bank, 2013, p. 8; italics added).

> While the overall contribution of development assistance to country investments in education is relatively small, it is important in some low-income countries ... Moreover, global estimates of the investments required to raise learning as part of the SDGs imply a need to increase development assistance, particularly to low-income countries.

But external actors must provide financing in a way that aligns systems with learning. ... External actors can support alignment by shifting the focus of systems toward learning, linking their financing to results rather than the provision of specific inputs or activities. (Filmer et al., 2018, pp. 211-212)

Thus, with respect to promoting an increase in domestic as well as international funding to cover the costs of more extensive and better in-service teacher education (among other education budget items), the WDR seems to reflect, at best, a half-hearted commitment to teacher learning.

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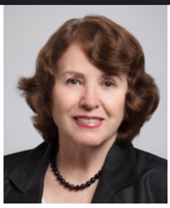
22. The Gender Dimension in the World Bank's Perception



Nelly Stromquist

With the production of a World Development Report focused on education, the World Bank makes a decisive claim to its authority in education policy. Given an introductory section acknowledging 119 "researchers and specialists across the world" who provided "feedback and suggestions" for the report (WDR 2018 hereafter), it would seem an intimidating task to examine the virtues and limitations of this extensive document. And yet, there is much room for improvement in this latest World Bank venture.

From a gender perspective, nothing new is proposed. Gender continues to be equated with sex, thus the emphasis on greater access to schooling by girls. There are 49 references to "girls" and 44 references to "gender," yet there is no treatment of how notions of femininity and masculinity create differential power and access to resources in societies throughout the globe. Without a proper diagnosis we cannot offer effective solutions.

WDR 2018 presents data confirming what is well known: Girls' academic performance is impacted by economic conditions in the household, the gap in education between girls and boys becomes more pronounced as puberty is reached, and girls perform better than boys in reading in all countries but boys tend to do better in math and science. The absence of a conceptual framework for understanding gender, leads the report to make bizarre observations such as that building "latrines for girls does not affect learning" and "school feeding does not often affect learning" (World Development Report 2018, both citations on p. 148). Since there is no direct connection between support mechanisms of this nature and immediate knowledge acquisition, the causality here is questionable.

For WDR 2018, learning is a paramount objective of education. Who could disagree with that? But serious concerns emerge when it becomes clear that learning is equated with performance in national standardized tests (and even global metrics) and when it is assumed that test data lead to unambiguous instructional strategies. Linked to such tests, the measurement of learning is limited to subjects that are usually tested: reading and math. By now, it is amply known that for an improvement in the social relations of gender, girls and boys need knowledge that will challenge the status quo. With the growing recognition of the incidence of gender-related violence, issues relating to domestic and sexual violence at home, in the workplace, and at school must become part of the crucial knowledge to be acquired by students. Educational authorities need to continue to remove gender stereotypes in the curricula and to turn schools into girl-friendly environments. The devaluation of women and femininities and, conversely, the overvaluing of men and hegemonic masculinities in social life as well as in school settings must be explicitly faced. To combat these social practices requires knowledge concerning how women experience inequality in their social world (private and public) and how men experience multiple forms of advantage. It also requires reflecting upon how citizens and policy makers could challenge this situation. These topics are not usually tested; nonetheless, they are essential elements of progressive schools.

Instead of focusing so much on measuring learning, efforts should be placed in making sure that learning occurs in the first place. Lip service to the recognition of the importance of teachers is not enough. Teachers—most of whom are women across the world—need to be given proper pedagogical and subject-matter training. They also need to receive training in gender issues and human rights. Many teachers in developing countries experience living conditions dangerously close to poverty. These persons cannot easily move from a survival mode to one of reflection about professional practices. And with per student expenditures for primary and secondary education ranging from an average of $9,200/year in OECD countries (Institute of Education Sciences, 2017) to about $500/year in low-income countries and $1400/year in lower-middle income countries (UNESCO, 2015), what sense does it make to concentrate attention on learning rather than providing a minimum of essential infrastructural and pedagogical requisites?

My core point is not to bemoan the limitations of WDR 2018 but to take this opportunity to turn the situation around. It is time that we—women and those men who would like to help reduce gender inequalities—appoint ourselves as change agents, without expecting male-dominated institutions—from governments to international financial institutions—to come to our assistance. It is my contention that women, even though they are not the majority of teacher union leaders, can make demands on their own organizations to increase their provision of professional development on gender issues, as these relate to education and to the rest of society in which they are embedded.

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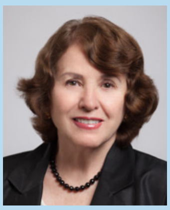

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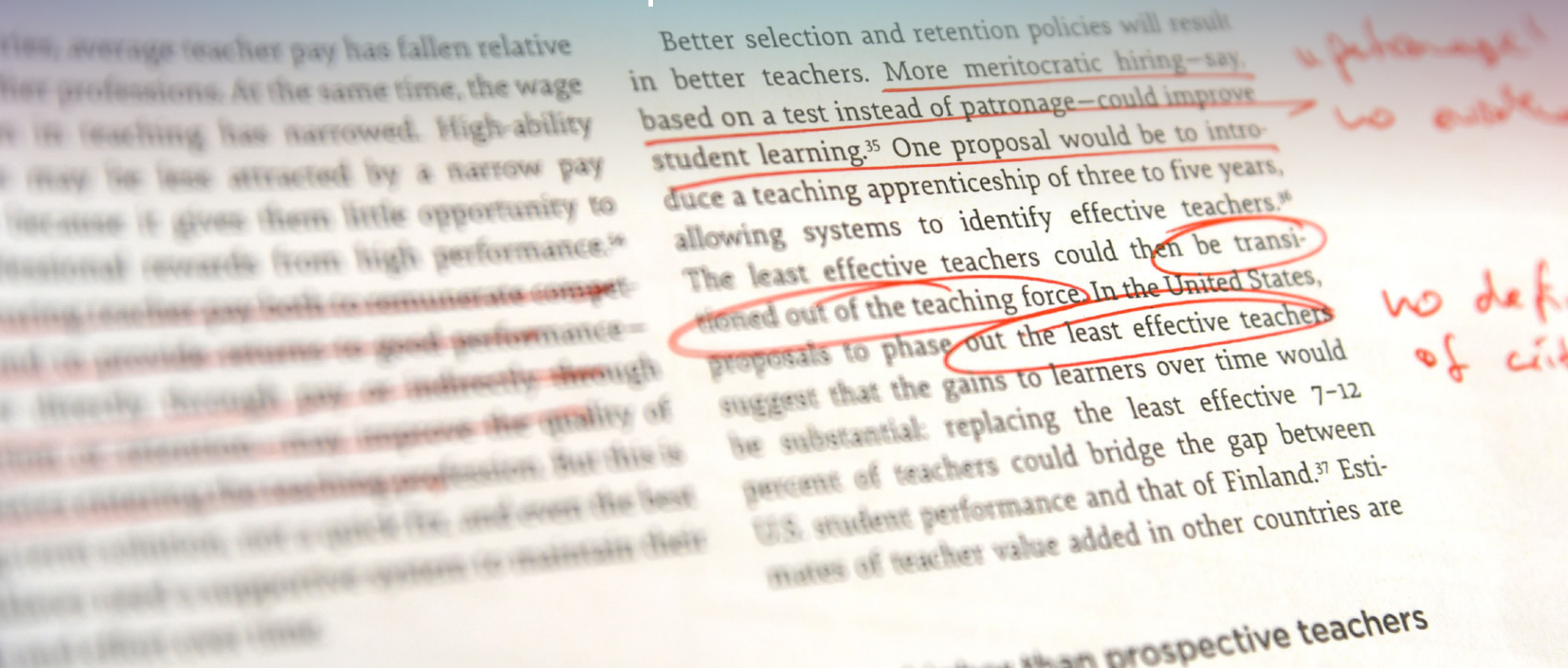

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