New in our seminars

Sharon Wolf, a University of Pennsylvania education professor and a SIEF-supported researcher, presented midline results from the evaluation of a program to improve kindergarten teaching and children’s development in Ghana (video and powerpoint). The research team is testing different approaches, including teacher training and raising parents’ awareness about early education and how to support child development. Initial results show that teacher training is improving kindergarten quality and school readiness, and reducing the rate at which teachers leave their jobs. Visit our seminars page for more information.

Water and sanitation in the Philippines

In the Philippines, SIEF-supported researchers are working to evaluate the effectiveness of a water and sanitation program incorporated into the Government’s Pantawid Pamilya Pilipino Program a conditional cash transfer program for the very poor. The evaluation examines the effectiveness of different measures for reducing open defecation and increasing the use of improved sanitation, such as toilets. A slideshow and feature story about the cash transfer program, known as the 4Ps and targeted at improving health and schooling for poor children, was recently produced by the World Bank office in Manila, with a FAQ brief outlining the program’s reach and impact.
Our people in the media and on the web

Berk Ozler blogs about his SIEF-supported evaluation of a teacher training at informal preschools in rural Malawi. The evaluation found that child development improved within the group that received both teacher training and parenting classes on child development. “Teacher training alone did not improve children’s outcomes, despite significant improvements relating to the classroom environment and teacher behaviors,” he writes.

In a blog for the Brookings Institution, SIEF-supported researcher Jishnu Das writes about new research on the use of public-private partnerships for education in Liberia and Pakistan. He argues that local programs that rely on local entrepreneurs do as well, if not better, as large international school operators. “Allowing schools to tailor their inputs to the local environment is critical, but this flexibility is often overlooked in centralized programs that standardize investments in every school,” he writes. Das was also the co-author of an article published this month in PLOS medicine, showing that many health care providers in China--especially those at village clinics and township health centers-- fail to correctly manage tuberculosis cases.

Alaka Holla, SIEF’s program manager, was quoted by National Public Radio, better known as NPR, for a report about the effects of flooding on people’s hopes for the future and what impact evaluations can teach us about this.