LESSONS FROM SABER AS A SYSTEMS APPROACH

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Systems Approach for Better Education Results

SABER helps better analyze and understand education system policies in these areas:

- Early Childhood Development
- Education Management and Information Systems
- Education Resilience Approaches
- Engaging the Private Sector
- Equity and Inclusion
- School Autonomy and Accountability
- School Finance
- School Health and School Feeding
- Student Assessment
- Teachers
- Workforce Development

Under Development
- Information and Communication Technology
- Tertiary Education

- SABER is a diagnostic tool used to assess education systems policies against evidence of what works.
- It helps inform country level dialogue and reform while enhancing the global knowledge base on education systems performance.
- 159 SABER country reports have used SABER tools to analyze education system areas to inform policy dialogue in a systematic manner.
SAFER collects and analyzes policy data on education systems around the world, using web-based tools to highlight the policies and institutions that matter most to promote learning for all children. SAFER will ultimately cover key domains of the education system, such as major areas in which a country makes policy choices that determine how effective its system is.
SABER | Building a High-Quality Knowledge Base at the Global Level

- 11 Framework Papers
- 239 Available Publications
- 16,000+ Policy Indicators
- 25 Briefs
- 400+ Applications
- 3 Regional Analyses
SABER in Action: NIGERIA

• Nigeria has used SABER diagnostic tools in various policy areas (teachers, school autonomy and accountability, ECD, private sector engagement, and school health and school feeding).

• The SABER-Student Assessment and SABER-EMIS frameworks have been used to influence policy dialogue and diagnostics.

State education commissions in Bauchi, Ekiti, and Anambra (covered by our $150 million Nigeria State Education Program Investment project) used SABER analyses to identify four key policy bottlenecks:

• Mismatch between teacher workforce and economic and geographic needs, often due to a lack of incentives for teachers.
• Lack of standard information on student learning and achievement.
• Weak accountability to communities and school-based management committees.
• Unavailable/inaccessible data for effective decision making.

In Lagos State, SABER is being used to help government regulate the private sector
SABER explaining within country differences

Education systems benefit from:
• Attracting and Motivating High Quality Teachers
• Effective Classroom Practices
• Assessment and Accountability

To succeed in contexts of adversity:
• Local assets are important
• Context matters
Issues still exist within policy intent

The Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) is an initiative to produce comparative data and knowledge of helping countries systematically strengthen their education systems. SABER evaluates the quality of education policies and diagnostic tools and detailed policy data collected for the initiative. The SABER country reports give all parties with a stake in improving education – teachers, and parents to policymakers and business people an accessible, objective snapshot showing how well their policies are promoting Learning for All. For more policy data and information on each domain, visit The Systems Approach for Education Results (SABER).

Key Indicators | Learning Outcomes | Attainment | Equality | Policy Data | Education Projects
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**Early Childhood Development Policy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal 1</th>
<th>Establishing an Enabling Environment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lever 1: Legal Framework</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lever 2: Inter-sectoral Coordination</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lever 3: Finance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal 2</th>
<th>Scope of Programs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lever 1: Scope of Programs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lever 2: Coverage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lever 3: Equity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal 3</th>
<th>Monitoring and Assurance Quality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lever 1: Data Availability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lever 2: Quality Standards</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lever 3: Compliance with Standards</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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SABER.Worldbank.org or EDSTATS.Worldbank.org
Promising results on policy vs outcome: SABER domains and the outcomes model

- The higher the rating on SABER policy areas the:
  - Higher average years of schooling
  - Lower the percentage of students not achieving low international level
  - Higher the percentage of students achieving advanced levels of learning
Systems approach moving forward

• Analysis of current data: The more applications of SABER tools in a country the faster we understand the dynamics/linkages of the education system

• Integrating information on education policies from different sources (e.g., CPIA, IBE, ...)

**Systems Thinking**

Education system is an open and complex structure:

- needs to be guided by **system-wide principles**
- requires **alignment**
- **Integration** is central: Developing unifying principles running "vertically" through the system brings us closer to the goal

The building blocks alone do not constitute a system:

- It is the multiple **relationships and interactions** among the blocks – how one affects and influences the others, and is in turn affected by them – that convert these blocks into a system
- They must function together in a dynamic architecture of interactions and synergies

**A holistic systems approach reduces unintended negative consequences and enhances planning and management**
Learning from the SABER domains

six cross-cutting themes emerge and make it possible to build integrated system tools
APPROACH FOR INTEGRATION

1. Statistical factoring with current domain data
2. Initial themes
3. Theoretical clustering after filling the blind spots
4. Final 6 themes
100+ POLICY LEVERS INTO 6 THEMES

- Early Childhood Development
- EMIS
- Engaging the Private Sector
- School Autonomy & Accountability
- School Finance
- Student Assessment
- Teachers
- Workforce Development

- Standards
- Governance
- Resources
- Information
- Delivery
- Accountability
Emergence of a Holistic Construct
Systems Thinking across sectors

- For decades researchers have identified and applied systems theory to industrial and sectoral systems, as well as strategic management and organizational studies
  - Service Delivery Framework
  - Health
  - Organizational Management
  - Government Administration and Governance
Service Delivery Framework (WDR 2004) applies system thinking

- Stresses on the importance of accountability and interconnectedness
- Citizens exercise voice to policymakers, holding providers accountable; policymakers set standards and policies to ensure smooth delivery of educational services
- Weaknesses in any of the relationships can result in service delivery failures
Health

- six building blocks make up the entire health system

According to the World Health Organization
Organizational Management follows Systems Thinking

- **Leadership**: create a shared vision and successfully manage change to attain the organization’s strategic ends and successful performance
- **Domain Expertise**: expertise of the sectors in which the organization operates
- **Relationship Management**: communicate effectively with employees and clients, maintain relationships and facilitate constructive interactions
- **Professionalism**: ability to align individual and organizational conduct with standards
- **Knowledge and Business Skills**: to run the organization (e.g. financial management, human resource management, strategic planning, risk management and quality improvement.)
Quality Assurance requires Systems Thinking

- The Food and Drug Administration (FDA in the US) follows a *comprehensive quality systems (QS) model* for maintenance and inspection of the quality of drugs

- **Six thematic areas** (one related to standards and five related to manufacturing) are central to an efficient functioning of the unit

- The **thematic area of standards** overlooks the manufacturing processes to monitor quality at every level
Potential

- Each theme integrates policy levers from across SABER domains, enabling full-system analysis and coherent interventions.
- Assesses essential system dynamics and interactions, providing an opportunity to operationalize a more cost-effective, systems-level, actionable approach for country decision-makers.
- Ventures from ideologies that intervene in functional areas in education, towards a solutions-orientated new option that realigns components of SABER into cross-cutting themes in addition to domains.
Scaling up

- Lead to a country education system scorecard
- Guide in-depth application of current SABER domains
- Support strategic reform in countries
- Useful tool globally
Thank you

GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT AND KNOWLEDGE EDUCATION GLOBAL PRACTICE