

# LESSONS FROM SABER AS A SYSTEMS APPROACH

Husein Abdul-Hamid  
Senior Education Specialist



**WORLD BANK GROUP**  
Education

# 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.

The World Bank Home - Site Map - Index - FAQs - Contact Us

# SABER SYSTEMS APPROACH FOR BETTER EDUCATION RESULTS

STRENGTHENING EDUCATION SYSTEMS TO ACHIEVE LEARNING FOR ALL

HOME TOPIC COUNTRIES GLOBAL ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY ABOUT QUICK ACCESS Hide

Select a Topic  
OR  
Select a Country

Education Strategy 2020

**SABER** collects and analyses policy data on education systems around the world, using evidence-based frameworks to highlight the policies and institutions that matter most to promote learning for all children and youth. SABER will ultimately cover key domains of the education system—that is, all major areas in which a country makes policy choices that determine how effective its system. ...more



The World Bank Home - Site Map - Index - FAQs - Contact Us

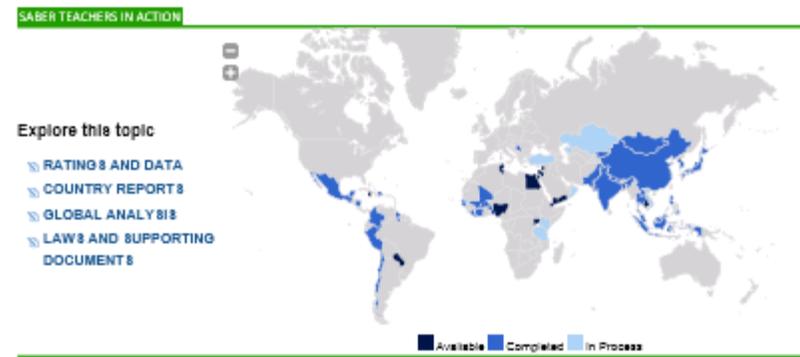
# SABER SYSTEMS APPROACH FOR BETTER EDUCATION RESULTS

STRENGTHENING EDUCATION SYSTEMS TO ACHIEVE LEARNING FOR ALL

HOME TOPIC COUNTRIES GLOBAL ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY ABOUT QUICK ACCESS Show

**Teachers**

SABER-Teachers documents and analyses the teacher policies that govern public schools in education systems around the world, in both developing and high-income countries. Of all the factors under the control of a schooling system, teacher effectiveness is the most important predictor of student learning. SABER-Teachers provides information they need to align their teacher policies toward making teachers as effective as possible, in the eight key policy areas listed below. The ultimate goal is to improve learning for all children and youth.



- Explore this topic
- RATINGS AND DATA
  - COUNTRY REPORTS
  - GLOBAL ANALYSIS
  - LAWS AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Available: At least one SABER Country Report is approved and available  
 Completed: At least one SABER Country Report is completed, but waiting for approval  
 In Process: SABER teams are currently collecting/analyzing data or drafting report for the countries

**What does SABER Teachers do?**

SABER-Teachers aims to catalyze and inform policy dialogue on teacher policies and to serve as a knowledge connector on improving the quality of teaching. It does this

The World Bank Home - Site Map - Index - FAQs - Contact Us

# SABER SYSTEMS APPROACH FOR BETTER EDUCATION RESULTS

STRENGTHENING EDUCATION SYSTEMS TO ACHIEVE LEARNING FOR ALL

HOME TOPIC COUNTRIES GLOBAL ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY ABOUT QUICK ACCESS Show

**Teachers Ratings and Data:**

Expand All Collapse All

BACK TO SEARCH EXPORT TO EXCEL DOWNLOAD RAW DATA TO EXCEL

	Bangladesh Country Reports 2011	Benin Country Reports 2012	China Shanghai Country Reports 2011	Guatemala Country Reports 2011	Guinea Bissau Country Reports 2011	India Andhra Pradesh Country Reports 2011
<b>SETTING CLEAR EXPECTATIONS FOR TEACHERS</b>	ESTABLISHED	ESTABLISHED	EMERGING	ESTABLISHED	EMERGING	ESTABLISHED
Are there clear expectations for teachers?	ESTABLISHED	ESTABLISHED	ESTABLISHED	ESTABLISHED	ESTABLISHED	ESTABLISHED
Are there standards for what students must know and be able to do?	Yes, at the sub-national level or national level	Yes, at the sub-national level or national level	Yes, at the sub-national level or national level	Yes, at the sub-national level or national level	Yes, at the sub-national level or national level	Yes, at the sub-national level or national level
Are the tasks that teachers are expected to carry out officially stipulated?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Is there useful guidance on the use of teachers' working time?	ESTABLISHED	EMERGING	LATENT	ESTABLISHED	LATENT	ESTABLISHED
<b>ATTRACTING THE BEST INTO TEACHING</b>	LATENT	EMERGING	ESTABLISHED	EMERGING	LATENT	LATENT
<b>PREPARING TEACHERS WITH USEFUL TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE</b>	LATENT	LATENT	ESTABLISHED	LATENT	EMERGING	EMERGING

# SABER | Building a High-Quality Knowledge Base at the Global Level



# 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.



NIGERIA

State Education Program Investment Project

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:

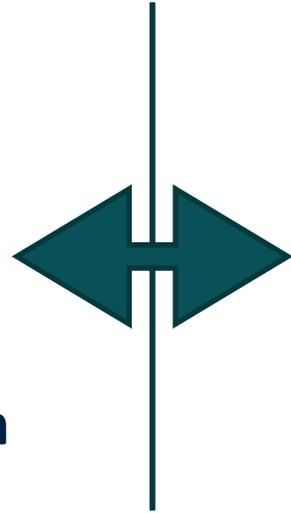
- Mismatch between teacher workforce and economic and geographic needs, often due to a lack of incentives for teachers.
- Lack of standard information on student learning and achievement.
- Weak accountability to communities and school-based management committees.
- Unavailable/inaccessible data for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

In Lagos State, SABER is being used to help government regulate the private sector

# SABER explaining within country differences

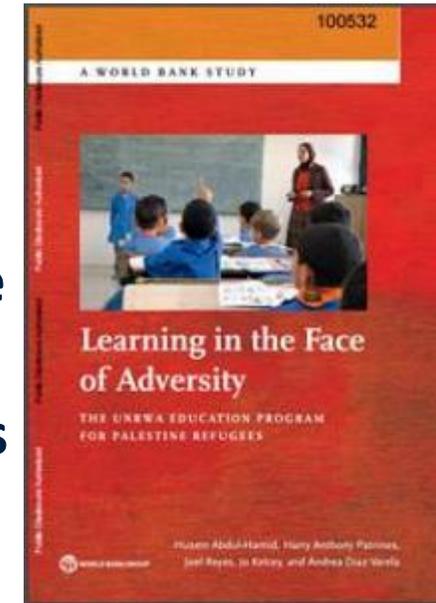
## Education systems benefit from:

- Attracting and Motivating High Quality Teachers
- Effective Classroom Practices
- Assessment and Accountability

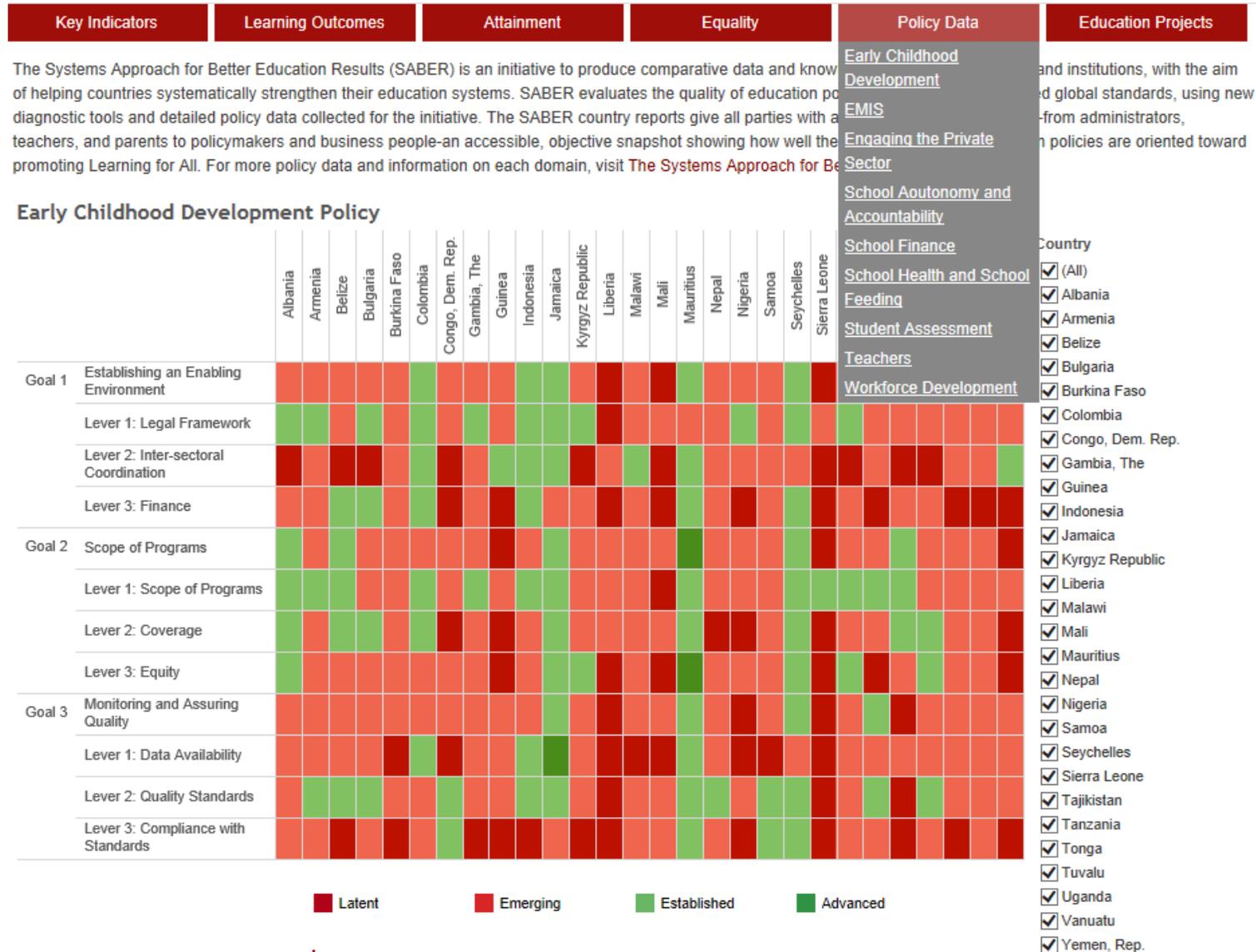


## To succeed in contexts of adversity:

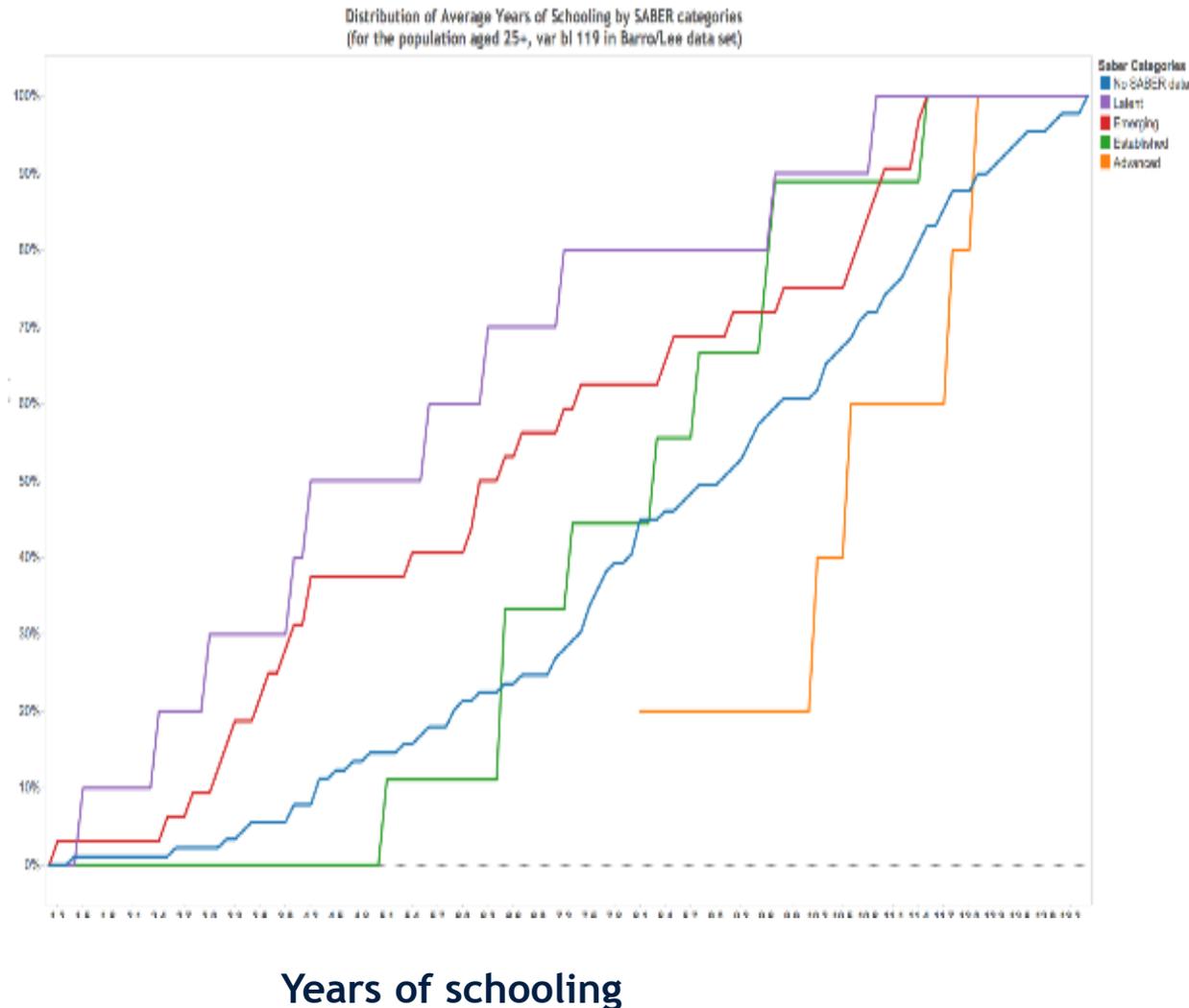
- Local assets are important
- Context matters



# Issues still exist within policy intent



# 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

**Statistical  
factoring  
with  
current  
domain  
data**



**Initial  
themes**

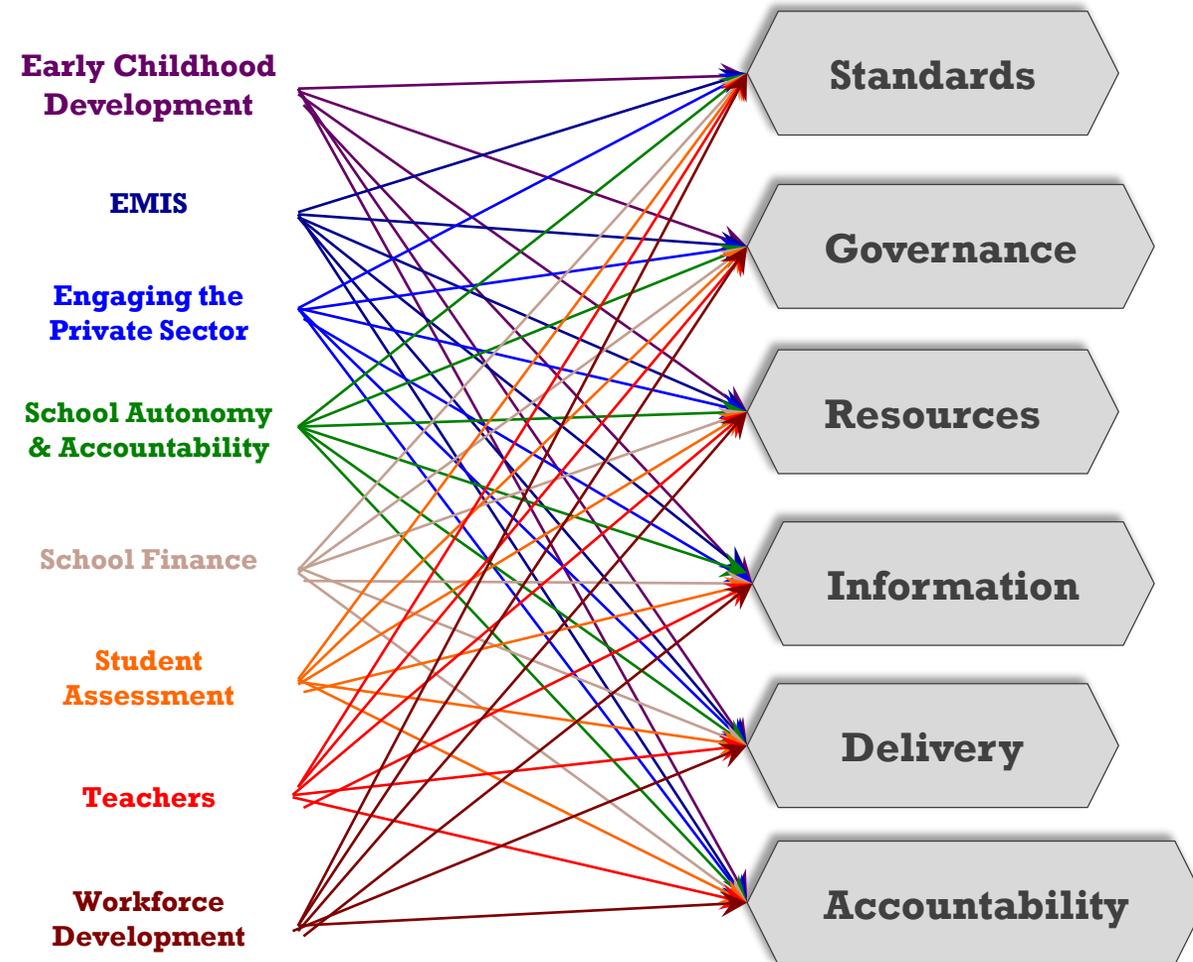


**Theoretical  
clustering  
after filling  
the blind  
spots)**

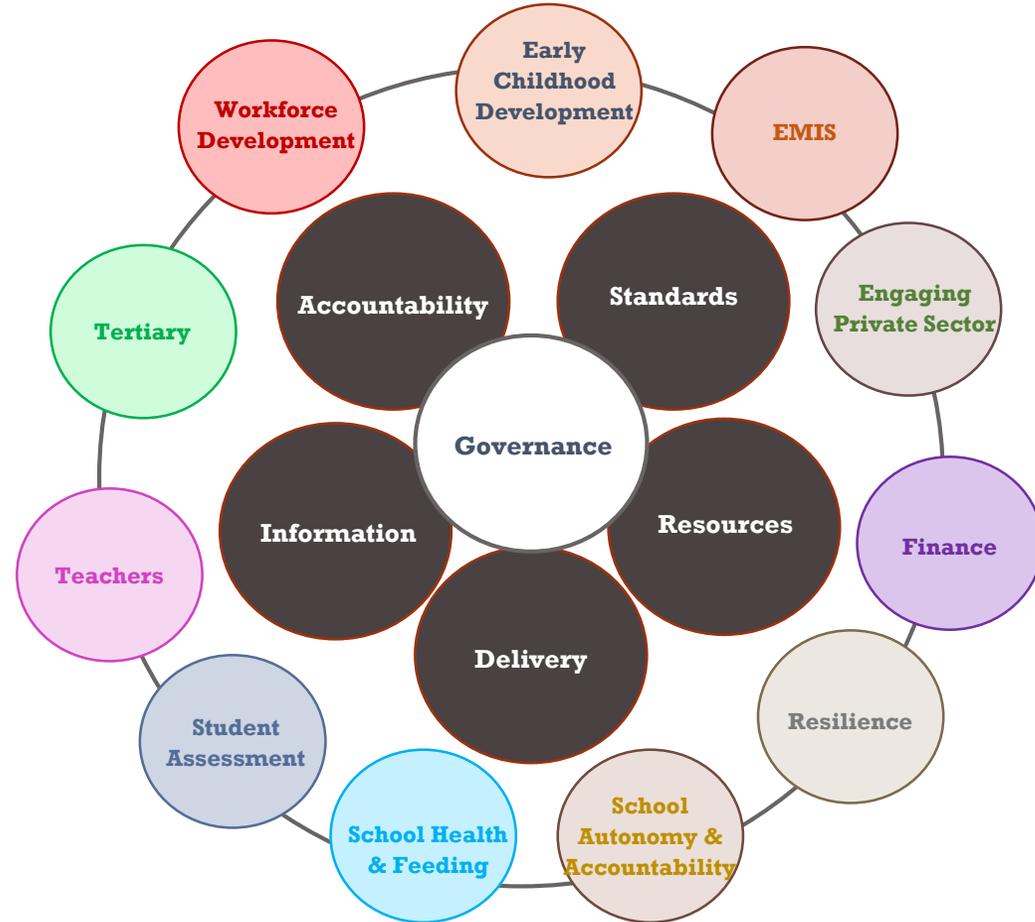


**Final 6  
themes**

# 100+ POLICY LEVERS INTO 6 THEMES



# 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

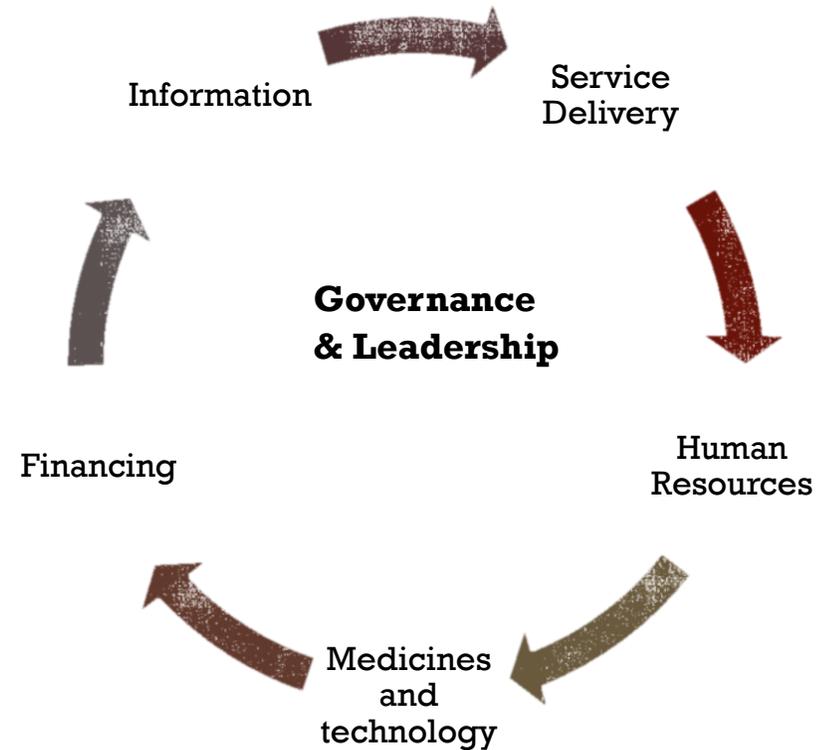
# Service Delivery Framework (WDR 2004) applies system thinking

- 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

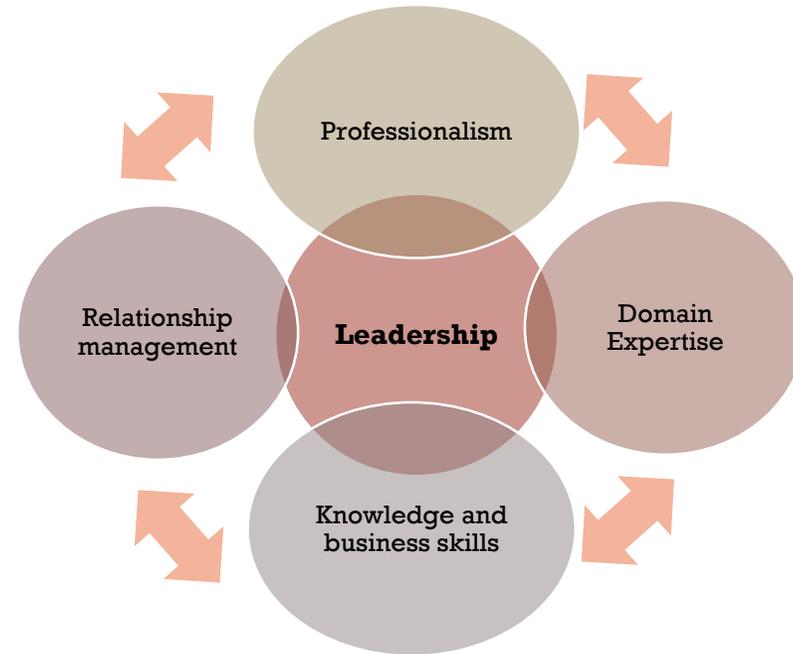
- six building blocks make up the entire health system



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**



**WORLD BANK GROUP**  
Education