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SABER Annual Report 2014

Strengthening Education Systems to Achieve Learning for All

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“Countries should focus their education systems on achieving results. Efficient and effective systems are necessary to ensure that the resources spent for education lead to higher completion rates and better learning outcomes. As one former minister has been known to say, pouring more and more resources into an ineffective education system will simply get us well-funded dysfunctionality. That’s why the World Bank Group is helping bring the best knowledge and experience to countries to build smarter education systems. An important resource we offer is our Systems Approach for Better Education Results, or SABER, an open-data platform. Through SABER, we are building an evidence base on effective programs and policies in more than 100 countries.”

World Bank Group President Dr. Jim Yong Kim, on April 10, 2014 in Washington, D.C., at the “Learning for All Symposium: Investing in a Brighter Future.”

Table of Contents

Program Manager’s Note.....	4
Background and Overview	5
Summary of SABER Key Accomplishments	7
Increasing SABER Reach	9
Widening Application of SABER Tools.....	9
SABER Knowledge Sharing and Capacity Development.....	14
Key Findings from SABER	15
Informing Country Dialogue and Reform.....	16
Building the Global Knowledge Base	17
Visualizing SABER data	18
Improving SABER Functions and Looking Ahead	19
Annex 1: Overview of SABER Activity by Domain by FY14.....	20
Annex 2: Overview of SABER Engagement	21
Annex 3: Outputs and Results Indicators.....	22
Annex 4: Improved Communications and Knowledge Sharing of SABER	23
Annex 5: SABER in Action.....	25

The SABER Annual Report 2014 reports on SABER activities completed during the span of the World Bank Group 2014 Fiscal Year (FY14), which began on June 1, 2013 and ended on June 30, 2014. Data used in the report is from July 22, 2014 as some end of fiscal year activities get rectified in the weeks following the closing of the fiscal year. This report is produced annually to help communicate key SABER activities to key stakeholders and to report to the SABER UF donors. The report was used for the SABER UF Annual Meeting and the Education Systems/SABER Advisory Board meeting in November, 2014.

Program Manager's Note

It has been four years since the inception of the **Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER)**, and it is already making a difference in many countries around the world by helping identify education system policy gaps to help inform reforms. Because of a lack of data and information, there is a lack of consensus on the education policies and programs most likely to create quality learning environments and improve student performance, especially among the disadvantaged. SABER has begun to fill this gap by allowing countries to conduct a thorough inventory of their education policies and institutions based on global best practice. SABER produces data on education system policies and institutions, analyzes and evaluates their quality, and provides decision makers and stakeholders with an assessment that fosters structured and effective policy dialogue on how to most effectively strengthen the education system's orientation toward *Learning for All*.



To date, SABER is being applied over **200 times** in more than **130 countries**, and some **84 SABER country reports** and related data are available on the SABER web tool. The Africa region accounts for almost 30 percent of SABER applications, with countries such as Nigeria and Uganda leading the way. Over 50 percent of the application of SABER tools is taking place in either low- or lower-middle-income countries. SABER is being applied by countries at all stages of development, and countries such as Bulgaria are using SABER to help inform legislative and policy reforms in education.

With the help of donors and partner agencies, SABER has dramatically increased its reach around the world. SABER today is helping policymakers determine education system investment and policy reforms based on evidence. Additionally, SABER is enhancing the education knowledge base in relation to how education systems function by providing framework documents on what matters most to achieve *Learning for All* and building open data on education system policies. SABER has the potential to help us more strategically engage with countries. Moving forward, as we look to institutionalize and operationalize SABER in the context of the new Education Global Practice, we hope to find a way for SABER and other education system analysis tools to be part of our country engagement and become global public goods accessible to clients and partners for their education reform initiatives. The possibilities are endless.

Harry Patrinos

SABER Program Manager
Practice Manager, Education Global Practice
World Bank Group

Background and Overview

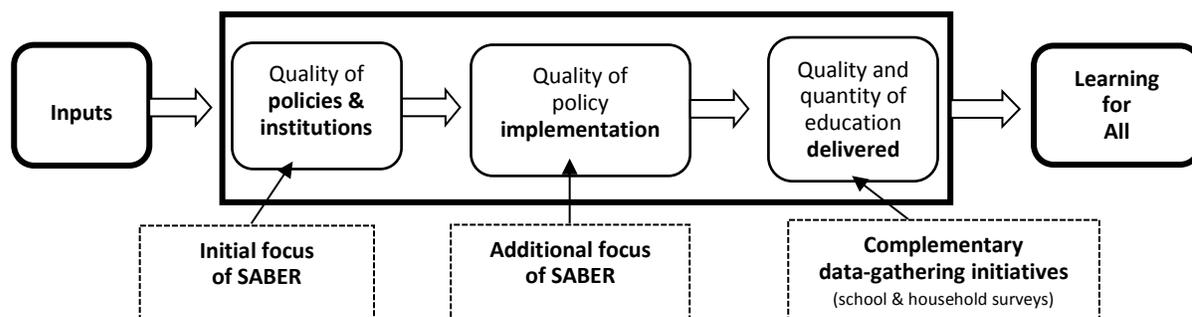
The World Bank's Education Strategy 2020,¹ endorsed by the Bank's Board in April 2011, commits the World Bank to help countries strengthen their education systems to increase *Learning for All*. To help countries achieve learning for all, the World Bank has focused its efforts in two strategic directions: reforming education systems at the country level and building a high-quality knowledge base for education reforms at the global level. The Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) aligns with the World Bank Education Strategy, providing a mechanism that aids countries in education system analysis, diagnosis, dialogue, and reform while simultaneously helping enhance the global knowledge base in the education sector.

Through a suite of analytical resources that identify the strengths and weaknesses of an education system's ability to achieve *Learning for All*, SABER provides countries with tools to inform reform efforts based on evidence-based analysis. SABER helps illuminate what is often referred to the "black box" of education systems: what lies between an education system's inputs (monetary and other resources that go into it) and their outcomes (learning acquired by students). The results chain for learning begins with education inputs, and it includes the quality of policies and institutions, along with the quality of policy implementation; these aspects of education policies are likely to be a major influence on the education delivered, which in turn affects student learning and other outcomes. Figure 1 illustrates the results chain for learning with related SABER and other data-gathering tools and interventions.

"SABER views the links between education inputs and outputs as a chain that should translate quality policies and resources into quality learning outcomes."

SABER in Action: An Overview, January 2014 (See Annex 5).

Figure 1: SABER and the Results Chain for Learning



Source: World Bank. "The What, Why, and How of the Systems Approach to Better Education Results (Conference Version)." April 2013.

¹ World Bank. The World Bank Group Education 2020 Strategy: Learning for All – Investing in People's Knowledge and Skills to Promote Development. 2011. Washington DC: The World Bank.

SABER efforts thus far have focused on producing comparative data and knowledge on education policies and institutions in an effort to help countries systematically analyze and strengthen their education systems. Through the application of SABER tools, the quality of education policies are evaluated against evidence-based global standards, using SABER diagnostic tools and detailed policy data in key education system areas, including early childhood development, finance, student assessment, teachers, and workforce development. The application of SABER tools along with the data collected for SABER and the findings outlined in the SABER Country Reports help foster better-informed sector dialogue at the country level and are aimed at helping countries understand what policies matter most to accelerate *Learning for All*. SABER offers a common basis for dialogue among stakeholders on reform strategies and programmatic priorities.

SABER and its related products are also helping build a high-quality global knowledge base in education available as a global public good through the SABER website.² Through the site, comparable findings from the application of SABER tools and related country reports, regional reports, policy notes and studies are made available. Also available through this site are SABER framework papers, produced in each key education systems area currently analyzed through SABER; these papers provide an outline of evidence-based findings of the education policies that matter most in terms of building effective education systems and achieving *Learning for All*.

The SABER initiative has achieved remarkable progress in harmonizing the methodology of scoring countries' systems on a four-point scale and in standardizing the presentation of analytical findings and the relevant country reports. The products have provided material for developing the Bank's education sector flagship Education Staff Development Program. Overall, the initiative has earned high marks from management and enjoys the ownership of the World Bank Education Management Team and donor partners; its tools and findings are being used by task team leaders as inputs for project design and policy dialogue.

The SABER Umbrella Facility (SABER-UF), implemented this past year, has been set up as a multi-donor trust fund, which allows partners and donors to support SABER activities. Through SABER-UF support, the World Bank has been able to expand the reach of SABER activities by increasing the number of countries SABER impacts, developed additional policy domains, and initiated work on the assessment of education policy implementation. Currently, the Australian government has committed \$7 million Australian dollars to the UF, and several other donors are expected to sign on during this fiscal year. Many partners and donors that have supported the development and application SABER include programs the UK Department for International Development (DFID) Partnership for Education Development, the Russia Education Aid for Development (READ), as well as through various forms of support from agencies such as the Children's Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF), United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO), the World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Netherlands BNPP program, Korea's KTF program, and Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Pacific Facility program.

² www.worldbank.org/education/saber.

Summary of SABER Key Accomplishments

SABER was formulated to help countries accelerate *Learning for All* by strengthening education system policies and institutions using innovative, standardized, and comparable analytics built on research, evidence, and cross-country experience within a public goods framework. Since SABER's launch in early 2011, SABER has engaged with over 60 percent³ of the world's countries, and a number of products have been developed, applied, and disseminated. These products and engagements are helping reform education systems at the country level and building a high-quality knowledge base for education reforms at the global level. SABER products include SABER framework documents and tools, capacity development (known as the Education Staff Development Program – ESDP), SABER data and country reports, a SABER website that provides access to SABER-related materials and allows for comparability across SABER results, communication products such as Education Notes and SABER in Action brochures, and operational reviews.

This past year, SABER launched a new phase of operations during which it expanded the number of countries applying SABER tools, focused on building a better understanding of education systems



World Bank Group President Dr. Jim Yong Kim speaks at the UN Secretary General's Global Education First Initiative anniversary event at United Nations Headquarters in New York City on Sept. 25, 2013, where our work on education systems and SABER were highlighted (UNICEF/Susan Markisz).

³ This figure was arrived by dividing the number of countries SABER has engaged with (132) by the number of countries listed in the World Development Indicators database (214).

analysis by developing new policy domains and initiating work that centers on the analysis and diagnostic of policy implementation, promoted greater use of SABER products in policy dialogue both nationally and internationally, and assisted in capacity development through extension of the ESDP throughout the Bank and to our partners and increasingly also to clients.

In addition, SABER has expanded partnerships with a number of international organizations. In October 2013, the World Food Programme School Feeding policy adopted SABER School Feeding as a tool that will be deployed in all school feeding programs. Additionally, in partnership with the Australian government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), the World Bank has successfully applied SABER tools in a number of countries around the world, particularly in the East Asia and Pacific region through the Pacific SABER (PaBER) initiative and now the SABER Umbrella Facility. Other partners that support and have historically provided financial support to the development and application of SABER include the UK Department for International Development (DFID) Partnership for Education Development, the Russia Education Aid for Development (READ).



Stakeholders in workforce development in the Solomon Islands participate in a SABER-Workforce Development workshop to validate data on February 10, 2014 (Ryan Flynn/World Bank).

Increasing SABER Reach

By the end of this past year, SABER's range in analyzing education systems extended to 10 policy areas with work on assessing education policy implementation also initiated. Four new education system areas were added to SABER toolbox, with the approval of framework papers for Education Resilience Approaches and Education Management and Information Systems, and framework papers forthcoming for Engaging the Private Sector, and School Autonomy and Accountability. The following areas of education policy are now being analyzed through SABER tools:

1. Early Childhood Development,
2. Education Resilience Approaches,
3. School Finance,
4. School Health and School Feeding,
5. Student Assessment,
6. Teachers,
7. Workforce Development,
8. Education Management and Information Systems,
9. Engaging the Private Sector,* and
10. School Autonomy and Accountability.*

*Framework papers pending final publishing clearance

Widening Application of SABER Tools

By the end of fiscal 2014, SABER was engaged in over 132 countries. Six domain teams have completed some 112 country reports⁴ since SABER's inception with more than 80 country reports and related data currently available online. Many countries are using findings from SABER in formulating their policies, engaging in policy dialogue, and often impacting the design of World Bank and partner operations and analytic work in country. A review of new SABER country reports published in FY 14 indicates that about 40% of these SABER engagements influenced country programs through either World Bank operational financial or analytic work or directly through country dialogue and reform initiatives.

This past year, over 50 additional SABER country reports⁵ and related data were made available through the SABER online portal. The SABER website⁶ – launched in December 2013 – makes SABER tools, reports, and data publicly available. The web tool allows all stakeholders to conduct cross-country comparisons on education policies. By June 2014, the portal had received about 48,200 page views, or a total of more than 14,300 visits. Internal users make up just 3.4 percent of daily unique visitors. Most daily unique visitors are in the U.S. (about 43 percent), followed by Japan, Mexico, the UK, Australia, and India. The website contains 133 publically available reports (84 country reports covering six domains, plus 49 background papers—encompassing framework papers and case studies), with another 28 country reports completed—either under review or being finalized for publishing. In addition, the website includes four regional reports and five SABER in Action notes, which highlight the impact of SABER in countries around the world.

⁴ Includes *completed* and *available* country reports, meaning they are in final publishing process or available on SABER website (see **Annex 1**).

⁵ This figure was arrived by subtracting the 34 country reports *available* at the end of FY13 (according to the FY13 Strategy Update) from the 84 country reports *available* at the end of FY14.

⁶ <http://saber.worldbank.org>.

Box 1: SABER In Action Around The Globe

Angola. Findings from SABER analysis of *student assessment (SA)* helped government officials set priorities for activities to strengthen the country's assessment system. It also underlined the need for trained staff and stable funding to underpin future assessment reforms. The government established and trained a technical group in the Ministry of Education and put in place a new budget line for assessments. It then implemented Angola's first-ever assessment of early-grade reading. These efforts provided the foundation for a much larger set of assessment reforms and activities led by the government.

Bulgaria. SABER tools are helping inform policy dialogue in interrelated areas of education: *early childhood development (ECD)*, *teacher policies*, *school autonomy and accountability (SAA)*, and *workforce development (WfD)*. A SABER analysis of *ECD* policies, which identified shortfalls in nutrition and pre-primary education programs, barriers to access for Turkish and Roma minorities, and a lack of comprehensive child development monitoring and tracking, was prominently publicized at a national ECD planning conference held in Sofia in June 2014. A SABER analysis of *teacher policies*, found compensation for teachers was not conducive to attracting and retaining talented professionals, and provided a blueprint for the drafting of Bulgaria's Strategy for the Development of the Pedagogic Staff. SABER findings on *WfD* have affirmed the government's desire to narrow the gap between the supply and demand for work skills most likely to boost labor productivity, feeding into the process of amending a law on technical and vocational education and training.

Iraq. Findings from the SABER assessment of *WfD* provided background analysis used in the development of a draft national TVET strategy. The findings were also used in the design of ongoing World Bank technical assistance (TA) that aims to strengthen the capacity of the Ministry of Education of Central Iraq to implement the TVET strategy and improve vocational education. The development of the TVET strategy is being done in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, the British Council, and the European Union.

Jamaica. Findings from an analysis of *ECD* through SABER identified key shortfalls in programs for children ages 0-3, and the government's Early Childhood Commission quickly moved to address them in its 2014 National Strategy Plan. Substantive and focused policy dialogue with relevant stakeholders from the onset helped ensure this outcome. Additionally, this work has helped inform a new \$12 million World Bank-financed ECD project on social inclusion.

Malaysia. SABER analysis in *WfD* was used to frame recommendations in the World Bank's Malaysia Skills Report, which identified shortfalls in the country's education system that limit its ability to become a high-performing economy. After the prime minister expressed interest in a recommendation regarding the need for improved coordination of the many agencies responsible for workforce development, the Bank prepared a two-day workshop in August 2014 inviting international experts to talk about how their advanced countries have improved governance in their TVET systems.

Nigeria. The use of SABER tools and methods exemplifies how SABER can help change policy and develop new program initiatives based on global best practice. The governments of Bauchi, Ekiti, and Anambra states in Nigeria used the key policy challenges identified through the use of SABER in the preparation of a World Bank-financed State Education Program. SABER findings became the basis for the releases of funds for this project. SABER supported a structured and effective policy dialogue with Nigerian decision makers at local, state, and federal levels, helping identify the four policy challenges in the area of *teachers*, *school based management*, and *information assessment*.

Box 1: SABER In Action Around The Globe (*continued*)

Samoa, Solomon Islands, and Papua New Guinea. The *school autonomy and accountability (SAA)* policies were analyzed through SABER in these countries through funding from Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade as part of PaBER (Pacific SABER). The process opened up policy dialogue among stakeholders from the three countries and led to an interest in analyzing student assessment and teacher policies. The SAA policy analyses informed the countries' Education Sector Strategy Updates. The Samoa SAA country report was used for a hands-on case study exercise in training DFAT education staff from the Pacific Islands in May 2014.

South Asia. Work on SABER *Resilience* was the basis for the November 2013 Resilience Research and Mixed Methods Training workshop attended by twenty researchers from five countries (**Afghanistan, Nepal, India, Bhutan, and Lebanon**) met in Delhi, India. Participants represented a variety of professions engaged in the field of education: Ministry of Education staff, University academics, staff of UN agencies, NGOs and consulting firms. Over the course of four days, they learned and discussed resilience theory and its application to education settings, as well as the value of mixed methods research design to inform education policies and practice aimed at improving the lives of vulnerable populations.

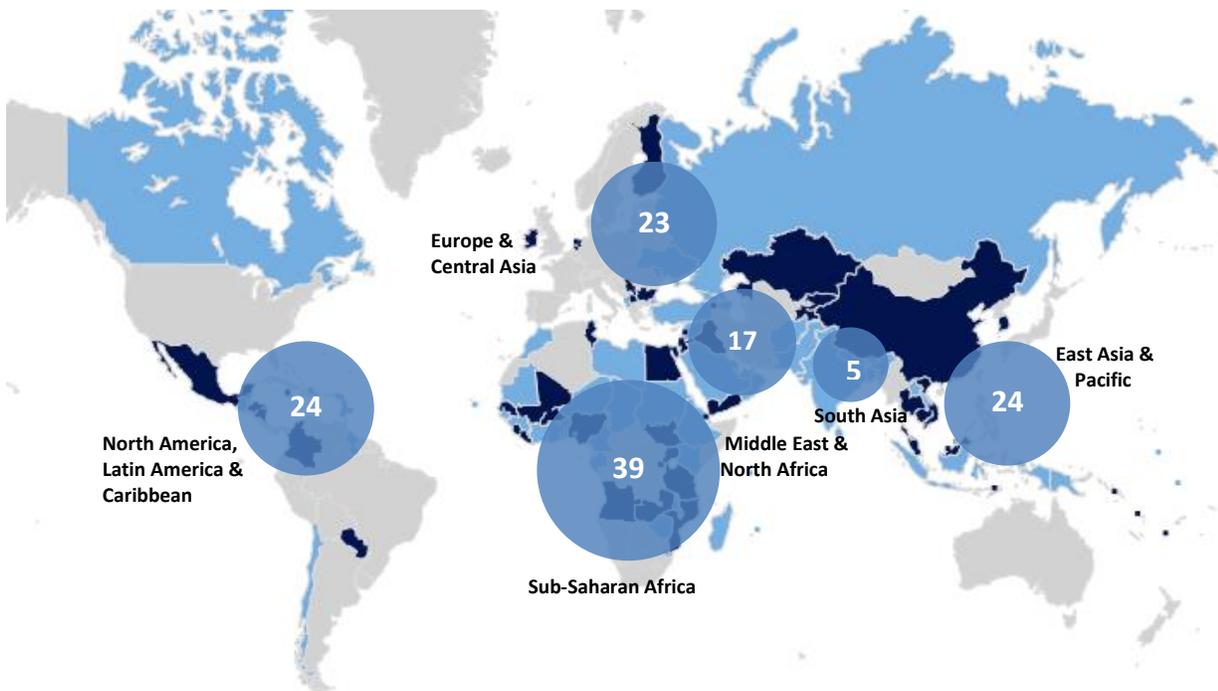
Tajikistan. SABER tools were used to analyze the *student assessment* system to help guide a national reform of the university entrance examination, which was viewed as a source of inequity in the ability of different groups to enter higher education. Corruption and poor test quality had undermined efforts to base entrance decisions on merit alone. The SABER exercise highlighted these issues, indicating how they might be dealt with. The government then designed and piloted a new entrance examination that addressed many of the issues.

Tanzania. Findings from the SABER analysis of *teacher policies* helped shape the government's current large-scale education reforms under its Big Results Now initiative. The SABER engagement in teachers helped identify underlying causes and key areas for reform in relation to entering the professional status and motivation of teachers. Using the World Bank's new Program-for-Results lending instrument for the first time in education, the Tanzanian Big Results Now in Education Program will receive a US\$122 million IDA credit over the coming four years, as pre-agreed results are achieved. The governments of the United Kingdom and Sweden are also supporting the country with these government reforms through financing of this program.

Uganda. The use of SABER has spanned from *ECD* to *WfD*, including work on *teacher policies* and *student assessment*. The findings on ECD were used by the government and the Bank team to inform the design of an ECE teacher training sub-component and a TA in Uganda's Global Partnership for Education (GPE) project. To strengthen the capacity of the Ministry of Education and Sports in the provision of quality ECE services, key ECD activities totaling US\$5 million in the GPE project included ECE teacher training, capacity building, and policy reforms to enhance the enabling environment for quality ECCE provision for improved school readiness for children aged 3-5 years. In the area of WfD, the SABER engagement coincided with the government's endorsement of a comprehensive Business, Technical, and Vocational Education Law. SABER workshops provided the basis for a shared assessment by stakeholders of workforce challenges and priorities for reform. Participants examined the SABER tools to identify needs and SABER findings and help establish clear targets for stakeholders to monitor implementation.

In the last year, SABER entered into over 50 new engagements with countries. **Figure 2** summarizes where SABER tools were applied or were in the process of being applied in fiscal year 2014. SABER has engaged with 132 countries since its inception, almost 30 percent of which are in the Africa region. Although much of SABER’s focus has been supporting low-income countries, various middle-income countries have also been using SABER to help analyze education system policies. **Annex 1** provides an overview of the status SABER development, outreach and engagement by education system areas. **Annex 2** summarizes the countries that have applied (or are applying) SABER tools at the end of fiscal 2014. **Annex 3** provides an overview of results as outlined in the Results Framework for SABER activities this past year.

Figure 2: Update on SABER application, as of July 22, 2014



Box 2: SABER Working in Partnership

Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) .In addition to supporting the SABER Umbrella Facility, DFAT supports the application of SABER in the Pacific through PaBER. This three-year pilot regional program is led by the countries involved: Samoa, Solomon Islands, and Papua New Guinea. The regional coordination for the program is carried out by Secretariat of the Pacific Board for Educational Assessment (SPBEA). This past year, funding for the program supported delivery of 4 ESDP programs, the application of SABER SAA and related SABER workshop in teachers and WfD.

ALECSO /UNESCO. As part of the Arab Regional Agenda for Improving Education Quality (ARAIEQ), the World Bank has partnered with the Arab League Educational, Cultural, and Scientific Organization (ALECSO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in using SABER to analyze student assessment systems in a 16-country benchmarking exercise.

Global Partnership for Education (GPE). In Uganda, the use of SABER to analyze ECD has helped design an early childhood education (ECE) teacher training sub-component with an accompanying technical assistance for a Global Partnership for Education (GPE) project. SABER-ECD findings also identified shortfalls in Uganda's enabling environment and proposed specific policy reforms needed to improve school readiness for children aged 3-5 years. Eventually, Uganda plans to scale up its ECE program to upgrade teacher training systems across the board.

Russia Education Aid for Development (READ). Since 2008, READ has focused on helping low-income countries improve their student learning outcomes through the design, implementation, and use of robust systems for student assessment. At the global level, READ has become a key player in shaping global policy dialogue on assessment and learning and has been instrumental in the post-Millennium Development Goals (MDG) 2015 learning goals discussion. Simultaneously, at the country level, READ supports Angola, Armenia, Ethiopia, the Kyrgyz Republic, Mozambique, Tajikistan, Vietnam, and Zambia through financial and technical collaboration with government counterparts to thoroughly review the existing assessment system, decide on activities to address any gaps, and implement and evaluate the effectiveness of those activities. READ plays a key role in the development of SABER instruments, namely on student assessment systems, and has supported the application of these tools globally.

DFID Partnership for Education Development (PFED). DFID supported SABER through the DFID-World Bank Partnership for Education Development (PFED), helping fund the initial SABER pilot applications in countries across the globe in areas of education quality (teachers and finance), resilience, and workforce development. Today, DFID is working with the Bank on SABER Engaging the Private Sector through the Education Markets work to help better understand this important part of the education system.

World Food Programme (WFP). The WFP, the largest humanitarian provider of school meals worldwide, is piloting the use of SABER to analyze school feeding interventions. Their current strategy states that all WFP engagements as of 2015 that intend to implement school feeding programs must undertake a SABER analysis of school feeding. This past year, WFP and the World Bank piloted the use of SABER tools in 6 countries around the world as it plans to use this in 60 countries in the coming years.

SABER Knowledge Sharing and Capacity Development

Through a number of global events, international workshops, capacity building activities, and communication tools, key findings from SABER have been shared across various stakeholders. Such knowledge sharing and capacity building activities are helping inform and shape the global debate on education. In an effort to help disseminate key findings from SABER and raise awareness of the initiative, a number of SABER launch events were held in London, UK during the Education World Forum from Jan. 19-24, 2014, including presentations, workshops, and communications and multimedia materials shared with a number of global stakeholders and researchers in the education sector.

SABER has featured and highlighted at several **high level global events and conferences**, including

- **“Education Systems Town Hall”** in London, England in January 2014. SABER presented with World Bank Education Systems research work (<http://www.ukcds.org.uk/education-systems-town-hall-0>). *Attended by over 100 education researchers and academics.*
- **“Measuring for Success” READ Global Conference** in St. Petersburg, Russia, from May 12-16, 2014. SABER analysis of student assessment was highlighted. *Attended by 122 participants from 19 countries.*
- **“Investing in Young Children Globally: The Cost of Inaction”** at the National Academy of Sciences in Washington, D.C., from April 17-18, 2014, organized by the Institute of Medicine. SABER work on Early Childhood Development was featured. *Global experts audience.*
- **“Learning for All Symposium: Investing in a Brighter Future”** at World Bank headquarters in Washington, D.C., on April 10, 2014 on the margins of the World Bank/IMF Annual Meetings. World Bank Group President Dr. Jim Yong Kim talked about SABER in his speech. *Global audience.*
- **“Assessment for Global Learning: Global Symposium”** at World Bank headquarters in Washington, D.C., from Nov. 7-8, 2013 highlighted SABER activities in the area of student assessment offering the SABER framework as a potential tool for post-2015 discussions in education. *Attended by 99 participants each day, including World Bank staff and external participants.*
- **“Global Education First Initiative Anniversary Event: Delivering on the Global Education Promise”** in New York City on Sept. 25, 2013. World Bank Group President Dr. Jim Yong Kim talked about education systems and SABER in his speech during the UN Secretary General’s Education First Event. *Global audience.*

Capacity building efforts through the **Education Staff Development Program** included training on:

- **"Engaging the Private Sector,"** January 29-30, 2014 in Washington, D.C., to 30 World Bank staff.
- **"School Autonomy and Accountability,"** January 27-28, 2014 in Washington, D.C., to 30 World Bank staff.

SABER in-country workshops and technical workshops (some examples):

- **SABER-Workforce Development** Stakeholders Data Collection and Validation Workshops: Solomon Islands, January 28-30, 2014 and February 10, 2014, *with about 35 participants.*

- **SABER-Education Resilience** Training Workshop (RES-Research) and South Asia Resilience Country Cases: Delhi, November 22-30, 2013, with 25 participants.
- **“Learning for All: Measurement and Data Issues”** at World Bank headquarters in Washington, D.C., on March 18, 2014, co-hosted by USAID and the World Bank to launch the new SABER web tool. *Attended by 44 USAID employees and 31 additional participants*

In addition to global events, capacity building and in-country SABER workshops, this year a number of SABER communications products have been developed. The SABER in Action notes were initially published in January 2014 for the domains Teacher Policies, Student Assessment, Workforce Development, and Early Childhood Development to highlight how SABER is helping shape policy dialogue and reform at the country level in various education system domains. Two additional SABER in Action notes were created to give an overview of the initiative and an illustration of how SABER was applied in Nigeria and Bulgaria, with a few more SABER in Action notes in the areas of Early Childhood Development and Education Resilience Approaches.

News about SABER has also been disseminated through numerous World Bank blogs on SABER, which have received more than 9,000 views. A SABER video⁷ was created, and it has been used as a tool for dissemination of the SABER initiative through various social media channels. This past year, the SABER initiative has been picked up by a number of news agencies and blogs, including the Huffington Post⁸ in July 2014, Relief Web⁹ in April 2014, and TechPresident¹⁰ and Library Intelligencer¹¹ in January 2014, among others. **Annex 4** provides a fuller listing of SABER communications and knowledge sharing activities done this past year and **Annex 5** provides links to the SABER in Actions pieces developed to communicate key findings of SABER application in countries around the world.

Key Findings from SABER

SABER’s twin goals are to inform country policy dialogue and build a global knowledge base on education system reform necessary to achieve learning for all. This past year, SABER has helped inform country dialogue through some 50 new country reports made available with open data on the SABER web tool. SABER has added to the global knowledge base by developing evidence-based tools to analyze Education Resilience and Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) in two new “What Matters” framework papers, and by creating a data visualization tool on the EdStats portal. In addition, drafts of “What Matters” framework papers for two additional education domains, Engaging the Private Sector and School Autonomy and Accountability, were finalized this past year.

⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lkuC2Q5g9il>.

⁸ http://www.huffingtonpost.com/travis-korte/how-data-and-analytics-ca_b_5609411.html.

⁹ <http://reliefweb.int/report/world/world-bank-support-education-systems-approach-achieve-learning-all>.

¹⁰ <http://techpresident.com/news/wegov/24709/world-bank-education-data-website>.

¹¹ <https://blogs.unimelb.edu.au/libraryintelligencer/2014/01/31/the-world-bank-launched-last-week-an-open-data-portal-called-the-systems-approach-for-better-education-results-or-saber-2/>.

Informing Country Dialogue and Reform

SABER country reports document the results of the application of SABER tools to assess and benchmark various aspects of a country's education system. The country report identifies the strengths and weaknesses of a country's policies and institutions in a particular domain and makes policy recommendations. Each policy area is rated on a four-point scale (latent, emerging, established, and advanced). The following are a sample of key messages from these country reports.

In an evaluation of the policy domain **Student Assessment (SA)** in **Nepal**, the SABER program recommended the country improve the quality of its classroom assessment practices, introduce government funding for examination-related activities, and effectively present and disseminate the results of its first National-Large Scale Assessment (NLSA). The SABER analysis contributed to the overall knowledge base, as student assessments are an integral part of the education system in Nepal. The evaluation informed the School Sector Reform Program, a \$350 million lending operation that aims to increase access to and improve the quality of school education, particularly basic education and especially for students from marginalized groups.

An analysis of **Workforce Development (WfD)** in **Moldova** found that the Eastern European country faces serious challenges as its population ages and its labor force shrinks. Outward migration of working-age citizens looking for jobs abroad has become increasingly common. With a weak WfD system, Moldova will not be able to withstand stiffer competition globally and regionally. Moldovan enterprises, especially exporters, complain about the difficulty in finding skilled workers with the right set of skills. The SABER evaluation was part of a wider set of analytic work on labor issues to develop country-tailored, evidence-based policy recommendations in jobs and skills for the Moldovan government, under two technical assistance operations.

Two evaluations of **Student Assessment (SA)** in the **Punjab** and **Sindh provinces** of **Pakistan** helped the World Bank team understand policy gaps and supported the design dialogue for two education sector projects in Punjab and Sindh. The team will continue to use the SABER report and data as a base document for future discussions and can be used as a benchmark to see if progress is made to address the gaps identified. Among other issues, the **Punjab Province** analysis found that the government had recently established a Curriculum Authority to oversee the supervision of curriculum, prepare and approve textbooks, and maintain standards of education, but on-the-ground classroom assessment practices in the province tended to be about recalling information and provided little feedback to students and parents. The **Sindh Province** analysis found that the government administers a Secondary School Certificate exam to students in grades 9 and 10 to determine whether individual students should pass on to the next level of school. However, the test assesses only textbook knowledge, and the textbooks are based on an outdated curriculum from 2002, not the most recent one completed in 2006.



World Bank Group President Dr. Jim Yong Kim focuses on the importance of education systems citing SABER at the “Learning for All Symposium: Investing in a Brighter Future” in Washington, D.C. on April 10, 2014 held at the margins of the World Bank/IMF Spring Meetings (Roxana Bravo/World Bank).

Building the Global Knowledge Base

Two “What Matters” framework papers were published this past year, showcasing evidence-based tools to analyzing two new SABER domains, Education Resilience and Education Management Information Systems (EMIS). Additionally, papers on Engaging the Private Sector and School Autonomy and Accountability were completed and are undergoing final review and publishing.

What Matters Most in Education Resilience Approaches (ERA) Framework Paper – This domain refers to analyzing education systems in contexts of violence, conflict, and fragility. The Resilience framework paper identified success factors strongly correlated with positive school and life outcomes of children and youth living in adverse contexts. These include individual factors (e.g., hope, purpose, social competence, problem solving, and autonomy) and environmental ones (e.g., care, support, high expectations and opportunities for meaningful participation in school, family and the community).

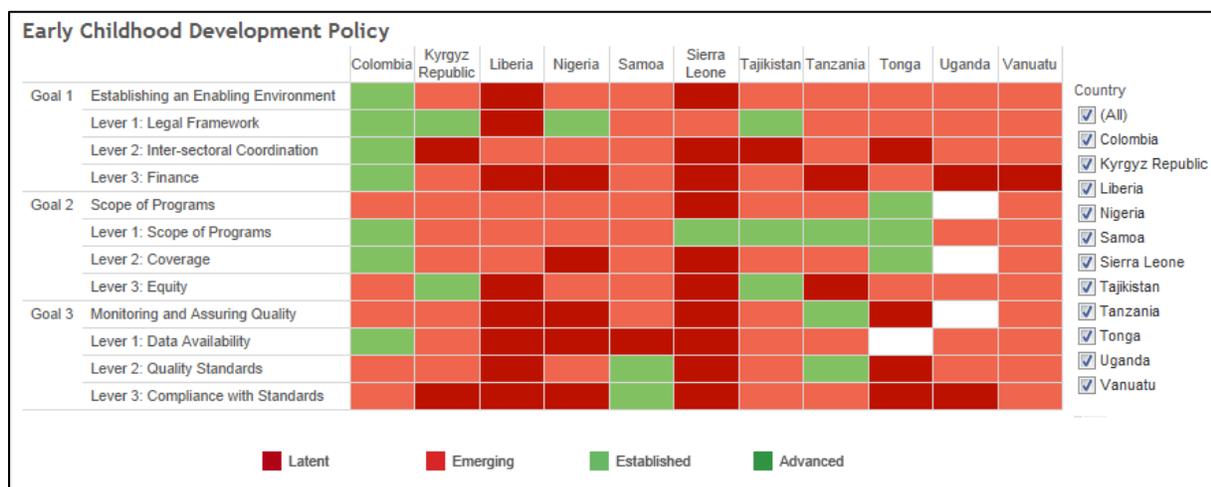
The ERA Program proposes principles and process that can guide education systems to foster protection, recovery, and performance opportunities for learners and their communities in spite of adversity. To capture the complexity and heterogeneity of the drivers of fragility and conflict in each context, ERA works across multiple levels of analysis – the student, the school, the community, and the institutional

environment. The four components of the ERA framework include analyzing: 1) education in adversity, 2) assets and engagement, 2) relevant school and community support, and 4) aligned education system support.

What Matters Most in Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) Framework Paper – The EMIS domain analyzes how well a country’s education management information system provides systematic and quality data on inputs, resources, governance, operations, and outcomes. The SABER tool aims to help countries identify areas for improvement in data collection, data and system management, and data use in decision-making and improving the different elements of the education system. Based on global evidence, the EMIS framework paper has identified what matters most to ensure learning for all. These four core policy areas are shared by education data systems and need to be assessed: 1) enabling environment, 2) system soundness, 3) quality data, and 4) utilization for decision-making.

Visualizing SABER data

The revamped online EdStats Dashboards,¹² an open data tool, includes a tab labeled “Policy Data” that allows anyone to compare SABER policy data across countries in the following domains: Early Childhood Development, School Autonomy and Accountability, School Finance, Student Assessment, Teachers, and Workforce Development. As pictured below, the dashboard enables users to create a data visualization for selected countries in a particular policy domain, such as ECD.



¹² http://datatopics.worldbank.org/education/wDashboard/tbl_index.aspx.

Improving SABER Functions and Looking Ahead

The development objective of SABER is to introduce a systems approach to the education sector that both deepens the contributions to country-level dialogue and increases global influence. To date, SABER has proven to be an invaluable approach for introducing a systems approach to our work in the sector with the expectation that SABER will continue to provide both global influence and country level impact. To reach its objective, SABER aims to provide public access and encourage use of systematic, accurate, and comparable data on the quality of countries' education policies. The impact of SABER is both at the country and global level. The focus in this past year therefore has been to broaden the reach and relevance of SABER with the goal of ensuring additional education domains be analyzed through new SABER tools and that additional countries apply SABER tools and make data and materials available through a new SABER open data web tool.

Work in the past fiscal year was organized in the following two key areas:

- 1) **Improved coordination, governance, and communications** – which involved a) enhancing the education global knowledge base by increasing the reach of SABER, b) improving overall SABER coordination and business model, and c) focusing on communications and outreach related to SABER; and
- 2) **Continued application of SABER tools and availability of SABER reports and data in an SABER web tool** – which involved a) increasing and deepening SABER contributions to country-level dialogue, b) creating an open data SABER web tool, and c) streamlining SABER operations.

As the World Bank begins to function as an Education Global Practice in line with the World Bank's recent reform efforts, the work of SABER will evolve. A greater focus will be placed on the institutionalization and operationalization of SABER engagement. Going forward, SABER will continue to expand the existing library of education systems analyzed around the world to compare the effectiveness of different policy environments through more and better data collection, compilation, and analysis. Additionally, a more holistic and in-depth analysis of the education system is envisioned through new SABER tools. Ensuring relevance of SABER both at the country level in operational support and policy dialogue and at the global level in terms of improving the education knowledge base will continue to be the driving forces of SABER.

Moving forward, SABER tools will become global public goods accessible to clients and partners to ensure education system policy reform is based on the best available evidence of what works to help children around the world acquire the learning, skills, and competencies necessary to prosper and succeed in life and work.

Annex 1: Overview of SABER Activity by Domain by FY14

Education System Domain	Framework Paper Status	KSharing/ Communication	Cumulative FY 14 Country Reports
1. Early Childhood Development	Available	Education Notes Completed & SABER in Action Completed	Available = 18 Completed = 2 In Process = 20
2. Education Mgmt & Information Systems	Completed		
3. *Education Resilience Approaches	Available	Education Notes & SABER in Action Completed	
4. Engaging the Private Sector	Completed		Completed = 5 In Process = 26
5. School Finance	Available	Education Notes	Available = 2 Completed = 3 In Process = 5
6. School Health and School Feeding	Available	Education Notes Completed	Completed = 6 In Process = 23
7. Student Assessment	Available	Education Notes & SABER in Action	Available = 20 Completed = 2 In Process = 18
8. School Autonomy and Accountability	Completed		Available = 11 Completed = 5
9. Teachers	Available	Education Notes & SABER in Action	Available = 20 Completed = 3 In Process = 28
10. Workforce Development	Available	SABER in Action	Available = 13 Completed = 2 In Process = 18
Total	8 Available 2 Completed to be published	Education Notes: 4 available, 2 completed to be published SABER in Action: 5 available (includes 2 not listed above: Overview, Nigeria) 3 completed (includes 1 additional not listed above: Bulgaria) completed to be published	Cumulative Available = 84 Completed = 28 In Process = 138

*Education Resilience Approaches conducts case studies at this stage of development.

Note: The data included in this chart was current as of July 22, 2014. *In Process* includes country reports that were put on hold. *Completed* means country reports had been drafted and were ready for formatting, editing, and clearance. *Available* includes country reports that have been posted on the SABER website. This chart does not count pilots, case studies, briefs, regional reports, ESDP, or e-learning.

Annex 2: Overview of SABER Engagement

A total of 132 countries, listed in the following table, have applied or were in the process of applying one or more SABER tools as of July 22, 2014.

Africa	East Asia/Pacific	Europe/ Central Asia	North America/ Latin America	Middle East/ North Africa	South Asia
Angola	Australia	Albania	Antigua & Barbuda	Bahrain	Bangladesh
Benin	Brunei Darussalam	Armenia	Barbados	Djibouti	India
Burkina Faso	Cambodia	Azerbaijan	Belize	Egypt	Nepal
Burundi	China	Bulgaria	Bolivia	Iraq	Pakistan
Cameroon	Indonesia	Denmark	Brazil	Jordan	Sri Lanka
Cape Verde	Japan	Finland	Canada	Kuwait	
Chad	Kiribati	Georgia	Chile	Lebanon	
Comoros	Korea, Republic of	Hungary	Colombia	Libya	
Cote d'Ivoire	Lao PDR	Ireland	Costa Rica	Morocco	
Congo, Republic of	Malaysia	Kazakhstan	Dominica	Oman	
Congo, D. R. of	Mongolia	Kyrgyz Republic	Dominican Republic	Qatar	
Eritrea	Myanmar	Macedonia, FYR	El Salvador	Saudi Arabia	
Ethiopia	New Zealand	Moldova	Grenada	Syrian Arab Republic	
Gambia, The	Papua New Guinea	Netherlands	Guatemala	Tunisia	
Ghana	Philippines	Poland	Guyana	United Arab Emirates	
Guinea	Samoa	Russian Federation	Honduras	West Bank and Gaza	
Guinea-Bissau	Singapore	Serbia	Jamaica	Yemen, Republic of	
Kenya	Solomon Islands	Spain	Mexico		
Liberia	Thailand	Tajikistan	Nicaragua		
Madagascar	Timor-Leste	Turkey	Panama		
Malawi	Tonga	Ukraine	Paraguay		
Mali	Tuvalu	United Kingdom	St. Kitts & Nevis		
Mauritania	Vanuatu	Uzbekistan	St. Lucia		
Mauritius	Vietnam		St. Vincent & the Grenadines		
Mozambique					
Niger					
Nigeria					
Rwanda					
Senegal					
Seychelles					
Sierra Leone					
South Sudan					
Sudan					
Swaziland					
Tanzania					
Togo					
Uganda					
Zambia					
Zimbabwe					

Note: The data included in this chart was current as of July 22, 2014. This chart counts country engagements that resulted in country reports, pilots, case studies, briefs, regional reports, and just data. It does not include ESDP or e-learning. This includes reports that were put on hold, but not those that were dropped. Country engagements still *in pipeline* stage were also not included. This data includes all country engagements in the domains listed in Annex 1, but not Learning Standards, ICT, Equity & Inclusion, or Tertiary.

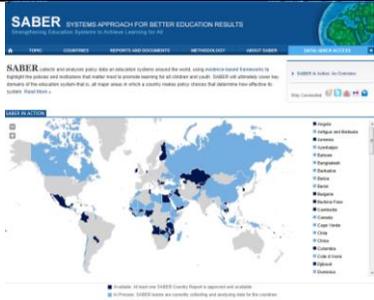
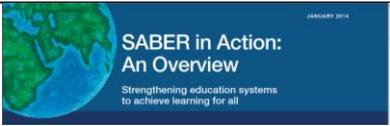
Annex 3: Outputs and Results Indicators

The below table outlines key results and outputs from SABER, namely from work organized under: 1) coordination, governance and communications; 2) SABER Application and use; and 3) Education Staff Development Program.

Table 1: SABER Outputs

Improved coordination, governance and communications	
Indicator	Results
New education system analysis tools	SABER has a total of 10 Tools to Assess policy intent. In FY 14, 4 additional new SABER policy intent tools were developed including: - 2 policy intent framework papers published (Education Management Information Systems and Education Resilience) - 2 policy intent framework papers produced in final stages of clearance and publishing (Engaging the Private Sector and School Autonomy and Accountability)
Cross-country analytical reports	SABER Regional Review of WfD in Middle East and North Africa Region drafted
Strategic Engagement of SABER and enhanced spectrum of SABER Products	In FY14, 2 new SABER policy implementation tools developed including: - SABER Policy Implementation Toolkit - Engaging the Private Sector SABER tools for assessing policy implementation and provider level surveys piloted in 2 countries. Additionally a re-engineering plan for SABER Strategic Engagement was developed.
Improved communications and Knowledge Sharing	In FY14 a SABER Communications Package was developed it included: 6 SABER in Action Notes, 1 SABER video, 10 SABER blog posts/social media outreach. SABER was also highlighted and featured in 6 High Level Global Education Events as well as in numerous technical and in-country workshops.
Continued application of SABER tools and availability of SABER reports in SABER web tool	
Indicator	Results
Increase use of SABER tools in country	SABER has a total of 10 Tools to Assess policy intent. In FY 14, 4 additional new SABER policy intent tools were developed: 50 new Completed/Available Country Reports and data (see Annex 1 and 2) Over 50 new country engagement (in process/pipeline) (See Annex 1 &2) SABER is increasingly used by donor partners in working with countries to analyze education systems. In FY14 World Food Program worked in 6 countries using SABER to pilots future use of SABER School Feeding in 60 countries. ALECSO/UNESCO is using SABER to analyze student assessment systems in 16 countries. Additionally, through the PABER partnership with DFAT SABER was applied in 3 countries in the Pacific across several domains.
SABER use in Country Level Dialogue	Based on portfolio review, a total of 14 World Bank lending operations reference SABER use in project documents. In FY 14 a new process to track SABER use in Bank operations including lending and knowledge and policy dialogue was initiated Based on this process, 36% of SABER FY 14 country reports were utilized or influenced county education systems through World Bank financial or knowledge based country services or through direct country dialogue and reform. Of the 50 new country reports produced, 5 referenced a link to a new World Bank operation, 7 were linked to ESW/AAA or Technical Assistance provided to countries, and 11 were linked to government policy dialogue and reform initiatives in countries. (18 out of 50 new SABER CR reported utilization in operations, ESW/TA and or country dialogue and reform).
SABER open database and web portal	Web Tool launched in FY14. Information on the 200+ SABER engagements. Some 84 country reports. Over 9,800 related data points for indicators. Launched December 2013. By June 2014, the portal had received about 48,200 page views (more than 14,300 visits). Internal users make up just 3.4 percent of daily unique visitors. Most daily unique visitors are in the U.S. (about 43 percent), followed by Japan, Mexico, the UK, Australia, and India.
Streamline SABER operations	Internal standardization was enforced through new Internal Operations Manual used by all SABER domains. Annual Report Produced and regular portfolio monitoring implemented.
Development and Delivery of Education Staff Development Program	
Indicator	Results
Capacity Development	To date, 6 SABER domains have been developed into ESDP training. ESDP training has been delivered 24 times reaching 414 staff and 270 donors and clients. 6 face-to-face modules (Teachers, SA, WfD, ECD, SAA, EPS), 2 e-Learning courses (Education Strategy 2020 and ECD) were also developed.

Annex 4: Improved Communications and Knowledge Sharing of SABER

<p>SABER Web Tool</p>	<p>saber.worldbank.org</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information on the 200+ SABER engagements - Some 84 country reports - Almost 10,00 data points - Launched Dec 2013. By June 2014, the portal had received about 48,200 page views 	
<p>SABER video</p>	<p>http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lkuC2Q5g9il</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tool for dissemination of SABER, used through various social media channels 	
<p>SABER in Action Forms</p>	<p>http://saber.worldbank.org/index.cfm?indx=5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SABER In Action Forms published for Teachers, WfD, Student Assessment, Nigeria, and a SABER Overview piece. With ECD, Bulgaria and Resilience in production. - SABER in Action showcase use of SABER in policy dialogue and reform. 	

SABER-related blogs and social media (YouTube, Twitter postings) published since July 2013, totaling more than **9,000 page views**.

- April 24, 2014 – **A Conversation about Early Childhood in Guyana, the Land of Many Waters** by Peter Holland: <http://blogs.worldbank.org/education/node/729> – 426 page views, 2 comments
- March 18, 2014 – **EdStats: Big Data, Better Policies, Learning for All** by Husein Abdul-Hamid: <http://blogs.worldbank.org/education/node/725> – 1,507 page views, 1 comment
- Jan. 27, 2014 – **Big Data in Education in 2025: A Thought Experiment** by Michael Trucano: <http://blogs.worldbank.org/edutech/thought-experiment-big-data> – 1,286 page views
- Jan. 22, 2014 – **When It Comes to Learning, Systems Matter** by Elizabeth King: <http://blogs.worldbank.org/education/when-it-comes-learning-education-systems-matter> – 1,440 page views, 4 comments
- Jan. 22, 2014 – “**Explore our new open data tool, SABER -- compares countries' progress on #education**” tweet from @WBEducation: <https://twitter.com/WBEducation/status/425986357211963392> – 28 retweets, 16 favorites
- Jan. 17, 2014 – **SABER Open Data Tool on Education Policies** video hosted on YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lkuC2Q5g9il> – 896 views, 4 comments
- Dec. 19, 2013 – **Is There a Role for the Private Sector in Education?** by Laura Lewis: <http://blogs.worldbank.org/education/there-role-private-sector-education> – 1,610 page views, 9 comments

- Dec. 13, 2013 – **Is Finland Still an Education Superstar?** by Halsey Rogers: <http://blogs.worldbank.org/education/node/718> – 1,150 page views, 3 comments
- Dec. 5, 2013 – **To Help Kids Learn, Nigeria Examines Policy Bottlenecks** by Michel Welmond: <http://blogs.worldbank.org/education/help-kids-learn-nigeria-examines-policy-bottlenecks> – 603 page views, 4 comments
- Nov. 6, 2013 – **Could Do Better! Some Thoughts on a ‘Report Card’ for Global Learning** by Marguerite Clark: <http://blogs.worldbank.org/education/could-do-better-some-thoughts-report-card-global-learning> – 896 page views, 5 comments

Annex 5: SABER in Action

Here are links to SABER in Action brochures, all of which were published in January 2014:

- “SABER in Action: **An Overview**”
http://wbgfiles.worldbank.org/documents/hdn/ed/saber/supporting_doc/in_actions/SABER_in_Action_Overview.pdf
- “SABER in Action: **Workforce Development**”
http://wbgfiles.worldbank.org/documents/hdn/ed/saber/supporting_doc/in_actions/SABER_in_Action_WfD.pdf
- “SABER in Action: **Student Assessment**”
http://wbgfiles.worldbank.org/documents/hdn/ed/saber/supporting_doc/in_actions/SABER_in_Action_Student_Assessment.pdf
- “SABER in Action: **Quality Teaching**”
http://wbgfiles.worldbank.org/documents/hdn/ed/saber/supporting_doc/in_actions/SABER_in_Action_Quality_Teaching.pdf
- “SABER in Action: **Nigeria**”
http://wbgfiles.worldbank.org/documents/hdn/ed/saber/supporting_doc/in_actions/SABER_in_Action_Nigeria.pdf



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