



SABER

Engaging the Private Sector

2016

An education system is composed of all the learning opportunities that are available in a society, including those provided by government schools as well as those offered by a diverse range of providers (government, community, faith-based, and for-profit) and funders (state and non-state). In recent years, the private sector has played an increasing role in expanding school enrollment for all students, including underserved children and youth. SABER-Engaging the Private Sector (EPS) assesses a country's law and policy orientation toward harnessing the potential capacity of non-state providers to help bring quality education within reach for all children, regardless of their ability to pay fees.

Why do countries engage with the private sector?

In the last two decades, the percentage of students in low-income countries attending private primary schools doubled, from 11 to 22 percent. This growth in private provision is closely connected to the boom in access that has taken place in low-income countries over the same time period. Engagement with the private sector may take many shapes: from providing public financing to privately-managed schools to providing vouchers for students to go to any school of their choice. Sometimes, the private sector may fill a gap in

education service delivery in communities where government facilities are either nonexistent or unable to meet increasing demand. Many parents opt to enroll their children in private schools because public systems do not provide the type or quality of services they wish for. As governments work to meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in education, the private sector can help crowd in financing and add access capacity to an education system. In addition, the private sector can be a source of knowledge and innovation that can benefit both public and private schools.

What challenges exist?

The challenges pertaining to engaging the private sector in education are the same challenges faced by education systems as a whole: access, quality, and equity. How can students receive a high quality education regardless of where they are born, their gender, or their family's income? When it comes to the private sector, the key challenge is enabling non-state schools to provide education services under an accountability- and learning-driven regulatory framework established by the government to ensure that all children gain the necessary skills and competencies to become

productive adults. In many countries, existing policies hinder the private sector from providing education services, often resulting in fewer options for children to participate in a quality education. Regulatory frameworks enable additional providers to enter the market and ensure these providers are held accountable to students, families, and communities.

What is SABER-Engaging the Private Sector?

Using new diagnostic tools and detailed policy information, the World Bank Group's Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) platform collects and analyzes comparative data and knowledge on education systems around the world and highlights the policies and institutions that matter most to promote learning for all children and youth. SABER's detailed data-gathering and analysis are organized by "domains," or areas of education policymaking within an education system. These currently include levels of education (early childhood development, primary and secondary, workforce development, and tertiary), types of quality resources and supports (school finance, school health and school feeding, and teachers), areas of governance (engaging the private sector and school autonomy and accountability),

information sources (education management information systems and student assessment), and complementary inputs and cross-cutting themes (equity and inclusion, information and communication technologies, and resilience). SABER aims to give all parties with a stake in educational results—from students, administrators, teachers, and parents to policymakers and business people—an accessible, detailed, objective snapshot of how well the policies of their country's education system are oriented toward ensuring that all children and youth learn.

The SABER-EPS tool analyzes laws and regulations at the basic education level to identify the types of private engagements that are legally established in each country, assessing the extent to which policies facilitate access, quality, and equity. The aim is to provide policy guidance to governments to further relationships of accountability that advance learning for all.

What drives effective engagements with the private sector?

Accountability is at the core of the SABER-EPS framework. Key policy areas for strengthening the accountability mechanisms between citizens, policymakers, and providers for effective private sector engagement are:

Encouraging innovation by providers.

Local decision-making and fiscal decentralization can have positive effects on school and student outcomes. Most high-achieving countries allow their schools substantial autonomy over managing resources (including personnel) and educational content. Local school autonomy can improve the power of the poor in determining how local schools operate.

Holding schools accountable.

If schools are given autonomy over decision-making, they must be held accountable for the outputs that they produce. Increases in autonomy should be accompanied by standards and interventions that increase access and improve quality. The state must hold all providers in the system accountable to the same high standards.

Empowering all parents, students, and communities.

When parents and students have access to information on relative school quality, they have the power to hold schools accountable and the voice to lobby governments for better-quality services. For empowerment to work equitably, options for parents and students should not depend on wealth or student ability.

Promoting diversity of supply.

By facilitating market entry for a more diverse set of providers,

governments can increase responsibility for results, as providers subsequently become directly accountable to citizens as well as to the state.

SABER-EPS benchmarks the key policy goals across **the four most common models of private service delivery:**

Independent private schools:

schools that are owned and operated by nongovernment providers and are financed privately, typically through fees.

Government-funded private schools:

schools that are owned and operated by nongovernment providers, but receive government funding.

Privately managed schools:

schools that are owned and financed by the government, but are operated by nongovernment providers.

Voucher schools: schools that students choose to attend with government-provided funding; these schools can be operated by the government or nongovernment providers or both, depending on the system.

How is SABER-Engaging the Private Sector helping to improve education systems?

In line with SDG 4, which calls for quality education for all children, SABER-EPS assesses the extent to which a country's basic education policies facilitate access,

quality, and equity within private education services. SABER-EPS is supporting governments in their efforts to improve education results by:

- Offering a comprehensive framework for assessing policies based on a thorough review of global evidence and related diagnostic tools.
- Providing governments, donors, and the public with new data and policy options to inform education policies that engage the private sector.
- Enabling cross-country learning and fostering informed dialogue and decision-making using a structured framework and methodology.
- Involving key education leaders and stakeholders in identifying reform priorities, leading to education policy reform and new program initiatives.

How are countries using SABER-Engaging the Private Sector to improve system effectiveness?

Nigeria. In Nigeria, the SABER-EPS team conducted policy research in three states (Anambra, Ekiti, and Lagos), as well as a school-level survey in Lagos. In December 2014, at the invitation of the government, two country

validation workshops were held in Lagos and Abuja, in close coordination with the Developing Effective Private Education Nigeria (DEEPEN) team. DEEPEN is a five-year program funded by the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID). The recommendations offered were taken into account in the formulation of new policies and laws regarding the private sector.

Senegal. The Senegalese government is in the process of reforming their 1994 law on private education. Following a March 2015 country workshop during which results from a SABER-EPS analysis were shared with government officials, the Minister of Education sought more stringent school inspections, stronger poverty targeting in education programs, and a greater focus on equity in the school system. At the request of the government, in-depth analysis of private sector engagement in the education sector is now being carried out using the SABER-EPS policy implementation analysis tool.

Tanzania. Following a stakeholders' workshop in Dar-es-Salaam in November 2014, the Ministry formed a secretariat composed of government and private sector representatives to coordinate and advance a SABER-EPS policy implementation analysis. The responding report detailed

how the private sector could help Tanzania expand secondary education access, supporting Tanzania's vision of becoming a middle-income country by 2025.

SABER-Engaging the Private Sector Partners

Between 2013 and 2015, the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID) worked with the World

Bank Group on SABER-EPS through the Education Markets for the Poor program to map and analyze education markets throughout Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. DFID and the World Bank Group are now collaborating on education systems research through their Research on Improving Systems of Education initiative.

In 2014, three Education Staff Development training programs on Engaging the Private Sector were delivered with support from the Australian Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) for education stakeholders in South Asia, East Asia and the Pacific, and the Middle East and North Africa.