SABER IN ACTION:
EDUCATION SYSTEMS TECHNICAL ADVISORY BOARD

JUNE | 2017

The World Bank Group's Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) initiative 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 informed policy dialogue on how to most effectively strengthen education systems. During its tenure, SABER has grown rapidly to become a key component in the design of education programming across the globe, providing countries with quality data and information. By generating a broader knowledge base on education systems worldwide, these tools are helping reform education at the country level while also building a high-quality knowledge base for education reforms at the global level.

SABER Convenes Technical Advisory Board

SABER was launched in early 2011. Since then, over 100 countries have engaged with SABER or applied SABER tools. SABER has developed, applied, and disseminated numerous SABER-related knowledge products for public use, producing high-quality data and playing a critical role in the development policy landscape.

SABER's accomplishments to date invite the opportunity to reflect upon its presence, momentum, and orientation in the field of education policy. To promote this reflection and determine appropriate future endeavors, the SABER team convened an Education Systems Technical Advisory Board (TAB) comprised of external experts. The first meeting of the TAB took place in February 2017 in Washington, D.C. where members discussed SABER's work program and identified future priorities, potential gaps, and areas of synergy.

The TAB included members of academia, government, research institutions, and international non-governmental organizations. When selecting participants, the SABER team made an effort

to include specialists from a wide range of professional and geographic backgrounds so that SABER could benefit from representative and thorough feedback.

Technical Advisory Board Members

1. **Patrick Griffin**, Professor and Chair of Education (Assessment), Melbourne Graduate School of Education, University of Melbourne, Australia

2. **Elizabeth King**, Nonresident Senior Fellow, Global Economy and Development, Center for Universal Education, Brookings Institution, United States

3. **Helen Ladd**, Susan B. King Professor of Public Policy Studies, Professor of Economics, Duke University's Sanford School of Public Policy, United States

4. **Zbigniew Marciniak**, Professor, Institute of Mathematics, University of Warsaw Ministry of National Education, Poland

5. **Silvia Montoya**, Director, UNESCO Institute for Statistics, Canada

6. **Karen Mundy**, Chief Technical Officer, Global Partnership for Education, United States

7. **Richard Murnane**, Juliana W. and William Foss Thompson Research Professor of Education and Society, Harvard Graduate School of Education, United States

8. **Miguel Székely Pardo**, Director, Center for Education and Social Studies, Mexico

9. **Caine Rolleston**, Senior Lecturer in Education and International Development, Institute of Education, University College London, United Kingdom

10. **Sara Ruto**, Director, PAL Network Secretariat, Kenya

11. **Oon Seng Tan**, Director, National Institute of Education, Singapore

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Key Takeaways

Over the course of the event, the TAB discussed the SABER program as a whole, including the new SABER Systems "Snapshot" tool and the new SABER Service Delivery survey instrument. It was agreed that SABER data is of high quality and plays a critical role in the development policy landscape that could serve to complement the indicators for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The TAB highlighted a few areas that can be strengthened going forward. First, TAB participants encouraged SABER to define its education systems theory more cohesively. To do this, SABER can clearly recognize and explain the links between and within SABER's thirteen different domains, or policy areas. Second, TAB participants cautioned that it can be difficult for SABER consumers, including policy makers, to identify key take-aways from the data due to the large quantity of data available. Participants thus stressed the importance of data organization and use. Third, the TAB emphasized that communications pieces highlighting SABER's country-level impacts were especially effective and should continue to be developed

and promoted through a variety of channels. It will also be helpful for the SABER team to better define SABER's global influence and impact by examining its use beyond World Bank Group projects.

TAB MEETING
JUNG-HWAN CHOI
/ WORLD BANK

Next Steps

Going forward, the SABER team will incorporate the feedback gathered during the inaugural TAB meeting into existing and future work programs. One concrete example of this is that SABER teams will endeavor to better capture where and how SABER has had an impact, on a country level and on a global level. Specifically, in the coming months, the SABER team will continue to expand communications from country teams that detail where, why, and how SABER tools and data were used and have had an impact on country policies and programming efforts.

The TAB will henceforth serve as a barometer for the relevance and impact of the SABER program as a whole, both within the World Bank's program, and also within the global development landscape. These continued discussions will be vital for strengthening support for learning for all.