

# **SUMMARY OF CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS**

**4<sup>th</sup> READ Global Conference**

**May 12-**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 4<sup>th</sup> Russia Education Aid for Development (READ) Global Conference took place from May 12-16, 2014 in St. Petersburg, Russia and focused on the theme of "*Measuring for Success: The role of assessment in achieving learning goals.*" The conference provided an opportunity to explore a variety of learning goals – for further study, work, and life – and the role that assessment plays in monitoring and achieving them. The conference also allowed the countries participating in READ to discuss their achievements under the program and how these serve as a foundation for attaining learning goals and ensuring success for their children. Each country team led a session at the conference to highlight their successes under READ. Teams also showcased their results



14:45-15:30	<p><b>READ in Action: Country Results and Accomplishments</b></p> <p>Tajikistan team</p>
15:30-16:00	Coffee Break/Expo
16:00-16:45	<p><b>READ in Action: Country Results and Accomplishments</b></p> <p>Armenia team</p>
16:45-17:30	<p><b>READ in Action: Country Results and Accomplishments</b></p> <p>Zambia team</p>
17:30-18:00	Wrap-up
<b>Tuesday, May 13</b>	
9:00-9:45	<p><b>Keynote 2 Address (National Perspective)</b></p> <p>“How assessment is being used to monitor and attain learning goals in South Africa”</p> <p>Anil Kanjee, Tshwane University of Technology (South Africa)</p>
9:45-11:00	<p><b>Panel Discussion (National Perspective)</b></p> <p>“Countries and their learning goals – setting, tracking, achieving”</p> <p>Viktor Bolotov, Higher School of Economics (Russian Federation); William Boyle, The Evaluation Business (United Kingdom); Fernando Cartwright, Polymetrika International (Canada); Jimin Cho, KICE (Republic of Korea); Anil Kanjee, Tshwane</p>



**MONDAY, MAY 12**

*Keynote 1 Address (Global Perspective): “Ten things policymakers should know about learning goals and assessment”*

**Keynote Speaker**  
Andreas Schleicher,



Statistics. This framework identifies seven key areas for learning, from early childhood through primary and post-primary education. These key areas include physical well-being, social and emotional, culture and the arts, literacy and communication, learning approaches and cognition, numeracy and math, science and technology.

The panel pointed out that regardless of the framework used, it is important that certain areas of knowledge and learning are emphasized at different stages of a child's development. For example, by the end of primary school, children should be able to solve age-appropriate problems, understand how to apply concepts that they have acquired in school to real world settings, be able to interact effectively and respect others, and have inhibitory control and the ability to make decisions.

The panel noted that international large-scale assessments are very effective for measuring global progress on learning goals as they allow countries to identify and track which segments of their population have not benefitted from education. They also noted that measuring outcomes at the country level allows countries to guide the education system to perform better



they implemented the activities outlined in their action plans. Meetings of professional networks held in 2013 also provided such opportunities.

The global-level work program that was supported under the READ Trust Fund has included the development of questionnaires, rubrics, and reports that allowed for the benchmarking of countries' student assessment systems as part of the World Bank's Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) program. 54 countries participated in the benchmarking exercise, which allowed countries to review the status of their student assessment systems and identify ways to further improve them. In addition, case studies of select countries were commissioned to more deeply understand the political economy of reforming assessment systems. Other products developed as part of the global READ Trust Fund program include videos, policy briefs, and a five-volume National Assessments of Educational Achievement book series.

Through the READ Trust Fund program:

- 5,000 professionals have been trained in assessment;
- 5 new national-level assessment policies were developed in READ countries;
- 8 different testing instruments and procedures, such as the EGRA in Angola and Provinha in Mozambique, were de

process

Delegation Leader: Rahmatulo Mirboboev, Deputy Minister of Education and Science, Tajikistan  
Team Members: Savzali Jafarov, Khayrullo Mirzoaminov, Parvina Sharopova

This panel discussion highlighted activities carried out under the READ Trust Fund Program in Tajikistan. Members of the country team reflected on the challenges encountered during the process of implementing READ-supported activities as well as on the outcomes and plans for further student assessment activities in the country.

### **Key Points**

Through the READ Trust Fund program, Tajikistan has focused on ensuring equity in access to tertiary education by reforming its examination system. Tajikistan also chose to improve the examination system in order to increase the availability of data on student learning and to address corruption issues. The Unified University Entrance Examination was introduced to meet all of these goals.

The Unified University Entrance Examination was designed in two parts. The first part assesses basic knowledge in math, history, and the Tajik language; and the second part covers a variety of specialty subjects. Items included on the examination were piloted first, and efforts were made to ensure that the difficulty level of the examination is appropriate and that it adequately measures the secondary school curriculum. Universities have the right to offer additional examinations for admission; for example, architecture schools may require an additional examination in order to better understand an applicant's creativity.

## *READ in Action: Country Results and Accomplishments in Armenia*

### **Moderators**

Michael Trucano, Sr. ICT & Education Specialist, and Emily Elaine Gardner, Education Specialist,  
The World Bank

### **Participants**

Delegation Leader: Manuk Mkrtchyan, Deputy Minister of Education and Science, Armenia

Team Members: Arsen Baghdasaryan, Zaruhi Karapetyan, Robert Khachatryan, Anush  
Shahverdyan, Aleksan Yesayan

This panel

## *READ in Action: Country Results and Accomplishments in Zambia*

### **Moderators**

Michael Trucano, Sr. ICT & Education Specialist, and Emily Elaine Gardner, Education Specialist, The World Bank

### **Participants**

Delegation Leader: Michael Chilala, Director of Examinations Council, Zambia

Team Members: James Chomba, Charity Kombe, Violet Muchelemba, Tshakazo Mzyece, William Walawala

This panel discussion highlighted activities carried out under the READ Trust Fund Program in Zambia. Members of the country team reflected on the challenges encountered during the process of implementing READ-supported activities as well as on the outcomes and plans for further student assessment activities in the country.

### **Key Points**

Through the READ Trust Fund program, Zambia focused on improving the capacity for carrying out assessment activities in the country. The Examinations Council of Zambia, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training, and Early Education through the Directorate of Standards and Curriculum, carried out the activities under the READ Trust Fund program in the country.

Through the READ Trust Fund program, 1,000 teachers were trained to become exam setters and markers.

Standards officers (individuals who ensure that learning standards are achieved in schools) were also trained on assessment practices.

A module for pre-service teacher training on classroom assessment was developed. In-service training related to item-writing and the development of assessment skills was provided to teachers.

Due to its participation in PISA for Development, Zambia has been able to benefit from training on international large-scale assessments.

Zambia worked on using the results of a national large-scale assessment of grade 5 students.

The team developed materials with the results of the assessment that were targeted to different stakeholders. For example, short brochures and specific messages for different stakeholder groups were prepared (parents, teachers, etc.).

With the support of the READ Trust Fund, the country is able to administer two examinations - the General Certificate Examination and the School Certificate Examination.











## Key Points

The Reimbursable Advisory Services (RAS) component of READ has focused on 3 areas since 2008.

The first area of focus relates to building technical institutional capacity in Russia to deliver educational aid and policy, which is what CICED does. The focus of this work is to develop experts who could support Russia's efforts in informing international education policy and assessment.

CICED has supported experts developing assessment tools, such as the ICT literacy test and the SAM tool.

A database of assessment experts was developed in order to better connect projects and people.

The second area of focus provides support for training and knowledge-sharing services, which has included developing two Master's degree programs. The Russian Training Center, headed by Igor Valdman, trains teachers and specialists on topics such as student assessment in Russia and internationally.

The third area of focus includes support to countries in the form of small grants and assistance by Russian experts and students.

All major outputs of the work have received international peer review.

## *READ in Action: Country Results and Accomplishments in Mozambique*

### Moderators

## Key Points

Through the support of the READ Trust Fund program, Mozambique has focused on classroom assessment as a method of improving its assessment system. At the beginning of the READ program, a team from Mozambique traveled to Brazil, forming a partnership with the country around assessment activities. Through this collaboration the team from Mozambique began taking short courses at a Brazilian university and introduced a distance-learning Master's program on assessment topics.

The team from Mozambique also learned from Brazil about a centralized classroom assessment technique, the Provinha. The Provinha assesses reading in grade 3 and is administered and conducted by teachers. Mozambique decided to adapt this tool to its own context.

The Provinha was piloted in Mozambique and has been expanded to over 200 schools. It has been implemented in five provinces and five districts in the country. An impact evaluation is underway to assess the effectiveness of Provinha in improving learning, the results of which will be used to determine whether the tool will be taken to greater scale in the country. Teachers were trained in administering the Provinha, which has helped to harmonize the teaching process among different teachers.

## *READ in Action: Country Results and Accomplishments in Kyrgyz Republic*

### Moderators

Michael Trucano, Sr. ICT & Education Specialist, and Emily Elaine Gardner, Education Specialist, The World Bank

### Participants

Delegation Leader: Dogdurkul Kendirbaeva, Deputy Minister of Education, Kyrgyz Republic  
Team Members: Anara Ainekenova, Artur Bakirov, Abakir Mamytov, Mira Mykyeva, Zharkyn Ryskulova

This panel discussion highlighted activities carried out under the READ Trust Fund Program in the Kyrgyz Republic. Members of the country team reflected on the challenges encountered during the process of implementing READ-supported activities as well as on the outcomes and plans for further student assessment activities in the country.

## Key Points

Through participation in the READ Trust Fund program, the Kyrgyz Republic has increased the Key Potæome(t).

With READ support, the Kyrgyz Republic decided to conduct secondary analysis of their performance in PISA 2006 and PISA 2009, which led to policy reforms such as the introduction of a new curriculum that incorporates assessment strategies. All of the reforms are part of an effort to shift from a content- to a competency-based approach in the education system. Related to the curriculum reform, the Kyrgyz Republic has done a lot of work around building capacity among teachers for conducting classroom assessment activities, and has trained over 5,000 teachers.

Other activities that the Kyrgyz Republic has been involved in with the support of the READ program include the development of assessments at the primary level, improving the school leaving exam that is administered to grade 11 students, and implementing another round of a large-scale assessment.

The Kyrgyz Republic impressively carried out activities under the READ program despite a political revolution in 2010.

### ***READ in Action: Country Results and Accomplishments in Ethiopia***

#### **Moderators**

Michael Trucano, Sr. ICT & Education Specialist, and Emily Elaine Gardner, Education Specialist, The World Bank

#### **Country Participants**

Delegation Leader: Araya Geberegziabher Mehari, Director General at the National Educational Assessment and Examinations Agency, Ethiopia

Team Members: Abiy Kefyalew Aboret, Tegegne Tayachew Ayalew, Belay Endeshaw Gizaw, Solomon Megra, Fekadu Mogale, Arega Mamaru Yewore

This panel discussion highlighted activities carried out under the READ Trust Fund Program in Ethiopia. Members of the country team reflected on the challenges encountered during the process of implementing READ-supported activities as well as on the outcomes and plans for further student assessment activities in the country.

#### **Key Points**

Ethiopia used READ funding to support school inspection, national learning assessment activities, and examinations in the country.

At the outset of the READ program, Ethiopia conducted a self-diagnosis of its assessment system, identifying gaps, such as a policy framework and dedicated funding for assessment activities.





The session discussed three enabling factors and the associated key questions that have supported Singapore's goals of measuring for success:

1. Learning standards: How do learning standards affect classroom assessment?
2. Textbooks and other curriculum resources: How do teachers and students use textbooks to assess students' current level of learning and plan for subsequent learning?
3. Focus on holistic assessment: Formal testing is strongly discouraged in Primary 1 and Primary 2. This policy, introduced in 2009, is now common practice in all primary schools in Singapore. How has this explicit policy paved the way for more classroom assessment?

The session highlighted important lessons for putting in place mechanisms to ensure that quality assessment takes place in the classroom. These lessons are questions that countries should ask themselves when they are reviewing their classroom assessment policies and practices:

1. What is valued? In Singapore, classroom assessment is valued. This value is supported and communicated by leaders, reflected in how teachers are evaluated, and is consistent with the National Test.
2. What tools are available to teachers? In Singapore, tools are developed and made available to teachers to support effective classroom assessment practices, and teachers are trained on how to use these tools to affect their teaching and improve student learning.
3. What platforms provide the development of teachers' assessment skills? In Singapore, teachers are provided with pre-service teacher education and in-service teacher training that has a strong focus on classroom assessment.

### ***Panel Discussion 3 (School/Classroom Perspective): "Classroom Assessment: Why doesn't it happen? What's missing?"***

#### **Moderator**

Marguerite Clarke, Senior Education Specialist, The World Bank

#### **Discussants**

Ban Har Yeap, Principal, Marshall Cavendish Institute (Singapore)

William Boyle, Professor of Education, The Evaluation Business (United Kingdom)

Vincent Greaney, Independent Consultant (Ireland)

Marina Pinskaya, Leading Researcher, Higher School of Economics (Russian Federation)

This panel session focused on identifying barriers to effective classroom assessment practices and ways to remove those barriers.

