Can evidence drive reforms?
How is it achieved, beyond utopias?

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Why Focus on Institutional Change?

If we all want better education, why don't we move in the same direction?

Why is it so difficult for us to promote and carry out reforms successfully?

Do we lack knowledge? Are we not willing? Do we not care?

What role does evidence play in all of this?
I. Better Understanding Intitutional Change
Institutional Change

Efficiency: search for optimal solutions

Cultural Change

Power Asymmetries
Education is embedded in a larger “development” model and institutional framework.
The role of Evidence in Institutional Change

Why don’t political leaders improve (change) and implement “better” institutions?

• Policy makers face high costs of institutional change: Relevance of better understanding the policy/politics cycles and asymmetries of power to learn “where, when and how” evidence can have an impact on the political process.

• Policy makers require a cultural and paradigm shift: Relevance of Innovation and freedom of intellectual inquiry/research.

• Policy makers have shorter time horizons (e.g. benefits of innovation policies vs political period): Relevance of State vs Government Policies & Relevance of Partnerships with civil society. It is key to promote long-term agendas and networks.

• Policy makers have lack of knowledge, information or wrong models of the world (e.g. streaming of students, repetition policies): Relevance of Eco-systems of Knowledge
II. Better Understanding Ecosystems of K+I+X
Four waves of the evidence revolution (White, 2019).

(1) New Public Management in the 1990s.

(2) Rise of impact evaluations: randomized controlled trials (RCTs) since the early 2000s.

(3) Production of systematic reviews since 2010s.

(4) Institutionalization of the use of evidence: emergence of knowledge brokering agencies.
Main problems of K+I+X Ecosystems in the Global South (SG):

1. **Limited generation of knowledge**
   - Nature of the good: knowledge is a public good (non-rival/exclusive), therefore, it is not 100% appropriable: Public financing is required (very limited).

2. **Knowledge is not totally relevant.**
   - Research agendas, theories and methodologies coming mainly from the Global North (Alatas, 2003).
   - Mainly carried out by NG researchers.

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**UNDER-REPRESENTED IN RESEARCH**

A large proportion of research on economic development does not involve any researchers who are based in the global south.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Article</th>
<th>Global north</th>
<th>Global south</th>
<th>Both</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All articles*</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articles with a specific focus on country or region in global south†</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*For 24,894 papers published in 20 high-profile development journals between 1990 and 2019.
†For a subset of 15,117 papers that focus on a country or region in the global south.
Main problems of K+I+X Ecosystems in the Global South (SG):

3. Low intensity of South-South and South-North face-to-face exchange: Key to the dissemination of tacit knowledge.

4. Dissemination of explicit scientific knowledge is carried out in magazines, whose industry is highly concentrated and located in the GN (and mainly in English): Elsevier, Springer and Wiley

5. Mechanisms for validating knowledge (Foucault's Gate Keepers), recognition, and acquisition of prestige and symbolic capital are located in the GN.

6. Low investment in R&D.

7. Weak governance that allows R&D priorities to be determined.

8. Weak local universities and low links with the State.

Table 3: Comparative analysis of the number of participants by type of official classification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of participant in the legislative hearings according to the official classification (%)</th>
<th>SEP Law</th>
<th>Inclusion Law</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academics and representatives of social, professional, teaching and student organisations</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government authorities and officials, mayors and councillors</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 4: Comparative analysis of the number of participants by type of participant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of participant role (%)</th>
<th>SEP Law</th>
<th>Inclusion Law</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Society Actor</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local authority</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal Administrative</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governmental civil servant</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Cooperation Organization</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union/Professional Association Reps</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own elaboration.
What we do

Mission:
Strengthening the right to education.

Focus:
closing gaps.

Action Level:
System Level: Structural Policies
School Level: Improvement Programs
Classroom Level: Pedagogical Practices
Caribbean Region: Curricular Reform

- Collaborative work with the University of the West Indies: campuses in 10 Caribbean countries.
- Mapping of the world's best practices in initial teacher training.
- Design and implementation of new curriculum: effective practices, inclusión, and practicum.
- Impact: renewal of 22% of teacher stock.
Final Thoughts: How to promote the use of evidence

Relevance of overall frameworks:

(1) Promote and include evidence from global south, and on “invisible populations”.

(2) Synthesise relevant evidence: school level (pedagogies) + national level (reforms).

(3) Scalability vs system transformation.

(4) Foster R&D&I Ecosystems.

Seeking success:

(1) Engage governments from the beginning.

(2) Engage NGO and Universities to provide long term commitment.

(3) Develop a more complex theory of change about institutional change: include power and culture.
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