

**Institution: University of Sussex**

**Unit of Assessment: UoA 25 Education**

**Title of case study:** International development organisations take up strategies for universalising access to education, from CREATE research

### 1. Summary of the impact

The research of the *Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity* (CREATE) has reshaped the discourse on access to education in low-income countries. It has influenced directly the education programmes of DFID, AusAid, the World Bank, the Commonwealth Secretariat, UNICEF, UNESCO, and Education International. The research was key to securing £80 million from DFID for the flagship RMSA programme of the Government of India, to contributing to the design of the £250 million DFID programme in Ethiopia, to writing the Commonwealth Ministers' Post-2015 Framework for Development, and to theorising the UNICEF 25-country studies on Out-of-School Children.

### 2. Underpinning research

CREATE was established at Sussex in 2006 with a grant of £2.5 million from DFID to Professor Lewin. It has worked with apex universities in India (National University of Educational Planning), Bangladesh (BRAC), Ghana (Cape Coast and Winneba), South Africa (Witwatersrand) and the UK (Institute of Education). It has associates in Kenya, Malawi, Sri Lanka, and China and over 100 researchers, including five Commonwealth Scholars and 18 doctoral affiliates.

The aim of the research was to increase knowledge and understanding of why so many children fail to complete basic education. CREATE seeks to influence policy to accelerate progress towards universalising access to education within the framework of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Education for All commitments made by the UN states.

CREATE undertook large-scale, multi-cycle surveys in 12,000 households and case studies in 200 schools with over 5,000 interviews and observations, and tracked 15,000 children for four years in four countries using periodic collection of data on health, attendance, age-in-grade, enrolment and achievement. It analysed access using 40 datasets across Africa and Asia, and completed three national case studies of the political economy of reform. Key findings are that:

- UN estimates of 60 million as the number of children out of school are too low. CREATE estimates that more than 250 million 6–15 year-old children fall into the CREATE 'Zones of Exclusion' defined by its expanded vision of access [see Section 3, R1];
- analysis of data across 40 countries reveals radically different trajectories and shows powerfully that growth in participation can leave the poorest behind [R2];
- most out-of-school children are drop-outs, not those who never enrol, and many children who are enrolled attend irregularly and learn little. They are 'silently excluded' and invisible to policy based on conventional statistics [R3];
- more than 30 per cent of poor children in Africa and South Asia are more than two years over-age; children who do not enrol by the age of ten are unlikely to ever enrol, especially if they are girls; achievement scores deteriorate for every year over-age [R4];
- who goes to secondary school determines life futures and national competitiveness. Managing secondary expansion needs cost-saving reforms and innovative financing [R5]; and
- new indicators of progress are needed to manage aid more effectively and assess the 'yield' of systems to capture the proportion of an age group acquiring competencies [R6].

CREATE's model of Zones of Exclusion and Inclusion charts participation by grade and identifies

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groups of children of school age who fail to sustain access to education, from Zone 0 – who are excluded from pre-school – through to Zone 6, who are at risk of drop-out from secondary school. This model is a widely used tool [see Section 5, C1–C5]. The CREATE twelve-point framework for development identifies the steps needed to make a reality of the right to education [R1].

### 3. References to the research

- R1** Lewin, K.M. (2011) *Making Rights Realities: Researching Access, Transitions and Equity in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia*. Brighton: University of Sussex, CIE, [www.create-rpc.org](http://www.create-rpc.org).
- R2** Lewin, K.M. and Sabates, R. (2012) 'Who gets what: is improved access to basic education pro poor in sub-Saharan Africa?', *International Journal of Educational Development*, 32(4): 517–28.
- R3** Lewin, K.M. (2009) 'Changing patterns of access in sub-Saharan Africa', in Lewin, K.M. and Akyeampong, K. (eds) *Access to Education in Sub-Saharan Africa: Patterns, Problems and Possibilities in Comparative Education*. Special issue of *Comparative Education*, 45(2): 151–74. Contains 10 refereed journal articles from the CREATE research programme.
- R4** Lewin, K.M., Wasanga, P., Wanderi, E. and Somerset, A. (2011) *Participation and Performance in Education in Sub-Saharan Africa with special reference to Kenya: Improving Policy and Practice*. Brighton: University of Sussex, CREATE Pathways to Access Research Monograph No. 74.
- R5** Lewin, K.M. (2008) *Strategies for Sustainable Financing of Secondary Education in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Washington: The World Bank, SEIA Africa Human Development Series.
- R6** Lewin, K.M. (2011) 'Policy dialogue and target setting: do current indicators of Education for All signify progress?', in *Access to Basic Education in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia Policies, Politics and Progress*. CREATE Special Issue of 'Journal of Education Policy', 26(4): 571–89.

Outputs can be supplied by the University on request.

### 4. Details of the impact

The CREATE's research has changed policy discourse around access to education and influenced DFID, Commonwealth Ministers, AusAid, World Bank, UNICEF, UNESCO and Education International.

- DFID's *2010 Education Strategy Paper* (2010) adopted the 'Zones of Exclusion' model to frame policy on access, quality and skills [see Section 5, C1, C6]. This was an impact of the presentation of research findings to DFID advisors at their retreat in Chennai in 2009. In addition, CREATE's research helped DFID's Rashtriya Madhyamik Siksha Abhijan programme in India for secondary education to secure £80 million UK-aid funding in 2011 [C1]. In 2012 members of the team contributed directly to the design of a £250 million education programme in Ethiopia (Chris Berry, Head of Profession, DFID, 1 September 2013).
- As a result of delivering the opening plenary to the Commonwealth Ministers' meeting in 2012, Lewin was appointed senior technical advisor to the Commonwealth Ministerial Working Party on Education. The Commonwealth Framework, co-authored by Lewin, adopts the CREATE 'expanded vision of access' and matrix of goals, indicators and targets. This was endorsed by the 53 member-states and presented to the UN High-Level Panel on the MDGs. It is used for advocacy across the UN system to reform the MDGs and is widely regarded as being of the highest quality [C2, C7].
- *Making Rights Realities* (R1) was the centrepiece of the 2011 UNICEF global advisors' retreat in New York and was projected on their global Intranet. This was a result of inputs to the design and theorising of the UNICEF 25-country Out-of-School studies in 2010 using the CREATE models [C3,

C5]. One of many results is that 'We have successfully used the (CREATE) framework and completed the first-ever comprehensive household-based study on exclusion in education in DRC. We found that there are 7.3 million children out of school ...' (Cecilia Baldeh Chef d'Education, UNICEF, 9 May 2013). UNICEF has subsequently commissioned an 11-country study on access and equity in the Arab region, and an East and Southern Africa Situation Analysis from Sussex. CREATE research findings are informing the Learning Metrics Task Force of UNESCO Institute of Statistics, which is adopting its 'yield coefficient' to help the Global Partnership for Education to monitor educational progress across 54 countries [C3, C8].

- Australian Aid's education policy paper 'Promoting Education for All' was explicitly shaped by CREATE's Zones of Exclusion and findings on silent exclusion, over-age children and drop-out. The 'expanded vision of access' was adopted as one of the 'three pillars' that shape Australian aid [C4]. AusAID organised two workshops with its education advisors based on CREATE during 2012. As a result of this (i) the zones of exclusion were integrated into the AusAID Performance Assessment Framework, (ii) three countries have piloted using the zones for management and monitoring, and (iii) the Pacific Ministers' meeting mandated the University of the South Pacific to replicate CREATE in the region [C4, C9].
- Work on strategies for the expansion of access builds on Lewin's work as senior advisor to the World Bank's Secondary Education in Africa programme [R5]. Software was developed to model student flows and costs. In CREATE it has been used in three states in India and has shaped the largest programme of expansion of secondary schooling in the world under RMSA [C1]. The work on financing also includes projects on the impact of privatisation on access. Lewin is an advisor to Education International, which has 30 million affiliated members, and is co-author of their 10-year strategic plan, using findings from CREATE. The impact of this work is evident from the invitation to debate privatisation in educational development at the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Education in the House of Lords [C10], and in the recent policy paper on privatisation published at the G20 meeting in Moscow in September 2013 [C10].

The impact of CREATE can be summed up by users of the research: 'The six zones of exclusion described in the conceptual framework for CREATE have now entered the literature and are a standard part of the dialogue between international aid agencies and countries. The plans and actions of DFID, the World Bank, Commonwealth agencies, AusAID, UNICEF and Education International have been strongly influenced by CREATE's work on zones of exclusion' [C5]; 'The "zones of exclusion" conceptualisation alone was worth the investment. It has changed the whole discourse' [C1].

## 5. Sources to corroborate the impact

- C1** Senior Education Advisor, DFID India: The work of Professor Keith Lewin has been of major influence both to overall DFID policy and specifically to the evolution of the DFID program in India. Prof. Lewin's work on zones of exclusion was a strong influence on the DFID 2010 *Learning for All Strategy* for education and the model was included in the policy paper launched by the DFID Minister'.
- C2** Head of the Education Section; Social Transformations Division, Commonwealth Secretariat: 'Keith Lewin of CREATE was engaged by the Commonwealth Secretariat to work with its Commonwealth Ministerial working group on the post-2015 development framework...the influence of CREATE's "expanded vision of access" to basic education can clearly be seen in the recommendations... The recommendations have been presented at the global thematic consultation on education and the UN Secretary General's High-Level Panel and their influence can be seen in the resulting report to the UN General assembly on post-2015'.
- C3** Chief of Education, UNESCO Institute of Statistics, Ottawa: 'The CREATE policy framework which describes zones of education exclusion has provided an inspiration for the five-dimensions-of-exclusion model (5DE) in the global UNESCO Institute of Statistics/ UNICEF Out-of-School initiative... The CREATE work influenced the decision to make a greater effort to understand children who are in school but at risk of early school leaving and those who have low levels of learning achievement (resulting in) adding two dimensions to our model... His

contributions related to measures of “yield” which seek to capture learning levels among population cohorts rather than only children enrolled in schools has become a central recommendation of the learning-metrics task force for measuring educational progress globally’.

- C4** Senior Education Specialist, AusAID: ‘The CREATE consortium has had a strong influence on the Australian education aid programme since 2011. In particular, the conceptualisation of access through the zones of exclusion influenced the selection of marginalisation as a priority in AusAID’s education thematic strategy. Through the strategy, and its accompanying performance assessment framework (PAF), the zones of exclusion have had an impact on country programmes’ commitment to disaggregate data by economic quintile, location and gender.... Several country programmes have used the zones of exclusion mapping analytically and understanding of patterns of participation and learning performance ... It has also influenced AusAID’s thinking on post-2015 goals of education and the importance of targets contextualised to country circumstances of resources.’
- C5** former Senior Education Advisor, the World Bank, Washington DC: ‘One major impact of CREATE’s research is the re-conceptualisation of access to education in the discourse that shapes flows of billions of dollars of aid. Put simply, it is no longer possible for agencies or recipient countries to describe achievements in access to education and provide only the numbers entering school or the total number enrolled at any level. The six zones of exclusion described in the conceptual framework for CREATE have now entered the literature and are a standard part of the dialogue between international aid agencies and countries. The plans and actions of DFID, the World Bank, Commonwealth agencies, AusAID, UNICEF and Education International have been strongly influenced by CREATE’s work on zones of exclusion’.
- C6** *Learning for All: DFID’s Education Strategy 2010–2015*. Department for International Development (2010): <http://consultation.dfid.gov.uk/education2010/sections/Page22>, includes the CREATE Model of Zones of Exclusion.
- C7** Summary of the Commonwealth Minister’s Working Group’s recommendations can be found at: <http://thecommonwealth.org/files/254282/FileName/CWERRecommendationsSummaryPost2015DevelopmentFrameworkforEducation.pdf>. The proceedings and background papers of the Commonwealth Minister’s meetings are at: [http://www.thecommonwealth.org/Internal/190663/37088/ministerial\\_meetings/](http://www.thecommonwealth.org/Internal/190663/37088/ministerial_meetings/).
- C8** The UNICEF Out-of School programme is described at: [http://www.unicef.org/education/bege\\_61659.html](http://www.unicef.org/education/bege_61659.html). The 5DE model it uses is closely related to the CREATE Zones of Exclusion. The Regional Situation Analysis on Out-of-School Children in the Eastern and Southern Africa Region Project: RFP-KENA-2011–12.
- C9** The Australian Aid paper ‘Promoting Education for All’ uses ideas from CREATE and is available at: <http://www.ausaid.gov.au/aidissues/education/Pages/home.aspx>. This paper was followed by two advisors’ meetings – February 2012 Canberra and August 2012 Manila which took the CREATE framework as a central theme and used commissioned zonal analyses developed for Vanuatu, the Philippines and the Lao Republic. CREATE also gave the lead presentation at the 9<sup>th</sup> Pacific Ministers’ meeting in Vanuatu in April 2012. This endorsed the research model and Ministers formally requested that it was replicated in the Pacific region. A report of FedMM is at <http://www.forumsec.org/pages.cfm/newsroom/press-statements/2012/9th-fedmm-parents-urged-to-send-children-to-school-at-right-age.html?printerfriendly=true>. The follow-up work mandated by the Ministers is also part of the Institute of Education, University of the South Pacific Strategic Plan located at <http://www.usp.ac.fj/index.php?id=12390>.
- C10** Work on Strategies for Planning expanded access in Africa is available at: <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/AFRICAEXT/EXTAFRREGTOPEDUCATION/0,,contentMDK:21678070~menuPK:4762583~pagePK:34004173~piPK:34003707~theSitePK:444708,00.html#kp2>. This was extended to include science education at: <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/WBI/WBIPROGRAMS/EDUCATIONLP/0,,contentMDK:22034052~menuPK:460926~pagePK:64156158~piPK:64152884~theSitePK:460909,00.html>. The All-Party Parliamentary Group debate on privatisation is reported at [www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-20641059](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-20641059) and [www.appg-educationforall.org.uk/index.php?start=4](http://www.appg-educationforall.org.uk/index.php?start=4). The G20 policy brief is available from Education International.