



RECOUP

Research Consortium on Educational Outcomes & Poverty

RECOUP is a research partnership of seven institutions - three from the UK and four from Africa and South Asia – funded by the UK Department for International Development, and led by the University of Cambridge.

Poverty can often lead to inferior educational outcomes which, in turn, play a major role in determining the future incidence and extent of poverty. RECOUP is studying the mechanisms that drive this cycle of deprivation. The research programme is examining the impact of education on the lives and livelihoods of people in developing countries, particularly those living in poorer areas and from poorer households. Its purpose is to generate new knowledge that will improve education and poverty reduction strategies in developing countries, through an enhanced recognition of education's actual and potential role.

Between 2005-2010 RECOUP is conducting six collaborative research projects grouped under three broad themes:

Social and Human Development Outcomes of Education

Economic and Labour-Market Outcomes of Education

The Outcomes from Partnerships in Education between Governments, Aid Agencies and Households.

The research agenda is being addressed via both quantitative and qualitative enquiries, and the generation of knowledge will be based upon new data collected by the consortium. A set of innovative household surveys are being conducted in the countries where our southern partners are based. Qualitative enquiries, with common designs, are also being conducted across each location.



Disability & Poverty Study

There is a consensus that impairment and disability are both causes and consequences of poverty. Whilst it is argued that this interaction can be broken via inclusive education, many questions remain. This study, using qualitative research methods, investigates local definitions and perceptions of disability and poverty; it examines the present educational arrangements available to poor people with disabilities and explores the meanings they attach to education and schooling. The study also focuses upon differences in participation, learning and social outcomes of education amongst people with disabilities, to establish enabling factors which break the cycle of deprivation facing poor people with disabilities.



Health and Fertility Study

This study investigates explanations for the relationships between schooling and the health and fertility-related behaviour of poor households. It also examines questions relating to reproductive citizenship, women's agency and empowerment in poor communities. Using both qualitative and quantitative methods, it examines

- whether the current orthodoxies about the strong positive relationships between a woman's schooling and her decision-making power are robust and, if so, it examines the pathways through which such effects operate;
- whether schooling 'works' through community or individual influences;
- whether there are threshold effects, and whether schooling effects on health and fertility are different for the poor than for the less poor;
- how teachers, officials, NGO workers and other educational stakeholders might develop better strategies to enhance pro-poor policies in local communities.



Youth, Gender & Citizenship Study

This inter-generational gender study investigates whether and how education helps male and female youth in poor communities achieve participatory citizenship. It investigates how education can help youth and their communities protect themselves, make

decisions, achieve an independent livelihood and participate in community life. Using qualitative methods, it examines

- How young men and women living in poverty construct their identities and how such identities mediate the effects of schooling and opportunities for enacting citizenship.
- The extent to which young people's strategies to break out of poverty are differentiated by gender and by schooling.
- The extent to which schooling can offer more opportunities to break out of poverty for young men and women than it does or did for their parents.



Skill Acquisition and Its impact upon Lives and Livelihoods

The ways in which the education and training of individuals affect their future lives and livelihoods are the focus of this study. A set of papers examining the relationships between earnings, education and other individual and household characteristics are being produced, using our household surveys and comparable data sets from other countries. A separate enquiry, using primarily qualitative methods, examines how and under what conditions, the main long- and short-term skill training systems (both public and non-state) contribute to positive labour market outcomes for the poor. It also studies how trainees from poor backgrounds who successfully enter formal or self-employment learn the things that make them succeed.

Public-Private Partnerships in the Provision of Education

Recently, new forms of partnership have emerged in the provision of education. This study evaluates the provision of education by public and private providers, drawing on the concepts of 'voice' and 'exit/entry', to examine individual behaviour within organizations that operate under the rules of the market. It will undertake a number of school-level studies to identify the manner in which demand-side and supply-side factors operate within a school, and how aspects of provision are affected by the ability of parents, pupils and providers to use and respond to voice and exit respectively.



Aid Partnerships and Educational Outcomes

This study analyses the relationships between the provision of educational aid and educational policy and practice in partner states. It examines how and why the quantity and modalities of aid have changed and investigates their effects upon education policy and outcomes. A mix of research methods is being used, including interviews, case studies and analysis of documentary sources.



RECOUP is a partnership of seven research centres in the UK, Africa and South Asia:

- The Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge, UK (lead partner);
- School of Social and Political Studies (SSPS), University of Edinburgh, UK;
- Centre for the Study of African Economies (CSAE), University of Oxford, UK;
- Associates for Change (AFC), Ghana;
- Collaborative Research and Dissemination (CORD), India;
- Kenyatta University, Kenya;
- Mahbub Ul Haq Human Development Centre (MHHDC), Pakistan

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For information about our projects and activities please visit
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