

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

WEBINAR

HOW DO EDUCATION ECOSYSTEMS IMPACT PEDAGOGICAL REFORMS?

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DYL: Good morning, afternoon or evening. Everyone from wherever you're joining us from. And welcome to the first webinar and the three-part SPARKS webinar series. This webinar specifically is titled "How Do Education Ecosystems Impact Pedagogical Reforms?" My name is Rachel Dyl and I serve as the senior project coordinator and research analyst for the Strengthening Pedagogical Approaches for Relevant Knowledge and Skills or SPARKS project at the Center for Universal Education here at the Brookings Institution. We are honored to have so many of you joining us for this important discussion with our SPARKS partners, joining us from Egypt, India and Mexico today. A little background about SPARKS before we get into the discussion.

The SPARKS project was developed in response to one of the most pressing challenges in international education. The limited impact of pedagogical reforms on classroom practices. Despite significant investments and well-intentioned efforts for reform, much of the focus in recent decades we've seen has been on the on the more visible and surface level aspects of pedagogy, classroom management techniques, assessment tools, how students and teachers are interacting. However, these visible elements represent just the surface of a much larger and more complex picture. Through a collaborative research approach, SPARKS aims to look beneath the surface. We're examining what we call invisible pedagogical mindsets or Ipms. These are the more interconnected, often unobservable elements that shape how education is delivered and experienced, including three core components education, ecosystems, culture and learning theories.

This webinar series has been structured to explore each of these three elements in depth. In the first session today, we turn our attention to education, ecosystems, the dynamic, interconnected systems of policies, institutions, actors and resources that influence how education functions within local contexts. Through our work at SPARKS, we hope to bridge the gap between policy research and practice by employing a two-pronged approach. We collaborate with locally led research policy collaboratives in Egypt, India and Mexico to ensure that pedagogical reforms are rooted in the realities of these local education ecosystems. These research policy collaboratives in each of these countries bring together diverse actors, policymakers, researchers, educators and community members to co-develop research that is contextually relevant and impactful.

We also convene the SPARKS Global Network, which serves as a platform for dialog and cross-country learning to amplify these local perspectives on pedagogical reforms. On our panel today, you'll hear from SPARKS partners from Egypt, India and Mexico, sharing their insights on how the education ecosystems have impacted pedagogical reforms in their contexts and how SPARKS research will help pave the way for education systems transformation. Before we begin, I'd like to remind everyone that we encourage engagement throughout today's session. You can submit your questions using the Q&A function here on Zoom by emailing events@Brookings.edu or by posting on X using the hashtag #sparkswebinarseries.

And it is now my pleasure to introduce today's moderator, my colleague, and SPARKS, Ghulam Omar Qargha. Omar is a fellow in the Center for Universal Education at Brookings and an education research and program evaluation expert for over 20 years of overseas experience designing, managing, implementing and evaluating international education programs. Omar's expertise is in policy analysis, program design, education transfer and research on teacher education, curriculum development, educational delivery and monitoring and evaluation in the developing world. As a fellow in the Center for Universal Education at Brookings on my Leads the SPARKS Project, which, as I mentioned, is focused on how the invisible pedagogical mindsets these intangible factors influence pedagogy and local context through collaborative research. Omar, over to you.

QARGHA: Thank you, Rachel. It's a pleasure to be here. And thank you for everybody who is joining us online for this conversation. As Rachel mentioned today, we are delving into one particular aspect of why pedagogical reforms don't seem to change classroom practice. We know that there has been tons of investment and trying to change how teaching and learning takes place across classrooms from Africa to Afghanistan to the U.S. But research consistently tells us that the amount of investment that we're putting into changing classroom practice does not translate into those reforms taking hold. And this is part of this is the heart of what SPARKS is trying to explore. Why is this change not taking place? And as Rachel mentioned, our focus is on three things that usually don't get as much focus and research and scholarly debates, and especially in policy environments.

That is the interaction of how educational ecosystems that culture within each of the contexts and the prevalent learning theories interact with these reforms. So today we're here to explore that first aspect. How does the existing educational ecosystem interact with reforms and what does that mean for those reforms taking hold? And I'm very happy to have three of our colleagues who are working with us and India, Egypt and Mexico and exploring these questions. For today's conversation, I am going to be introducing you to our three amazing colleagues. The first colleague is from India, Apoorva Bhatnagar is the research manager of Dream A Dream in India, where she works on research initiatives, focus on education, transformation, social emotional learning with expertise and policy analysis, program evaluation.

She works at the intersection of research, policy and practice to create contextually relevant and equitable education ecosystems. She also collaborates with national and global education networks, policymakers and practitioners to co-create evidence-based interventions that are responsive to the needs of young people, particularly those from a diverse background with a strong commitment to bridging research and implementation. She focuses on translating findings into actionable policy recommendations that support teacher capacity building innovations and learning centered education models. Welcome, Apoorva. Our second panelist is from Mexico. Gabriela Lozano Campos is chief operating officer at Education for Sharing. She has a master's in business administration from Appleby Business School and studied communication sciences at the National Autonomous University of Mexico.

She has diplomas in comprehensive care for people with disabilities and the elderly and in the development of management skills. She has participated in various conferences and events on leadership and education around the world. Welcome, Gabriela. And our third panelist as joining us from Egypt. And that Nariman Moustafa is a senior research associate at EdTech Hub, the president of the Foundation for Self-discovery and Development. And within this capacity, a research partner for SPARKS. She is also co-founder of the EcoVersity Alliance and an alumni of the Academy's Global scholars here at Brookings Institution Center for Universal Education and a research fellow at the Center for Lebanese Studies at the American University of Beirut.

She also she holds a master's in education from Harvard University's Graduate School of Education. Her research focuses on Decolonizing the Colonial system thinking in social justice and education. Welcome, Nariman. It's a pleasure to have our three panelists with us. So, as we have discussed previously, this is intended to be a conversation about how local education ecosystems impact the different aspects of educational reform and different contexts. Then and we're concentrating on the three contexts that SPARKS works out. And I will start the conversation with our leading question and just pass it along to our panelists with the intention of just kind of digging deeper into this intersection. We have educational reforms that are trying to change classroom practices. We have existing systems that have been there for decades and centuries.

And how do these two things interact? So, my first question to our panelists and I think we can start with Apoorva and then pass it along to Gabby and Nariman. Could you provide an overview of the recent education reform policies in your countries, such as the National education Plan in India and whether Square, La Mexicana and Mexico and Education 2.0 in Egypt? Specifically, what are the key priorities of these reforms and what types of pedagogical changes do they propose to transform teaching and learning in your respective contexts? Apoorva, would you mind taking?

BHATNAGAR: Thank you, ma'am. So glad to be part of this panel today. I think I'll start with the national education policy in India, which came out in 2020, almost after 34 years of our or version of the policy. Not like we didn't have programs, regulations, rules coming in between those many years, but 2020 was when the new education policy came, and it was quite revolutionary to have a policy after so many years talking about innovative practices, rethinking about pedagogy as well. I can share a couple of thoughts that came into the policy as well. One is definitely the structure of how the schooling system was looking like. So earlier we had a ten plus two grades, but now looking at the cognitive and development needs of the children at different stages, it was transformed into a five plus three plus three for the starting with a play-based method to an experience, to a subject based to a multi-disciplinary approach that was replacing the traditional approach of the system as well. The focus became more on competency-based learning, removing the road based, memorizing and focusing more on how understanding an application can be implemented at the school levels, having a more input, a different approach as well.

One of the key aspects of the policy is also looking at assessments. So redefining assessments from a holistic point of view whereby the policy talks about having a 360-degree review that you not just the teachers, evaluate students based on subjects, but they're also looking at the overall development of social emotional learning, their physical abilities, their linguistic abilities as well, where you have a peer, a self-review, a parent feedback as well, which was integrated, and most importantly, the teachers being the key drivers of this policy. So, all the fragmented preservice education for teachers was actually integrated in a four-year course, and this was more focused on bringing more professional development courses, more continuous professional development approaches within the teachers who are part of this whole routine.

It was a comprehensive and it still is a comprehensive overhaul of India's education policy, where the focus is on delivering of future ready learners who are not just critical thinkers, problem solvers, as well as innovators in this century. So, yeah, I think it's been almost 4 to 5 years since the new policy have come up. We have had our chance of relooking. I did look at some aspects here and there, but predominantly these were the reforms that came into the pedagogy. Thank you.

QARGHA: Thank you, Apoorva. And I should mention that the SPARKS project and all three locations started exploring these different aspects of pedagogies because there were specific reforms that were taking place in each one of these countries that were trying to change how education looked and transform the educational system. Gaby, would you mind telling us about the educational reforms in Mexico and how they are trying to change pedagogical practices and transform the teaching and learning landscape in Mexico?

CAMPOS: Of course. Thank you. Thank you. Hello everyone it's a pleasure to be here. So, the Mexican medical reform that we have is called La Mexicana or a New Mexican school. It basically wants to move from their standard or very standardize. And they and this and this drive-in education to a more holistic, inclusive and community-based approach. So basically, what it does is to emphasize equity, multiculturalism and also social and emotional skills. And so, this is a huge change also in the in the policy. And the goal is to foster social responsibility, a strong sense of community participation and also environmental awareness. So, the idea here is to have the academic

knowledge, but also go to this, do these different goals and establish different guiding principles. They have eight that are more into the part of a learn to value our Mexican identity and also how to establish a good relationship with the environment with other people and seeking for the for the general well-being. In this case, it's really focusing the intercultural and so participative focus on local or local approaches and local implementation. Regarding a what you call part of it, it's a bit of change because we are not having isolated subjects anymore. So, we have more academic fields or and or interdisciplinary learning areas. In this case, we establish for that our ethics and at your end societies that it's more like the idea of how humans interact with nature.

In this case, then we have languages that it's from literacy to also learning different languages and a different communication method. We also have another one that it's called the Human and the Community. And in this case, it's more the relationship between humans and how take care of the of the well-being of everyone. And the last one is more about knowledge and scientific learning. So basically, now we don't have subject subjects. We have these fields of learning areas, and they also establish something that they call it can articulate areas that are like cross-cutting themes that they just have to include in everything that they teach. And it's more, as I mentioned, is about inclusion, critical interculturality, gender equality, critical thinking, healthy living arts. And I still think experiences and cultural engagement through reading and writing.

So basically, this is a huge way of changing everything that we have in education here. And also, it's a different the way that we are evaluating this more into we used to have a lot of it standardize tests and yeah, to make sure everyone in this case is more like a qualitative evaluation with teachers is set goals according to the to the characteristics or the profiles of the students. And then of grades we have a descriptive thing about how they have brought and the different goals that they want to achieve that the general idea of the evaluation and that's a regarding that part of how it has their how people have received it. So, we have had very, very mixed reactions to it. For one side, something we something that there is a, you know, dedication, community value a lot. This is part of it being local and appreciate the differences in it.

Regarding diversity, we have seen many teachers that mainly in the indigenous communities that are really enjoying this part of creating their own projects that are pertinent and that are that are according to what they want to the teacher and also what they want to develop with their children. So that's something very positive. Also, people are appreciating a lot of the social the social and emotional learning in this case that it's more important. It's good of it because after the pandemic, everyone was saying that it was so near it. So, they are present appreciating also. And regarding the other reactions, the not positive ones, I think we're going to help more deeply after this. But yes, it's the need of it more teacher training, because this is a big, big, big, big a change in the way they teach, in the way they evaluate, and that way they interact even with their own children. And also, the lack of or the inequality in this case of resources and the land and follow up with the with their ministries of education.

QARGHA: Thank you. Gabriella. That's really insightful. And it seems like we're seeing a bit of a trend between India and Mexico and to bring an Egypt. Nariman would you share with us what Education 2.0 aims to do in an Egypt and how that is impacting the vision of what pedagogical learning should look like in Egypt?

MOUSTAFA: Thanks so much. I feel like Egypt is just going to continue the trend, right? You just took the word that I was thinking about when I was listening to Apoorva and Gabi, and it's not our first time together and we've been in conversation as partners in this project together, but many key words that really also come from India and Mexico. Right? And I know we'll start with descriptions. So, I want to be true and honest to what the policy documents describe in the answer to this question, but then maybe next question as we explore a little more, really, what are the realities on the ground? So, everything I'm saying is what the policy documents are saying should happen. But I think there are many keywords that are coming multi-disciplinary or interdisciplinarity from, you know, the know subjects that that Gaby talked about. You know, Apoorva mentioned words like competency based, inquiry based holistic assessments, continuous professional development, critical thinking and problem solving.

All of these words are words that are all across the policy documents. Also explaining education 2.0 in Egypt. And it's I think it's also like a question for our audience, for ourselves to think about. Yes, we live in a globalized world, but also where does relevance and context come into all of this and how does education discourse travel across all kinds of different countries? Now, the Education 2.0 reform was launched in 2018 and is again another comprehensive initiative. It talks about modernizing the Egyptian education system, which is interesting because we've been in the modernization process since the 19th century. But according to the Ministry of Education and all the strategic plans, there are five key components. One is a multidisciplinary curriculum that integrates learning subjects. Two is technology integration and expanding access to digital learning. This is a huge part of this reform. Three is concerned with teacher development, school leadership and professional development. Four is concerned with expanding access and strengthening infrastructure, especially access...

QARGHA: Nariman, where I'm getting at least audio

MOUSTAFA: ...for me in early childhood. He is the assessment when it comes to.

QARGHA: Nariman we're having.

MOUSTAFA: I'm sorry. Can you come again?

QARGHA: You're breaking up now. I think you're back on. Can you hear us? This is the challenge of doing virtual meetings across countries.

MOUSTAFA: Is this I wonder any better?

QARGHA: This is better. Yes.

MOUSTAFA: Okay. Did I where did I cut off? Was it when I was saying digital technology is an important part?

QARGHA: I heard the fourth.

MOUSTAFA: Fourth, right. All right. Well, so the fourth element was expanding access and infrastructure and strengthening it, especially to early childhood education. And the fifth is reform, sorry, assessment reform, just like also a core of it mentioned. So, you know, when it comes to multi-disciplinary curriculum, maybe I just focus on the multi-disciplinary curriculum, the technology integration and the part around, you know, the teacher development because we're more concerned with those in the research here. So multidisciplinary is not actually explicitly identified in the policy documents, but it's this idea to facilitate connections between subject areas that students, for example, learning about the environment in a science class can also explore related topics in language lessons. Right?

There is also a focus on 14 competencies that come from life skills and citizenship skills that were developed by international organizations like UNICEF and UNESCO's international organizations. And private corporations feature big time in the development of this new curriculum. Now, when it comes to technology integration, this is an important one because it includes it is included in the way teachers conduct their professional development. It is included in the way they deliver curricula, the way they get access to resources, and also the way they conduct exams and assessments. Now, it's also worthy to mention that there is the Egyptian Knowledge Bank, which is an online repository, open access library to actually every Egyptian citizen, including teachers of students with a huge open source materials.

There is very specific materials for every school by grade and subject to learning outcomes and all of that, but also just general materials to the public in general. And it's integrated with a learning management system for every school. And this is to fulfill the reforms, ideas of moving from a system that is focused on rote memorization to life, to a culture of lifelong learning, which the system sorry, which the reform emphasizes very much. Now, the final thing when it comes to teacher development, it's important to just say that the reform is in collaboration with a lot of huge donors, of course, around the world, whether it's USAID, British Council, the Japanese, the EU and the two biggest teacher professional development programs, and that support teacher certification, merit based promotion

systems are supported by the USAID, which, you know, when we come to talk to the challenges, maybe we talk about that in light of recent developments from the new US administration.

But, you know, the policy documents talk about equipping teachers with new pedagogical strategies that are aligned with the multi-disciplinary curriculum and the usage of digital tools, introducing online professional development courses throughout the year and integrating performance-based assessments. And so, the teachers describe I mean, I'm not going to go to how the teachers describe it, but it's kind of a leap that is asked of the teachers from what they're used to. So, I'll leave it at that. But would just say this is the espoused values of the reform and then we can look at the realities on the ground.

QARGHA: Thank you, Nariman. I think as all three of you were explaining, the reforms. So, a couple of thoughts came in my mind. First, there's an assumption that there is something wrong with the educational system currently. That's why we need a reform. So, this is in line with the Transforming Education Summit that the United Nations had several years back. So that. So, there is a problem that people are sensing that education is not working for them. There's also this there are similarities that are showing up in the reforms in three different completely different contexts of multi-disciplinary competency based and social emotional learning. And there is this, so how those things come about, we could get more into that and in future webinars.

But I think in just in general, there are issues related to how we have learned, people learned the brain science aspect of it, connecting between different aspects of knowledge. That's where the multidisciplinary comes. The fact that our societies have changed, that we need different competencies. And then there is sort of this element I picked up on the word modernization that Nariman mentioned. There is this these loaded terms. What is modernization mean? And there is a lot of colonial aspects to that that we can perhaps get into and the and the webinar on culture. But then there is this, this aspiration that we have that we want to change the system, but there's an existing system that's there and that existing system has multi levels, it has bureaucracies, it has teacher training, it has the curriculum, it has, and it all comes down to the teacher.

And sometimes we forget about all of this structure and system and just focus on the teacher and say, why isn't this teacher changing classroom practice? And this is what this conversation is about. So, for the for the next question and maybe I'll go to the to Gabrielle first on this one. If you can tell us in in your context in Mexico, how do systemic factors like curriculum design, time constraints and terms of how much time teachers have to teach their particular subjects or non-subjects in terms of multidisciplinary approaches, assessment requirements, classroom sizes, teacher student ratios and other similar factors, how do these either support the reform agenda or they challenged implementation of pedagogical reforms? So, can you dig a little bit deeper into these factors so that we understand what a teacher is faced with in terms of trying to implement these reforms and her classroom.

CAMPOS: Of course. Thank you. So basically, a dedication system is providing some instructors that facilitate from the side of facilitating the adoption of the New Mexican school. In this case, the first one is the curriculum. It's very flexible. So, these allow teachers to integrate their own local knowledge and provide real world applications to the things that they do. So that's, I think that's something that it's enabling or it's not. They are having efforts to centralize the education in Mexico. We have the federal Ministry of Education and we also have a state, a state ministry. In this case, they are working in have it more centralized that before they'll give them a more independency and autonomy to the states. I would say communities. They do are providing a better training. But I did mention it after that. But they are provided it.

They are giving a training mainly on the generalities of the instructor of the reform and also on active pedagogy. That is a point that is central to the to the New Mexican school. And also, they are encouraging and the community involvement that we didn't have that strong before, that it's a how to integrate a local organizations and also families in the in the educational process. So, in that case, those are the enabling factors of it and in that on the side of the systemic challenges. And I want to start with the part of the teacher training. It's super difficult to change the tires of the car when you are when you are also driving it. So, it's very difficult for teachers to participate fully in the trainings, but also implement everything.

And they what I heard from some of them, it's that the trainings, they are too short or are too often speaking about theories and everything and they need a hands-on things and strategies that I need to use in my classroom to really integrate the reform. Or they say that they don't fully explain how to transition. Like, okay, I understand what you want me to do. I understand where I was, but how can I transition from this to this? It is the case of teacher training. Also, there is Mexico. It's very diverse. And also, I'm sure that in the end, in this case, a one of the challenges with this is the resources that resources gaps that we have in the different in the different parts of the country.

So, we have things I'm sorry that my dog is barking, but basically a is that you have different access to technology or it's not the way they receive the they receive the materials and everything. It's but that even from the different sites somewhere or the country. So, it's really a challenge in the in the part of it related to it. It's also about the bureaucratic inefficient inefficiencies. They slow down everything that they have to send and everything that they have to receive. And also, with this worker, I see that teachers have. A lot of work regarding administrative processes. They have to do a lot of things or that are not the key and they are thinking related where they are besides the data learning process. So that's a huge, huge challenge.

And in this case, there's not a standard, a standardized evaluation that is going to give us even greater amount of work in this case. And teacher ratio in Mexico, mainly in the in the big cities or in certain states is really big. So, it's very difficult for the teachers. I plan to apply the new active pedagogies and also to create, to evaluate and make sure everything with, I don't know, groups of 35 children from many different backgrounds and many different needs. So that's super difficult for the teachers and these case. And also, the last one that I want to address is the resistance to change not only and I'm not talking yes, with teachers and everything, but also, we have the parents and they have this society in general. So, the parents are expecting something and the parents are used to have grades in this case over the parents use that teaching process.

These your children learns to behave and needs it, learn to behave and it's going to be sedate in the classroom even if they are playing or creating projects and everything, that's losing time. So, for teachers is super difficult to also work with parents in this in this change, because there's patients, if

there's conditions that everyone may have, are very different. So that's a that's a huge challenge that they are addressing and they have to keep in, like making awareness about why it's important, why they change and everything. So, it's very difficult to do that besides everything that teaching entails.

QARGHA: Thank you, Gabi. I really like the analogy of changing your tires while the car is moving. It's it seems like there is the vision is there. But as you mentioned, there seems to be a big gap between. How to implement that vision and to changing systems that are supportive of that vision. So before I move to a part of, just a follow up question, if you were to and I know this is there's no right or wrong answer to this, but in terms of where Mexico is, in terms of filling that gap between the vision and the systematic challenges that that that you see in Mexico, if you were to just kind of rate where Mexico, as is a sort of at the beginning stages are some certain systems are already changing or are you quite well along with those changes.

CAMPOS: Well, it's a difficult question. And in this case, it's only the second year that we implement the New Mexican script. The previous one, it was like we had a pilot, but then they canceled it and they say everyone is going to start at the very same time. So, it was it really difficult the last school year to have it. So, this is the first year where they have it properly implemented, the New Mexican script. And so, I think from that point of view, I think we are in the beginning stages. But yes, there has there has been working regarding that. And also, I think it changes in the different regions of the country. It depends on the on the state I even mentioned. But we also have a big a big challenge to that part of the differences between the governments of the states and the federal government. And sometimes they have like these challenges of, no, you're not we're not going to use the books. We're going to not do that and everything. So that that's a very a very different process in each one of the of the states regarding that. But I think this is the first proper implementation of the of the reforms. Right. That's why I lean more to the part of we are the big in the in the first stages of it.

QARGHA: Thank you. Apoorva, moving to India. Same question in terms of. How do you see this vision of the reform agenda and in India for education versus the system realities? And just to lead in to that question. When we were in our first research exchange in India a couple of months back, we're actually going to Mexico and a couple of weeks. Excited about that. But when we met one of the

teachers and one of the schools in India, she was mentioning that despite having all these aspirations to change her classroom practices, she had duties as far as like counting the meals that she was giving to her students and having that. Those administrative tasks in addition to her other duties. So, can you tell us about where India is in terms of the aspirations and then the systems and how these things interact, whether they're supportive or challenging.

BHATNAGAR: Sure, Omar. I think a lot of recognition with what Gabriel had mentioned about Mexicans like India being such a diverse country, both socially, culturally, linguistically and economically as well. So, any policy and program does provide a roadmap, but it doesn't give a direction of how it should be implemented and more specifically, that. There's not one solution for every problem that we have. So just believing that there is a must have policy, what must change and infrastructure like must change is teacher trainings on what should be there in the classroom is not going to be in tune with the realities of where we are talking about. I think that was one of the resignation I could pick up from Gabrielle's point as well.

Even so, the teacher that he met, when you all go ahead in India to have that kind of administrative duties as well, and traditionally even teachers not being provided the autonomy or to have a community where they can learn from on even the incentive to experiment new methods. That has never been there. And unless we don't empower teachers, there's no reform or new program that is going to function very well. To say so in when the policy came in 2020 and main highlight being, let's look at assessment, let's look at how assessments are practiced. But it required a lot of shifting from those summative rote learning evaluation to more continuous informative assessments as well. And there was no systemic alignment. There's still figuring out like, how should we recognize the system that is actually there.

So, I love the example of the car, like trying to change the tires of the car, but just to recognize that the car was already there, the main engine and the function is already there. So just to order all the car, you don't have to make a new one. So, the whole understanding that the local education system is playing a very crucial role in this changes or reforms, as we say. And just to have a factor of everything does cost you from a sense of that it's not a onetime solution is what you need to go back

and look at the mindsets that it's been working, what parents, what students, what the other stakeholders are also talking about. And only when these mindsets are actually twinned in, you're actually looking at what these reforms are. And probably you will need these reforms after a couple of years when you're trying to reevaluate the structures and that's a framework as well. And give one more example, and I think I'll pass it on to Nariman that the emphasis on competency based and equity driven learning that always was there in the culture that was always there before the education system was actually more formalized. I would say so.

And that's in the heart of this policy now, in 2020, we are talking about how should we bring back this kind of learning? But the transition from these heavy content exam-based, looking at the success metrics from the max aspects, it does require a gradual and a collaborative effort. So, unless we are not able to do that, the implementation or whether that's happening or it's not happening, I would say that's probably a secondary question and more like a not that important in terms of was it a checklist or whether we were able to do that or not, because whatever we end up doing will not be sustained for the longer duration. But like I said, having a context sensitive approach that's allowing flexibility, not just Indian states, schools as well as teachers was there in the classroom just to have an ID, knowing the unique needs and aspiration and capacities of what's happening inside the classroom or the school or the state as well, is something that I would say like is the need and probably something we all are working towards for.

QARGHA: Thank you. I'll follow up with the same questions for Gabi in terms of your assessment of where the system is in terms of the aspiration versus changing the systems to accommodate these aspirations. Where do you think India is? And in terms of beginning stages, middle and somewhere in the middle?

BHATNAGAR: To be honest, no one there's no one answer for that because the diversity is so intense in India that what might be happening in the rural state was as an open state is so different. But I would say that there is a lot of hopes that are there in India right now. There are a lot of people trying to work together to move into the must have the aspirational part of any be. But there's no average score that probably anyone in India can share that what's happening is what's not happening.

QARGHA: And that and that sounds about right. And so, we'll move to Egypt, because what I'm hearing is that with both Mexico and India, the aspirations are there. But there is this friction that we're seeing, the challenges that we're seeing and in terms of implementing these aspirations. So, to get a window into Egypt's reform agenda, same question, Nariman in terms of how do the systemic factors, the curriculum, that student teacher ratios, the other elements of the system, how are they interacting with these aspirations of multidisciplinary competency based educational reforms and change in classroom practices?

MOUSTAFA: Am I? Am I both right? Yeah. Yeah. Well, it's really interesting. I feel like something about something is different because not everything is the same, of course. But also, there's so much similarities with, with Mexico and India. So, there is a, there is a gap. There is a big gap between espoused values and policy documents and between realities on the ground. And it's what we're here for. And I want to talk about a few challenges and hurdles in front of the curriculum. I mean, to sum it up there is to start with, there is there's a need for a conversation around a coherent philosophy. You know, what is the purpose of education? Like, why are we specifically these strategies and approaches to reform towards what kind of end result?

And I think different actors that we speak to as a research team and as an organization active in the field of education, different actors that we speak to have different answers to this, including the teachers themselves, right. And the teachers are not part of this larger conversation of what is the what is the actual end goal of education for Egypt. And when the teachers are absent from this conversation, but also are the ones required to deliver on the answer, whatever the answer is for the policymakers, then I'm not entirely sure how this can happen. So, there's a lot of actors that are involved in the education system in Egypt, as I'm sure is in Indian Mexico. International donors play a huge role since the 90s and the education discourse here. It's more private corporations, especially with the integration of technology at the moment. Obviously, there are the teachers and the students and the parents.

But, you know, so it's a big system and who benefits and is benefiting from it and is affected by it. And the coordination between all of these actors remains an important central thing to figure out. Teacher buy-in in a contradicting policy environment between espoused values and implemented practices and an inequality between different regions. Now I want to speak maybe about two big things the teacher buy in an engagement piece and the pedagogical shift and its relevance to classroom realities. Now, when it comes to teacher buy in, there is really a contradiction that has been that is historic. It's not actually new, that is historic and continues through this reform. And it's about time to make a pause with it. And it's this contradiction between a societal rhetoric where a teacher is an extremely important figure.

You know, that we have got poetry in our heritage that talks about the importance of teachers and all of that. And even some espoused rhetoric from the Ministry of Education. Right. That one of the first initiatives that were launched for teachers as part of the new reform was called Teachers First Initiative. And it was a continuous professional development initiative or training teacher Not really going to more teacher training. But there is a huge contradiction between this and between the actual conditions faced by the teachers. So many teachers were not involved in shaping the reform.

One study in a rural area in Upper Egypt talks about how teachers struggle to interpret the new curriculum that they're only introduced to it during training workshops, which happen in limited times before the start of the year, that they have been trained by trainers that are not teachers, which is a big problem because then when they're trained by trainers that are not teachers who cannot relate to the kind of difficult decisions that a teacher has to make within her classroom, it's really hard that these kinds of changes for the curriculum or for the purpose of what needs to happen changes across the year.

And there isn't a lot of clear communications around how this goes from the ministry to across all the levels of the of the chain for communication, the main interface between the teachers and the Ministry of Education in terms of communication is the inspectors. And so, the teacher gets an inspector that tells her different messages around what you're supposed to do. She's not part of why she's supposed to do it. And so, this leads to a general feeling of teachers not seeing themselves

necessarily as active agents and in fact, not seeing any incentive for being an active agent. In fact, seeing that what is incentivized is more the application of what is requested, you know, the filling of whatever papers that needs to be filled out, the application of exercises that need to be done. There was a conversation that Apoorva shed light on her on teacher autonomy. Right. Very similar situation here where teachers are not given an autonomy to develop lessons on their own or things like this. Now, I also within all of this, I do want to highlight that while it is quite knowing and all kind of literature and writings and international donor discourse that Egypt's reforms are top down. I'm not necessarily saying this to say this is something to be ashamed of or that it's a shame.

And I think there is something to be talked about between top down approaches and between engagement and complete participation and the whole spectrum that lies in the middle, because there's also a lot of evidence that. Complete autonomy from a system that is entirely top down actually leads to a lot of chaos and lack of support and then a lack of officials who need to carry a certain responsibility and provide certain resources for equality. You know, dispensing with this responsibility. So, there's also a lot to be talked about here, that the opposite of top down is not just full autonomy to leave teachers without support and scaffolding across the process.

Yeah, I guess I'll pause here for time, but there is a lot for it to say. I yeah, I think there is just. Well, there's only one sentence I really want to add, which is I think there is a lot of questions to ask around the role of technology and teachers here around technology. Teachers are professionals. They are respected professionals. And a lot of teachers have this idea that there are sources of information for their children. And when the rhetoric around technology globally and also equally reflected in Egypt and in media and comms that and the Ministry of Education in Egypt adopts a discourse that portrays technology as a substitute for teachers. We cannot then ask why. We cannot say teachers are resisting technology in the classroom if we're trying to tell them technology is going to substitute you, it would be a very legitimate fear that teachers would fear if the ministry and the world around them is going saying, we're just going to substitute, you're dispensable. So, I don't support a rhetoric of teacher's resistance as much as a real look into the legitimate fears and concerns of teachers from this.

QARGHA: Thank you. As you said, there's a lot to talk about and we only have limited amount of time. But I think what I've heard across the three contexts as you mentioned, there's a lot of similarities, which begs the question in terms of similarities, in terms of reforms and similarities in terms of, of the challenges that exist. Which begs the question, why are there so many reforms that are looking the same with potentially different contexts? What is the purpose? What's the goal? But that's for a different conversation.

And then there is I picked up on a couple of things that you mentioned with teachers not being involved, having spaces for conversation. Which leads me to my third question, and maybe I'll just start with you and on with this one and the SPARKS project. Our focus is on the invisible pedagogical mindsets, the culture, the ecosystem and the prevalent learning theories. How can how can this research guide education policymakers and practitioners to tailor pedagogical reforms so that they are more aligned with the local systematic realities. How can our research address some of these challenges that we've talked about? How can it at lessen that gap that was talked about between aspiration and the reality?

MOUSTAFA: Yes, very excited to answer this thing because it's very, yes, the reason why I joined Parks and the reason why we can hopefully shift the conversation from all the hurdles that we've been talking about at this point. So, as I shared, it's become clear that there are certain hurdles at hand that we're talking about in the Egyptian context when it comes to the disconnect between. How teachers could see themselves and the no incentive for active teacher involvement. The need for room to explore a teacher's beliefs, perceptions, the pedagogies that they see as appropriate. Now, you know, for us in SPARKS, Egypt, we thought long and hard about where we want the sites of this research to be and what kind of angle we want to look into. It was clear to us that it's teachers, it's teachers that is professional development.

It's exploring the intersections of what teachers' values, beliefs and perceptions, as well as the messages that they receive from the ecosystem and learning theories around that. But when we thought about the specific question that we or the kind of specific scope that we want to think about, we thought that there is a lot of research that goes into subjects like STEM- science, technology,

engineering and mathematics, but not enough support or research or conversations that happen on languages and subjects, on subjects that are like the Arabic language, right being the language that is not only just the mother tongue, but also a language that contributes to citizenship and so on. So, our Arabic, Arabic teachers particularly actually struggled with implementing active learning methods with a legacy of just teaching Arabic on ways that are grammatical and rule-based approaches centered on more repetition and memorization.

While there are a lot of other methods of teaching Arabic, historically in Egypt in general, outside of schools that could be looked at and Egypt does have a huge like literacy with illiteracy, illiteracy within schools program problem, like children could actually go up to middle and high school without not even being able to read and write. So, there is very much connected to a central problem, very much connected to the idea of Arabic teachers receiving less training on integrating technology or being able to use digital tools effectively. So, this is what we decided to focus on then. And so, our research is a comparative case study. It examines how teachers, students, policymakers and donor organizations perceive education to point out reforms.

And it specifically looks at these three main points how Arabic teachers are making pedagogical choices within the new curriculum, how actually systemic and historical factors shape the existing and the current teaching practices that we would that the reform would like to shift so that it links and becomes relevant to these historic and systemic factors and how education, technology tools influence Arabic instruction, whether an alignment or misalignment with local classroom realities. And so, we're basically comparing three distinct school types. Each is representing a different educational and a social cultural context. The first is public schools in Cairo, and these are the largest segments of Egypt's education system governance governed and run by the Ministry of Education. The second is community schools, which also is under the purview of Ministry of Education and teaches the national curriculum.

However, it is run by nongovernmental organizations, by NGOs and NGOs play a role in adapting the curricula within these community schools. Community schools are always present in remote areas, which the government usually doesn't have a reach. And finally, we're also comparing this to the

context of us, her school as her schools are, you know, there again, K-12 schools and universities, but more not only under the Ministry of Education, but under the purview of the Ministry of Education and also which is the largest Islamic institution in Egypt. Given that Arabic is central to both Islam and religious education in Egypt, and there is also different methods of teaching Arabic and so studying how these reforms in these different settings and tracing the policy journey from inception to implementation to see how schools structure is training programs, continuous professional development influence, pedagogical change and teachers choices.

Here we're working with Arabic teachers, with language inspectors, with teacher training professionals, whether they're from civil society or government programs or international organizations. And finally, with policymakers from the Ministry of Education. And, you know, stay tuned. So, what we find out, we're in deep collection phase at the moment and we're very excited to be speaking more and more in the future about this.

QARGHA: Thank you. That all sounds very exciting. And I'll move to Apoorva, just because of time constraints. Same question. How is our research in India addressing some of these systemic challenges?

MOUSTAFA: Sure. Thank you, Nariman, for sharing what you had. I think if our question, first of all, is like, who is the system for? Why are we even talking about the education systems and transformations? And just to saying to the young person like me, I think we often forget that. Who is the structure being designed for? And in India, what we are looking at like how invisible pedagogical mindsets are shaping these policy reforms, how they're shaping the teacher training, as well as classroom practices, which are enabling a young person to thrive. So, a stage where the young person can actually reach their full potential in presence of a caring and compassionate adult is something that Dreamer Dream is looking for.

And as part of our research, we are looking at a mixed method research, which is happening in four parts of the country. So, a north south east is not just, not a comparative. But just to get a sense of what's happening in the country as well. And I feel like it's very important to talk about SPARKS and

the research policy collaboratives and how they actually leverage invisible pedagogical mindset. So, when you're talking about research, when you're talking about policy and practice, how does it bridge it together? Because only when you have evidence-based insights. So, talking about the systemic constraints of curriculum assessment, even the workload that we all have spoken about in the previous questions as well, they are shaping the pedagogical practices and policy or the narratives that are applied in terms of the programs that are running in each of our contexts.

So, in India also we are looking at Add and something what not even also mentioned that it's not just the top down minded, but also how teacher informed solutions can be derived and how IBM's actually offers that, how we can take a bottom up approach for educational reform. So, we are looking at this resource. We are also in the data collection stage right now, very, very excited about how this turns out to be. And you've already started speaking to a couple of teachers. There's talking to policymakers and how this collaboration of not just teachers but Benin's policymakers can actually be integrated together while looking at how the success metrics in the education system can be looked at beyond academic scores and marks. And then sum it up by just saying that, you know, we're looking at like how policymakers, practitioners, teachers, all of them can actually design reforms in tune with the local systemic realities just to create not just a contextual but culturally relevant change. Or if I say so, a more sustainable way of looking at education systems for a young person to thrive. Thanks.

QARGHA: Thank you, Apoorva. That's beautifully put. And yeah, I think just kind of building on what Nariman mentioned as well. So really excited to see how the research and these places are come together and elevate the voices from within the system as far as how they're envisioning change. Why the change? So, I'll turn to Gabi to with the same question in terms of how the research that we're conducting and as part of SPARKS in Mexico can address some of these questions tensions, fractions within aspirations and system realities.

CAMPOS: Thank you so much. And it's really exciting to listen to Apoorva and Nariman. In this case, a something that the members of the RPC and from the schools that we are working in, in the in the research, they are always saying that they feel that this is the right way of doing everything to hear their voices. So, to feel like they have an important part, that their voices are going to be important for

something. Even for us in the in the political reform. They do have some tables of dialog between teachers, but sometimes they didn't even feel reflected in the results of it or some they say that it's not the reality of what came up of those of those exercises. So, in this case, they are super excited about this. So, I think that's the key value of the of this SPARKS research project that we can hear the differing voices inside of the system and the ones that implement that that had the most or the most important or the biggest work in this case.

Regarding Mexico, we decided with our RPC to focus, as I mentioned, and that has many different parts that change and everything. But with the RPC we decided to focus on the active pedagogies that proposed the New Mexican school and also because it's very related to what we do in education, but a competition revocation for sharing and also a we want to focus on cultural, on the different cultural aspects that impact the implementation or not of the of the new active pedagogy in the New Mexican school. Basically, what we're going to do is we're going to do a to have like WS, the one of the previous a school year that they already implemented to see what they saw, what they learn and everything. And also, the current, the school year that they are having right now. And we're going to work in three schools from any from three different regions in Mexico that it's the center of Mexico, Mexico City.

It's an urban school from a very challenging environment. Then we're going to have we're having one school in Yucatan from an indigenous community and one in the very north of Mexico in that it's the most I think it's the most modern in this case and technological state in in Mexico and the one that has most of their resources. So basically, what we're going to a to do is we're right now in the in the data collection stations a world to super excited to see what it's going to be about. We're right now we're starting with some stories that are going to give us like a first sense of the different cultural factors the teachers, our teachers, administration personnel and principals and authorities and families are sensing regarding this topic.

Then we're going to go deeper with different workshops where, according to what we learned in the service, we're going to understand better what they mean with that and how they impact it in a positive world arena. In a sense, it's a challenge in the in the implementation of the act, which is and

then we're going to work also with children because it's so very important to us to see having them on mind in this case. So basically, that's what we are where we are. Yeah, I just want to highlight this part of the importance of a teacher. So, the skaters and the school community in general to be heard and to be part of the of the transformation or change that policies one to achieve.

QARGHA: Thank you, Gabi. It's. It's exciting. We're all three. The research sites are all three projects. We hope to have our results or research completed by June or so. And play. Please stay tuned for findings and getting more into the nitty gritty of how these reform agendas are. Are interacting with these realities within educational ecosystems. Now we want to turn to our question and answer period for our audience that are online. Well, that's everybody. Please feel free to send your questions at events@Brookings.edu or the Twitter hashtag that Rachel mentioned at the beginning. We did receive quite a bit of questions ahead of time, so thank you for sending those. We'll try to get through as many of those as possible.

And the ones that we don't, we'll try to get back with you with some thoughts maybe through email or some other means. So, while we are waiting for four questions from our audience that might come live, I wanted to maybe combine two of the questions that we have received. To start our conversation. So, the question is about the fact that. These reforms that come into spaces, they they're faced with governments that might change and 3 to 5 years. But at the same time, that's the cycle of the donor projects as well usually depending on what the how much donor involvement is within the reforms. So, there's this time factor which we have discussed so far, is that these reforms, they're so complex there, there's so many layers. But then on the other side of it, we have a government that might change in 3 to 5 years, donor projects that might end in 3 to 5 years. So, I guess the question is, how do you look at reforms within this dichotomy of needing a lot of time for reforms versus these time constraints? And what does that mean for the reform and what does that mean also for the research that we're doing as part of SPARKS. So, I will leave it to you. Who wants to respond to that? Nariman?

MOUSTAFA: Thank you. I think the reason I jumped in is that we're just Egypt is such a firsthand witness to this. The reform was launched in 2018 on the hands of a particular minister that was there

at the time. But since that time, there are two other ministers that already assumed office in the process, and it has been a continuous conversation between all the actors and the system to figure out how every minister, what their priorities are, what are they going to carry from the curriculum, from their predecessor, you know, what are they going to focus on? Some of the some of their reform, some of the reform components are agreements that are agreed on. You know, and with the presidential office or with international donors. And so, they continue for a number of years, but still some components of it get elevated or reduced, you know, higher or lower in volume based on a new minister's priorities.

And so, and this has a cascade all over the system on every single actor. And it's a one big topic that all the teachers that we've been speaking to and data collection has been talking to us about like the. The confusion of information, you know, the kind of the kind of requests that they're asked to do and the kind of administrative tasks that they are asked to continue on a daily basis that reflects what the what every minister really has as priorities. And so, it's I just want to say that these shifts have impacts into the daily classroom and the daily duties of a teacher. It's also just an Egypt. And I would be very curious if this is reflected in Mexico or India. I'm not sure we haven't spoken since that happened, since it happened very soon. But so, so recently, just a few days ago, the U.S. new administration, there's an executive order, right.

To reevaluate and realign any U.S. foreign aid. And the USAID is the biggest donor for teacher research professional development initiatives in Egypt. And so, the future many teachers and their reform programs is actually put under question at this point, which highlights the fragility of both donor dependent and top down reform program. So, there is if there's anything that I would describe all of this with, it's the word fragility. It's makes systems very fragile. And so, for me, it becomes a question of what does it mean to make systems resilient, context relevant and center the voices of the people who stay, not the people who regularly leave all the time. Right. I know, for example, that usually even donor institutions tend to engage.

They always want the blessing of the minister, but they also tend to engage sort of the first rank officials, you know, the ones who stay as the minister leaves. But I think we need to extend that to

think about actually the teachers who are staying inside the classroom, even when the executives. Leave because teachers are also embedded within their communities, especially if we talk beyond the big urban cities. You know, teachers are very much part and parcel of the fabric of the community. Part of their reputation comes from the community. Either there's an accountability that the teachers have to the communities outside of big urban cities. And so, we need to think about who is accountable to who in our systems. And I think these are questions that are going to come up in our research a lot, shifting accountabilities from accountability to donors or accountability to inspectors to accountability back to the students and the communities that we work with.

QARGHA: Thank you very much. That's, usually in and in many governments, the teachers make up the largest civil servant population of any country. So, I think that's an excellent point in terms of the fact that the teachers, you have to listen to them. And part of our research policy collaboratives is to bring in these voices that are that stay there for a longer time. And just before I turn over to Apoorva and Gabi to see if they have any thoughts on this, just the thought occurred to me that teachers have seen a lot of these reforms. So, they have become resilient in the face of this fragility to withstand and kind of carry along their work so that they know that systems are very difficult to change. So Apoorva, or Gaby, did you want to come in with your thoughts on those?

BHATNAGAR: Sure, I would just add to what Nariman had mentioned, and I also read it in a book like when reforms usually happen in System, it's always the street light in back. So, there is a spotlight and you just end up making changes where the light falls. But the dark areas is often ignored. And that's the case with every government, every donor or I would say every program as well. There's always a spotlight of what's happening. But I think the intent of what the system is that the teacher and student relationship stays afloat. It never changes the structures of schools. Probably one tweak here, one quick dusting in terms of visas, what we are doing as part of SPARKS and Omar pointed that out, that these policy collaboratives that we are speaking about, they're there to stay there, there to talk about invisible pedagogical mindsets, which is, I would say not very much in tune with what would happen in the government, which will come next.

But the own biases, all kinds of cultural factors and even the learning theories that are in there that will stay. And that is the conversations we also would want to bring up again and again. So, it's not just where the spotlight is, but also the groundwork which is happening in the background for the whole ecosystem to change. And that's the whole conversation that we are trying to work around that we can tweak one piece here and there, but unless we change our mindsets like what we are trying to do with the ecosystem is not. It is a gradual process, but it's something to be working for and something to look forward to as well. So, I think it's a brilliant question as well, just to have the most curiosity of like, you know, what happens next, but just to stay in line with what we're doing as part of this research is very exciting to off.

QARGHA: Thank you, Gabi. Did you want to come in?

BHATNAGAR: Yeah, I totally agree with Apoorva, in this case. I was thinking exactly the same of how to. It's our work to strengthen our research collaborative groups, in this case, our art pieces, so they can keep working together and having these voices integrated in their in the different stages that we're going to be. Where luckily for the, you know, Mexican school, we have a president that it's in the same party of the last president. So right now, she's going just like bigger and deeper with the New Mexican school. So, we're not going to have a big change soon in this case.

But still, we want our artists to be strong and also to keep collaborating and keep updated in the different challenges that the that the educational ecosystem is going to have in the in the next year. And I totally agree. In this part of the IBM's the state and having this this research is going to give us a lot of light on them and they are going to be and they are going to keep being important to have into consideration in any educational reform in this case. And so, I think this it doesn't matter what happens with the with the exact reform that we're having right now, if we are able to have important information and results with our research and is strengthening our species, this is going to be like really extremely useful for it.

QARGHA: Thank you. So, there's a lot of questions about limited time, and I think there's some questions about artificial intelligence technology and those things. I think we can leave those for future

discussions because it's an emerging issue. It's certainly going to have a lot of impact in terms of how it's integrated, what policies come around to try to implement those, and then the local realities of whether people have access or not. But I think I'll shift to another question that one of our audience members has sent and which kind of picks up where everybody was talking about these research policy collaboratives are designed to be these spaces to bring in multidisciplinary voices that are local, to talk about what needs to change, how it should change, how do we research and go forth. What is, and I'm paraphrasing the question, what is your long-term vision for our pieces and your community? If you just don't think about constraints, just kind of how do you see that RPCs are contributing to these difficult topics and in the long run? So, who wants to go first and share with us their vision of the RPC for the future?

MOUSTAFA: Yeah, sure. I think the intent from the very beginning was to was an acknowledgment of the existence of a lot of silos in the Egyptian education system between different actors and the need for a continued dialog. And I think for me, the RP is a process and you always tell us this long that this is a process-oriented research rather than I mean, there is obviously outcomes that we want to do, publish and voices that we want to elevate, but also the learning is actually in the process. And so, to me, it's to have a continued process of spaces where actors and the system can convene, have continuous dialog, reevaluate, you know, have the voices that are not usually present.

And by that I really mean the voices of the teachers, the students and the parents that are not usually present and policy dialog and decision-making present on the table. So obviously to give them a chance to be present on the table, to have classroom realities and everyday realities presented on the table and from there and from there have continuous dialog. I know Paolo Ferry says we never go there from there, we go there from here. And so, it is really, really about creating a space where we actually talk really about what is here, not just pretend that we're not seeing it, what is here, what is the everyday reality of classrooms, teachers, parents. And then from there, we can take one step at a time, linking evidence to policy and linking different voices to each other. The hope is to carry the continuous link between research, classroom reality and policy conversations.

Obviously, it doesn't mean that only by research and evidence we can generally change class reality, but it's engaging in what works and what doesn't work. And when there is an opportunity and a window then to take from these dialogs into the reality, hopefully you could also be a space for teachers to trial solutions in their classrooms, to champion ideas for the classrooms to think about themselves as active voices in their classrooms, and then come back to these circles of RPC and say, Hey, I've tried this, I've tried that, this could work. Maybe we could expand on this. And finally, to have conversations about relevance, about. Ah, you know who is pushing us to take certain decisions around and goals of our education system. Where does it come from and what is the balance that we need between connecting to a globalized world? We have to move in certain directions. You know, if I happened, technology happened. We cannot not move in this direction. But also, what does it mean to keep our own, I guess, indigenous pedagogies and whatever that means for all of us.

QARGHA: Thank you. Nariman, who wants to go next.

BHATNAGAR: I think pretty much on your RPC model that we are envisioning is just to create a system strengthening model, not a part of the system which looks alienated to what existence is, but just to bring in from the existing system and make it more sense than. So just to look at how global aspirations could be met with local realities, the more scalable solutions which are more locally led is something that we are trying to achieve for. And this whole iterative process of whether it's a top down or watered down reports and how do we bring the voices, I think, completely resonating with Egypt on that, that not just bringing the voices at the center, but also making it more flexible in terms of how these art pieces can function and how these art pieces can define results and how is that building a system which is more structured as well as allowing those spaces for classroom practices to evolve over time? Yeah. Thank you.

QARGHA: Thank you, Apoorva.

CAMPOS: I totally agree, when I put it in this case from our side, our main objective is they are pieces to find their own sense of purpose, of belonging and belonging in this case, A. We really need a wanted to be a that every voice inside of it feel like they belong to that and that they their voice is

important and that we can go together to different two different goals in this case. In this case, it's now focus on the research that we're having. But also, we have seen that it's a great space for it. Talk to each other for dialog for even proposing different projects and working together. So I think the power of the of the RPC, it's very, very big. And for us, our main objective is finding this purpose and this and this sense of belonging to each one of the members inside of it.

QARGHA: Thank you. Thank you all. This has been a really enriching conversation for me. I could go on and I'll probably go on with you guys for quite a bit on this and other meetings. But for this webinar, it's unfortunately we are bound by time and I want to thank all of you for taking time and sharing your experiences. I think it's been every time I speak with you, I learn quite a bit about the realities of what it means to do educational reform and the complexities of that. So I want to thank all three for taking the time to share your experiences. Thank you very much. Omar, I really appreciate as well. I would just really like to add that I, for all of us, there are there are big teams in all of our countries that are working on these projects. I also want to extend those thanks to all of these teams. And each of their is men and women. They're the powerhouse really behind everything we're doing. You know, sending me a lot of messages. And also, as we've created a really beautiful community here, we have a SPARKS group, you know, in which everybody is like cheering us up in this webinar. So thanks to all of this extended team members all around.

QARGHA: Thank you. I really appreciate that. Yeah, and this is work that we are trying to do across these three countries to just put a window into this complexity of what it means to do educational reform. And a lot of times we have these big aspirations about how we want to change our educational systems. And usually these aspirations are related to political motivations, to economic motivations, to social changes that take place. And our hope is that education can serve as the social engineer or the social engineering mechanism to make those aspirations a reality in our systems. But the reality of it is, is that education is very complex. There is social, cultural, economic and political issues that all combine philosophical, ideological in terms of how we view education.

And like unlike many other aspects of our society, everybody in our society, whether they are going to school or to other forms of educational outlets, everybody's involved, everybody's got a stake and the

educational system and everybody has opinions. So the idea that teachers are resisting, maybe they're resisting for a good reason. We need to listen to them. We I think as a research community and as a policy community in general, I think we need to become a little bit more humble in terms of, yes, we have these aspirations, but how do we connect those aspirations to the realities and each of the local settings. But at the same time, to be globally relevant because the world is extremely interconnected. So I heard a lot of that and the conversation, and I'm hoping that we will delve more into these conversations and the upcoming seminars and to our listeners, just keep up to date on our social media and website.

And we have a newsletter that we try to disseminate. If you're not getting in the newsletter, please reach out to us. We will include you in the newsletter group. And this is not, SPARKS is not going to solve all the problems, but we hope it will give us a spark for the right direction in terms of how we look at education reform and education transformation for me. The strengthening pedagogical approaches for relevant skills and knowledge. That word relevance is key for me. Unless we make educational reforms relevant to the context that they are happening in. We're going to have this continuous cycle of five, maybe ten-year reform agendas that that come and then something new comes and then we have to reinvent our rhetoric. So we look forward to all of the findings coming together. And I think we are out of time. Thank you very much for joining us. And we look forward to future collaborations.