

Communication Kit

WB spring meeting:
Talking about teachers
Challenges to institutional coherence

and

Launch of the Study
The World Bank's Doublespeak on Teachers
- An analysis of ten years of lending and advice
By Clara Fontdevila and Antoni Verger.



Education International
Internationale de l'Éducation
Internacional de la Educación

Thursday, April 14th, 2:00 – 3:30 pm
Room I2-220

Talking about teachers

Challenges to institutional coherence

Central to this event will be Education International's study *The World Bank's Doublespeak on Teachers– An analysis of ten years of lending and advice*, conducted by Clara Fontdevila and Antoni Verger. Drawing from the findings of this study that looks at how the World Bank portrays teachers as opposed to which teacher policies it recommends, the session will specifically address the discrepancies between recommended teacher policies and the new professional imperatives for deeper learning and whole system approaches. It will also discuss progressive examples of teacher policy and the potential for improving education quality through teachers' professional capital.

Speakers:

- Antoni Verger *Researcher and Lecturer, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB)*
- Amit Dar *Education Global Practice, World Bank Group (WBG)*
- Karen Mundy *Chief Technical Officer, Global Partnership for Education (GPE)*
- David Edwards *Deputy General Secretary, Education International (EI)*



Image source:
Education International, 2015

Direct links to download:
<http://go.ei-ie.org/WBpictSMALL> (223kb)
<http://go.ei-ie.org/WBpictBIG> (3Mb)

**THE WORLD BANK'S
DOUBLESPEAK ON TEACHERS**
An Analysis of Ten Years of Lending and Advice



Clara Fontdevila and Antoni Verger

Full report (In English)
<http://go.ei-ie.org/doublespeak>



Résumé (en français)
<http://go.ei-ie.org/WBsummFR>



Resumen (en español)
<http://go.ei-ie.org/WBsummSP>



Summary (in English)
<http://go.ei-ie.org/WBsummEN>



During the last few decades, the World Bank has become a central actor in shaping the global education policy agenda and is increasingly involved in education to the point of becoming the largest supplier of external funding to the sector. Its growing capacity to shape policy goes far beyond its lending activity and involves a significant “ideational” power also influencing educational issues such learning outcomes, education quality and teacher related issues. World Bank policy preferences can be analyzed through both its publications and interventions on the ground.

Antoni Verger *Antoni Verger is associate professor at the Department of Sociology of the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB) and a researcher of the ‘Globalisation, Education and Social Policies’ research centre. His main areas of expertise are global governance and education reform (antoni.verger@uab.cat).*

Clara Fontdevila *Clara Fontdevila is a PhD candidate at the Department of Sociology of the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, with a thesis project on the post-2015 global education agenda. She has collaborated in different projects of the Globalisation, Education and Social Policies (GEPS) research center, and her main research areas of interest are private sector engagement in education, education and development and the global governance of education.*

Tweets

New study by Verger & Fontdevila looks into what the @[worldbank](#) says & does in relation to teachers & teacher policies <http://goo.gl/8Sqefh> #SMCSO16

New study reveals gap between talk & action @worldbank. Conflicting agendas within this institution! <http://goo.gl/8Sqefh> #SMCSO16

The @[worldbank](#) influence on education policy reform cannot be overlooked <http://goo.gl/8Sqefh> #SMCSO16

@[worldbank](#) bets on managerialist and market solutions ignoring the voice of teachers <http://goo.gl/8Sqefh> #SMCSO16

New @[eduint](#) study on @[worldbank](#): Teachers seen as human resources to be managed, not as agents of change <http://goo.gl/8Sqefh> #SMCSO16

@[worldbank](#) sees organised teachers' as a problem. Professional voice of teachers should be heard! <http://goo.gl/8Sqefh> #SMCSO16

@[worldbank](#) policy recommendations show preference for bureaucracy-heavy reforms ignoring the voice of teachers <http://goo.gl/8Sqefh> #SMCSO16

Teachers need trust, tools and time; not surveillance, pressure and instability @[worldbank](#) <http://goo.gl/8Sqefh> #SMCSO16

Teachers are more than content deliverers; complex work needs quality preparation <http://goo.gl/8Sqefh> @[worldbank](#) #SMCSO16

Quality teaching means time for collaboration amongst teachers <http://goo.gl/8Sqefh> @[worldbank](#) #SMCSO16

@[worldbank](#) prescribes wrong drivers for educational improvement. Future generations are shortchanged & locked in the worst of the present <http://goo.gl/8Sqefh>

An alternative short link for the study is:
<http://go.ei-ie.org/doublespeak>

Infographic

The World Bank's doublespeak on teachers

World Bank Action

- Trust
- Professional teachers
- Whole child/ whole system
- Deep learning

World Bank Communication

- Surveillance
- Content delivery systems
- Failed piecemeal tinkering
- Rote learning

To know more check EI's study
The World Bank's Doublespeak on Teachers- An analysis of ten years of lending and advice
conducted by Clara Fontdevila and Antoni Verger

<http://go.ei-ie.org/doublespeak>

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Source: Education International, 2016

Direct link to download: <http://go.ei-ie.org/WBinfograph> (jpg)

Blogpost

Do as you say, or say as you do? The World Bank's double-speak on teachers

Published on Wednesday, 06 April 2016



The World Bank has become an increasingly influential player in the education policy debate and is now the largest supplier of external funding to the education sector. With this in mind, but also as the education goal, Sustainable Development Goal 4, moves towards implementation, EI commissioned us to conduct a research and to take a closer look at recent (2005-2014) World Bank publications and projects to carve out an understanding of how the World Bank perceives and conceptualizes teachers and which teacher policies it recommends.

The final review of the World Bank's activity around teachers in the last ten years reveals a significant disconnection between, on the one hand, the policy preferences that predominate in the Bank's publications on teachers and, on the other hand, the teachers' related policies that the Bank effectively supports through its lending operations.

With regard to its official discourse, circulated through numerous books, technical reports and research papers (also known as knowledge products), the World Bank's position on teacher-related matters seems to be fundamentally consistent with its long-standing preference for pro-market and incentivist policies, usually grounded on a selective use of evidence. In fact, most of the Bank's publications tend to emphasise the poor contribution of teachers to educational quality. Here the publications often refer to a certain lack of teachers' effort - through pervasive references to work absenteeism and the absence of performance-based incentives.

Nonetheless, in these publications, there is also some consideration given to a range of factors that mitigate teachers' responsibility on these issues (e.g., the effect of school location), as well as for the limitations affecting teacher training. However, the policies most frequently advanced as a solution by the Bank's publications end up failing to address these more systemic issues. In fact much of the World Bank literature, which is very much inspired in neoclassic economics, takes rather a favourable view on performance-based incentives and school-based management schemes as its preferred policy options, suggesting that it all comes down to a matter of individual motivation, effort and control.

Lending projects favour a teacher professionalisation agenda

Clara Fontdevila

Clara Fontdevila is a PhD candidate at the Department of Sociology of the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, with a thesis project on the post-2015 global education agenda. She has collaborated in different projects of the Globalisation, Education and Social Policies (GEPs) research center, and her main research areas of interest are private sector engagement in education, education and development and the global governance of education.

Antoni Verger

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Other blog posts

Beyond the Summit

Written by Fred van Leeuwen on Wednesday, 16 March 2016

The sixth International Summit on the Teaching Profession (ISTP) was held in Berlin on the third and fourth of March 2016. The first such summit, in New York in 2011, was a major breakthrough for teachers, which also recognised Education International (EI) as the global representative of teachers and of the profession. The New York meeting, like subsequent summits, brought EI together with governments and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), with its considerable expertise and bountiful data...

Read more...

Education reform in times of crisis: Emulating Finland?

Written by Antoni Verger on Friday, 07 December 2012

Education reform is an increasingly internationalised phenomenon. Governments seeking to reform their education system usually look to the international

Direct link: <http://educationincrisis.net/blog/item/1322-do-as-you-say-or-say-as-you-do-the-double-speak-of-the-world-bank-on-teachers-policies>

Short link: <http://go.ei-ie.org/WBblogpost1>



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Financing and policy for quality education

Straight strategies needed
for education goal to become reality

When the world defined its intent for a better future at the last United Nations General Assembly in September 2015, education figured prominently among the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). And not by chance – Education International (EI) had tirelessly advocated for the inclusion of quality education in what is set to be the most influential policy agenda of the next 15 years.

The adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals is to be celebrated, but without committing the necessary means to make the education goal a reality, many of its aims will be elusive.

As the education goal, SDG 4, moves towards implementation, coherent, properly financed systemic planning is essential. How this will be done is still the subject of a controversial debate involving policy makers and education activists at national and global levels.

With this in mind, EI commissioned Clara Fontdevila and Toni Verger of Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona to take a close look at recent World Bank publications and projects with a view to understand the World Bank's policy on teachers.

Since the World Bank is an influential player in the education policy debate as well as the largest supplier of

external funding to the sector, it exerts considerable influence in shaping education policy through suggestions and requirements. This influence takes the form of recommendations on a wide range of topics, from benchmarking learning outcomes to teacher issues.

In their study, *The World Bank's doublespeak on teachers – an analysis of ten years of lending and advice*, Fontdevila and Verger show that "different policy documents published by the World Bank offer varying positions on the same teacher-related themes. This doublespeak undermines policy coherence by advocating simultaneously for different (and sometimes even opposing) policy options."

The study, which can be downloaded at the end of this text, provides rare, in-depth insight into the challenges to institutional coherence and consistency of teacher policy recommendations and programmes at the World Bank.

The policy discourse expresses a preference for micro-management focused reforms, whereas the projects undertaken lean towards a teacher professionalism agenda, an approach which clearly is at the heart of improvement efforts in OECD

countries. This conflict of ideas and action is perplexing. The rhetoric and the practice do not match.

Given the impact its policies have in the sector, it is imperative that the global education community critically reflect on how the World Bank can contribute to improving education quality. To deliver on the promise of SDG 4 – to ensure inclusive and quality education for all – governments must acknowledge the diverse and challenging contexts in which teachers work, and provide sufficient means for improvement.

The World Bank can play a major role in strengthening the teaching profession. However, greater coherence on financial and policy aspects will be required.

Clara Fontdevila and Toni Verger
The World Bank's doublespeak on teachers
– an analysis of ten years of lending and advice

<http://go.ei-ie.org/doublespeak>

