OECD DAC Prize 2014

JURY COMMENTS ON ASER

H.E. Lubna Bint Khalid Al Qasimi, Minister of International Development and Cooperation, United Arab Emirates

This model addresses the much-needed area of determining baseline data in education. Once baseline data is determined, then M&E work can be done in a more thorough manner, hence improving aid effectiveness.

K.Y. Amoako, President, African Center for Economic Transformation

Focus on results (outcomes) generates healthy competition among states and districts and thereby creates a race to the top. ASER provides solutions to many of governance problems confronted in basic education in many developing countries and is highly replicable

Julius O. Akinyemi, Resident Entrepreneur at Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Media Lab

This has become an effective national standard for districts, states, and national estimates of children's enrollment and learning levels in rural India. ASER provides the only annual estimate of basic reading and arithmetic available in India.

Homi Kharas, Senior Fellow and Deputy Director for the Global Economy and Development, Brookings Institution

ASER tackles the challenge of measuring learning outcomes and using this information to drive improvements in schools. The issue is critical and the ASER model, now 10 years old, is best-in-class. It has scaled successfully in India and provides important information at the district, state and national levels. However, it depends on citizen volunteers and philanthropists to achieve scale, something that may not be easily replicable in many other countries.

Geoff Lamb, Chief Economic and Policy Advisor to the co-Chairs and CEO, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

Emphasis on actual learning is great. Very smart to make ASER seriously household-based, not school-based. Impressive adoption as timely and authoritative assessment of Indian basic educational attainment; encouraging take-up of the model by other countries.

Andrew Wyckoff, Director, Science, Technology and Industry Department, OECD

ASER provides an evidence base on the outcomes of learning (proficiency in key subjects) versus inputs (attendance) which both improves accountability and impact. By moving from one to seven countries, it has demonstrated the ability to scale.