

## India among countries using innovative teaching techniques, says report

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India is among the countries in the developing world that are successfully experimenting with innovative teaching techniques in an effort to spread learning across the nation, according to a new report previewed here today.

The Washington DC-based Brookings Institution used areas in rural India covered by education charity 'Pratham' as part of its research for the 'Millions Learning: Scaling Up Quality Education in Developing Countries' report, unveiled at the Global Education and Skills Forum (GESF) here this weekend.

The report, to be officially launched in Washington DC next month, found that Pratham's 'Read India' programme was proving an effective model that could be replicated around India.

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"Pratham piloted the Read India programme aimed at students who are unable to keep up with the level of teaching in their classrooms. They organised extra tutoring for these kids and have come up with different ways of organising this.

It has become very effective in increasing reading levels," said Rebecca Winthrop, director of the Center for Universal Education at the Brookings Institution.

The influential think tank also used examples from African countries to try and throw up strategies needed to scale up effective teaching practices in parts of the developing world.

"The good news is that from the slums of New Delhi to the rainforest in Brazil, transformational change in learning is happening at a large-scale in many places around the world. How this change has happened and what governments, civil society, and the private sector can do to more actively scale up quality learning is the focus of this report," the think tank said.

Winthrop estimates there is a 100-year gap between education levels in developing and developed countries and with business as usual in the education sector, this gap is not projected to change.

"Today, 250 million children around the globe — many of them having spent at least four years in school in a developing country — lack the most basic literacy and numeracy skills.

"Additionally, countries around the world are struggling to help young people develop 21st-century skills, such as critical thinking and collaborative problem solving, which are increasingly demanded by the labour market," she warned.

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The 'Millions Learning' research concludes that scaling quality learning initiatives requires open, adaptive, and flexible education systems that fully leverage the range of skills and comparative advantage that various state and non-state partners bring.

Governments have the central responsibility for ensuring all children have a quality education but beyond that all stakeholders, from social innovators who can experiment and take risks to government agencies that are essential for any education effort to spread nationally, need to work in tandem.

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