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Improving Learning Outcomes: Lessons from Rigorous Evidence

Global efforts are underway to improve education quality—to ensure children are not only in school but learning and developing to their full potential. Although many theories exist on the best approaches to improve education quality, policymakers and implementers need evidence on which programs are effective at helping children actually learn while in school. Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) is a research and policy nonprofit that discovers and advances what works to reduce poverty and improve lives. In addition to conducting rigorous research, IPA reviews and consolidates research for policymakers and practitioners. The objective is to distill complex, nuanced, and dynamic research findings into focused and actionable recommendations. This brief summarizes and provides key lessons from multiple meta-analyses and over two-dozen randomized evaluations (both IPA and non-IPA studies) on improving learning outcomes in low-income countries, with a focus on basic education.

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