



## Meeting expectations? Reflections on PISA for Development from participating countries

- The PISA for Development (PISA-D) project focuses on making PISA more accessible and relevant to middle- and low-income countries.
- Countries joined the project expecting to gain an understanding of how their students perform compared with students around the world; to provide their policy makers with insights on how to help students learn better, teachers to teach better and school systems to operate more effectively; and to acquire capacity in managing and using the results of large-scale assessments.
- As the first PISA-D results are published, and the survey instruments and capacity-building support models from the initiative are mainstreamed into PISA, participating countries' reflections on the project indicate that these expectations have been met.

The OECD has enhanced its PISA instruments through the PISA-D initiative to provide a finer-grained view of low-performing students, to better measure factors more strongly related to student performance in middle- and low-income countries, and to develop methods for assessing out-of-school youth. PISA-D also established a model to build capacity in the participating countries for managing large-scale student learning assessments and using the results to support national policy dialogue and evidence-based decision-making. At the beginning of the initiative, countries indicated that they were participating in PISA-D in order to:

- gain an understanding of how their students' performance compares internationally and, in particular, how it compares with student performance in countries facing similar challenges
- develop insights into how to help students learn better, teachers to teach better and school systems to operate more effectively
- build capacity to conduct large-scale learning assessments, and analyse and use the results to support national policies and evidence-based decision making.

Seven of the countries participating in the PISA-D school-based assessment – Cambodia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Paraguay, Senegal and Zambia – reported results in December 2018 in individual national reports; Bhutan will report results in February 2019. As the initiative moves into its final phase, it is a good time to reflect on whether the countries' expectations have been met.

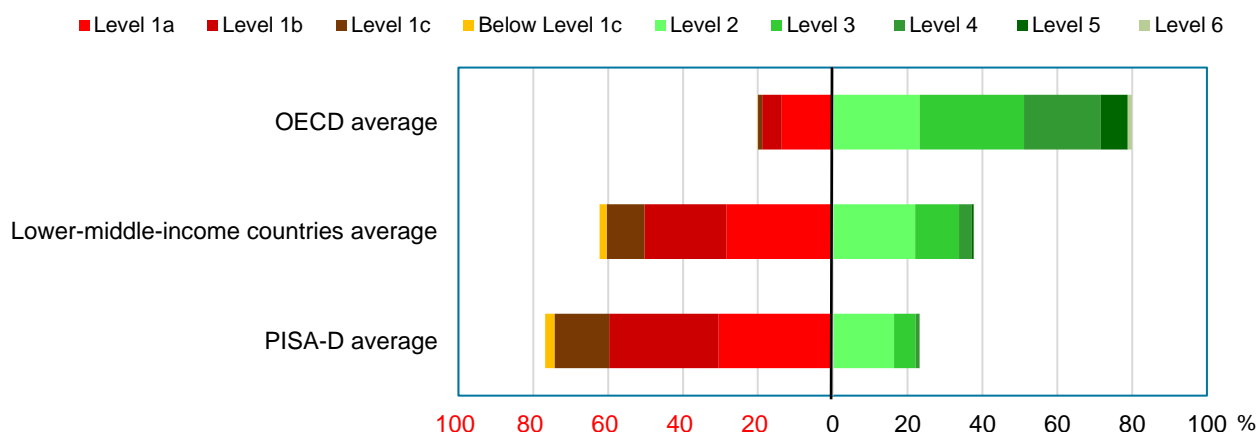


### International comparisons

PISA-D was successful in making the assessment instruments more relevant to low-to-middle-income countries while still being able to report results on the main PISA scale, thus facilitating international comparisons on all of the variables covered by PISA. These variables and factors include student performance, educational attainment, health and well-being, attitudes towards school and learning, the learning environment, learning time, the quality of instruction, family and community support, and resources devoted to education.



### Students' proficiency in reading, PISA 2015 and PISA-D



#### Policy insights

PISA-D assessment results provide countries with a solid database that can help them refine policy priorities and set new goals or targets to improve their education systems. The data collected have a lot to say about the allocation of resources and its implications for equity. With reliable data on gaps in access and differences in outcomes between groups of children and young people, countries can determine whether poor and marginalised populations are given equal opportunities to succeed at school and beyond. The challenge for countries is to maintain a focus on these goals or targets, and to track progress towards them by participating in future cycles of PISA and other relevant studies.

#### Capacity development

PISA-D has helped the participating countries build their capacity to manage large-scale assessments and make use of the results in support of national policy dialogue and education policy making. When asked about the usefulness of the capacity building provided through PISA-D, countries largely praised the continuous support they received through every phase of the project. Countries also highlighted the pertinence of the training provided, including sampling, translation/adaptation of survey instruments, data management, coding of students' responses, data analysis and reporting. They noted the benefits of strong peer-learning partnerships with representatives from PISA countries, and reported that their national assessments have been enhanced – particularly in the areas of student sampling, survey operations and data management – as a direct result of participating in the project. The PISA-D countries appreciated the needs analyses conducted at the beginning of the project as both a useful assessment of the national team's strengths and weaknesses and as a benchmark for assessing how far they have come in capacity building since the project began.

#### For more information

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#### Coming next month

*Disseminating the PISA for Development results*

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