



Data Must Speak (DMS)

About Positive Deviance Approaches to Learning

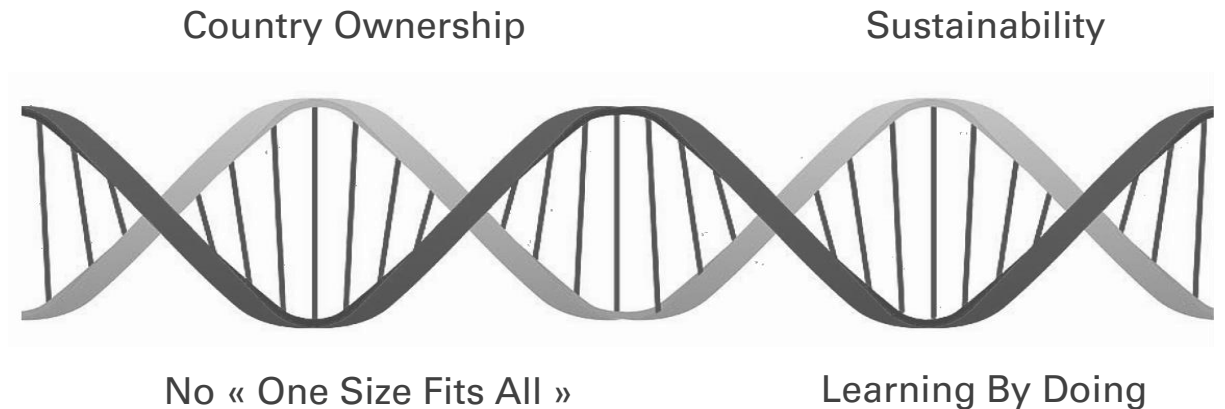
Research Snapshot

UNICEF Office of Research-Innocenti
August 2021

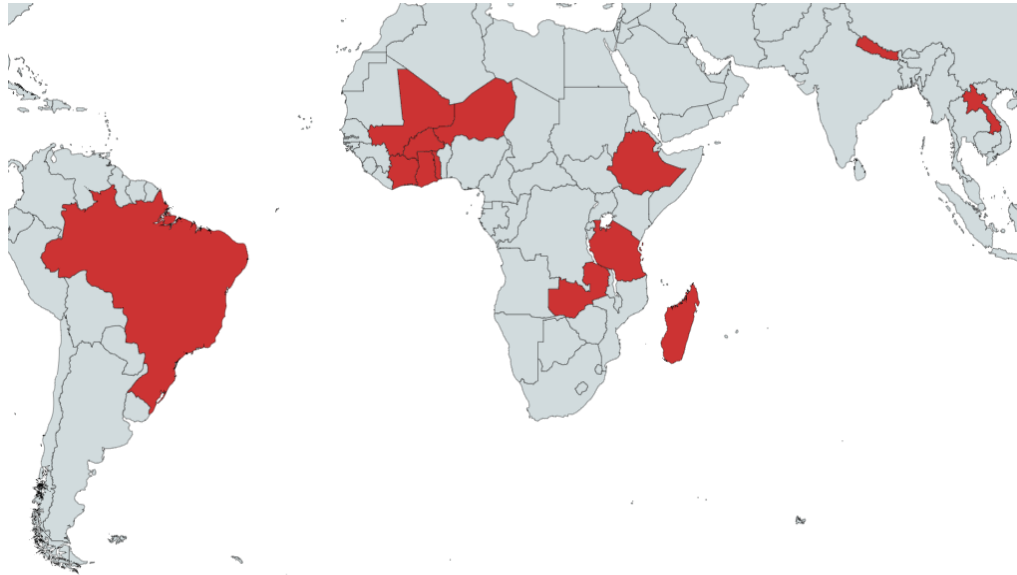
Data Must Speak (DMS) Initiative - History

- **Objective:** maximizing the use of existing data for policy making, systems management and social accountability (community engagement)
- **Started in 2014, active in 13 countries** (different stages of implementation)
- Focused on **Foundational Literacy and Numeracy** (primary education)
- **Technical support components**
 - Datasets merging; District, school, and community profile cards
 - School/District indices for equitable resource allocation/school grant formulae

Guiding Principles | DNA of DMS



DMS – Research Component



13 participating countries in Africa/Asia: Brazil, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Lao PDR, Madagascar, Mali, Nepal, Niger, Tanzania, Togo, and Zambia

- **Same Guiding Principles (DNA)** as for the other DMS components & also focused on **Foundational Literacy and Numeracy**
- **Objective:** Finding out and understanding positive deviant behaviors/practices in best performing schools and ways to scale them in more schools
- **Methodologies:** Quantitative research, Behavioral science, Implementation research & Scaling science
- Co-funded by **Internal UNICEF resources** (global and country level), **Hewlett Foundation, KIX (IDRC/GPE), NORAD, Schools2030,** and **Jacobs Foundation**
- Tapping on **UNICEF** unique **field presence** (900 education staff) and **their trusted partnerships** w/ Ministries

What is Positive Deviance?

It is a methodology used to understand what makes **certain schools perform better** than others even though they operate in the same context & with the same resources, by **analyzing their behaviors and practices**.

Argentina – By improving the relationship between communities and schools, students are much more likely to graduate primary school
Dura, L. & Singhal, A. (2009)

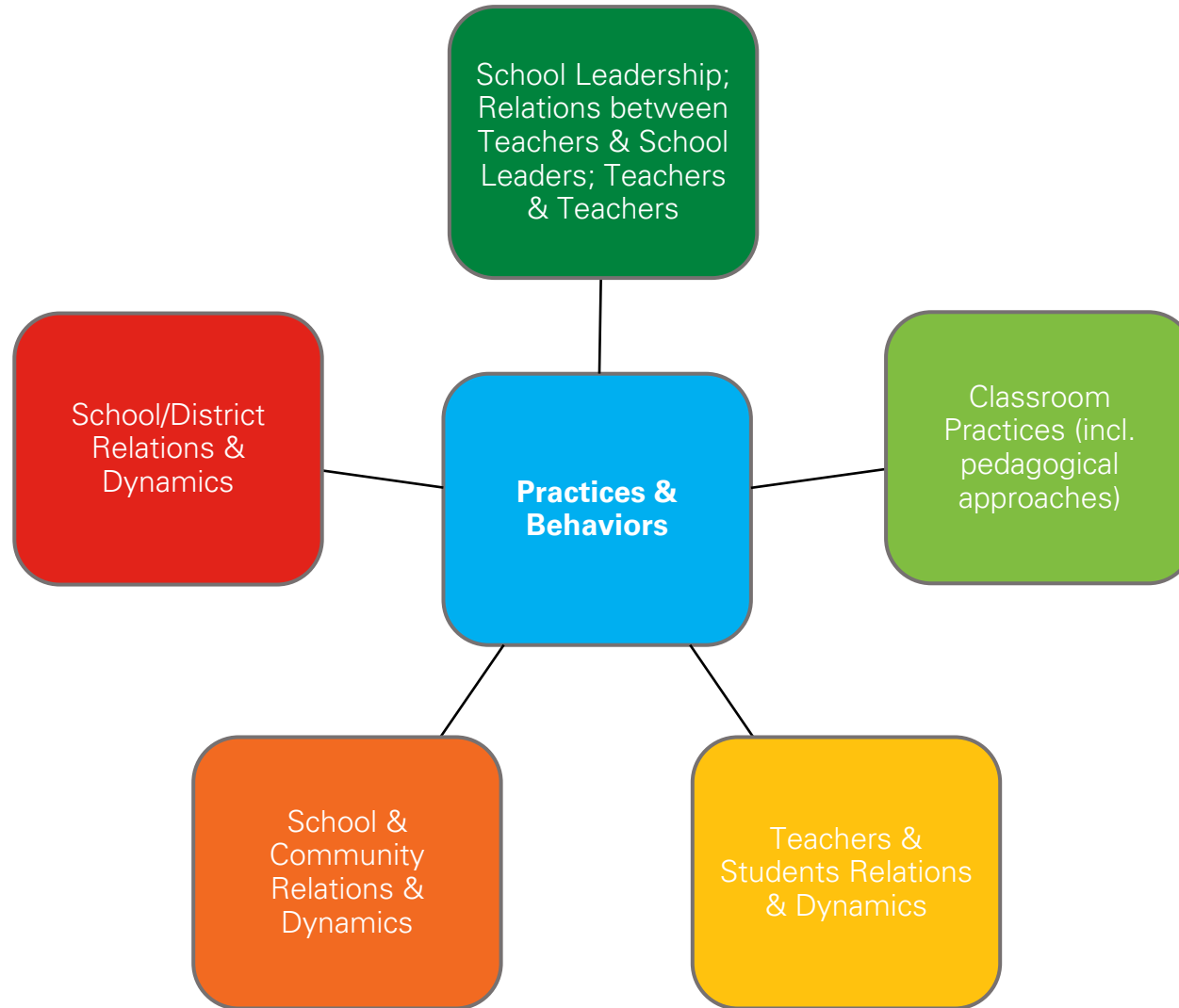


Namibia – Students learning outcomes increased when the head-teacher act as a role-model and foster a strong team spirit
UNICEF (2015)

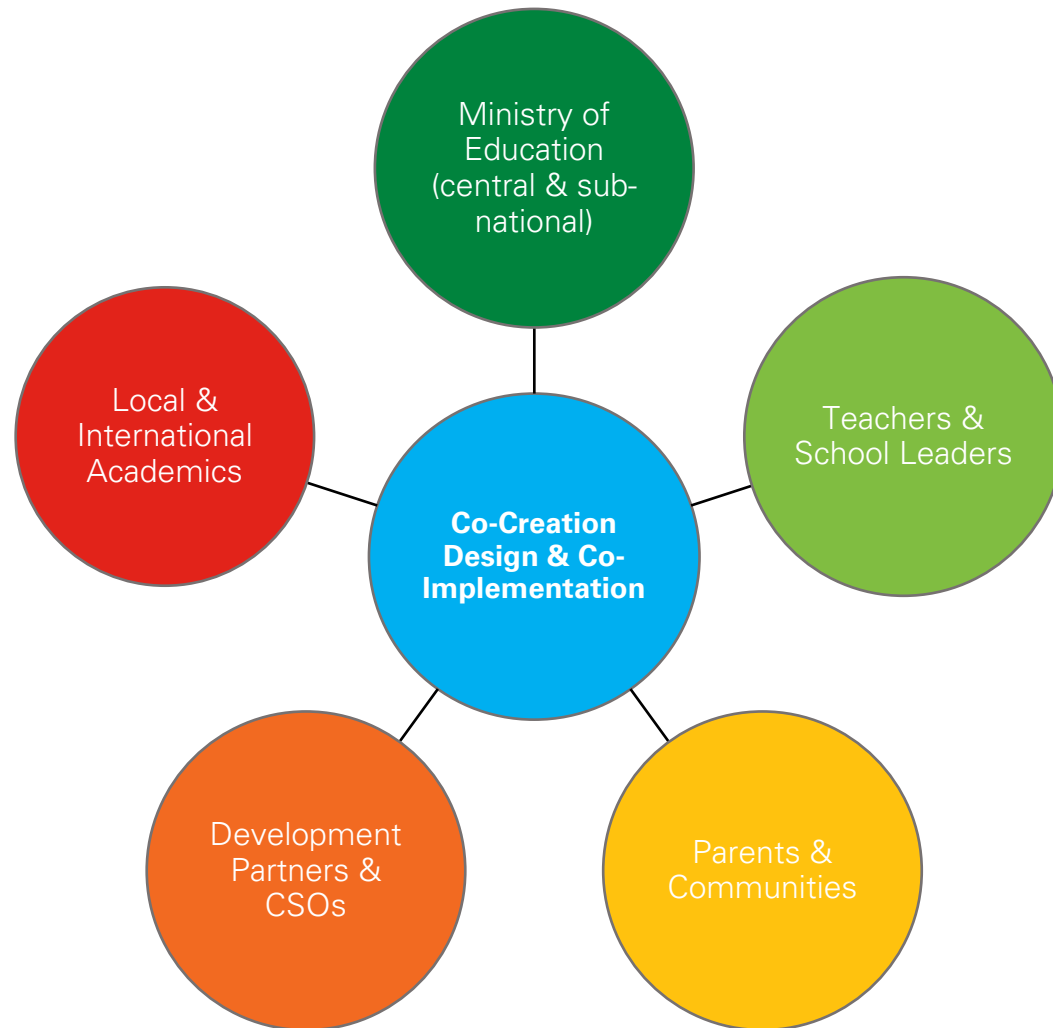
U.S.A – When receiving positive feedback from teachers, parents, and friends, students with learning disabilities are much less likely to drop-out
Singhal, A. (2013)



Domains of Practices/Behaviors under Study

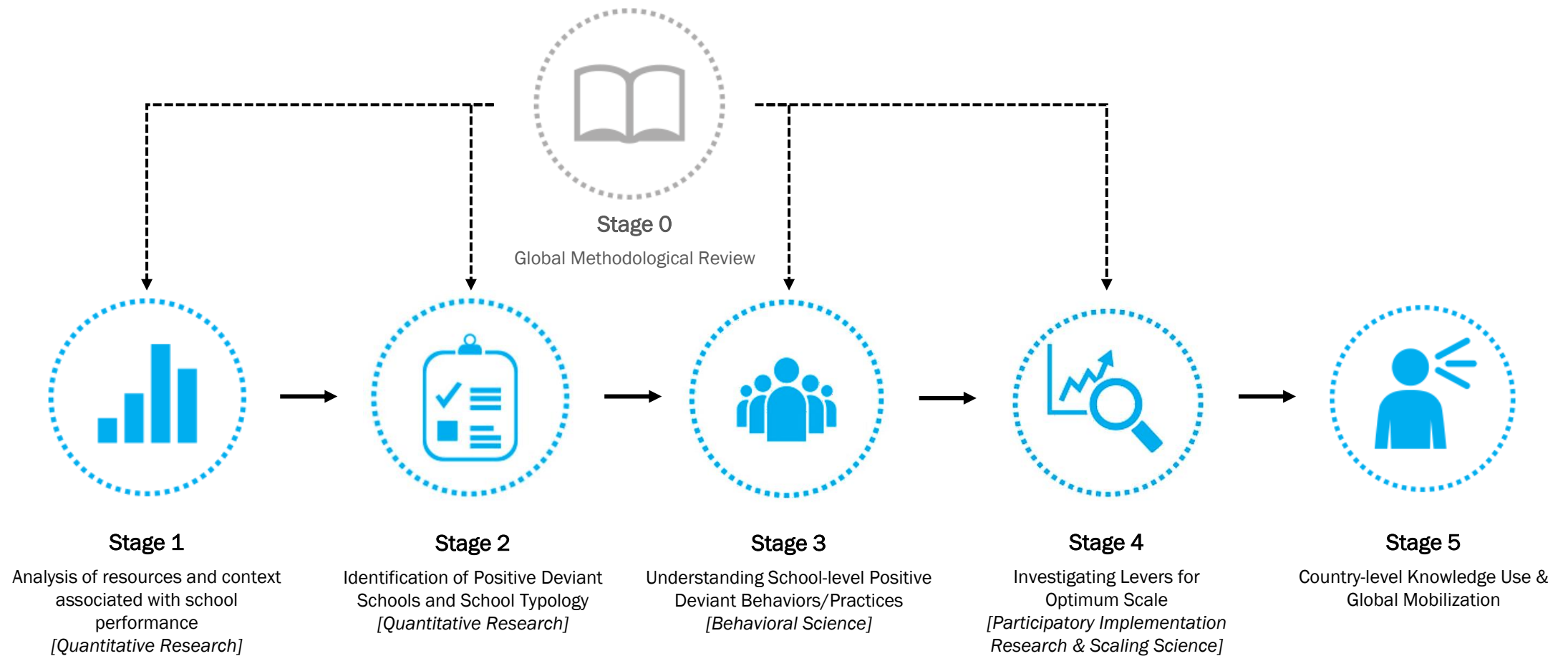


Co-Creation & Co-Implementation from the Outset for Improved Uptake

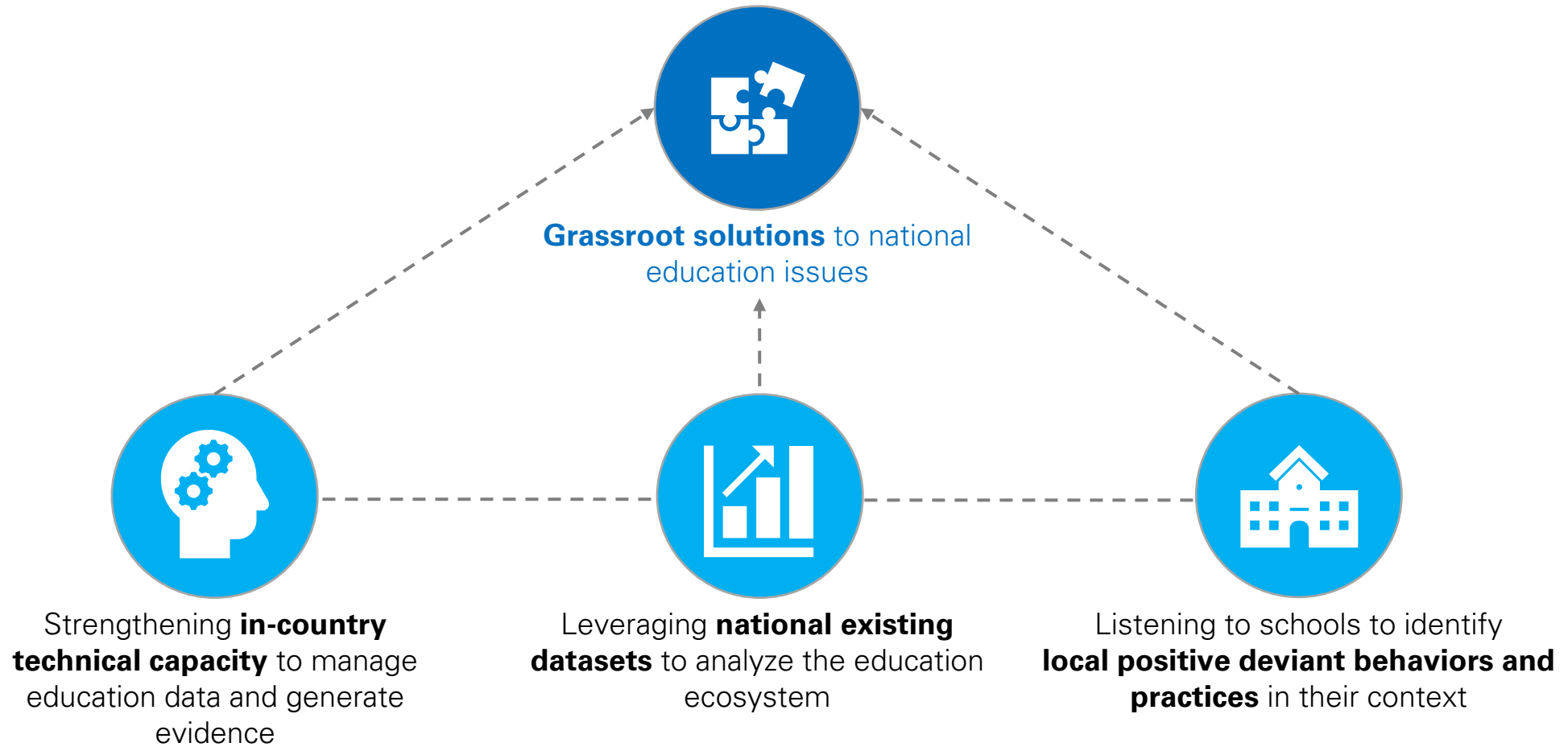


A **participatory research** project from and for ministries' officials, school leaders, teachers, communities, and children

Country-Tailored Research Methodology



Valuing Country-Level Capacity and Solutions





Thank you! Questions?

Renaud Comba

Data Must Speak Research Manager | READ Unit

UNICEF Office of Research-Innocenti

rcomba@unicef.org