Improving Learning

CORPORATE PROFILE

ACER

The **Australian Council** *for* **Educational Research (ACER)** is one of the world's leading not-for-profit, independent educational research organisations.

For nearly 90 years, ACER has built a strong reputation as a provider of reliable support and expertise to education policymakers and professional practitioners through its large-scale surveying, assessment, evaluation and monitoring, and policy advice at all levels of education around the globe. ACER now has more than 380 staff located in Adelaide, Brisbane, Dubai, Jakarta, London, Malaysia, Melbourne, New Delhi, Perth, and Sydney.

⚲ ACER OFFICES

◯ ACER PROJECTS
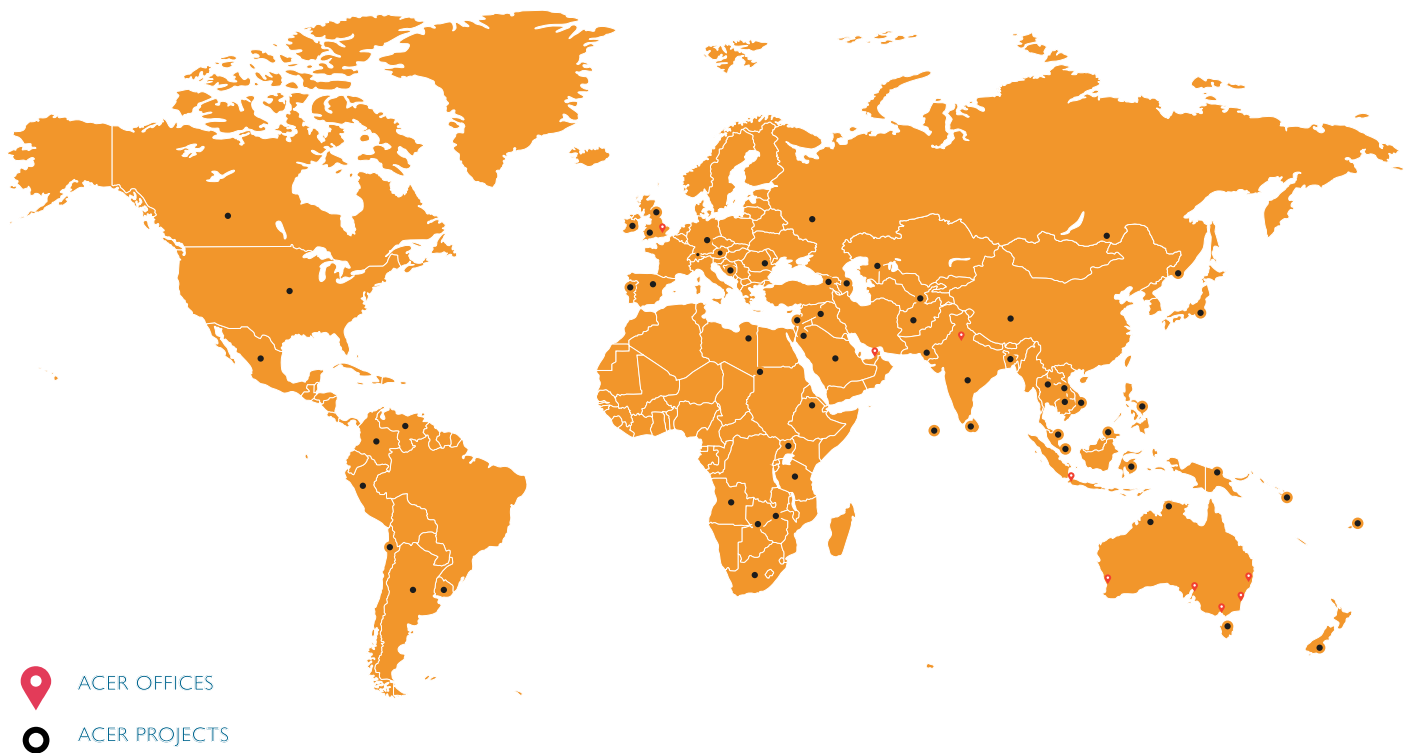
ACER research centres

● **Centre for Global Education Monitoring**
Through its Centre for Global Education Monitoring (GEM), ACER supports the monitoring of education outcomes worldwide to inform policy and help in the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 4.

● **Centre for Assessment Reform and Innovation (CARI)**
Through CARI, ACER is redefining the purposes and methods of educational assessment to establish a new thinking on understanding how well students have learnt.

● **Centre for Education Policy and Practice**
The centre connects education research, policy and practice focusing on effective teaching, effective institutional leadership, and effective system leadership with the ultimate goal of improving learning.

● **Centre for Science of Learning @ ACER**
The centre focuses on transdisciplinary research to build our knowledge on fundamental learning processes and the conditions that lead to successful learning.

ACER is the official partner of UNESCO INSTITUTE FOR STATISTICS

ACER INDIA

WHO WE ARE

ACER India was established in 2005 to become the South Asian branch of ACER. ACER India enables ACER to provide its expertise and services in the region, undertaking educational research, large-scale assessments, capacity building programmes, and monitoring and evaluation for a range of clients in India and the South Asia region.

WHERE WE WORK

Drawing from its international and local expertise, ACER India has successfully delivered assignments in Bangladesh, India, Jordan, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.

WHO WE WORK WITH

ACER India works in partnership with national and state governments, universities and schools, international aid agencies, and non-profit organisations in the delivery of education projects.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)

ACER India provides technical assistance to governments and development partners in South Asia working towards achievement of the SDG Goal 4 of ensuring 'inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.'

NETWORKS

ACER India is a member of networks such as the Network on Education Quality Monitoring in the Asia-Pacific (NEQMAP) that aim to improve learning in the region by enhancing student learning assessment to strengthen education systems.

COLLABORATION

ACER India draws upon the expertise available within its global network of offices in Australia, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, United Arab Emirates, and the United Kingdom.

Research

School assessments

Professional learning

Publications and resources

Research

ACER INDIA'S RESEARCH IS COMMITTED TO QUALITY, EQUITY, AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN EDUCATION. ACER INDIA DRAWS FROM ACER'S CONTRIBUTION TO EDUCATION RESEARCH FOR NEARLY 90 YEARS.

ACER India's research division has gained a strong reputation in India for its ability to contribute technical expertise to a range of high level projects.

ACER India provides technical support to governments, development partners, and private schools in the following areas:

- Education policy reform
- Development of robust assessments that monitor learning progress and reports results
- High-quality capacity development programmes on assessment and data analysis

- Curriculum validation for compliance with international standards
- Evaluation of assessment materials to identify their strengths and weaknesses
- Analyses and reporting of assessment data
- School improvement and system strengthening

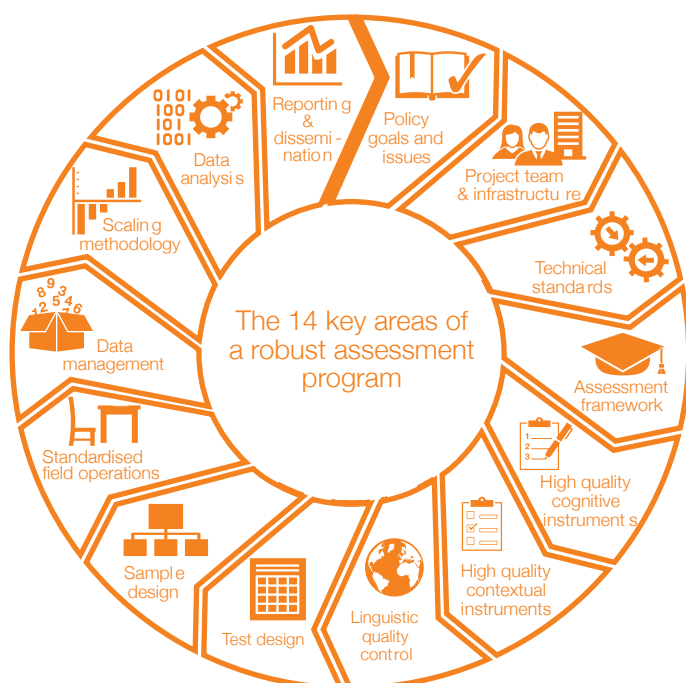**Large-scale assessments**   **Capacity development**   **Monitoring and evaluation**

RECENT PROJECTS

Among our recent projects were capacity building and assessment reform for the states of Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, delivering regional workshops to groups of states on robust assessment, and developing the secondary school national assessment in Bangladesh.

All of the research activities that we undertake at ACER India are informed by global best practice and insights drawn from research. This ensures that we can deliver high-quality outputs that are underpinned by robust approaches to research and assessment.

Sarah Richardson, Research Director, ACER India

The 14 key areas of a robust assessment program

- Policy goals and issues
- Project team & infrastructure
- Technical standards
- Assessment framework
- High quality cognitive instruments
- High quality contextual instruments
- Linguistic quality control
- Test design
- Sample design
- Standardised field operations
- Data management
- Scaling methodology
- Data analysis
- Reporting & dissemination

STRONG FOCUS ON INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Outside India, ACER India has provided technical assistance to **Bangladesh** for its Learning Assessment of Secondary Institutions (LASI), **Nepal** for strengthening data analysis capacities, and **Maldives** for pre-service teacher training at university level. In **Jordan,** the company recently undertook an evaluation project of teacher professional development.

School assessments

NEW ERA SCHOOL ASSESSMENTS THAT SUPPORT STUDENTS IN THE 21ST CENTURY. SCIENTIFICALLY DESIGNED, THE ASSESSMENTS PROVIDE INSIGHTFUL DATA ON LEARNING OUTCOMES.

ACER India offers school assessments that are designed to provide student learning data to school leaders that help them in developing school improvement plans and teachers in targeting classroom teaching and learning.

ACER India works closely with Indian schools to support them in undertaking external assessments that complement their own internal assessments for enhanced learning:

- School assessments that are suitable for CBSE, ICSE, and international schools
- Analysis and reporting of data
- Support in the interpretation of data
- School improvement

PRODUCTS

- The curriculum-neutral **International Benchmark Test (IBT)** for private schools in India, covers classes 3 to 10 in English, Mathematics, and Science
- In addition, ACER India has developed the **Indian Progressive Achievement Scales (IPAS),** a suite of assessment tools for use from classes 3 to 10 in the disciplines of English, Mathematics, and Science that align with the CBSE curriculum. IPAS is used by low-cost budget schools in many states to support learning improvement
- For international schools, ACER has developed **International Schools' Assessment (ISA)** based on the PISA construct that helps to monitor student progress in reading, mathematical literacy, and scientific literacy
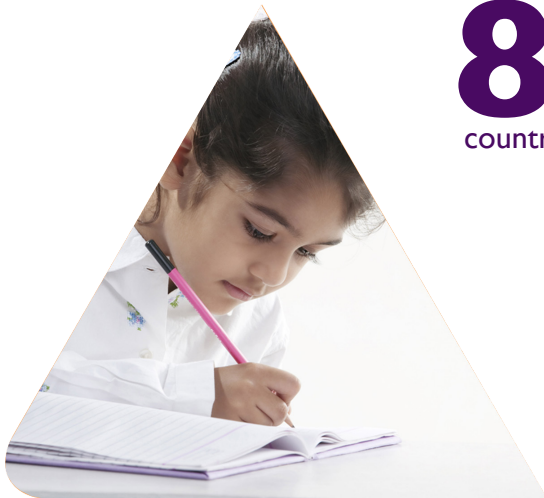
Students in

80

countries take ISA annually

1.8 million

IBT tests have been taken till now

In India, schools have a growing interest in using assessment data for informed decision making. They want detailed information on the learning progress of their pupils to support them in critical areas.

Varun Jain, Senior Project Director, ACER India

PSYCHOMETRIC RESEARCH

ACER assessments use **Item Response Theory (IRT),** a statistical approach used in leading international surveys such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS).

By using IRT methods, a reliable picture of student performance can be generated. IRT models distinguish question difficulties from examinee abilities and place them on the same scale for comparison. Student abilities can be compared accurately even if not all students take the same set of tests or not all students are in the same academic grade.

Progress or decline in learning of an academic cohort over time can be traced even when different students are populating that cohort. IRT models are more informative as they set different levels of learning and describe what students at a level know and can do in each subject.

Professional learning

WORLD CLASS PROFESSIONAL LEARNING PROGRAMMES THAT HELP EDUCATORS IN IMPROVED TEACHING AND LEARNING.

ACER India's professional development programmes for school teachers in India are needs-based, evidence-informed, and practice-oriented, and support teachers in their career development. They have both foundational and advanced courses on the concept of Assessment-for-Learning and are delivered by facilitators with international training.
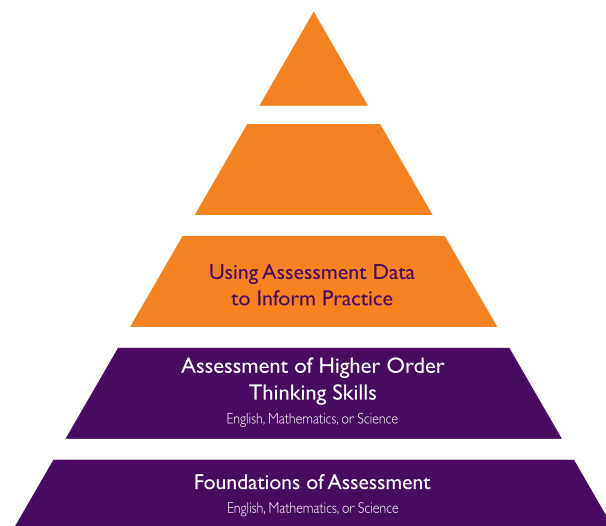
ACER India works with schools to deliver effective professional learning programmes that enable educators to use assessment data for improving learning.

ACER professional learning quality principles

- NEEDS BASED
- HIGH EXPECTATIONS
- EVIDENCE INFORMED
- INCORPORATING FEEDBACK

- PRACTICE ORIENTED
- ACTIVE AND REFLECTIVE
- EVALUATING FOR IMPROVEMENT
- SUPPORTING CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Professional learning programmes for teachers in South Asia:

- FOUNDATIONS OF ASSESSMENT
  introduces teachers to student assessment and its place in the teaching and learning cycle
- ASSESSMENT OF HIGHER ORDER THINKING SKILLS
  helps teachers understand higher order skills and assessments that can measure progress of their students
- USING AND UNDERSTANDING ASSESSMENT DATA
  trains teachers to use assessment data effectively in their classrooms

Using Assessment Data
to Inform Practice

Assessment of Higher Order
Thinking Skills
English, Mathematics, or Science

Foundations of Assessment
English, Mathematics, or Science

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING PROJECTS

- Student-centric classrooms
- Usage of IBT data in identification of student misconceptions
- Evidence-based decision-making for school leaders

Publications and resources

ENGAGING AND EASY-TO-READ PROFESSIONAL LEARNING RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS ASPIRING TO TRANSFORM TEACHING AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS.

ACER India prints and distributes evidence-based learning resources to schools in India. Teacher, a quarterly print magazine, has gained popularity in bridging the gap between policymakers, researchers, and practitioners in the last seven years of its presence in India.
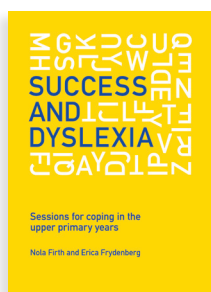
Success and Dyslexia
(with CD)
by Nola Firth and
Erica Frydenberg
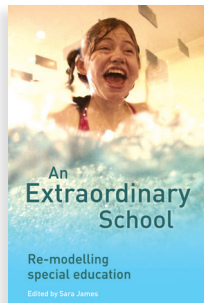
An Extraordinary School
edited by Sara James
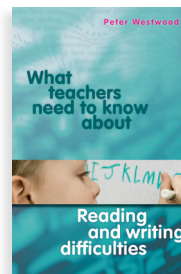
What Teachers Need to Know About Series
by Peter Westwood

Teacher

Teacher India focuses on new and practical ideas on professional learning, curriculum development, information technology, well-being, leadership, teaching and learning, and education policy. It showcases innovative school interventions and practices, provides teaching resources for tackling modern classroom challenges, and shares news and insights from the education community.
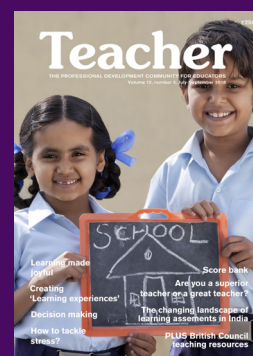
> *'ACER India is committed to improving learning in the South Asia region. Since our incorporation as a not-for-profit company in 2005, we have grown into an organisation that works closely with governments, international aid agencies, other not-for-profit groups, and schools in areas of capacity building, assessment reform, evaluations, and large-scale surveys. Among other things, we use advanced learning assessments to provide high-quality data to education policymakers and practitioners that enable decisions to enhance the quality of education and improve learning.'*

Amit Kaushik, CEO, ACER India

TEAM

ACER India's highly qualified and passionate staff have experience of delivering education projects across the world. ACER India's team is an eclectic mix of teachers and researchers with global and local experience who work closely with ACER international offices to deliver projects efficiently.

Australian Council *for* Educational Research (India)

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