

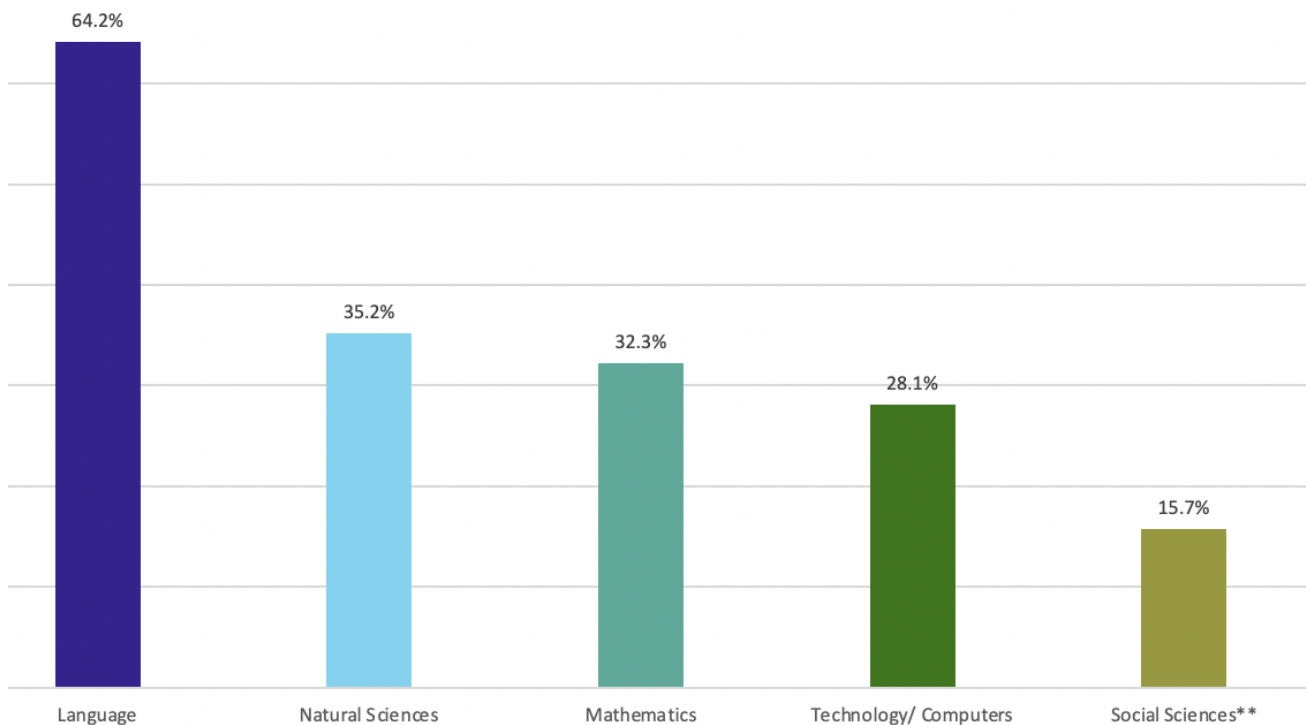
World Education Reform Database

Subject Area Reforms

Background

School systems around the world enact subject-focused reforms to change the content of what is taught and learned in classrooms. Approximately 12 percent of education reforms in the World Education Reform Database target issues related to specific subject areas. Among all reforms that target at least one subject area, more than 60 percent focus on language-related changes.

Percentage of Reforms by Subject Area



Note: Subject area categories are not mutually exclusive. Percentages are calculated out of the total number of reforms with at least one subject area identified. This figure represents 1,317 reforms from 178 countries.
**Includes subjects such as history, geography, civics, and social studies.

The **World Education Reform Database** is a collection of more than 10,000 changes to school systems reported by 189 countries and territories, mainly since the 1970s. Reforms are defined as planned, systemic, and non-routine changes to education. Examples include laws, acts, policies, plans, strategies, and other self-identified changes related to education. This brief was produced using version 1 of the data.

For more details and data see: <http://werd.stanford.edu>

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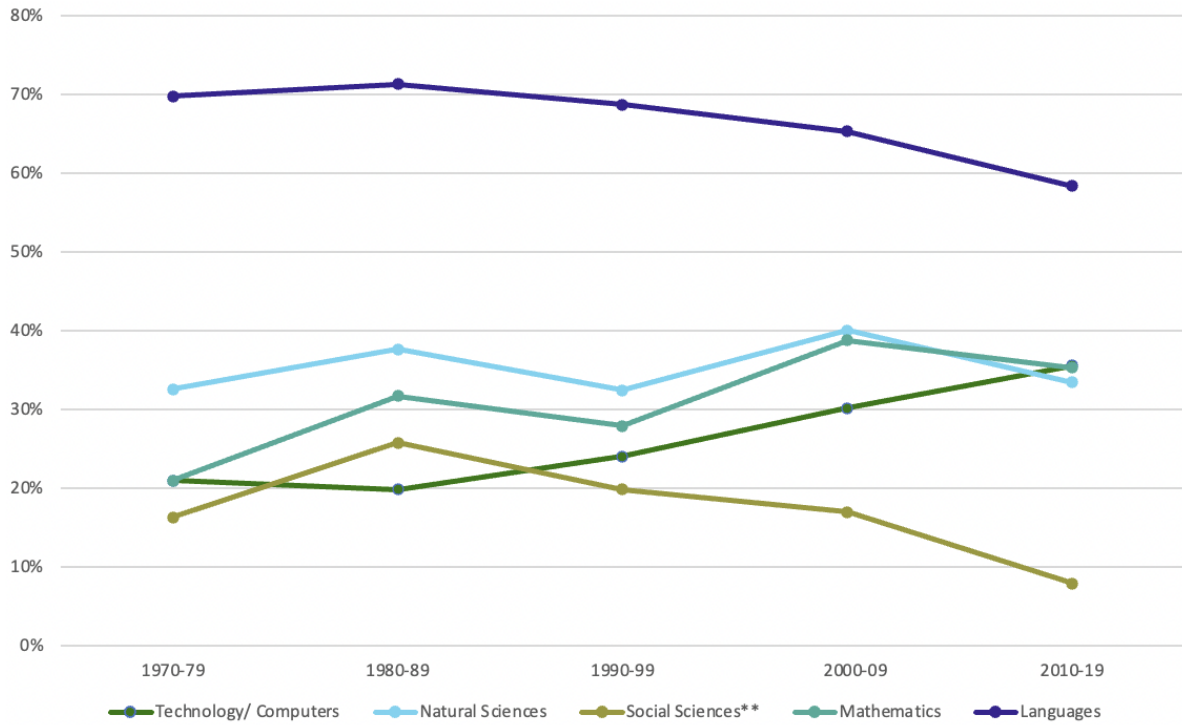
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Brief compiled by Jigme Garwang

Percentage of Reforms by Subject Area Per Decade



Note: Subject area categories are not mutually exclusive. Percentages are calculated out of the total number of reforms with at least one subject area identified (per decade). This figure represents 1,130 reforms from 176 countries.
 **Includes subjects such as history, geography, civics, and social studies.

Historical Trends



17 percentage point decrease in focus on **Social Sciences** reforms from the 1980s

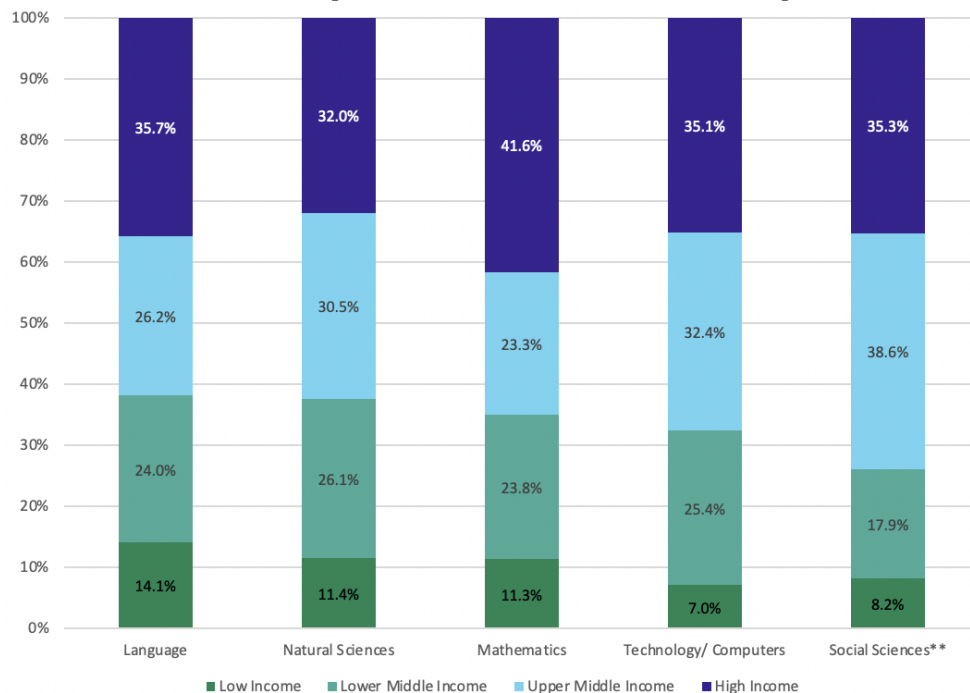


Nearly 13 percentage point decrease in **Languages** reforms since the 1980s



Steady rise of 16 percentage point in **Technology/ Computers** reforms since 1980s

Country Income-Level Analysis



Note: Subject area categories are not mutually exclusive. Percentages are calculated out of the total number of reforms with at least one subject area identified. This figure represents 2,310 reforms from 168 countries. Income-level classifications are based on World Bank country classifications.
 **Includes subjects such as history, geography, civics, and social studies.

Examples of Reforms by Subject Area

Languages

Mozambique: In 2020, the Government recently launched the Strategy for the Expansion of Bilingual Education 2020-2029. The aim of the Strategy is to expand the bilingual modality (Portuguese and local languages) as an alternative to monolingual education (only Portuguese) by producing learning and teaching materials in 19 local languages.



Technology

Ireland: In October 2015, the Department of Education published The Digital Strategy for Schools 2015-2020 Enhancing Teaching Learning and Assessment. The Digital Strategy for Schools provided a rationale and government action plan for integrating ICT into teaching, learning and assessment practices in schools over the next five years. It provided over EUR 200 million in investment in digital technology for schools and rolled out new initiatives to promote technological education. These included introducing a new computer science subject in upper secondary education in 2018 and adding coding and computational thinking in primary school.



Mathematics

Ghana: In 2014, the Ministry of Education established a national committee to examine the state of mathematics and science teaching and learning and to develop recommendations to ensure that future learners develop the mathematics understandings and skills required to meet the needs of an increasingly technological society. The Commission's report argued that pupil learning outcomes on national assessments in math and science could be improved by bringing the syllabus in line with international trends in primary mathematics education and led to policy reforms aimed at enhancing quality, reducing repetition, and improving grade transitions.



Natural Sciences

Bangladesh: The Government of Bangladesh launched the Secondary Science Education Project with financial assistance from the Asian Development Bank in April 1985 and completed in June 1991. The main objective of the project was to improve the quality of secondary education with particular emphasis on science education, through upgrading and expanding physical facilities for secondary schools and madrasahs and improving the professional competence of teachers, teacher-trainers and educational administrators.



Social Sciences

Belgium: In 2016, a new course on philosophy and citizenship was been introduced in primary school from 2016-2017 and in secondary education in 2017-2018 by the Government of Belgium. This change in the curriculum aimed to develop skills and knowledge on ethics and philosophy and enable young people to develop critical, independent thinking, and to question and take ownership of citizenship in the broad sense.

