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A Profile

BACKGROUND

ERU Consultants Pvt Ltd, earlier known as Educational Resource Unit is a research and consulting group was established in 1996 by Vimala Ramachandran with the objective of working in an interdisciplinary manner on elementary and adult education, public health and child development. ERU is the first virtual (electronically networked) research group. We have the capability to work in several states and in different language zones of India, South Asia and Africa!

Strategic planning and programme development has been a running theme in our work and in particular we have focused on policy development, operationalisation of policy by working with government and donors to move from macro policies to concrete programmes and projects.

One of the running themes of all our work is gender and social equity. ERU has done extensive research, documentation and training on women's empowerment programmes and projects - in government and the non-governmental sector. The ERU team is passionate about girls education - right from pre-primary to adult, vocational, life skill and higher education.

ERU TEAM

Unlike conventional research institutes, the ERU research and documentation team comprises a core team of professionals and a wider pool of independent researchers who come on board for specific assignments / projects. The team is hand picked to suit the specific requirement of every assignment. We bring in people from research institutions when required. We are networked via the Internet and are able to work with researchers across the country and in different languages. Our core panel of researchers include the following persons:

CORE TEAM

Vimala Ramachandran has worked on elementary and adult education, public health and child development for over 25 years and has extensive experience in qualitative research, policy and programme development and process documentation. She was

the first National Project Director of Mahila Samakhya (1988-1993), a founder Trustee of HealthWatch (1994-2007) – a network of social activists and researchers working on women's health issues. Vimala has significant experience of grant making, programme design, appraisal and evaluation and is based in New Delhi. Vimala has been a mentor to chief executive officer and heads of programme personnel involved in grant making, monitoring and evaluation and documentation. She is based in New Delhi.

Kameshwari Jandhyala has worked on women's education, empowerment and livelihood issues for over 20 years. She is the first Director of Mahila Samakhya Andhra Pradesh and Consultant to the National Office of Mahila Samakhya in Department of Education, GOI. She is a keen researcher and has significant experience in qualitative research and programme development in education (women's education), women's studies and gender and development issues. Kameshwari is based in Hyderabad.

Nishi Mehrotra has worked on sustainable agriculture, watershed development, rural development and women's empowerment issues. She is the first State Programme Director of Mahila Samakhya Programme in Uttar Pradesh. She has significant experience in the area of water and sanitation and is a highly skilled qualitative researcher and has extensive fieldwork experience. She is based in Lucknow and has significant ground level experience in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Bihar and Jharkhand. Nishi is based in Lucknow.

Shanti Menon, has a C.A.S. degree [equivalent to an M.Phil] in education from Syracuse University, New York and over 20 years experience in designing and conducting qualitative and quantitative research and evaluation, managing research projects, developing and writing grant proposals and teaching courses in research methods. Her areas of interest include secondary and higher education, educational policy, and public health. She is particularly interested in the intersection of gender, caste and class with macro level political, social, cultural and economic forces. She is based in Kerala.

Bharat Patni, an engineer from IIT Roorkee with an MBA from IIM Ahmedabad, has 32 years of domestic and international experience in the corporate sector. He then transited into the development sector and spent six years with Pratham, Mumbai providing full time support on issues related to general management, donor coordination, MIS, finance and programme planning / development. He has travelled extensively in the country in connection with Pratham interface with the government in Primary Education. He joined ERU group in 2006 and has anchored / managed multi-state research projects. He brings quantitative research skills to the ERU management team. Bharat is based in New Delhi

Vani Periodi, independent researchers, trainer and experienced qualitative researcher based in Mangalore, Karnataka. She was the District Coordinator of Mahila Samakhya in Mysore District and a MacArthur Fellow 2003-2005. She is part of a network of

trainers based in Karnataka. She leads ERU qualitative research studies in Karnataka. Vani is based in Mangalore.

Niti Saxena, has been a part of ERU team since inception and she has significant experience in quantitative as well as qualitative research. She has worked on child rights, women's rights and education and development issues. Niti is the former Executive Director of AALI (a feminist legal advocacy and research group headquartered in Lucknow). She leads / anchors ERU's field projects across northern India. Niti is based in Lucknow.

Harsh Sethi, Consulting Editor of Seminar Magazine with over thirty years of engagement with civil society issues, non-party political formations and non-governmental organisations. He has special expertise in analysis and interpretation of qualitative and quantitative data. He oversees ERU projects with a view to ensure quality of outcome. He is based in New Delhi.

RESEARCH AND DOCUMENTATION:

2009 (Ongoing)	UNESCO, Asia Pacific Programme for Education for All, Bangkok: Advocacy brief on Gender issues in higher education.
2009 (Ongoing)	Save the Children, Bal Raksha Bharat, New Delhi: Nutrition Policy Brief. A research based advocacy brief for SC BRP, India.
2009 (Ongoing)	Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai: Assessing the coverage and effectiveness of national efforts to provide quality maternity protection for all. A qualitative study in Uttar Pradesh, India.
2009	Effective Intervention & London School of Economics (UK): Qualitative and quantitative study of situation of elementary education in Guinea Bissau.
2009	UNICEF (ROSA), Kathmandu: Water, sanitation and education: exploring inclusion and exclusion – a qualitative study in two districts of Uttar Pradesh.
2008-09 (ongoing)	Sir Dorabji Tata Trust, Mumbai and Zubaan, New Delhi: Part II of Cartographies of Empowerment – Tracing the Journey of Mahila Samakhya 1988 to 2008. A study conducted in partnership with Mahila Samakhya units in 9 States of India and ten research partners.
2008	Plan International, India, Baseline survey of elementary schools in Bihar & Uttar Pradesh
2008	Save the Children (UK), Scoping study on nutritional status of children and opportunities for improving the nutritional levels of children in India.



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- 2007-08 **Plan International, India**, Baseline survey of primary schools in Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh and Uttarakhand,
- 2007-08 **Azim Premji Foundation**, Teacher development in India – mapping the terrain. (contemporary history of teacher development in India)
- 2007 **UNICEF ROSA, Kathmandu**, Girls health and education in South Asia – a research based study on the situation in 8 countries (Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Bhutan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Maldives and Sri Lanka).
- 2007 **Oxfam, India**: Basic Education in India – the situation on the ground and exploring possibilities for intervention.
- 2006-07 **NUEPA, UNESCO and Department of Education, MHRD, GOI**, Mid-term Assessment of MDG goals and EFA – three chapters (a) Progress made in Uttar Pradesh by Nishi Mehrotra, (b) Progress made in Andhra Pradesh by Kameshwari Jandhyala and (c) Thematic review of Education and Equity by Vimala Ramachandran.
- 2006-07 **Plan International India, New Delhi**, Research study on the Hidden Cost of Education in 4 states – Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa and Rajasthan.
- 2005-2007 **International Labour Organisation, New Delhi and Government of India**, Department of School Education and Literacy, New Delhi: Improving the quality of education in government schools – caste studies of programmes with potential for replication covering Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Nagaland, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Assam, Uttaranchal, Uttar Pradesh etc.
- 2005-2006 **Royal Netherlands Embassy, New Delhi**: Cartographies of Empowerment – Tracing the Journey of Mahila Samakhya 1988 to 2005. A study conducted in partnership with Mahila Samakhya units in 9 States of India and ten research partners.
- 2004-05 **Oxfam N(O)VIB**: Systemic issues and strategies to promote equity and quality in elementary education – a qualitative research study in Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan.
- 2004-05 **Knowledge and Skills for Development and IDS Sussex**: the India study in Rajasthan, part of a multi-country study on Teacher Motivation (Elementary Education) .
- 2004 **World Bank**, Study on Positive deviance in ICDS – exploring the factors that contribute towards better performance of the programme in select development blocks of Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.

- 2003 **DFID, India:** An evaluation of Balika Shikshan Shivir (residential educational programme for out of school girls), Lok Jumbish Project, Rajasthan.
- 2002-03 **World Bank,** Qualitative research study: Factors that facilitate / impede successful primary school completion - children in diverse poverty situations in Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.
- 2000-01 **DFID,** on approval of DPEP Bureau, GOI, Backward and forward linkages – ten case studies in primary education.
- 2000 **NIEPA and European Commission,** Community Participation in Primary Education with special focus on innovations in Rajasthan.
- 1999-2000 **Department of Education, GOI and NIEPA** (as a part of the EFA 2000), Assessment Education and the status of women, exploring linkages and identifying constraints.
- 1998 **Engendering Development:** Lessons from Social Sector Programmes (with special focus on primary education) in India – independent ERU research, with concrete examples from the two fields, that has fed into gender sensitisation training of a wide range of development agencies and organisations. Adapted for the education and health sector.
- 1996 - 1997 **ASPBAE, New Delhi, and UNESCO PROAP, Bangkok;** Four-Country study on the status of women's and girl's education in South Asia (India, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Nepal). Asia South Pacific Bureau for Adult Education. This project involved identifying teams from researchers from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal and working with them over a period of eighteen months.
- 1996 **UNDP, New Delhi,** Redefining Safety Net: Inter-linkages between education, credit, women's collective and empowerment as the safety net.
- 1996 **UNICEF and Government of Andhra Pradesh,** Critical Consciousness, credit and productive assets - key to sustainable livelihood.
- 1996 Integrating a gender concerns in mainstream programmes and institutions, UNICEF and Department of Women and Child Development, GOI. This research paper was followed by training of specific state office and area specific teams in **UNICEF.**

REVIEW AND EVALUATION

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- 2009 **The Children's Education Fund Foundation, UK:** Qualitative concurrent review of the Aid India programme in Tamil Nadu, India
- 2008 **Room to Read, New Delhi.** Impact assessment of Room to Grow scholarships for adolescent girls in Delhi and Uttarakhand.
- 2006 & 2007 **Department of Elementary Education, MHRD, Government of India:** National evaluation (in 2 parts covering 24 states in India) of Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidhyalaya and National Programme for Girls Education in the Elementary Sector. Vimala Ramachandran was the Team Leader and Kameshwari Jandhyala and Nishi Mehrotra were members of the evaluation team
- 2007 **Oxfam Novib, The Netherlands –** Core Programme Evaluation for India – focus on education and health.
- 2007 **American India Foundation,** Review of the Digital Equaliser Programme in Rajasthan, Orissa, Punjab and Andhra Pradesh.
- 2006-08 **Word Bank, New Delhi,** Concurrent review and documentation of a multi-sectoral child development programme in Madhya Pradesh.
- 2006-07 **Save the Children, UK:** Review of capacity building of NGO partners in Tamil Nadu.
- 2006 **Sir Dorabji Tara Trust, Mumbai:** Facilitating consultations to explore the creation of a national level institute for education in India.
- 2006 **Sardar Patel Vidhyalaya, New Delhi:** Education Audit
- 2005 **Save the Children, UK:** Reviewing institutional mechanisms for integrated child development and education in the tsunami affected areas of India.
- 2004 **Oxfam Lucknow:** Analysis of the education policy of Uttar Pradesh and budget analysis.
- 2003 **UNICEF –** Community participation in UNICEF supported programmes in Uttar Pradesh, Orissa and Maharashtra.
- 2003 **SIDA, New Delhi –** Appraisal of Tamil Nadu Primary School Improvement Campaign, for
- 2002 **European Commission and GoI –** Gender and social equity in DPEP – an overall impact assessment.
- 2001 **Forut, Save the Children Fund of Norway and Sweden –** Ten year review of The Concerned for Working Children.

2000	Group of donors including Dorabji Tata Trust, Mumbai – Ten year review of Kutch Mahila Vikas Sangathan, Bhuj;
1999-2000	SIDA, New Delhi – Appraisal of Shiksha Karmi Project of Rajasthan
1999	HIVOS, Bangalore – Grant review of Navsarjan Trust, Ahmedabad:
1996	Ford Foundation, New Delhi – Review of Multiple Action Research Group, New Delhi:
1996 and 2000	HIVOS, Bangalore – Ten and then fifteen year review Agramee, Kashipur, Orissa.

POLICY / PROGRAMME REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT:

2007	Oxfam N(o)vib , Reformulating and training Urmul Trust, Bikaner to enable them to develop their proposal from rights based perspective.
2005-07	World Bank, New Delhi , Documentation and concurrent review of a pilot project in Madhya Pradesh for integrated child development.
2006	Department of Education, MHRD, GoI - Chairing and drafting of the report of the Sub-group on girls' education for the formulation of the XI Plan.
2004	Department of Education, MHRD, GoI - ERU led the teams in Gujarat and Bihar doing the national evaluation of Mahila Samakhya Programme.
2004	Sesame Street, India : Background paper on status of elementary education in India.
2004	Ace Global Private Limited and Delegation of the European Commission, New Delhi : Technical assistance for the identification phase of EC state partnership programme with Chhattisgarh.
2004	Department of Education, GoI and UNICEF : Facilitating regional and state level planning workshops on National Programme for Girls Education at the Elementary Level (NPEGEL) for state and district level administrators.
2004	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), Vientiane, Lao PDR : Gender Audit Study of Demand Driven Approach to basic Education for All in Lao PDR.

- 2003 **UNESCO, Paris:** Global Monitoring Report 2003:
(a) Gender equality in education (India) – progress in the last decade
(b) Empowering Education: the Mahila Samakhya experience
- 2003 **The World Bank:**
(a) Case study of Lok Jumbish (Education for All) Project of Rajasthan as an input into the MDG report;
(b) Case study of Learning Guarantee Scheme of Government of Karnataka and Azim Premji Foundation as an input into the MDG report;
(c) Case study of Madhya Pradesh Education Guarantee Scheme – a Social Inclusion and Empowerment Case Studies for: Shanghai Conference on Scaling up Poverty Reduction being planned by the World Bank.
- 2003-2005 **Naandi Foundation, Hyderabad and Government of Andhra Pradesh**
 - Strategic planning and hands on support to the elementary education quality improvement project in Paderu area of Vishakhapatnam District
 - Strategic planning and resource support to the Hyderabad City elementary education quality improvement project
- 2002 **European Commission (New Delhi):** Planning support and preparation of approach paper to appraisal and pre-appraisal of European Commission support to Government of India's Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan
- 2002 **Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), New Delhi:** Country Strategy Paper on Social Sector Reform.
- 2001 **UNICEF, India Country Office, New Delhi:** Strategic planning exercises in primary education – as member of Think Tank.
- 2001 **UNFPA, New Delhi:** Facilitate 6th Country Programme Cycle strategic planning exercise.
- 2001 **Care, India:** Basic Education in India advocacy strategy paper commissioned. This document is an input into their strategy planning exercise in India.
- 2000 **Ford Foundation:**
(a) Santiago: Incorporating Women's Health Concerns in Health Sector Reforms: Key Areas for Strategic Advocacy and Citizen Participation.
(b) Educational programmes for adolescents – with focus on out-of-school children, New Delhi

- 2000 **Nuffic, The Netherlands:** Specialised inputs on gender and social equity issues in the European Commission primary and upper primary education project formulation mission
- 1999 Consultant to **SPARC** (a Mumbai-based NGO) in a **World Bank-**sponsored initiative to review the experience of NGO involvement to promote women's participation and community involvement in World Bank-supported social sector development projects in India.
- 1999 **N(O)VIB, The Netherlands:** Education Project (NGO) Identification in India.
- 1998 – 1999 **DFID, India:** Development of an education strategy for reaching out to children and young people in the 11 – 17 age group.
- 1998 **UNICEF, India Country Office, Government of Rajasthan and UNICEF Jaipur:** Formulation of Government of Rajasthan policy for women
- 1997 **Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), New Delhi:** Rights, social justice and governance, exploring opportunities for NGO support in Rajasthan.
- 1997 **UNESCO:**
- (a) Planning and executing an international training programme for educational administrators to integrate gender issues into monitoring and evaluation system of non-formal education programmes. UNESCO PROAP, Bangkok
 - (b) Co-ordinating regional consultative meetings (South and South east Asia) on Education for Survival jointly with Nirantar, New Delhi, as a run-up to CONFENTEA V, IIE, Hamburg.
- 1997-98 **Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), New Delhi:** Team leader - project formulation for a SIDA-assisted Reproductive and Child Health Project in seven districts of Rajasthan, India.

TRAINING

- 2009 (ongoing) **DoEE&L, GOI and DFID, India:** Training and capacity building of Mahila Samakhya programme personnel across India.
- 2008-09 Mentoring and advising NEGFIRE, New Delhi

PUBLICATIONS ARISING OUT OF RESEARCH:**BOOKS:**

1. (2008) Vimala Ramachandran: Health and girls education in South Asia: An essential synergy; UNICEF – UNGEI, Kathmandu
2. (2008), Rashmi Sharma and Vimala Ramachandran: The Elementary Education System in India: A field based investigation into institutional structures, processes and dynamics, Routledge India.
3. (2006) Leela Visaria and Vimala Ramachandran (Ed): Reality Check: Abortion in India, Routledge India, New Delhi.
4. (2004) Vimala Ramachandran: Fostering opportunities to learn at an accelerated pace: Why do girls benefit enormously? UNICEF Working Paper, New Delhi
5. (2004) Vimala Ramachandran (Ed): Hierarchies of Access: Gender and Equity in Primary Education; Sage Publications, New Delhi.
6. (2004) Snakes and Ladders: Factors Influencing Successful Primary School Completion for Children in Poverty Contexts; South Asian Human Development Sector Report No. 6, World Bank, New Delhi
7. (2003) Vimala Ramachandran (Ed): Getting children back to school: case studies in primary education; Sage Publications, New Delhi.
8. (2001) Vimala Ramachandran and Harsh Sethi: Shiksha Karmi Project of Rajasthan – an overall appraisal; New Education Division Document No 7, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
9. (1998) Vimala Ramachandran: Girls and Women’s Education: Policies and Implementation Mechanisms – Case Study India; UNESCO-PROAP, Bangkok.
10. (1998) Vimala Ramachandran (Ed) Bridging the gap between intention and action - Girls and Women’s Education in South Asia, Editor the book and author of the Indian experience, UNESCO-PROAP, Bangkok and ASPBAE, New Delhi, May.

ARTICLES IN JOURNALS

11. (2009) Vimala Ramachandran and Suman Bhattacharjea: Attend to primary school teachers, Vol. XLIV, No. 31, August 1, 2009 Economic and Political Weekly
12. (2009) Vimala Ramachandran: Right to Education Act, Vol. XLIV, No 28, July 11, 2009, Economic and Political Weekly.
13. (2009) Vimala Ramachandran: What is ‘para’ about some teachers? Vol. 34, No. 2, April-June 2009, VIKALPA (A journal of Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad)
14. (2007) Vimala Ramachandran and Kameshwari Jandhyala: Strengthening the government school system – lessons from India, Economic and Political Weekly, VOL 42 No. 48 December 01 - December 07, 2007
15. (2007): Vimala Ramachandran, Nishi Mehrotra and Kameshwari Jandhyala: Do incentives make a difference to meaningful education of socially underprivileged children? Journal of Educational Planning and Administration, NUEPA, New Delhi
16. (2006) Vimala Ramachandran, Education and livelihood, Seminar 563, June. New Delhi
17. (2005) Vimala Ramachandran: Why school teachers are de-motivated and disheartened, Economic and Political Weekly, VOL 40 No. 21 May 21 - May 27, 2005
18. (2003) Vimala Ramachandran, Kameshwari Jandhyala and Aarti Saihjee: Through the life cycle of children: factors determining successful primary school completion; Economic and Political Weekly, VOL 38 No. 47 November 22 - November 28, 2003
19. (2003) Vimala Ramachandran: Backward and forward linkages that strengthen primary education in Economic and Political Weekly, March 8-14, Volume XXXVIII, No 10



20. (2002) Vimala Ramachandran and Aarti Saihjee: The New Segregation – reflections on gender and equity in primary education, Economic and Political Weekly; No 17 Vol. XXXVII, 27 April-2 May.
21. (2001) Vimala Ramachandran: Community Participation in Primary Education – Innovations in Rajasthan; Economic and Political Weekly; Vol. XXXVI, June 23
22. (1999) Vimala Ramachandran: Adult Education: A tale of empowerment denied; Economic and Political Weekly; Vol. XXXIV, No 15 April 10.
23. (1998) Vimala Ramachandran: Engendering Development: Lessons from Social Sector Programmes in India: Indian Journal of Gender Studies, Vol. 5: 1
24. (1997) Leela Visaria and Vimala Ramachandran: Emerging issues in reproductive health, Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. 22, No 36, September 6
25. (1997) Vimala Ramachandran: Changing face of the development sector in India; VOICES, Volume 1, Number 2
26. (1996) Vimala Ramachandran: NGOs in the times of globalisation: from family planning to reproductive health; Seminar, November.
27. (1996) Vimala Ramachandran: Fertility and women's autonomy in the Indian Family; India International Centre Journal Special Issue on Women And The Family, Winter
28. (1995) Vimala Ramachandran: Equality among unequal partners - relationship between NGOs and the government in India, The Administrator, Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration, Mussoorie, July.

CHAPTERS IN PUBLISHED BOOKS:

29. (2009) Vimala Ramachandran: Quality, the Heart of Equity, in Cohen, Joel E., and Martin B. Malin, eds. 2009. *International Perspectives on the Goals of Universal Basic and Secondary Education*. New York: Routledge.
30. (2009) Vimala Ramachandran: Democratic Inequalities: The Dilemma of Elementary Education in India, in Robert Cowen and Andrea M Kazamias (ed), *International Handbook of Comparative Education, Volume II*, Springer International Handbook of Education Series, The Netherlands
31. (2009) Vimala Ramachandran: Systemic barriers to equity in education, in Preet Rustagi (Ed) *Concerns, conflicts and cohesions: Universalisation of Elementary Education in India*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi
32. (2008) Vimala Ramachandran, Kameshwari Jandhyala and Aarti Saihjee, Through the Life Cycle of Children: Factors that facilitate / Impede successful primary school completion; in Rama Baru (Ed) *School Health Services in India: The Social and Economic Contexts*, Sage Publications, New Delhi
33. (2008) Vimala Ramachandran, Kameshwari Jandhyala and Aarti Saihjee: Through the Life Cycle of Children: Factors that facilitate / impede successful primary school completion, in Rama Baru (Ed) *School Health Services in India*, Sage Publications, New Delhi
34. (2007) Vimala Ramachandran A school in every village – the Education Guarantee Scheme in Madhya Pradesh, India, in Deepa Nayayan and Elena Glinskaya (Ed) *Ending Poverty in South Asia: Ideas that Work*, World Bank, Washington DC.
35. (2006) Vimala Ramachandran and Aarti Saihjee, The New Segregation in Primary Education – Implications for Local Governance, in Amit Prakash (Ed), *Local Governance in India*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi
36. (2005) Kameshwari Jandhyala: Working within and without, in Mandira Kumar and Padma M Sarangapani (Ed), *Improving Government Schools – What has been tried and what works*, Sutradhar and Books for Change, Bangalore
37. (2002) Vimala Ramachandran: Literacy, Development and Empowerment: Conceptual Issues, for edited book on Gender Gap in Basic Education Edited by Dr. Rekha Wazir; Sage Publication, N Delhi
38. (2002) Vimala Ramachandran: Education and the status of women; in India Education Report Edited by Dr Govinda, Oxford University Press, New Delhi.



39. (1998) Vimala Ramachandran: Voluntary organisation, professional agency or sub-contractor - the changing profile of the non-government sector in India, Dr. Pravin Visaria, M L Dantwala and Harsh Sethi (Eds.) Social Change through voluntary action, Sage Publications New Delhi, September
40. (1996) Vimala Ramachandran: Redefining Safety Net: in N Rao, L Rurap and R Sudarshan (Eds.): Sites of Change: The Structural Context for Empowering Women in India, UNDP / FES