Accountability in education: MEETING OUR COMMITMENTS

#CountOnMe
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Millions of dollars aren’t making it to classrooms.

4/5 of primary schools in sub-Saharan Africa DO NOT have electricity.

1 in 7 primary school teachers are not trained.

Accountability is important to help fix education’s problems.

Less than half of children have basic reading skills.

4 out of 5 countries have not made pre-primary education compulsory.

Aid to education has been stagnant since 2010.

Millions are taught in a language they don’t understand.
Sustainable Development Goal 4

EQUITABLE QUALITY EDUCATION
HOW ALL ACTORS IN EDUCATION ARE CURRENTLY HELD TO ACCOUNT

GOVERNMENTS
- Free & fair elections
- Fulfilment of the right to education
- Evidence-based, inclusive planning
- Equitable resource allocation
- Monitoring & evaluation
- Budgeting
- School inspections
- Whole school improvement
- Safe and healthy places to learn
- Supportive learning environments

SCHOOLS
- School meals
- Learning materials
- Media
- Supportive learning environments
- School-based management
- School-based pay
- School inspections
- School-level mentoring
- School-level training
- School-based norms
- School-based performance
- School-based accountability
- School-based funding
- School-based planning
- School-based monitoring
- School-based evaluation
- School-based reporting

TEACHERS
- High-quality, gender-equitable teaching
- Performance-based pay
- Teacher evaluations
- Community involvement
- Professional norms
- Code of ethics
- Student well-being

PARENTS
- Participation in child's education
- Parent-school contracts
- Common goals
- Standards
- AID & help achieve goals

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
- Transnational partnerships
- Monitoring and regulations
- Aid & support for education

STUDENTS
- Participation in child's education
- School meals
- Learning materials
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- Supportive learning environments
- School-based management
- School-based mentoring
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- School-based accountability
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- School-based evaluation
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PRIVATE SECTOR
- Private tutoring
- Private sector
- School-wise codes of conduct
- School-wise training
- School-wise accountability
- School-wise funding
- School-wise planning
- School-wise monitoring
- School-wise evaluation
- School-wise reporting

COMMUNITY
- Participation in education
- Local community involvement
- Local community services
- Local community resources
ACCOUNTABILITY helps show who is responsible for what, and how problems can be fixed

A FEW KEY TRUTHS:

Ambitious education outcomes rely on multiple actors fulfilling shared responsibilities

While responsibilities are shared, accountability is not

People should not be held accountable for outcomes beyond their control

Accountability mechanisms may be effective in some contexts and detrimental in others
Accountability in Context

- Trust
- Motivation
- Capacity
- Information
- Resources

Economic Context

Political Context

Social Context

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
Accountability with Humility

Generally beneficial

• *Legal accountability*
  • Backbone of a well functioning state

• *Social accountability*
  • Useful when community members have capacity and resources
  • Works best when targeting easily observable behavior
  • Importance of media and civil society

• *Professional or internal accountability*
  • Creates culture of shared professional norms
  • Increases trust
Accountability with Humility

Generally detrimental

- **Performance-based accountability**
  - Especially when focused on easily gamed outcomes or outcomes beyond the actors control.
  - Blame focus reduces trust and leads to undesirable consequences

- **Market-based accountability**
  - Competitive pressure further marginalizes disadvantaged parents and students
  - Works best when targeting easily observable behavior
  - Importance of media and civil society

- **Unsustainable approaches**
  - Rely on external funding
  - Depend on temporary actors
ACCOUNTABILITY STARTS WITH GOVERNMENTS

The right to education must not just be written into law but also implemented.

Citizens can take their governments to court for violating the right to education in only 55% of countries.

Governments have been taken to court in 41% of countries.
How to DESIGN a robust accountability system

Governments should:
CREATE SPACE FOR MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT TO BUILD TRUST

1. Encourage dialogue with multiple stakeholders, especially those not in government
2. Involve parliamentary committees in reviewing education policy

Over 60% of teacher unions are never or rarely consulted on teaching material development
DEVELOP CREDIBLE EDUCATION PLANS AND TRANSPARENT BUDGETS

1. Prepare plans with clear lines of responsibility
2. Make budgets open to scrutiny and audit spending independently
3. Publish national education monitoring reports regularly

IT'S HARD TO HOLD ANYONE ACCOUNTABLE IF YOU DON'T KNOW WHO'S RESPONSIBLE

Only 1 in 6 countries have published a national education monitoring report annually since 2010
ESTABLISH, MONITOR AND ENFORCE REGULATIONS AND STANDARDS

1. Make clear and transparent registration/accreditation and bidding/contracting processes

2. Mainstream equity and quality into education regulations

There are no regulations on class sizes in almost half of countries.
BUILD DON’T BLAME

1. Use student test scores to improve teaching and education quality, not to sanction or reward teachers and schools
2. Support struggling schools; do not punish them by encouraging parents to move their children elsewhere

HIGH STAKES TESTING CAN LEAD TO TEACHERS ONLY TEACHING THOSE WHO ARE LIKELY TO DO WELL

Of 11 PISA countries with test-based accountability, 5 saw some increase in learning, from 2003 to 2015, while 6 saw a decrease
ALLOW FOR DEMOCRATIC VOICE

1. Encourage media scrutiny
2. Ensure ombudsman offices are present and autonomous

In Uganda, a school was more likely to receive its funding if it was close to a newspaper outlet.
How to IMPLEMENT a robust accountability system

Governments should:
BE TRANSPARENT: PROVIDE RELEVANT AND TIMELY INFORMATION

1. Invest in information that helps understand the education system

2. Make sure the purpose of data is to improve learning, keeping in mind costs and the burden of data on teachers and schools

72% of parents in Kenya did not know what to do with student learning data
BE COMMITTED: FUND EDUCATION

1. Spend at least 4% of GDP on education, or allocate 15% of total government expenditure

2. In their aid programmes:
   - Allocate 0.7% of income to aid and at least 10% of that to education
   - Be careful of results-based financing

In 2015, 1 in 4 countries missed both funding benchmarks; the share of aid to education has fallen for six years in a row
**BE SUPPORTIVE: BUILD CAPACITY**

1. Set up strong institutions to detect and deter corruption in education
2. Train teachers and school evaluators
3. Invest more in those who represent the country in international organizations

In the **European Union**, there was more risk of corruption in education and training than in the construction sector
But accountability isn’t only about governments

*Other actors play important roles:*

- **TEACHERS** are regularly consulted in Mexico over policy with the government through their union
- **STUDENTS** forced government to freeze tuition fees with protests in Chile and South Africa
- **PARENTS** have had climate change denial removed from textbooks in the USA
- **CIVIL SOCIETY** monitored textbook delivery in Phillipines and reduced costs by 2/3
took the government to court in Buenos Aires over early childhood education

**WE ARE ALL NEEDED TO IMPROVE EDUCATION**
Other Resources

Accountability Annex

Country Case Studies (26): Australia, Bangladesh, Honduras, Nepal, Pakistan, Poland*, Republic of Korea, Rwanda*, South Africa, Tajikistan*
Let’s get accountability right

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