

Accountability in education:

MEETING OUR COMMITMENTS

#CountOnMe
@GEMReport



100 million
YOUTH CANNOT READ

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



Millions are taught
in a **language they**
don't understand

Less than **half of children**
have **basic**
reading skills



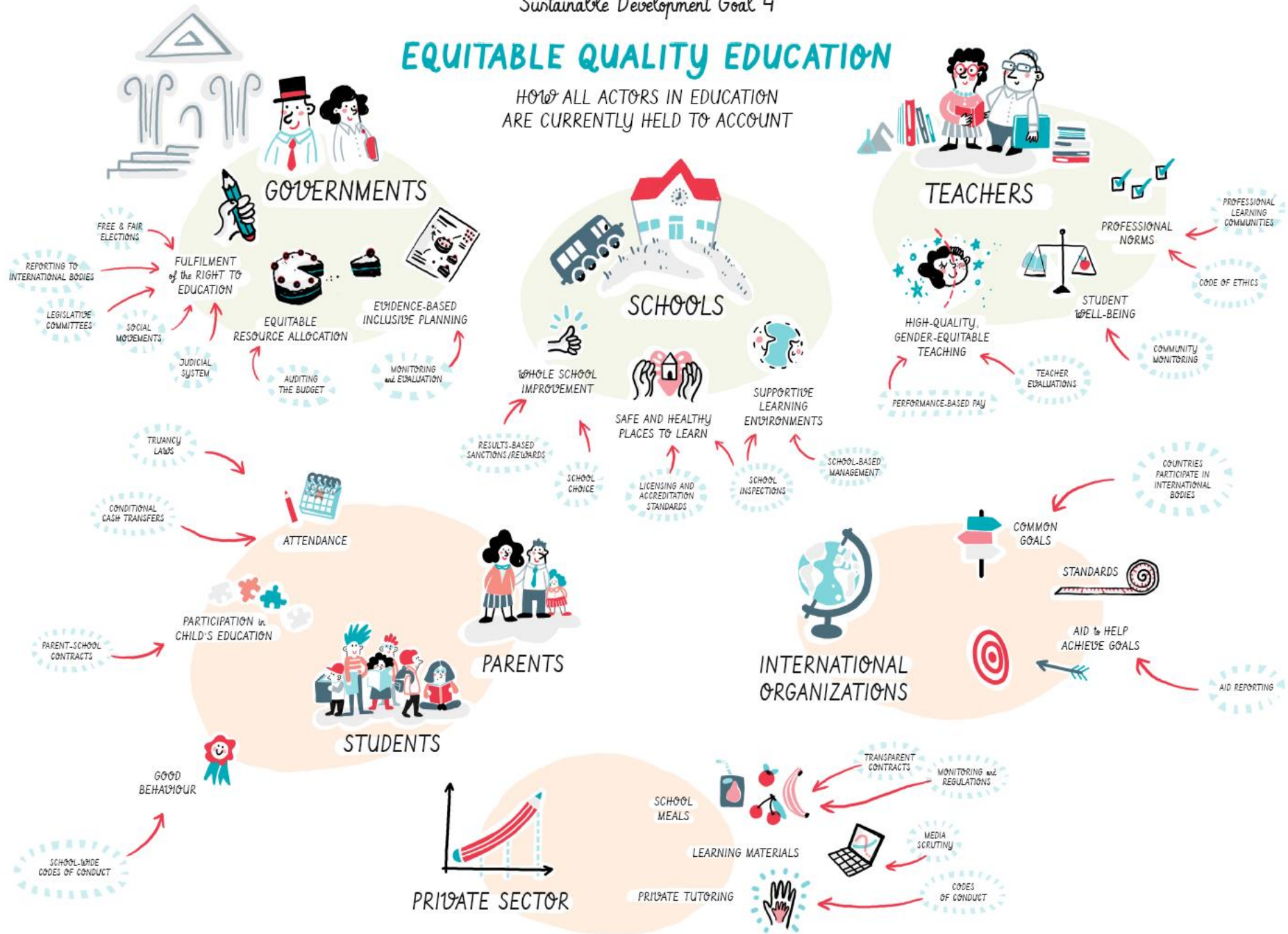
4 out of 5 countries have not made
pre-primary education compulsory

Aid to education has been **stagnant since 2010**

Sustainable Development Goal 4

EQUITABLE QUALITY EDUCATION

HOW ALL ACTORS IN EDUCATION
ARE CURRENTLY HELD TO ACCOUNT



ACCOUNTABILITY helps show who is responsible for what, and how problems can be fixed

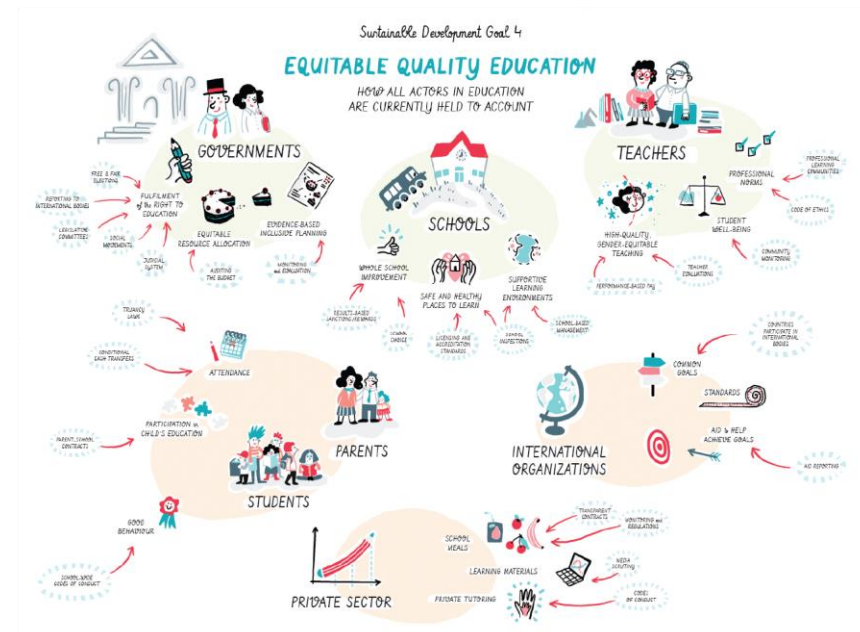
A FEW KEY TRUTHS:

Ambitious education outcomes rely on multiple actors fulfilling shared responsibilities

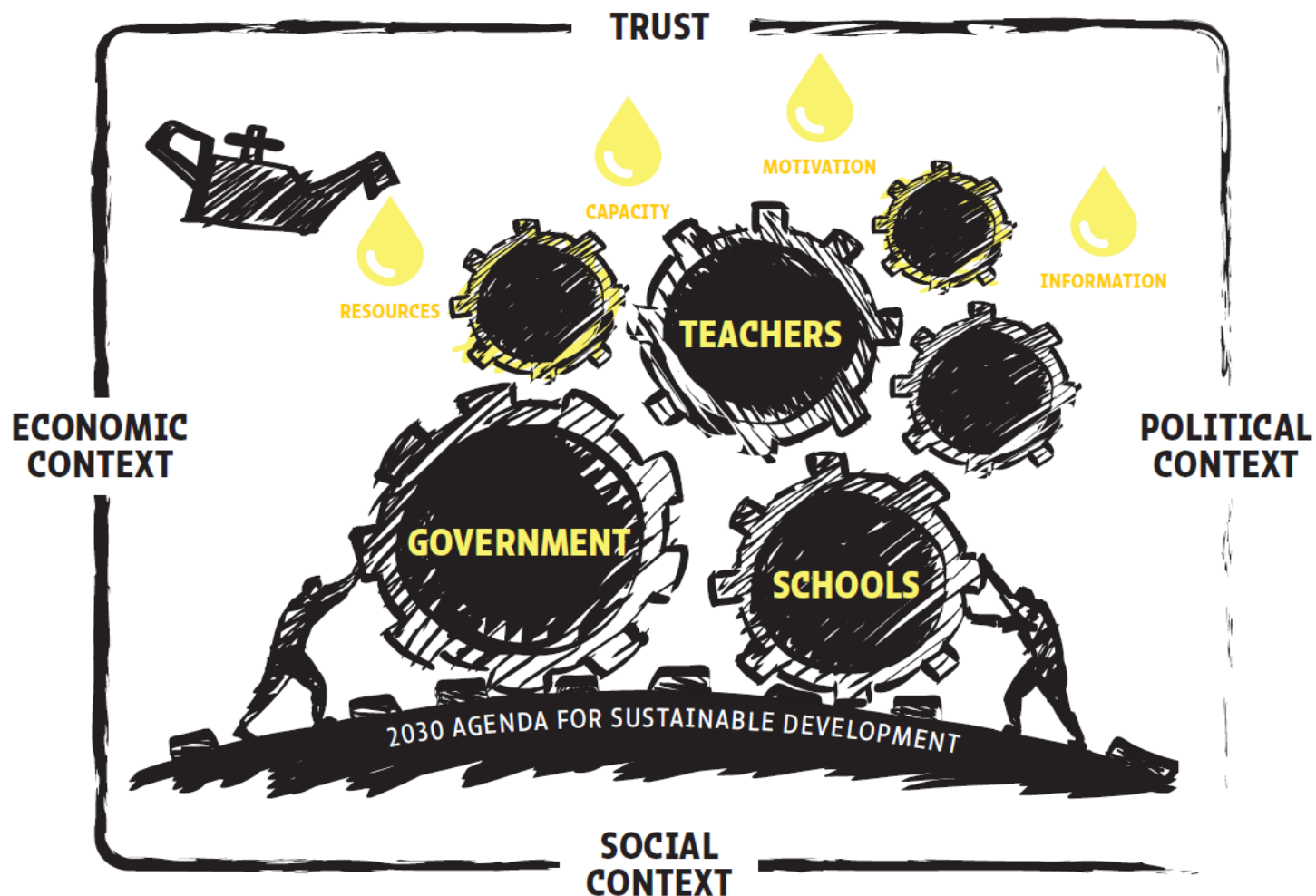
While responsibilities are shared, accountability is not

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



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*

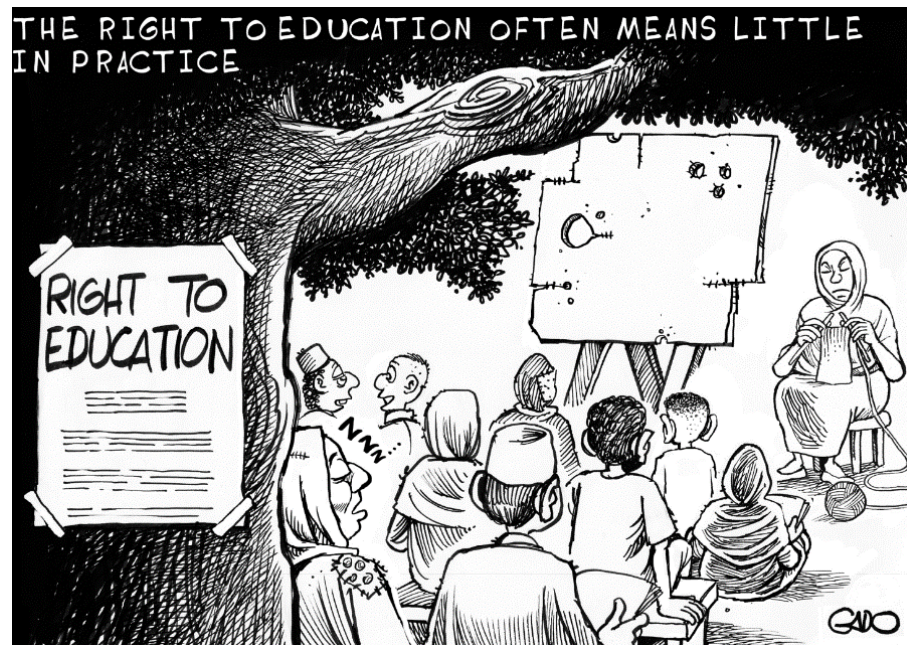
- Competitive pressure further marginalizes disadvantaged parents and students
- Works best when targeting easily observable behavior
- Importance of media and civil society

- *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

55%

Governments **have** been taken to court in 41% of countries

41%

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

STOP THE BLAME GAME
EDUCATION IS A SHARED
RESPONSIBILITY



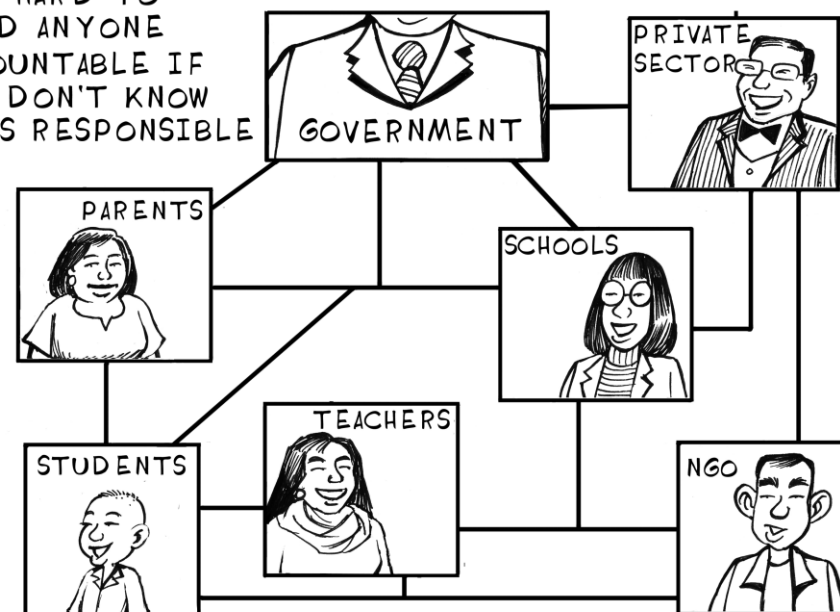
60%

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

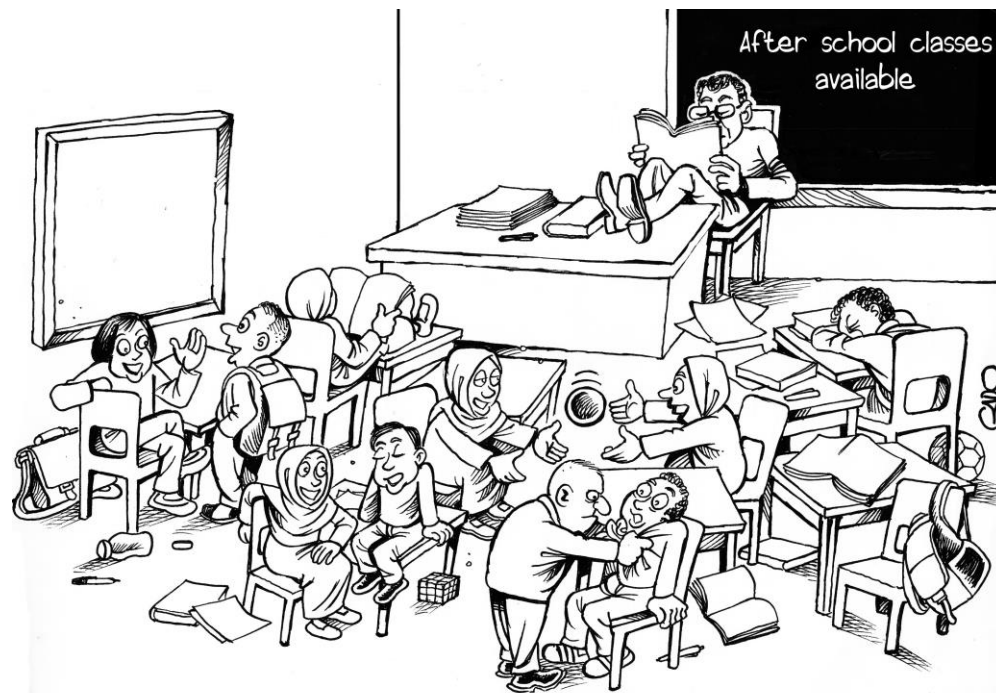
IT'S HARD TO HOLD ANYONE ACCOUNTABLE IF YOU DON'T KNOW WHO'S RESPONSIBLE



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



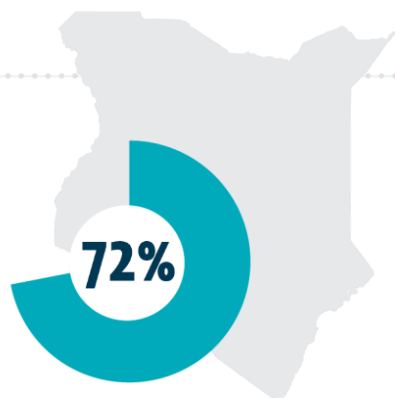
In Uganda, a school was more likely to receive its funding if it was close to a newspaper outlet

How to IMPLEMENT a robust accountability system

Governments should:

BE TRANSPARENT: PROVIDE RELEVANT AND TIMELY INFORMATION

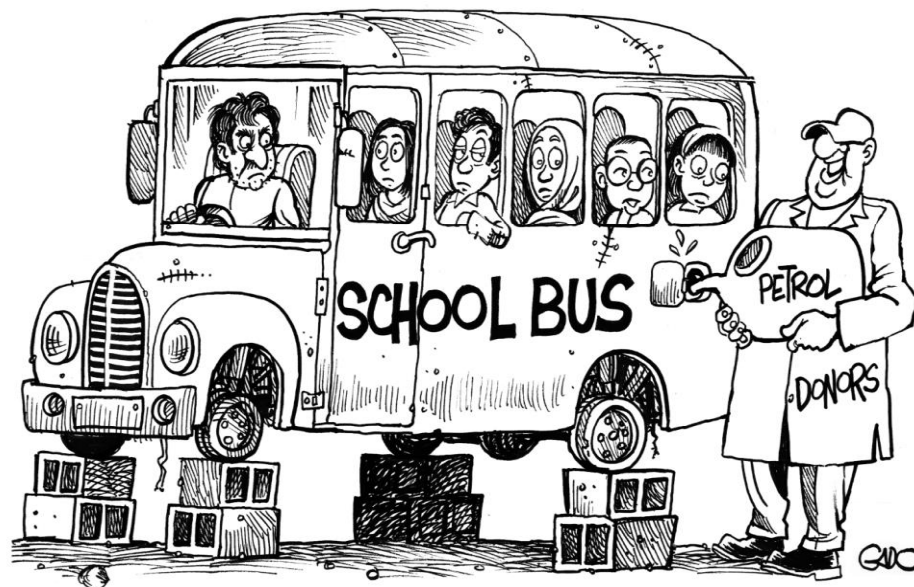
1. Invest in information that helps understand the education system
2. Make sure the purpose of data is to improve learning, keeping in mind costs and the burden of data on teachers and schools



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:



STUDENTS

forced government to freeze tuition fees with protests in Chile and South Africa



TEACHERS

are regularly consulted in Mexico over policy with the government through their union



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***

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying a WordPress blog post. The address bar shows the URL: <https://gemreportunesco.wordpress.com/2017/12/05/a-penalizing-system-of-accountability-in-australia-exacerbates-equity-gaps-in-education/#more-11320>. The page title is "A penalizing system of accountability in Australia exacerbates equity gaps in education". Below the title, it says "Posted on 5 December 2017 by GEM Report". The main content area features a blue banner with the text "COUNTRY CASE STUDY" and "2017/8 GEM REPORT Blog series". Below the banner, the text reads: "This blog is written by [Dr. Emma Rowe](#), Lecturer in Education in the School of Education, Deakin University, and the author of a [case study](#) on accountability and education in Australia commissioned for the [2017/8 GEM Report](#). The blog is part of a [series](#) showing that accountability in education is shaped by a country's history and political, social, and cultural context." Below this, there is a section titled "Background: Australia's education system" with the following text: "Australia's education system is fundamentally centralized. Central bodies (federal or state) fund schools and make key decisions on curriculum. However, decentralization of schools has remained the over-arching goal of successive governments. The 2004 Act stipulates that schools maintain the authority to recruit their own staff, develop their own school charters, elect independent school councils and operate and determine their own budget. In 2014, the federal government legislated Independent Public Schools with the aim to make one-fourth of public schools in Australia autonomous and decentralized." On the right side of the page, there is a sidebar with several widgets: "this blog and receive notifications of new posts by email." with an email input field and a "Sign me up!" button; "Translate" with a link to "Select another language with Google Translate"; "Current Blog Series" with a thumbnail for the "2017/8 GEM REPORT Blog series"; "Previous Blog Series" with a thumbnail for the "Global Education Monitoring Report Blog Series"; "Connect" with social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram; and "Recent Posts" with a list of two posts: "A penalizing system of accountability in Australia exacerbates equity gaps in education 5 December 2017" and "The Global Compact for Migration will go on - with or without the United States - for the sake of education 4 December 2017". The Windows taskbar is visible at the bottom of the screen.

A penalizing system of accountability in Australia exacerbates equity gaps in education

Posted on 5 December 2017 by GEM Report

COUNTRY CASE STUDY

2017/8 GEM REPORT

Blog series

This blog is written by [Dr. Emma Rowe](#), Lecturer in Education in the School of Education, Deakin University, and the author of a [case study](#) on accountability and education in Australia commissioned for the [2017/8 GEM Report](#). The blog is part of a [series](#) showing that accountability in education is shaped by a country's history and political, social, and cultural context.

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COUNTRY CASE STUDY

2017/8 GEM REPORT

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Let's get accountability right

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