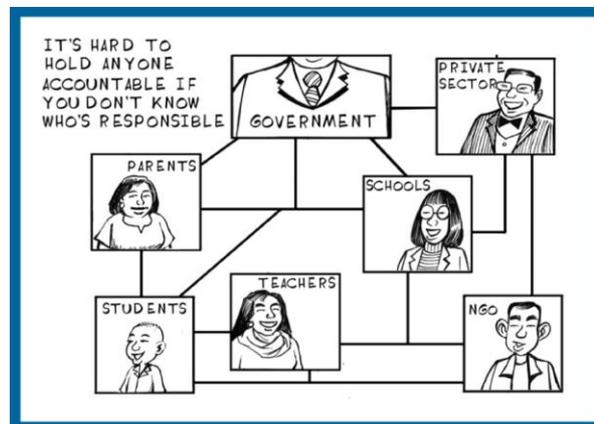


BRIEF: #MakeitPublic campaign: All countries should produce regular national education monitoring reports

The 2017/8 Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report showed that national education monitoring reports are a vital tool for transparency and accountability yet governments in only one in two countries produced such reports between 2010 and 2016. Only one in four did so annually.

Monitoring should provide timely and relevant information on whether progress is being made towards the objectives of the national education strategy or plan. Monitoring reports can interpret evidence, identify problems to support decisions and follow-up actions, and provide the basis for subsequent evaluation. When the assignment of responsibilities and the links between inputs and results is clear, they also serve as an accountability mechanism.

National monitoring reports are the tool through which governments capture progress on education commitments to report it to their citizens. While NGOs fulfil this reporting role in many countries, a government report carries special weight. Governments prepare a range of monitoring reports, many of which full statutory obligations to other bodies, e.g. the legislature, the supreme audit institution or an international organization. In addition, citizens need a regular report on the implementation of the national education strategy or plan to be able to hold government to account. Such a document can demonstrate the executive's commitment to transparency and to communicating government expenditure, activities and results to citizens in an accessible manner.



National education monitoring reports vary in purpose and scope

National education monitoring reports are an accountability tool, and what countries choose to emphasize and how they choose to present it may reflect domestic context and expectations.

While national education monitoring reports are more common among richer countries, several middle income countries regularly produce reports, e.g. *memorias* in the Dominican Republic, annual reports in Malaysia and activities reports in the Republic of Moldova. The *Annual Performance Report of the Ministry of Education and Sports* in Uganda is a less common example of a regular report in a low income country.

The reports analysed by the 2017/8 GEM Report varied in their coverage. Almost all covered primary and secondary education, about three in four covered early childhood care and education, about two in three covered tertiary education and one in three covered adult education. This does not necessarily mean countries had no reports covering the other levels. Rather, it reflects dispersed responsibility among government bodies. Reports covering the entire education system included *Education, Youth and Sport Performance* in Cambodia, the *Accountability Report* in El Salvador, and the *Swiss Education Report*.

Reports also vary in their relative emphasis on assessing the current situation, describing ministry actions relative to a government programme of work and reporting on expenditure. A content analysis suggests that about 60% mainly focus on actions taken and 25% on the current situation.

An example of a report that provides balanced coverage of situation, activities and expenditure is the annual report of the education ministry in Saskatchewan province, Canada. The report covers ministry actions and achievements during the previous year in areas under the government mandate, from early childhood care and education to adult literacy. It also lays out progress against ministry goals and policy objectives in the ministry's annual plan and the overall provincial government direction. In addition, it contains information on expenditure against the budget and an analysis of variations.

Legal provisions for accountability sometimes drive national monitoring reports

Context is important in understanding what, if any, type of monitoring report a country prepares. Some are a legal requirement as part of the basic public reporting established, usually, by the legislature. These tend to focus on actions or expenditure. For example, Germany's *Bildungsbericht* (Education Report) is a legal requirement. In Vanuatu, the education ministry's annual report is prepared under the Public Service Act and in accordance with guidelines issued by the Public Service Commission.

In Panama, as in several Latin American countries, the education ministry publishes an annual report (*memoria*), as stipulated in the law for transparency in public management: Articles refer to the obligations of 'public servants ... to communicate the results of their management to society' (§1) and of state institutions 'to have available, in printed form, on their respective Internet sites and to publish periodically, up-to-date information' on a range of issues, including general policies, in accordance with the principle of publicity (§9).

Cross-national reports offer another institutional context. The European Commission, for example, produces the annual *Education and Training Monitor*, the monitoring report of the Education and Training 2020 strategic framework, comprising reports on each member country, beyond any national report they may produce. While no such reporting system exists in other regions, regional organizations do increasingly play an important role in influencing national approaches to monitoring education.

For example, the *State of Education Report* of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations recorded progress against the four priorities of the 5-Year Work Plan on Education (2011–2015). The African Union *Outlook on Education Report* was prepared with support from the Association for the Development of Education in Africa for the 2014 Conference of Ministers of Education. The annual flagship publication of the Organization of Ibero-American States, *Miradas* (Perspectives), monitors progress on the 11 targets of the education strategy *Metas Educativas 2021*.

Call to action

Let's combine efforts to ensure that more countries produce regular, relevant and rigorous national education monitoring reports for their citizens.

Join the GEM Report's campaign that follows up on one of its key recommendations and call on:

All governments to:

1. take steps towards producing a regular national education monitoring report, capturing progress on education commitments across all education levels, and government education expenditure;
2. make reports publicly available to their citizens, including on the internet;
3. use their national education monitoring reports as key sources for the education section of their SDG national voluntary reviews;

All regional organizations with an education agenda to:

4. produce regional education monitoring reports, based on their regional education strategies and monitoring frameworks, thereby influencing national approaches to monitoring education.

How you can take part

The GEM Report has created a special page on its website to show which countries and regional organizations produce education monitoring reports and provide links to the most up to date reports.

1. Endorse our campaign by:

- a) Finding out whether and when your country produced a [report](#)
- b) Writing and tweeting to your Minister of Education, show them this is important to you. Use our template letter and template tweets.

c) Email your national education coalition to say you want to join them in making this a priority.
For the contact details of your local education coalition visit
<http://www.campaignforeducation.org/en/members>

2. Help keep our campaign up to date: Use our [online form](#) to help us update the list of national education monitoring reports on the website to increase transparency and access to existing reports.