

Frequently Asked Questions

Africa Education Watch

1. What is Transparency International's Africa Education Watch (AEW) programme?

AEW is a three year programme running from 2007 to 2010 and implemented by Transparency International to assess whether new decentralised education management systems are effective in controlling and preventing corruption and resource leakages. Particularly, it examines whether school administrations are genuinely accountable and participatory governance systems. AEW covers seven countries: Ghana, Madagascar, Morocco, Niger, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Uganda.

From the late 1990s primary education was decentralised in many African countries with the goal of bringing public services closer to the user, and giving local stakeholders greater involvement in management. AEW analyses whether this approach has worked. The key objectives of the programme are to:

- identify approximate levels of resource leakages or delays in resource transfer from the central government to school level
- determine the extent of (illegal) fees and other costs to parents, and
- assess decentralised accountability structures and determine how effective they are at controlling resources and preventing corruption.

AEW has produced a regional [overview report](#) synthesising the findings for all seven countries and providing recommendations, along with seven full [country reports](#). All are available for download on www.transparency.org.

2. Who funds AEW?

AEW is funded by a US \$1.5 million grant from the [William and Flora Hewlett Foundation](#), one of the largest private foundations in the United States. In the past five years it has made grants in more than 40 countries, with a special focus on education and the environment.

3. Which countries are covered and how were they chosen?

AEW covers seven countries: Ghana, Madagascar, Morocco, Niger, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Uganda. These were selected based on the presence of a TI chapter in the country with previous experience working on education. Another criterion was representation of broad geographical and cultural differences across the region.

4. How was the information gathered?

TI chapters in the seven countries reviewed how primary education is financed and implemented field surveys and interviews to assess the quality of governance in schools and transparency in the management of their resources. The survey in Uganda was carried out by a consulting firm under the direction of the TI chapter.

The TI International Secretariat (TI-S) drew on input from national and international education experts, civil society activists, and survey experts and worked closely with TI chapters on the design of four different survey questionnaires and methodology, as well as data quality control processes. All surveys were carried out between March and May 2008. Nearly 8,500 questionnaires were administered.

In each country a minimum of 60 schools were randomly selected in regions that included income demographic and economic differences and represented urban and rural areas. Four types of respondents were interviewed:

- Households -- at least 1,000 per country,
- Head teachers -- average of 58 per country,
- Heads of Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) – average 58 per country, and
- Local governments (district education officers) – average of 10 per country.

A detailed explanation of the methodology is in Annex 2 of the [overview report](#).

5. Is primary education improving in the countries surveyed?

Primary school enrolment in the past decade increased in all the countries surveyed. But access to education does not always equate with improvements in education. Decentralisation of school management brought decision making down to the local level but did not adequately prepare head teachers or parents to take advantage of their new power. The report suggests that insufficient training, lack of monitoring and parental apathy make holding schools to account difficult. The report recommends targeted training for both head teachers and heads of School Management Committees to help them understand and take responsibility for budgets and better manage school resources. It suggests widespread educational campaigns will also help parents become more involved in their children's education and understand their rights.

6. How will the report be used?

The report makes general and country-specific recommendations to improve the delivery of primary school education in the countries surveyed. The recommendations are addressed to Ministries of Education (MoEs) or to civil society in the surveyed countries, as well as international development partners active in these countries. These parties are encouraged to use bi- or multilateral discussions with MoEs to seek support for their implementation, and to offer financial support to cover their costs.

Universal access to basic education is broadly considered as the linchpin of development and thus good governance in this area must now form an integral part of reforms and development approaches. This report serves to show that the governance framework in education management results in a more efficient use of resources and is a necessary step to improve the delivery of quality education.

The broad reach of the AEW report can act as a benchmark from which to measure future progress.