

AFRICA EDUCATION WATCH: SENEGAL

GOOD GOVERNANCE LESSONS FOR PRIMARY EDUCATION

The 10-year plan to improve education in Senegal dates from 2000 and the introduction of the United Nations Education for All goals. Its aim is to increase the quality of education and increase enrolment across the country, particularly among girls and in rural areas. The administration of primary schools in Senegal has been decentralised since 1996, however, there is still a marked lack of organisational structure at the local level.

As part of the three-year Africa Education Watch programme, Forum Civil, the national chapter Transparency International in Senegal assessed whether the education management systems are effective in controlling and preventing corruption in the country. The study examined whether school administrations are genuinely accountable and whether participatory governance systems bring public service closer to the user, particularly parents.

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.

AFRICA EDUCATION WATCH RESPONDENTS: SENEGAL

General Public (parents/guardians)	1,000
Head Teachers	60
Parent Teacher Association Chairs	30
District Directors of Education/ School inspectors	13
Presidents of rural communities	18

COUNTRY FACTS*

Primary Education in Senegal	FREE
Length of study	6 years
Population 2007	12m
GNP per capita 2007 (PPP US\$)	1,666
Percentage of Population living on Less than US\$1.25 per day	33.5%
Public current expenditure on primary education as % of GNP (2005)	2%
Net enrolment ratio primary school (2007)	72%
Primary-age children (2006)	1.9m



FINDINGS

- 10 per cent of parents said they had access to financial information at schools.
- 94 per cent of schools had either no or incomplete financial documentation.
- 79 per cent of parents reported paying registration fees, which are illegal.
- 59 per cent of head teachers received no financial management training.
- 55 per cent of School Management Committee members received no financial management training.
- There is little control of finances at the school level. More than one in four parents reported the existence of corruption.
- Teacher absenteeism is widespread.

“ 94 per cent of schools had either no or incomplete financial documentation ”

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Parents need to be informed of their right to demand quality education and that education is free.
- All schools should have School Management Committees, and School Management Committee members and Parent Teacher Association heads should receive financial management training.
- Anyone who misappropriates school resources should be sanctioned.
- School financial information should be published.
- Roles and responsibilities of school administrators from the national to the local should be clearly defined.
- School administrators should address the problem of teacher absenteeism.

Contact

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