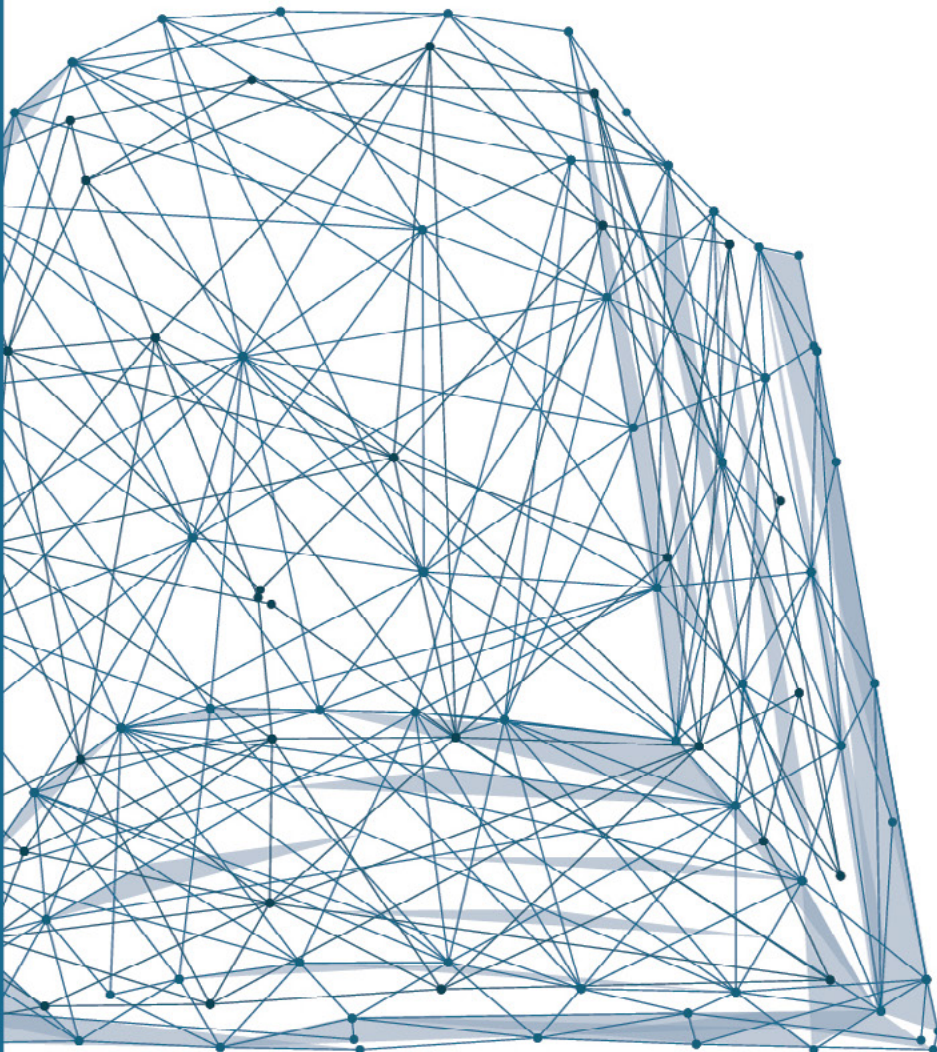


SECONDARY EDUCATION GOVERNANCE IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) is a very promising region with strong economic potential and millions of young men and women who can make remarkable contributions to the economies of their countries if provided with quality education. Since the beginning of the 21st century, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Education for All (EFA) movement have brought about significant improvements in primary education across Africa and have increased the number of children who complete schooling at the primary level. This, together with the increasing labor market need for educated and skilled individuals in both the formal and informal sectors, led to a strong demand for quality secondary education.

Although the responses to this demand vary among the SSA countries, there are efforts across the region to enable more students to enroll in and successfully complete secondary education. Accountability and good governance are key for meeting the demand for quality secondary education. However, enhancing accountability at all levels of the system requires resources, planning and coordination, use of technology, reliance on data, and building institutional capacity.

Governments, schools, teachers and families (students and their parents) should all be engaged in ensuring accountability and good governance of secondary education. Governments should develop national education plans with a sector-wide approach to ensure accountability. Local education authorities, relevant stakeholders, and representatives of the society should be engaged in this process; and plans should have clear targets and standards to measure performance. Governments should also invest in technologies that can be utilized to enhance accountability at all levels of the system and in training staff members at the ministry, local education authorities, and schools on use of technology to provide accurate and reliable data to support decision making.

Schools should develop a school profile system or a school report card, and engage in self-assessment efforts to improve performance. Outcomes of these efforts should be made public and communicated to families and the society on regular basis. To improve teacher attendance, technology should be utilized to report teacher absenteeism in partnership with local providers of communications and internet services. Sanctions and rewards can be put in place to encourage teacher attendance and improve performance. Educating parents and students on the importance of the accountability efforts should yield positive results in improving the whole system.

Governments should make data collection a funding priority by investing in developing or improving Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) and training of their staff on data collection, analysis and reporting. International donors and development agencies should support governments in improving specific aspects of EMIS as opposed to covering broad areas of these systems. Hiring and retention of staff working on EMIS should be a priority for governments since these staff develop critical capabilities over time and their commitment to working at the ministries becomes vital for sustained accountability efforts.

