Information for Accountability

Transparency and citizen engagement for improved service delivery in education systems
Assumed theory of change: The dissemination of more and better quality information is expected to empower parents and communities to put pressure on schools and officials to make changes that improve learning and learning environments.

- Transparency
- Open Data & Social Accountability
- Accountability

Improved Service Delivery
# Mechanisms of Change for Different Actors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Parent</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>School Mgmt or Local Officials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increased attendance</td>
<td>Increased awareness of rights, quality, and expectations</td>
<td>Improved attendance</td>
<td>Better functioning SBM organizations</td>
<td>Better functioning SBM organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater effort in school and at home</td>
<td>Increased pressure on teachers and administrators</td>
<td>Greater effort in class</td>
<td>Increase in discretionary budgets at school level</td>
<td>Increase in discretionary budgets at school level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Increased investment of time with own children; more schooling material in the home; increased engagement with the school</td>
<td>Better engagement with parents</td>
<td>Lower fees</td>
<td>Reduction in leakages of funds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exercise choice in favor of better performing schools</td>
<td>Adoption of good practices from other teachers or schools</td>
<td>Exit of low-quality teachers</td>
<td>Improved monitoring of and support for teacher performance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Intensity of Information Interventions

PASSIVE

- Citizen or school-level monitoring (ex: text message reporting; school report cards)

COLLECTION

- Sharing information about rights and responsibilities, expected learning outcomes of students, and access to financing
- Sharing information about school-level inputs (ex: teacher attendance, textbooks) or outputs (ex: pass/fail rates)

DISSEMINATION

MADE ACTIONABLE

- Information plus facilitated meetings with parents, teachers, or administrators
- Information plus training for parents or teachers on how to engage with children, or the creation of school improvement plans with school administrators

ACTIVE
IMPACT EVALUATION REVIEW
Overview of Information-based interventions: Approaches and Targeted Agents and Outcomes
### Collection Interventions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Collecting agents</th>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aker and Ksoll</td>
<td>Niger</td>
<td>Weekly phone calls checking whether classes were held</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2015)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Student learning: +</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barr et al.</td>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>Scorecard on school inputs implemented by School Management Committee</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2012)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cilliers et al.</td>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>Reports from head teachers verifying teacher attendance through text messages</td>
<td></td>
<td>Null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2014)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duflo et al.</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>Students take pictures to verify teacher attendance</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2012)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Key finding:

- Interventions are most effective in cases where sanctions or rewards are implied or explicitly stated.
## Dissemination Interventions

*(snapshot of 3 studies out of 13)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Type of Information</th>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Agents of change</th>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Camargo et al.</td>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>Outputs</td>
<td>Website; newspaper</td>
<td>✓  ✓</td>
<td>Null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mixed ²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cerdan-Infantes</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>Rights and</td>
<td>Pamphlet</td>
<td></td>
<td>Null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and Filmer</td>
<td></td>
<td>responsibilities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2015)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Text messages</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>de Hoyos et al.</td>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>Outputs</td>
<td>Diagnostic report</td>
<td>✓  ✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(forthcoming)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Key finding:
- Success is highly context-specific, in cases where lack of information is *only bottleneck for action*
**Key findings:**

- Information should be targeted at the management level
- Parents are more likely to respond to information on inputs rather than performance data
Summary of Findings

- Successes are limited in number
- Impact is context-specific
- Agent response is greater when information is actionable
ENABLING CONDITIONS AND DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS
Enabling conditions

Political
Societal
Technological
Legislative

Design Considerations

Data quality and availability
Digital and societal divides
Tension among stakeholders
Enabling Conditions

• **Political**
  – Responsiveness of supply side is a function of: high-level support, the strength of existing accountability processes, and institutional capacity

• **Societal**
  – Need strong public demand for data
  – Data users must have capacity to assess, understand, and act
  – ‘Infomediaries’ can help translate and communicate information in actionable ways

• **Technological**
  – Latest technologies may not be the best vehicles for dissemination
  – Platforms must be tailored to the end user

• **Legislative**
  – Tensions exist between demands for transparency and right to privacy
Design Considerations

• Social inequalities require use of infomediaries
  – Digital divides produce parallel data divides
  – Potential for adverse effects

• Must rectify low quality or missing data
  – Transparent systems are only as strong as their source data
  – Data need to be available, trustworthy, and usable

• Information must be targeted to locations of decision-making
  – Lack of resources or autonomy can hinder accountability and management reforms
WHAT ABOUT DATA AVAILABILITY?
Data on MoE Websites

• Snapshot of data available to the public in 133 low- and middle-income countries, including 11 in MENA region
• Current as of April 2016
• Findings:
  Data disaggregated at the school-level are typically not available
  The bulk of available data is in PDF or non-downloadable formats
  Student assessment data are not as commonly available as enrolment data
  Financial information is typically budgetary rather than on expenditures
Data disaggregated at the school level is typically not available.

The bulk of available data is in PDF or non-downloadable format.

Student assessment data is not as commonly available as enrollment data.

Financial information is typically budgetary.
## Available data (MENA region)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Disaggregated?</th>
<th>Infrastructure</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Student</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Financing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>MoE database under construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Djibouti</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt, Arab Rep.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes (limited)</td>
<td>Yes (limited)</td>
<td>Yes (limited)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libya</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No MoE website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morocco</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palestine</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syrian Arab Republic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Site not working</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yemen, Rep.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Site not working</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FINAL TAKEAWAYS
Final Takeaways

- Information is not enough
- Use of infomediaries is vital to bridge gaps
- What information is captured and how it is shared matters
- Aligning the type of information to the capabilities of the targeted agent helps
- Dissemination tools are as important as the source data
- Pathways to change may be non-linear
Thank You

To download the report, please visit:

For additional blog pieces on the topic:
https://www.brookings.edu/author/lindsay-read/