

Morocco



SCHOOL AUTONOMY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

SABER Country Report
2015

Policy Goals

1. **Autonomy in Planning and Management of the School Budget**

The School Management Council expresses the school's learning and administrative materials needs but the legal authority for the preparation and execution of the operational budget rest with the regional level. There is no wider consultation with parents and the community on the preparation and execution of the operational budget.

Status

Emerging



2. **Autonomy in Personnel Management**

Recruitment of all school personnel (teaching and non-teaching staff) are made under the auspices of the Public Service and the Special Status of Personnel of the Education Sector at central level, and their deployment at regional level. Decisions on selection and placement of school principals are handled by the regional authorities (AREFs) and their evaluation by the Local Education Authority.

Emerging



3. **Participation of the School Council in School Governance**

The School Management Council representing school personnel and the community upon open election supports the school principal in operational management and partnership projects but has no legal right on matters related to staff management and learning inputs.

Emerging



4. **Assessment of School and Student Performance**

No school assessments exist in Morocco. National examinations for students take place annually for certification and selection purposes and schools are not obligated to use results to make pedagogical, personnel, or operational adjustments. Standardized learning prerequisite assessments exist and can be used to identify learning gaps among students at Grades 2, 5, 7, 9 and 10, but they are not obligatory and AREFs can use them if they have funding.

Latent



5. **Accountability to Stakeholders**

Regulations are in place for complying with rules for financial and school operations. However there are no mandates to simplify and explain results of assessments to the general public to hold schools and the education system accountable for their performance to parents, communities, and the public.

Emerging



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Introduction

In 2011, the World Bank Group commenced a multi-year program designed to support countries in systematically examining and strengthening the performance of their education systems. Part of the World Bank’s Education Sector Strategy,¹ the evidence-based initiative called SABER (Systems Approach for Better Education Results), is building a toolkit of diagnostics for examining education systems and their component policy domains against global standards, best practices, and in comparison with the policies and practices of countries around the world. By leveraging this global knowledge, the SABER tools fill a gap in the availability of data and evidence on what matters most to improve the quality of education and achievement of better results. This report discusses the results of applying the SABER School Autonomy and Accountability (SAA) tool in Morocco.

Country Overview

Morocco is a country in the subtropical zone on the western side of Africa. It is spread over an area of 710,850 square kilometers, and composed of 12 regions and 82 provinces. The population of Morocco was estimated at 33.8 million in 2014, of which 60.3 percent live in urban areas. The national economic growth was 4.4 percent in 2013, and the national per capita income was estimated at \$7,000 (PPP) (MENFP 2014a).

The geographical position of Morocco has made this country a multicultural space given the diversity of its population: Arab, Amazigh and African. Linguistic pluralism is a challenge for the education and training system due to the introduction of Arabic and Berber, Morocco's two official languages in the constitution of 2011.

Between 2004 and 2014, the youth population declined slightly. This affected all ages; however, the most pronounced decrease was for the age group 6-11. Overall, the decrease in the school-age population aged 4-17 years is expected to continue until 2030 (MENFP 2014a). This is likely to reduce population pressure on the current and future school system, and will allow for financial resources to be redirected to other qualitative aspects of the education and training system.

I. Education in Morocco

Since the validation of the National Charter of Education and Training in 2000², Morocco has made considerable progress in the achievement of the Education for All (EFA) goals, prioritizing access to general education and increasing school supply for compulsory education cycles, namely primary and lower secondary (see Table 1).

¹ The World Bank Education Sector Strategy 2020: Learning for All (2011), which outlines an agenda for achieving “Learning for All” in the developing world over the next decade.

² Commission Spéciale Education Formation (COSEF) July 1999: *Charte Nationale d’Education et de Formation*.

Level	Ages	Grades
Pre-primary	4-5	Pre-school
Primary	6-11	1-6
Lower secondary	12-14	7-9
Upper secondary	15-17	10-12
Tertiary	18+	Colleges and Universities

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics 2014

According to the EFA National Report 2013-2015, access to all levels of education improved drastically from 2000 to 2014. Indeed, the primary net enrolment rate for the age group 6-11 increased from 79.1 percent to 99.5 percent. For the same period, the net enrollment rate in lower secondary (age group 12-14 years) increased from 58.1 to 87.6 percent, while enrollments for upper secondary (age group 15-17 years) increased from 35.4 to 61.1 percent.

Quality of learning did not improve at the same rate as access, as evidenced by the results of Moroccan fourth graders in TIMSS and PIRLS 2011. Few students (1-2 percent) reached the high benchmarks in reading, mathematics, and science, but about one-fourth reached the low benchmark³ in mathematics, 21 percent in reading, and 15 percent in science (Mullis 2011).

Despite the financial efforts allocated to the education sector (6.6 percent of gross domestic product [GDP] and 24.0 percent of the government budget in 2013; see Table 2), the findings of the EFA Report 2013-2015 show that within Morocco, inequalities in access persist between regions, thus delaying the achievement of universal education. These differences reflect social inequalities between economically rich regions and those that are poorly developed. This disadvantage interacts with other variables including the geographical isolation of certain populations because of mountainous terrain and flood-prone areas, as well as cultural attitudes that remain hostile to the education of girls, despite efforts made by Morocco to promote gender equality.

³ Students reaching the low benchmark can read and comprehend facts, read a variety of simple graphs and tables, know simple mathematics (such as adding, subtracting, and basic geometric figures), and know science facts about health, ecosystems, and animals.

Public Expenditure on Education (2013)	
As % of GDP	6.6
As % of Total Government Expenditure	24.0
Distribution of Public Expenditure per Level (%) (2013)	
Pre-Primary	-
Primary	37.69
Secondary	44.61
Tertiary and other	17.70
Teacher/Pupil Ratio in Primary (2014)	27.5
Percentage of Repeaters in Primary (2014)	11.0
Primary to Secondary Transition Rate (2013)	85.4

Source: * EdStats, World Bank (Last Updated: 09/26/2014); Morocco Higher Council for Education, Training and Scientific Research (CSEFRS) 2014; and MENFP, 2013-14.

Morocco has put high priority, in recent years, on the reduction of social and geographical inequalities in its public policies, especially in education, as evidenced by the provisions and projects of the Emergency Program set up by the Ministry of Education covering the period 2009-2012 (MENFP 2008). This program has helped to improve school provision in rural areas and to strengthen the social policy of support for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds, in addition to efforts aimed at developing human resources and improving governance of the sector.

One method that the Government of Morocco is using to reduce regional inequities is decentralization of decision-making to the regional level. Decentralization policy in Morocco began in 1997 with the enactment of Act 96/43 establishing and organizing the regions. From a legal perspective, decentralization aims to involve citizens in governance through their elected representatives by the transfer of powers from the State to local governments. The application of this principle to the education sector, through the creation of Regional Academies of Education and Training (AREFs) in 2000⁴, focused primarily on technical and administrative management powers (MENFP 2013). Autonomy is granted to the AREFs to manage certain logistical and financial decisions, following guidelines issued by the central government within the context of national goals and priorities defined

⁴ Decree n°2.00.1016 of 24 November 2000 relating to the application of Law No. 07-00 of 19 May 2000 relating to the creation of Regional Academies for Education and Training.

by the general policy of the State. The 2011 Constitution gave a strong impetus to the strategic directions of good institutional governance and the creation of a new public management system based on responsibility, results-based management, and accountability.

Lever 15 of the National Charter of Education and Training states that “education and training authorities shall, in coordination with other relevant authorities, accelerate the implementation of the decentralization and deconcentration policy in this sector, as a decisive choice, irreversible strategy and urgent responsibility.”⁵ This policy has essentially been enacted through.⁶

- Review of the administrative and management competencies of the education sector’s central services to focus on strategic management, defining general guidelines, assurance of equity between regions, and control of resource management;
- Creation of the AREFs as regional authorities enjoying legal recognition and planning and management responsibilities such as the preparation of regional plans, school mapping, programming of construction and renovation of school buildings, human resources management (including recruitment, training and evaluation), and management of partnership initiatives;
- Strengthening the Local Education Authorities (LEAs) by integrating them in the regional structure and delegating some competencies related to human resources management, budget preparation, and local administrative processes;
- Creation of School Management Councils (SMCs) consisting of a representation of the various local stakeholders for participation in the management of school affairs.

II. The Case for School Autonomy and School Accountability

School autonomy and accountability are key components of an education system that ensure educational quality. The transfer of core managerial responsibilities to schools promotes local accountability; helps reflect local priorities, values, and needs; and gives teachers the opportunity to establish a personal commitment to students and their parents (see Box 1). Benchmarking and monitoring indicators of school autonomy and accountability allows any country to rapidly assess its education system, setting the stage for improving policy planning and implementation.

Box 1: What are School Autonomy and Accountability?

School autonomy is a form of school management in which schools are given decision-making authority over their operations, including the hiring and firing of personnel, and the assessment of teachers and pedagogical practices. School management under autonomy may give an important role to the School Council, representing the interests of parents, in budget planning and approval, as well as a voice/vote in personnel decisions. By including the School Council in school management, school autonomy fosters accountability (Di Gropello 2004, 2006; Barrera, Fasih and Patrinos 2009).

In its basic form **accountability** is defined as the acceptance of responsibility and being answerable for one’s actions. In school management, accountability may take other additional meanings: (i) the act of compliance with the rules and regulations of school governance; (ii) reporting to those with oversight authority over the school; and (iii) linking rewards and sanctions to expected results (Heim 1996; Rechebei 2010).

School autonomy is a form of a decentralized education system in which school personnel are in charge of making most managerial decisions, frequently in partnership with parents and the community. More local control helps create better conditions for improving student

⁵ Commission Spéciale Education Formation (COSEF) July 1999. *Charte Nationale d’Education et de Formation*

⁶ MENFP. June 2007. *AREF Experiences Within the Decentralization and Deconcentration Framework*. Legal Affairs Department.

learning in a sustainable way, because it gives teachers and parents more opportunities to develop common goals, increase their mutual commitment to student learning, and promote more efficient use of scarce school resources.

To be effective, school autonomy must function on the basis of compatible incentives, taking into account national education policies, including incentives for the implementation of those policies. Having more managerial responsibilities at the school level automatically implies that a school must also be accountable to local stakeholders as well as national and local authorities. The empirical evidence from education systems in which schools enjoy managerial autonomy is that autonomy is beneficial for restoring the social contract between parents and schools and instrumental in setting in motion policies to improve student learning.

The progression in school autonomy in the last two decades has led to the conceptualization of **School-Based Management (SBM)** as a form of decentralization in which the school is in charge of most managerial decisions but with the participation of parents and the community through school councils (Barrera, Fasih, and Patrinos 2009). *SBM is not a set of predetermined policies and procedures, but a continuum of activities and policies put into place to improve the functioning of schools, allowing parents and teachers to focus on improvements in learning.* As such, SBM should foster a new social contract between teachers and their community in which local cooperation and local accountability drive improvements in professional and personal performance by teachers (Patrinos 2010).

The empirical evidence from SBM shows that it can take many forms or combine many activities (Barrera et al. 2009) with differing degrees of success (see Box 2). Unless SBM activities contribute to system closure, they are just a collection of isolated managerial decisions. Therefore, the indicators of SBM that relate to school quality must conform to the concept of a system, in which the presence or absence of some critical components within the system allow or preclude system closure.

Box 2: Different paths to School-Based Management are fine as long as they allow for system closure

In many countries the implementation of SBM has increased student enrollment, student and teacher attendance, and parent involvement. However, the empirical evidence from Latin America shows very few cases in which SBM has made a significant difference in learning outcomes (Patrinos 2010), while in Europe there is substantial evidence showing a positive impact of school autonomy on learning (Eurydice 2007). Both the grassroots-based approach taken in Latin America, where the institutional structure was weak or service delivery was hampered due to internal conflict, and the operational efficiency approach taken in Europe where institutions were stronger, coincide in applying managerial principles to promote better education quality, but driven by two different modes of accountability to parents and the community. One in Latin America where schools render accounts through participatory school-based management (Di Gropello 2004) and another in Europe where accountability is based on trust in schools and their teachers, (Arcia, Patrinos, Porta and Macdonald 2011). In either case, school autonomy has begun to transform traditional education from a system based on processes and inputs into one driven by results (Hood 2001).

As components of a managerial system, SBM activities may behave as mediating variables: they produce an enabling environment for teachers and students, allowing for pedagogical variables, school inputs, and personal effort to work as intended.

When do SBM components become critical for learning?

The improper functioning of a school or a school system can be a substantial barrier to success. The managerial component of a school system is a necessary but insufficient condition for learning. One can fix some managerial components and obtain no results or alter other components and obtain good results. What combination of components is crucial for success are still under study, but the emerging body of practice point to a set of variables that foster managerial **autonomy**, the **assessment** of results, and the use of the assessment to

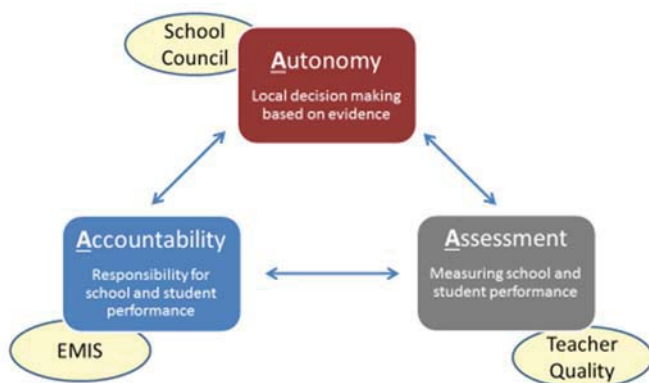
promote **accountability** among all stakeholders (Bruns, Filmer, and Patrinos 2011). When these three components are in balance with each other, they form a “closed-loop system.”

Defining a managerial system that can achieve closure is conceptually important for school-based management, since it transforms its components from a list of managerial activities to a set of interconnected variables that when working together can improve system performance. If an SBM system is unable to close, are partial solutions effective? Yes, in a broad sense, in which schools can still function but their degree of effectiveness and efficiency would be lower than if the system closes. In this regard, ***SBM can achieve closure of the loop when it allows enough autonomy to make informed decisions, evaluate its results, and use those results to hold someone accountable.***

This last conclusion is very important because it means that *SBM can achieve balance as a closed-loop system when autonomy, student assessment, and accountability, are operationally interrelated through the functions of the school councils, the policies for improving teacher quality, and Education Management Information Systems (see Figure 1).*

Figure 1

School Autonomy & Accountability The 3 A'S



Source: Demas and Arcia 2015.

Note: EMIS – education management information system.

In managerial terms it is clear that the point of contact between autonomous schools and their clients is primarily through the school council (Corrales 2006). Similarly, school assessments are the vehicles used by schools to determine their needs for changes in pedagogical practices and to determine the training needs of their teachers. Both pedagogical changes and teacher training are determinant factors of teacher quality (Vegas 2001). Finally, the role of EMIS on accountability has been well established, and it is bound to increase as technology makes it easier to report on indicators of internal efficiency and on standardized test scores (Bruns, Filmer, and Patrinos 2011).

Results on the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) suggest that, when autonomy and accountability are intelligently combined, they tend to be associated with better student performance (OECD 2011). The experience of high-performing countries on PISA indicates the following:⁷

- Education systems in which schools have more autonomy over teaching content and student assessment tend to perform better.
- Education systems in which schools have more autonomy over resource allocation and that publish test results perform better than schools with less autonomy.
- Education systems in which many schools compete for students do not systematically score higher on PISA.
- Education systems with standardized student assessment tend to do better than those without such assessments.
- PISA scores among schools with students from different social backgrounds differ less in education systems that use standardized student assessments than in systems that do not.

As of now, the empirical evidence from countries that have implemented school autonomy suggests that a certain set of policies and practices are effective in fostering managerial autonomy, assessment of results, and the use of assessments to promote accountability.

⁷ Examples of high performing countries that have implemented school-based management policies and frameworks include the Canada, the Netherlands, and New Zealand, among others.

Benchmarking the policy intent of these variables using SABER can be very useful for any country interested in improving the performance of its education system.

SABER School Autonomy and Accountability: Analyzing Performance.

The SABER School Autonomy and Accountability tool assists in analyzing how well developed the set of policies are in a given country to foster managerial autonomy, assess results, and use information from assessments to promote accountability. There are five policy goals for school autonomy and accountability. Below are the main indicators that can help benchmark an education system's policies that enable school autonomy and accountability:

1. **School autonomy in the planning and management of the school budget**
2. **School autonomy in personnel management**
3. **Role of the School Council in school governance**
4. **School and student assessments**
5. **Accountability**

Each of these policy goals has a set of policy actions that make it possible to judge how far along an education system's policies are in enabling school autonomy and accountability. Each policy goal and policy action is scored on the basis of its status and the results classified as Latent, Emerging, Established, or Advanced:

Latent ●○○○	Emerging ●●○○	Established ●●●○	Advanced ●●●●
Reflects policy not in place or limited engagement	Reflects some good practice; policy work still in progress	Reflects good practice, with some limitations	Reflects international best practice

A Latent score signifies that the policy behind the indicator is not yet in place or that there is limited engagement in developing the related education policy. An *Emerging* score indicates that the policy in place reflects some good practice but that policy development is still in progress. An *Established* score indicates that the program or policy reflects good practice and meets the minimum standards, but limitations may exist in its content and scope. An *Advanced* score indicates that the program or policy reflects best practice and it can be considered on par with international standards.

III. Morocco's Performance: A Summary of Results

A summary of the results of the benchmarking exercise for Morocco are shown below, followed by a breakdown by policy goal.

Summary. Budgetary autonomy is "Emerging." The entire school operational budget is prepared and executed by the AREFs at the regional level, taking into account the operational needs voiced by schools. Schools have the legal authority to prepare and execute small budgets related to the school development project and the ability to raise additional financial resources. **Autonomy in personnel management is "Emerging."** The recruitment of the teaching and non-teaching staff is conducted at the central level, while their deployment is managed at the regional level by the AREFs. Decisions on the selection and placement of school principals are handled by the AREFs, and the evaluation of school principals is conducted by the Local Education Authority. **The role of the School Management Council in school governance is "Emerging."** The SMC provides advice on, and validates the school's operational activities and partnership projects but has no legal right or voice on matters related to the management of teaching and non-teaching staff management or on learning inputs. **School and student assessment is "Latent."** There is no school assessment in Morocco to evaluate overall school performance. Student knowledge can be evaluated using standardized prerequisite assessments which are available to schools to identify learning gaps among students at the beginning of the school year, but they are not obligatory and are used only if AREFs have funds for them. The annual national examinations are organized at the end of each level of education for the purposes of certification and selection into the next stage of the education system. **Accountability to stakeholders is "Emerging."** Regulations are in place for complying with rules for financial and school operations. However, no mandates are established to simplify and explain results of assessments to the general public, in order to hold schools and the education system accountable for their performance to parents, communities, and the public.

1. Autonomy in the planning and management of the school budget is emerging

This policy goal focuses on the degree of autonomy that schools have in planning and managing their budgets. To evaluate policy intent, the scoring rubric makes clear which areas should be backed by laws, regulations, and/or official rules in the public record. School autonomy in the planning and management of the school budget is considered desirable because it can increase the efficiency of financial resources, give schools more flexibility in budget management, and give parents the opportunity to have more voice on budget planning and execution.

Although the operational budget⁸ preparation process in Morocco takes into account the learning and administrative materials needs expressed by the School Management Council (SMC) (according to Decree No. 2.02.376 of 17 July 2002, pertaining to the particular legal status of public schools), legal authority for the preparation and execution of the operational budget rests with the regional level (Regional Academy for Education and Training - AREF). In Morocco almost the entire operational budget for schools comes from the government. A ministerial note addressed to AREFs gives clear guidelines for the preparation of the operational budget according to which the AREFs send their budget proposals to the Ministry of National Education and Professional Training (MENFP) for review and endorsement prior to submitting it to the Ministry of Finance for validation.

Decree 2.02.376 states that the schools define their operational requirements. The requirements or needs are then translated into an operating budget by the local education authority (LEA) and sent to the AREFs. Since SMCs are not authorized to handle public funds, in parallel, Associations for Supporting School Success (AAER) were established in each school to allow local and participatory budgetary and financial management and to avoid the regulatory constraints of public finance. They have legal authority to prepare and execute small budgets transferred from the AREF to manage school development projects in close collaboration with the SMCs. They follow a procedural guide sent to these

associations by the Ministry of Education. In addition, regulations in place allow the SMC and the AAER to establish partnership agreements with the private sector, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) or any other association to supplement their financing needs. These additional funds are managed directly by the schools or through the partners themselves. No wider consultation is done with parents and the community on preparation and execution of the operational budget other than through the SMC and AAER representatives.

In Morocco, although the school principal initiates the administrative process to adjust wages for teaching and non-teaching staff (grade advancement, withdrawal of days for absence, abandonment of post, etc.), all wage-related financial decisions are managed at the central level. Salary scales for teaching and non-teaching staff are defined by the Decree of the Public Service and the Special Status of Personnel of the Education Sector.

1. Legal authority over planning and management of the school budget is Emerging		
Indicator	Score	Justification
Legal authority over management of the operational budget	Emerging ●●○○	The legal authority over management of the operational budget rests with the regional level.
Legal authority over the management of non-teaching staff salaries	Latent ●○○○	Non-teaching staff salaries are managed at central level based on school director administrative acts.
Legal authority over the management of teacher's salaries	Latent ●○○○	Teacher salaries are managed at central level based on school director administrative acts.
Legal authority to raise additional funds for the school	Advanced ●●●●	Schools have authority to raise additional funds, including from NGOs, private sector, and other sources.
Collaborative budget planning and preparation	Emerging ●●○○	Schools define their operational requirements but do not propose a budget.

⁸ Operational budget is defined as budget transferred through government channels for the day-to-day operation of schools excluding salaries for teachers and non-teaching staff and capital cost like school construction.

2. School autonomy in personnel management is emerging

This policy goal measures policy intent in the management of school personnel, which includes the principal, teachers, and non-teaching staff. Appointing and deploying principals and teachers can be centralized at the level of the Ministry of Education or it can be the responsibility of regional or municipal governments. In decentralized education systems schools have autonomy in teacher hiring and firing decisions. Budgetary autonomy includes giving schools responsibility for negotiating and setting the salaries of its teaching and non-teaching staff and using monetary and non-monetary bonuses as rewards for good performance. In centralized systems, teachers are paid directly by the Ministry of Education or the Ministry of Finance under union or civil service agreements. As a result, in centralized systems schools have less influence over teacher performance because they have no financial leverage over teachers. Inversely, if a school negotiates teachers' salaries, as private schools routinely do, it may be able to motivate teachers directly with rewards for a job well done.

In Morocco, all managerial decisions about teaching and non-teaching staff that impact the budget, and therefore the Ministry of Finance, remain under centralized control. This includes recruitment, grade to grade promotion, and retirement. Each year the Ministry of Finance allocates a number of vacant posts to various sectors including Education. Recruitments are made under the auspices of the Public Service and the Special Status of Personnel of the Education Sector. The MENFP proceeds to recruit at central level to fill the vacant positions and assign new teachers to AREFs for their deployment. Deployment decisions about newly recruited teachers are made after current teaching staff have been redeployed or transferred within the education system according to the needs identified by an annual school mapping process. Teachers' promotion in steps within grades is based on a combination of the evaluation of the district inspectors and principals while their promotion to a higher grade is subject to an examination or seniority. Staff unions are consulted in the development of the criteria for transfer and deployment.

School principals are appointed through a selection process outlined in the Ministerial directive of the Movement of Personnel. For the primary level, candidates must be primary school teachers and for the secondary level candidates must be school administrative staff who used to be teachers.

The initial selection is made by ranking the candidates automatically at the central level according to criteria including seniority in the position, an aptitude score (attendance, organizational skills, etc.), the last inspection evaluation of teaching skills, university degree, and seniority in the latter school. Then the AREFs organize interviews for the top five candidates on the basis of their CV and a written educational project of four to six pages about the candidate's vision of school management. The vacant position is then assigned by the director of AREF to the selected candidate. New applicants are confirmed in their posts by AREF after having successfully completed training sessions during their first year (a total of 150 hours) in various areas, including but not limited to: pedagogy, administrative and financial management; development of work plans and school projects; processes of school census and school mapping; evaluation and learning support; communication and facilitation of cultural and social events; and management of cooperation and partnership programs. In 2014 the Ministry began a training program for 110 future school managers for a period of six months at the regional training centers. This is a pilot training that allows candidates to be evaluated on their skills before being formally offered a post. The training graduates will be favored in the allocation of new vacancies for school principals.

School principals are evaluated by their supervisor at the LEA. The director of AREF has the right to suspend a school principal following the evaluation by the LEA, or following an audit commissioned by the Director of AREF or by the central service. But the final suspension is the responsibility of the Minister.

2. School autonomy in personnel management is Emerging		
Indicator	Score	Justification
Autonomy in teacher appointment and deployment decisions	Emerging ●●○○	Initial recruitment of teachers is made at central level by the MENFP and deployment by AREFs.
Autonomy in non-teaching staff appointment and deployment decisions	Emerging ●●○○	Recruitment of non-teaching staff is made at central level by the MENFP and deployment by AREFs.
Autonomy in school principal appointment and deployment decisions.	Established ●●●○	Appointment of school principals is made at regional level and their evaluation belongs to the local level.

3. Participation of the School Council in school governance is emerging

Participation of the School/Parent Council in school administration is very important because it enables parents to exercise their real power as clients of the education system. If the council has to cosign payments, it automatically has purchasing power. The use of a detailed operational manual is extremely important in this area, since it allows council members to adequately monitor school management performance, help the principal with cash flow decisions, and become a catalyst for seeking additional funds from the community. The use of such manuals by the School Council is thus a good vehicle for promoting increased accountability and institutionalizing autonomy.

It is important to note that change management studies also have provided evidence that bringing stakeholders together to plan and implement meaningful activities also contributes to behavioral change in institutions, including schools. Collective school planning activities can provide a mutual vision and shared accountability of what parents and school staff can commit in terms of support to the school. These processes provide an enabling environment for better governance.

In Morocco the SMC is established by Decree No. 2.02.376 of 17 July 2002 pertaining to particular legal status of public schools. The SMC is composed of the

school principal, several teachers representing all levels and all disciplines in the school, a representative from the administrative and technical staff, two student representatives (only for high schools), the president of the association of parents, and a representative of the local elected bodies (such as the mayor's office or a locally elected district official). Teachers are the most heavily represented group on the SMC, which can lead to an imbalance of stakeholder views. They also may not be serving on the SMC as truly elected representatives. For example, if a teacher is the only faculty at the school teaching a particular subject, then they are nominated automatically to be on the SMC regardless of whether they are interested in serving or not.

The SMC's roles and responsibilities consist of setting the school's internal rules and regulations (dress code, sanctions for students' late arrival and absence, communication with parents, etc.); providing advice on partnership projects; identifying the school's operational needs; and validating the school's annual report. It has, however, no authority on administrative and financial management oversight, no legal right or voice on teacher appointment, transfer and removal, or on matters of learning inputs.

A Procedural Guide for the use of Areas of Public Institutions of Education and Training establishes the conditions for participation of external parties in school activities through partnership conventions.

The SMC's members are elected for a period of three years through direct and confidential elections. All staff from the institution are called to nominate their representatives. The list of candidates is compiled by the school principal and displayed one week before the election date. A commission is formed immediately after the election consisting of the school principal and two members of the electorate (the oldest and the youngest) for counting the votes, and minutes are taken reporting on the results of the vote.

According to Decree No. 2.02.376, the SMC should meet at least twice a year, at the beginning of the school year to review the plan of school activities prepared by the other school councils (Subject Council, Class Council, Pedagogic Council), and at the end of the year to examine achievements and identify needs for the following year. No guidelines are set up for calling

general assemblies with the whole school community, leaving no avenue for further communication with the community at large.

3. Role of the School Council in School Governance is Emerging		
Indicator	Score	Justification
Participation of the School Council in budget preparation	Emerging ●●○○	The school council participates in the identification of the school's operational needs but does not prepare the budget.
Participation in financial oversight.	Emerging ●●○○	The SMC has authority to carry out validation of the annual report, but no oversight on budget issues, administrative, and financial management activities.
Participation in Personnel Management	Latent ●○○○	The SMCs has no legal right or voice on matters of teacher appointment, transfers and removals.
Community participation in school activities	Established ●●●○	There is a Procedural Guideline stating the conditions for external parties' participation to school activities.
Community participation in learning inputs	Latent ●○○○	There is no legal right or voice for SMCs on matters of learning inputs.
Transparency in Community Participation	Established ●●●○	There is a ministerial note stating election procedures of members of SMC, but no guidelines for calling wide general assemblies.

Morocco has created a Collective of Professional Practice (CPP), a consultative body composed of principals from the same school area, for sharing resources and examples of best practice. The goal of the CPPs is to create a supportive and collaborative professional learning environment for school principals through networking. Areas of particular focus include: ownership of methods and tools for the preparation,

implementation, monitoring and evaluation of school projects; complementarity and coherence of these projects within the same school area; sharing school management experiences; coordination and collaboration around partnerships; and optimization of administrative support efforts.

4. Assessment of school and student performance is emerging.

School assessments can have a big impact on school performance because it encourages parents and teachers to agree on scoring rules regarding school performance and ways to keep track of them. Measuring student assessment is another important way to determine if a school is effective in improving learning. A key aspect of school autonomy is the regular measurement of student learning, with the intent of using the results to inform parents and society and to make adjustments to managerial and pedagogical practices. Without a regular assessment of learning outcomes, school accountability is reduced and improving education quality becomes less certain.

Moroccan schools are not assessed following officially established performance evaluation criteria. Irregular school inspections are conducted by the National or Regional Education Inspectorates of the MENFP to evaluate the principal's compliance with the Ministerial directives. School performance is not assessed in terms of educational outcomes. Schools' learning outcomes are only indirectly evaluated through the system for national student assessments. No policy is in place for school self-evaluation, and inspection results from the district are not a key contributor to pedagogical, personnel, or operational adjustments to improve the learning environment.

Student performance is evaluated through two sets of examinations: compulsory annual national examinations at the end of primary, lower and upper secondary; and optional prerequisite examinations at the beginning of each school year for selected grades. Annual national examinations at the end of each cycle (primary, lower and upper secondary) are organized for the purposes of certification and selection for further levels of education. The National Examinations and Evaluation Centre (CNEE) conducts an analysis of the national exams results and

compares institutions according to their performance. The results of this analysis are for internal use within the Ministry only and are not made available to schools, teachers, parents or communities. A National Programme for Student Assessment (PNEA) was launched in 2008 by the National Authority for Evaluation (INE) in collaboration with CNEE. It was implemented just once in 2008 at grades 4, 5, 7, and 8 and assessed students' performance in mathematics, science, Arabic, and French. A plan is in place to administer the assessment for a second time in 2016.

4. School and student assessment is Latent		
Indicator	Score	Justification
Existence and frequency of school assessments	Latent ●○○○	Schools are not assessed following officially established performance evaluation criteria.
Use of school assessments for making school adjustments	Latent ●○○○	There is no school assessment.
Existence and frequency of standardized student assessments	Emerging ●●○○	Standardized learning prerequisite assessment packages exist for grades 2, 5, 7, 9, and 10 but are not obligatory or funded. Annual national examinations are organized at the end of each level of education.
Use of standardized student assessments for pedagogical, operational, and personnel adjustments	Emerging ●●○○	A ministerial note requests teachers to use the results of the assessment of learning prerequisites to plan for their courses but the tests and their use are not obligatory.
Publication of student assessments	Emerging ●●○○	The school principal is asked to inform parents on the learning gaps of their children.

In 2009, standardized learning prerequisite assessment packages (tests and user guides) were developed to enable schools and AREFs to identify learning gaps

among students at the beginning of the school year. The prerequisite exams can be conducted at grades 2, 5, 7, 9, and 10, subject to availability of financial resources. The results of prerequisite tests are analyzed by teachers at the school level.

No policy obligates schools to use the results of the national exams or the prerequisite exams to make pedagogical, operational, and personnel adjustments. However, the Ministerial note introducing the assessment of learning prerequisites does encourage teachers to use the results to plan for their courses, and it encourages pedagogical inspectors at the local level to provide technical and pedagogical support to teachers based on the outcomes of these assessments. The school principal also is asked to present a report on the results of the prerequisite tests to the SMC and to inform parents about gaps in their children's learning.

5. School accountability to stakeholders is emerging

Accountability is at the heart of school-based management. The systemic connection between budgetary and personnel autonomy, parent participation in the financial and operational aspects of a school, and the measurement of learning outcomes are all aimed to reinforce accountability. Only by being accountable to parents can educational quality be sustainable. The following indicators address aspects of accountability that can be implemented within the framework of school-based management.

Guidelines exist to support teachers in using the results of the prerequisite tests to inform teaching and learning. The standardized learning prerequisite assessment is accompanied by a package of guidelines consisting of a test administration guide, a user guide, and a teacher's guide. The teacher's guide provides teachers with practical examples about potential ways of exploiting the assessment results. However, no guidelines are in place to demand accountability for their application.

The Directorate of Evaluation, through the CNEE, has the mandate for the development of methods and tools for the evaluation of education and training units. No comparative analysis is done for the standardized learning prerequisite assessment. However, the CNEE

analyzes national exams (baccalaureate) results drawing comparisons between regions, localities, and schools. No feedback is provided to schools for improving learning. Only basic results (volume of successes and failures) and examination scores are communicated to students and parents.

All acts of public finances are subject to the Regulations of Public Accounting according to Decree No. 330-66 of 21 April 1967, whether at the central, regional, local or school level. All civil servants managing funds are subject to financial control by their supervisors, the General Inspectorate of the MENFP and the General Inspectorate of Finance. An automatized monitoring of spending is operated through SIB-AREF (budget information system for AREFs) by the MENFP. However, no clear regulations are in place for linking rewards and sanctions to compliance.

Schools have an obligation to implement the instructions in the Ministerial Notes Concerning the Preparation of the School Year with regard to the school calendar, school councils, inspector activities, and exams. In addition, the MENFP has recently introduced a new online school information management tool "MASSAR" that supports the governance and transparency of schools. MASSAR also allows parents to monitor their children's school life (class schedules, scores, and attendance) using a personal login and password. So far only parents of high school students have access to their children's information. Incremental elements are gradually incorporated each year to the system. No incentives are in place for best performing schools.

In Morocco the MENFP has the legal authority to determine the content of the curriculum, but the Local Education Authority has a degree of flexibility in the selection of textbooks to be used in each school, from a list of books approved by the central scientific committee. No mandates are established to simplify and explain results of assessments to the general public.

5. Accountability to stakeholders is Emerging		
Indicator	Score	Justification
Guidelines for the use of results of student assessments	Established ●●●○	The standardized learning prerequisite assessment introduced in 2009 is accompanied by a guidelines package.
Analysis of school and student performance	Emerging ●●○○	No comparative analysis is done for the standardized learning prerequisite assessment. However national exams results are analyzed drawing comparisons between regions, localities and schools.
Degree of financial accountability at the central, regional, and school level	Established ●●●○	Regulations for complying with rules of financial management are in place at each level of education system.
Degree of accountability in school operations	Established ●●●○	Regulations for complying with the rules of school operations are in place, but do not link rewards to performance.
Degree of learning accountability	Latent ●○○○	There are no mandates to simplify and explain results of assessments to the general public.

IV. Enhancing education quality: Policy recommendations for Morocco

The interrelations between autonomy, assessment, and accountability can be compared to a "closed-loop system," or one in which feedback constantly informs output. In a closed-loop system, all elements in balance are critical to achieving success. In this regard, school-based management can achieve closure of the loop (balance) when it allows enough autonomy to make informed decisions, evaluate its results and use that information to hold someone accountable (Demas and Arcia 2015).

Regionalization is a top priority in the political agenda for Morocco. More power has been provided to the regions which have been consolidated from 16 to 12. For

education, it is clear from the benchmarking section, that Morocco made some progress in the implementation of its decentralization strategy by transferring most of the operational budget management and personnel deployment to the regional level, establishing rules and guidelines for supporting school management with the creation of the SMC, AAER, and the CPP, as well as introducing evaluation and accountability mechanisms through developing prerequisite tests and the MASSAR program.

AAERs have some authority to manage a small amount of budget. This has been effective in allowing schools to quickly address low-cost, essential expenditures without waiting for funds to be approved and disbursed by regional or central authorities. Expanding this model could allow schools to respond quickly to evolving needs unique to their community and to implement low-cost school improvement projects within weeks or months, rather than waiting for the next academic year to begin.

Box 3: Per Capita Formula Financing of Schools

Autonomy in the management of the budget at the school level is beneficial for school operations and for accountability since funds can be allocated to relevant areas in need and monitored by local stakeholders. There are several ways for funds to be transferred to schools. Formula financing can be especially useful in addressing inequities. Formulas can be simple or complex and there are benefits to both. A simple formula allows for transparency and easier monitoring. A more complex formula provides the opportunity to address multiple inequities (rural and urban, gender, socioeconomic, geographic, and so on) and provide incentives, but may make it less clear how much the recipient should be receiving.

Formula financing has been used across Eastern Europe and Central Asia (ECA). In the last 20 years several countries changed their school budget allocation process from input-based or normative funding, to formula funding for schools. The intent was to improve efficiency, equity, transparency and accountability of public education expenditures. Per student funding allows central governments to ensure a minimum level of education financing in all jurisdictions. Formulas can vary in the degree to which they cover the school budget. In Armenia and Georgia, they cover all recurrent costs but no capital expenditures. In several ECA countries, the central government uses a formula that yields a per student allocation to the regions. In turn, regional governments used their own funds to top off allocations to schools depending on the size of its revenues. To improve equity, a few local governments in Poland adjusted the formula for per student funding across their own schools in order to mitigate differences among schools within their territories.

Accountability and transparency depend on the process by which the government determines school budgets and makes public the relevant data for all stakeholders. In Morocco, the existing MASSAR system could be used to publicize student enrolment data among others for two-way accountability. This could increase predictability of operating cost funding flows for schools and their communities and reduce the risk of funding ghost students.

Source: Alonso and Sanchez 2011.

To ensure better learning outcomes through school-based management with accountability, Morocco could strengthen its SBM policies in a few key areas. Specific measures should be taken vis-à-vis the local authority to plan and manage school budgets, the composition and functions of the School Management Council, participation of school communities, and school evaluation and use of the results to improve learning.

1. Autonomy over planning and management of the school budget. The operational budget is managed at the regional level. To allow for closer and more efficient management of the budget against the actual needs of schools, the MENFP may wish to delegate some authority for budget management to the school level. Currently

This could be implemented in a range of ways. One possibility is to strengthen the role of the SMCs and AAERs to incorporate budget preparation and execution as part of their responsibilities. This would require clarifying the respective roles and responsibilities of SMCs and AAERs with regard to financial management, and defining a process of collaboration. SMCs should have some authority to plan and budget their projected operating costs. A second alternative is to strengthen the CPPs and mandate collaboration between the CPPs and the LEAs to inform annual budget preparation and to monitor budget execution. A third option is to combine these two approaches by designating the SMC and AAER as the core financial management team for each school, supported by the CPPs where appropriate.

Operationalizing any of these three approaches would facilitate a more efficient and transparent use of funds, tailored to each school community and its unique needs.

Salaries is another area of the budget. In Morocco responsibility for salaries remains highly centralized with wages and pay scales for teachers and non-teaching staff set by the central MENFP within the Public Service. While this arrangement is not likely to be decentralized without major system changes, it is recommended that the AREFs play a role. The AREFs are well placed to understand specific regional needs. Using well-defined criteria, established at the central level, AREFs could be given legal and budgetary responsibility to implement special remuneration packages as incentives for teaching and non-teaching staff working in challenging areas. This could encourage experienced teachers to apply for vacant posts in remote areas or suburbs, where learning outcomes are low. A better distribution of qualified and well-experienced teachers could also help address equitable access to quality education for all.

2. Autonomy in personnel management

The Moroccan context does not allow schools to have legal authority over the appointments and management of teachers and principals. New hires of teaching and non-teaching staff are made at the central level. However, significant powers are given to the AREFs to determine the local needs for teachers through a planning exercise and to manage their deployment. As stipulated by the National Charter for Education and Training and to ensure the hiring of teaching and non-teaching staff with the appropriate knowledge and skills to benefit their region, it is recommended that legal authority for recruitment be transferred to the AREFs.

The National Education and Training Charter acknowledges the role that schools play in communities and advocates for a participatory management approach. It also recognizes school heads as agents of change. There is a small degree of decentralization in the hiring of school directors in Morocco, with responsibility for the appointment and training of school directors resting with the AREFs. The performance evaluation of school principals is devolved to their immediate supervisor who is the MENFP delegate within the Local Education Authority.

Hand-in-hand with strengthening the school level's authority to plan and execute operating budget is the actual transfer of operating funds to the school. Per capita formula financing is one method that can be effective (see Box 3).

Since the initial appointment, training and evaluation of school directors is fairly well established, the Ministry may want to turn its attention to ensuring a quality process for training school director candidates. The current six month pilot initiative for training 110 school director candidates should be evaluated and communicated to local stakeholders for their feedback before the institutionalization of the new selection process of future school principals. The role of CPPs here is also important in the interview process for selecting new directors, their workplace training, and coaching.

3. Role of School Committee in School Governance

Morocco has established school governance policies to facilitate community participation in school management through the SMC and AAER. Their roles need to be strengthened to make SMCs and AAERs more effective in their contribution to school-based management and school improvement.

One challenge for school governance is that the composition of the SMC does not currently allow for balanced representation or effective participation of all stakeholder groups in school management. The majority of the SMC members are school staff, mainly teachers. Furthermore, although teachers are the dominant group, many who are nominated are disinterested in serving on the committee. It is recommended to revise both the guidelines for SMC composition and the election procedures to serve as an SMC member, and to improve the election criteria of the SMC members in order to allow for balanced representation among the school stakeholders at least half of them representing the community stakeholders in order to avoid election of disinterested parties and ensure a more balanced view in the school management (see Box 4).

The creation of a school development plan (contains school projects) is a good opportunity to involve communities together with the school administration in the management of their school. This type of plan allows a better understanding of how the school operates and

increases interest and awareness on how it is managed. The school development plan is a way to forge the identity of the institution, set its goals for better learning outcomes, and assert its independence. To strengthen this independence, the legal framework defining the SMC should provide it with more decision-making power, particularly with regard to defining its goals, the selection and implementation of school projects with monitorable indicators and clear accountability criteria.

engagement and improvement, the approval process for school projects identified by the SMC should be simplified to enable the SMC to implement their decisions. Finally, if the SMC is truly assisting in managing the school, it would need to meet on a regular and frequent basis to monitor school activities and evaluate school and teacher performance.

Box 4. Creating Effective School Management Committees: Country Examples

School Management Committees have the potential to improve student learning and school quality when they engage in the right kinds of activities. The Center for Public Education identifies five characteristics associated with effective SMCs.

- *Focus on Student Achievement.* Effective SMCs understand that student learning is the priority, and they focus their School Improvement Plans and activities on goals that help improve the quality of education and learning outcomes of children in school.
- *Allocate resources to needs.* These SMCs allocate available resources from school grants and their operating budget to focus on their student-learning priorities.
- *Are mindful of their own accountability to the community.* Effective SMCs routinely and regularly measure and report the return on investment of the education dollars they spend.
- *Use data whenever possible.* Effective SMCs track all available data about their schools through school report cards, student assessment scores, budget data, and any other data available and make this information available to the parents and communities they serve.
- *Engage the communities they serve.* Effective SMCs institutionalize parent and community involvement in policy-making and setting goals for the school (Ward and Griffin Jr 2005).

Composition of SMCs in Indonesia. SMCs in Indonesia are active with regular meetings throughout the year, and their activities have been seen to correlate with improved student learning outcomes, especially when the SMC coordinates with the local village council and democratically elects its members (Pradhan et al. 2011). A 2002 Ministerial Decree requires that each SMC have at least 9 members, and these members must include representatives from parents, community leaders, education professionals, the private sector, teachers, community-based organizations, and village officials. The decree further requires that SMCs encourage a larger role for the community and that they seek to accommodate the aspirations of the community in their activities (World Bank 2011).

Targeted SMC Training and Improved Student Learning in Mexico. Targeted training for parents and the SMC on establishing learning goals for the school can be effective for improving student learning. Through Mexico's PEC Program (Quality Schools Program), parents play a key role in the composition and management of SMCs. PEC provided targeted training to SMCs on how to improve learning outcomes in their schools. This puts the school community's focus on learning and allows them to better support the teaching and learning efforts of the principal and teachers at the school (Wang et al 2015). Increasing the responsibility of parents by involving them in the management of school grants, made the most difference in lowering repetition and failure rates in comparison to control schools (Skoufias and Shapiro 2006; Gertler et al. 2006). Targeted training to parents in School Improvement Planning (SIP) and monitoring also significantly increased language and math scores (Lopez-Calva and Espinosa 2006; Arcia, Kattan, Patrinos and Rivera-Olvera 2013).

Well-developed and clear guidelines on the role and functions of the SMC in school-level decisions also will contribute to greater participation. The SMC members will have more incentive to get involved in school management if their contribution is truly impacting school improvement. To foster this attitude of

Enhancing the performance of SMCs would not only lead to school improvement but also could facilitate the effective implementation of existing government policies. For example, the National Charter for Education and Training stipulates that 15 percent of curriculum should be determined at the local level. Reforming the

current SMC structure would enable the SMC to implement this policy in an informed and effective manner.

As part of the SMC strengthening it should be mandated that SMCs organize a public general assembly with the wider school community at least twice a year, once at the beginning to present the school development plan and at the end of the year to present the outcomes of the school performance and request feedback.

Beyond the school, significant efforts are required to improve the level of participation of local stakeholders in school governance. Proactive measures should be taken to encourage and motivate the school community and to engage actively in the school's mission. To assist these efforts, education departments and civil society organizations should be encouraged to undertake national campaigns to enhance the awareness of the role of parents in monitoring school performance, including finance and resources management.

4. Enhancing School and Student Assessment

No formal criteria are in place to evaluate the performance of schools and no comparative analyses on students' standardized tests and consequently no feedback is provided to schools in order to improve learning. Current approaches to the evaluation of school success focus exclusively on test scores obtained in national examinations, and do not provide information about a school's strengths or weaknesses, or how to improve. Since many factors play a critical role in the advancement of student performance and achievement, a school assessment system should be developed to reflect this.⁹ Accurate school assessment would guide appropriate allocation of human and financial resources, facilitate better school management, and foster more effective pedagogical practices at the school level, leading to improved learning outcomes for students (see Box 5).

It is recommended that regular school assessment across the education system be mandated and a national school evaluation and inspection system¹⁰ capable of ensuring

⁹ Many forms of school assessments exist, such as school inspection, teacher observation and appraisal, school self-evaluation or own quality assurance, school report cards, and test-based ranking. While they take many forms, they should deal with two main issues: integrity of the assessment process

local management of quality should be promoted, through standardised school performance and school self-evaluation, in order to guide allocation of human and financial resources, better school management, and pedagogical practices at the school level. Measures of "value added" of schools performance, developed over the past decade, are representative of this approach (Jarousse 2011). They constitute the basis of a reflection on the factors that explain differences in performance between schools. The results can be the starting point of collective reflection on the work done or to be done and pedagogical, operational and personnel changes or reinforcements that need to be taken across individual schools, CPPs, and regions.

Box 5: Why conduct school assessments?

- *To provide Information* on how schools are managed, how much they cost, and what they produce.
- *To strengthen accountability mechanisms* that set goals and hold students, parents, teachers, principals and ministries responsible for results.
- *To bolster awareness and demand for quality.* Because education stakeholders are often unaware of problems and are not used to playing a direct role in improving learning, they seldom hold schools accountable or push for improvements.
- *To create a shared vision.* Although most countries have a national curriculum, few have identified what constitutes acceptable/unacceptable performance or make clear provisions for the resources needed to reach goals.
- *To determine what actions may need to be taken to improve performance.*

Source: Ortega-Goodspeed 2006

As a first step, schools could self-evaluate using criteria from the central authorities on a range of school practices to assess their own quality. Eventually, school assessment practices could evolve into regular internal (school self-evaluation) and/or external assessment of school performance (the Regional Education Inspectorate or district level carries out school assessment) accompanied by written recommendations for operational and pedagogical adjustments. The results of the school self-evaluation could take the form of a

and use of yearly assessment of teachers and students to evaluate school performance and take action to improve.

¹⁰ Assessing both quality of school performance and compliance with regulations.

simple school report and feed into an annual school report card compiled by the SMC and shared with the

local education authority as well as the wider community (see Box 6).

Box 6: School Report Cards

School report cards can be an effective tool for monitoring and communication at the school level and beyond if they are kept simple and direct, and if there is capacity to use them. School report cards can be a useful method for disseminating information to school-level stakeholders so that they can better understand the following:

- The criteria for assessing performance.
- The performance of the school from year to year and in relation to other schools in the education system.
- The actions that may need to be taken to improve performance.

Used in this way, school report cards engage parents and the community, and build a partnership in demand for better results and solutions for reaching the intended outcomes.

Paraná State in Brazil undertook an accountability program and collected school-level information for each school to generate individual school report cards. The stated goals of the initiative were to increase parental knowledge about the quality of instruction in schools, and to raise parents' voice in school matters at the school council and state levels. The initiative also aimed to increase awareness among school personnel about their schools' instructional quality and academic performance. The report cards were relatively simple three-page documents which included the following information:

- Test-based performance (4th and 8th grade test scores)
- Student flows (promotion, retention and dropout rates)
- School characteristics (average class size and teachers' qualifications)
- Parental opinion and satisfaction with several aspects of the school (facilities, security, teaching practices, quality of education, and parental involvement)
- Parental opinion on the availability of information on school performance and activities (Bruns, Filmer and Patrinos 2011).

The report cards also included comparative information on the performance of neighboring schools. The report cards were published in a newsletter and widely disseminated. Parents and communities were easily able to access them, and engage in discussions with teachers and school officials about how they might improve the quality of their schools.

Sources: Wang et al 2015; Bruns et al 2011.

In contrast to school assessment, which are not currently mandated, student assessments are in place, although they are not systematically used to improve student learning. No comparative analyses are conducted on students' standardized tests, and no feedback is provided to schools to enable them to improve learning. The prerequisite exams are designed to inform pedagogical practice, but they are not mandated.

It is recommended that the MENFP upgrade the ministerial note on the assessment of learning prerequisites to a policy with some dedicated funding that obligates schools to administer the prerequisite tests regularly and to use the results to make changes. The MENFP should strengthen policies to require the

school principal to present an annual report on the results of the prerequisite tests to the SMC and to inform the parents about gaps in their children's learning.

Furthermore, tracking school quality over time requires data about students' learning performance at the entrance and at the end of the given education level. Student learning outcomes should be tracked more systematically, using already established mechanisms such as MASSAR. Currently, student learning performance at the entrance and at the end of lower secondary and high school are available through the national exams at the end of primary, end of lower secondary, and end of upper secondary (baccalaureate). However, little is known about student learning

performance that is comparative across primary schools because no standardized exam is given before the end of primary education. As part of its longer term planning, the MENFP should consider establishing a standardized learning assessment for the mastery of reading and math at an appropriate grade of primary education as an initial reference for the school evaluation at this level.

5. Foster Accountability to Stakeholders

Ways to increase voice, transparency, and accountability include some innovative tools such as public expenditure tracking, school report cards, community monitoring, and social audits (Gaventa and McGee 2013). To support financial and operational accountability, Morocco has fairly well developed regulations in place for financial management compliance at each level of the education system and clear regulations for complying with the rules of school operations. Accountability weaknesses, however, are much more prominent when it comes to communicating information to local stakeholders about school and student performance, analyzing that information, and enabling stakeholders to use the information to request improvements or to be motivated by the progress that they are achieving.

To complement the introduction of school assessments, it is recommended that the MENFP establish a policy for packaging and disseminating the information for school level stakeholders. Some countries have introduced school report cards or school self-evaluations for this purpose. Often the country's education management information system pulls relevant data to inform parts of the report cards. The MASSAR program is a database that could be better developed with improved dissemination of information on students' achievement and other learning inputs to hold the school accountable for increases in learning outcomes and allow greater monitoring by parents and the school community. The information could also allow for the introduction of remedies and consequences for poor performance. Additionally, developing and updating a school web page displaying school rules and regulations, activities, school projects, monitoring and evaluation, would be a genuine bridge linking the school to its community. Radio and TV programs and face-to-face general assemblies with the school community are other venues through which to disseminate key messages to parents about their child's

school, especially for rural and less sophisticated communities that do not have easy access to the internet.

Improvement in policies related to the school and student evaluation will provide more accountability tools and analysis that should be shared with all stakeholders, AREF, LEA, schools, and parents. Making public policies that link rewards and sanctions to operating performance will encourage schools to perform better.

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Acronyms

AAER	Association for Support to the School of Success
AREF	Regional Academy for Education and Training
CNEE	National Examinations and Evaluation Centre
CPP	Collective of Professional Practice
EFA	Education for All
EMIS	Education Management Information System
INE	National Authority for Evaluation
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
LEA	Local Education Authority
MASSAR	School Information Management Tool
MENFP	Ministry of National Education and Professional Training
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
SAA	School Autonomy and Accountability
SABER	Systems Approach for Better Education Results
SBM	School-Based Management
SMC	School Management Council

TIMSS Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study

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The Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) initiative collects data on the policies and institutions of education systems around the world and benchmarks them against practices associated with student learning. SABER aims to give all parties with a stake in educational results—from students, administrators, teachers, and parents to policymakers and business people—an accessible, detailed, objective snapshot of how well the policies of their country's education system are oriented toward ensuring that all children and youth learn.

This report focuses specifically on policies in the area of School Autonomy and Accountability.

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