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Strengthening Accountability in the Implementation of SDG4-Education 2030

High-Level Ministerial Panel Discussion on SDG4-Education 2030

1 November 2017 (3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.), Room II, UNESCO HQs

I. Background

SDG4-Education 2030 is a renewed commitment to ensure the right to quality education and the promotion of lifelong learning opportunities, as the foundation for sustainable development. As outlined in the 2015 Incheon Declaration and the 2030 Framework for Action (FfA), strengthened governance, partnerships and accountability are essential in translating global education targets and commitments into effective policy and practice at the national level. The range of partners engaged in education - whether government, schools and teachers, families and communities, civil society organizations, or the business sector – have important roles in this collective societal endeavor. They also each have important responsibilities for which they must be accountable in the collective effort to realize the global commitment to ensure the right to quality education for all. As duty bearers, governments have the primary responsibility to deliver on the right to education, and a central role as custodians of efficient, equitable and effective management and financing of public education.

II. Objectives

Based on progress countries have made in the past two years, this high-level event organized by the Secretariat of the global multi-stakeholder SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee, aims to review national experiences in strengthening governance and accountability systems, and to further our understanding of the opportunities and challenges arising from this effort for the effective realization of SDG4-Education 2030 commitments. It will explore the different processes, mechanisms or instruments established by governments to promote accountability and transparency, including through more rigorous public monitoring and reporting. It will also explore how greater accountability can improve both domestic and international financing for education, hence contributing to the implementation of the SDG4-Education 2030 agenda.

III. Format

Opening and introductory presentation

The High-Level Panel Discussion will begin with an opening address by UNESCO's Director-General. The introductory presentation on accountability in education by the Global Education Monitoring Report, will serve to frame the two panel discussions, by clarifying the notion of accountability in education, the diversity of approaches, as well as the critical issue of accountability in the financing of education. The panels will be followed by open floor discussions.

Thematic panel 1: Accountability: A diversity of approaches

Accountability aims to strengthen the efficiency and effectiveness of education systems, ultimately in view of improving individual, social and development outcomes for all. It implies the need for timely, reliable, and transparent data that can properly inform decisions relative to the deployment of funds and the regulation of education institutions, the quality and relevance of the learning, as well as, the degree of alignment of learning outcomes with desired national education and development goals.

Understandings of and approaches to accountability in education vary enormously across contexts. By featuring the multitude of approaches, policy measures, strategies and tools used by governments in the context of the SDGs, this panel discussion will identify the enabling environments required for effective accountability across the diversity of contexts.

Panelists' guiding questions:

- What is your approach to accountability in the implementation of the 2030 education goal and targets?
- What are the national public education monitoring mechanisms to ensure accountability?
- How can they be made more effective?

Thematic panel 2: Accountability in the Financing of Education

Financial accountability is key to the success of Education 2030. It relates to two obligations for all education stakeholders, namely: (i) that institutions report on how resources have been spent and, (ii) that institutions act in accordance with the rule of law. In education, governments are accountable to their citizens and are responsible for ensuring that public funds are allocated to the purposes for which they were committed, and are spent in a way that delivers education to all learners, in particular to those belonging to disadvantaged communities.

Reliable and complete information on the sources and uses of financial resources is key to monitor the extent to which governments have efficiently spent funds according to the priority areas budgeted in their education plans. This panel examines ways in which improved accountability can improve financing for education, both domestic and international.

Panelists' guiding questions:

- What can be done to ensure greater accountability in domestic and international financing for education?
- How effective are the various processes, mechanisms or instruments for monitoring and reporting of public budgets in promoting accountability and transparency at the national and international levels?

IV. Panelists

The two panels will bring together Ministers of Education representing all regions.

V. Contact

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