

Motivation

Yemen faces significant challenges in expanding access and promoting quality for improved educational outcomes. Despite overall increase in gross enrollment rates, Yemen has one of the lowest adult literacy rates in the world. The government acknowledges that it is unlikely to meet Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) objectives. Additional measures are needed to help achieve learning outcomes and improve overall educational quality in the country.

Objectives

First, it explores how public funds are used at the governorate and district levels to deliver educational services. Second, it examines how actual practices in selected governorates deviate from formal regulations with respect to teacher deployment and wage payments and resource allocations to frontline service delivery units. Third, it offers findings on leakages in wage and salary expenditures through an absenteeism survey, which provides direct physical verification of teachers' presence through surprise visits to selected schools.

Main findings

Budget allocations and realizations at various levels of Yemen's education system –ranging from central government, intermediate levels, and schools – are characterized by excessive rigidity, lack of predictability, and transparency.

Ghost workers

Existence of ghost teachers, who appear on the payroll but who do not teach or undertake any administrative tasks, is a significant problem that affects the efficiency of public expenditures. There is a gap of approximately 30,000 teachers between Annual Educational Survey (AES) data and payroll data. The large gap in the number of teachers in payroll, AES, and teacher absenteeism survey (TAS) records shows that teacher transfers between schools are not accurately reflected in schools' payrolls. However, it is hard to tell the true magnitude of the ghost teacher issue due to lack of reliable data. The ghost teacher issue cannot be resolved unless payroll is properly prepared for each school.

Absenteeism

Teacher absence rate is 19 percent of total registered teachers. The absenteeism rate is 14.5 percent. More than one-third of unauthorized absenteeism was unacknowledged by principals during the school visit. Among the 211 unauthorized absence cases in the survey, 36 percent were sick leaves, 19 percent were for personal reasons, and 26 percent were for unknown reasons. Furthermore, early departure and late arrival of teachers also contribute to high absenteeism rates. Absenteeism rate on Thursdays is higher than any other day of a week; reflecting the overall reluctance in Yemen for going to work on Thursdays. Mismanagement of leave authorization for teachers at schools is one of the key factors in high

absenteeism rates. Urban-rural or male-female variations were not detected in absenteeism rates. However, the survey did detect wide variations in absenteeism rates across governorates

Other findings

Several teachers indicated that they had never received the same salary amount for two consecutive months and that the payments were systematically delayed. Some also stated that additional fees were deducted from their salaries, either as government approval donation or as a penalty for days of absence. They have no records showing the base salary and deductions, as they do not get a pay stub.

Sample

240 schools

Sample design

The survey covered 4 governorates, Hodeidah, Hadramout, Shabwah and Saada—selected by stratified multi-stage sampling based on the MoE's 2004/05 Annual School Survey (School Census) data.

Resources monitored

Wage and salary expenditures

Recommendations

It is imperative to clarify roles and responsibilities for the education sector. If well designed, school autonomy measures can promote bottom-up accountability.

- The efficiency of human and other resources deployment in the basic education sector can be enhanced through improved teacher management.
- This report calls for a more merit-based rather than residency-based hiring mechanism, with a special emphasis for teachers specialized in needed subjects.
- Prevailing challenges in salary payments call for an improved salary delivery system through greater transparency.

Contact

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Main report

World Bank (2006) "Tracking Basic Education Expenditures in Yemen: Analyses of Public Resource Management and Teacher Absenteeism," Social and Economic Development Group Middle East and North Africa Region Report No. XXXX-MNA, December 27.