

Improving primary education service delivery through score card

From 1994, when country Y introduced free primary education, through 2005, increased national government spending for education (from 13% of the total budget before 1994 to about 28% in fiscal year 2004-2005) did not translate into improved quality of education. Many citizens believed that corruption and mismanagement were behind this situation. In a widely reported fraud case in 1999, for example, the Ministry of Education lost around USD 1.3 million meant for school construction.

Numerous issues and problems have plagued the public primary school system, particularly in the rural areas, including lack of infrastructure (school buildings, toilets, drinking water, sports facilities, benches, desks, etc.), lack of equipment and education materials (like textbooks, workbooks, laboratory equipments, etc.), lack of quality teachers, and inadequate supervision by the Village Education Committee.

In line with country Y's efforts at democratic decentralization, delivery of education services has been devolved to the District Governments. Village Education Committees, with representatives from the District Education Department, the Village Government and parents-teachers associations, are supposed to supervise public primary schools.

Faced with mounting pressure from citizen groups, and in accordance with its commitment to the Millenium Development Goals (MDG 2: Achieving Universal Primary Education), the government has recently embarked on a five-year program to improve delivery of primary education services. The program is being funded by multilateral donor agency, and involves focusing on improving services in rural districts where poor people are concentrated, and providing incentives for teachers to move into such districts.

Score card exercise:

A Civil Society Coalition for Quality Primary Education (CSCQE) has been formed in 2000, with 67 citizen groups spread out over the 27 Districts of country Y. The coalition has recently partnered with the Ministry of Education to monitor the performance of District Governments in delivering primary education services. Your institution is part of this coalition of citizen groups that has been assigned to monitor District C with 15 villages and 44 elementary schools using the score card.

- Define the issues that the score card will address;
- Identify the main objectives of the whole score card process;
- Define the key performance indicators that will be rated in the score card;
- Outline the key activities in implementing the score card.