

### Policy Goals for Independent Private Schools

### Status

#### 1. Encouraging Innovation by Providers

Schools have legal authority to set teacher standards, to appoint and dismiss teachers, and to determine teacher salary levels without final review from central authorities. Schools also have the legal authority over how the curriculum is delivered. However, central government has the legal authority over how resources are allocated to the classroom.

Established  
●●●○

#### 2. Holding Schools Accountable

The government does not set standards on what students need to learn and by when. Standardized exams are administered annually and results are disaggregated. Government does not require schools to undergo an inspection. Sanctions are not administered based on the results of school inspections or performance on standardized exams.

Emerging  
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#### 3. Empowering All Parents, Students, and Communities

Ad hoc information is provided to parents on standardized exam results or inspection reports. The government does not provide tax subsidies or cash transfers for families attending private schools.

Latent  
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#### 4. Promoting Diversity of Supply

Schools set fees without any review from government. The government allows all of the following school types to operate: community, not-for-profit, faith-based, for-profit. Operating standards are the same as public school certification standards. Registration/certification guidelines are not made public and are only available on request.

Established  
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### Policy Goals for Government-Funded Private Schools

### Status

#### 1. Encouraging Innovation by Providers

Schools have the legal authority to set teacher standards, to dismiss teachers, to determine teacher salary levels, to manage school operating budgets, and determine how the curriculum is delivered without final review from central authorities. However, the central government has the legal authority to appoint teachers and determine classroom resources allocation.

Established  
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#### 2. Holding Schools Accountable

The government sets standards on what students need to learn and by when. Standardized exams are administered annually and results are disaggregated. Government does not require schools to report on the use of public funds as a condition for the continuation of funding. Schools are required to undergo an inspection but no standard term is specified. Inspection reports include a school's strengths and weaknesses and specific priorities for improvement. Sanctions are not administered.

Established  
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#### 3. Empowering All Parents, Students, and Communities

Ad hoc information is provided to parents on standardized exam results or inspection reports. Neither students nor parents are interviewed as part of an inspection process. Schools are allowed to select students based on academic performance. Parental choice is restricted by compulsory monetary parent contributions.

Emerging  
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#### 4. Promoting Diversity of Supply

The government allows for all types of providers to operate a school. Operating standards are the same as public school certification standards. Registration/certification guidelines are only available on request. Academic operating budgets are equivalent to per-student amounts in public schools. Schools do not receive initial funding to open.

Established  
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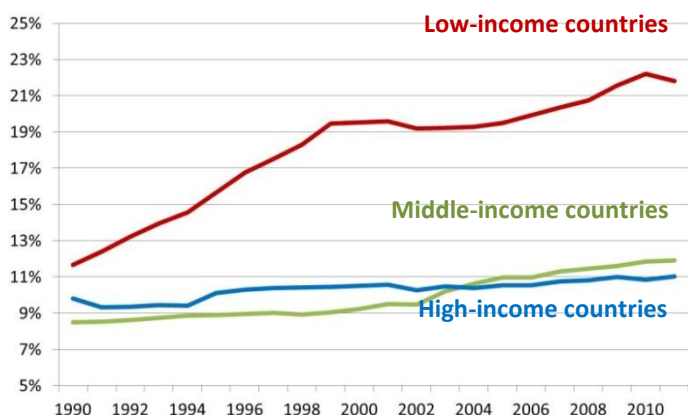
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## Introduction

In recent years, private sector engagement in education—which includes a vibrant mix of non-profit, for-profit and faith-based organizations—has grown significantly around the world. **In the last two decades, the percentage of students in low-income countries attending private primary schools doubled, from 11 percent to 22 percent** (figure 1). This growth in private provision is closely connected to the boom in access that has taken place in low-income countries over the same two decades: primary net enrolment increased from 55 percent to 80 percent between 1990 and 2010.

**As countries redouble their efforts to achieve learning for all at the primary and secondary levels, the private sector can be a resource for adding capacity to the education system.** By partnering with private entities, the state can provide access to more students, particularly poor students who are not always able to access existing education services (Pal and Kingdon 2010; Patrinos, Barrera-Orsorio, and Guáqueta 2009; Hossain 2007). Additionally, evidence shows that governments have been successful at improving education quality and student cognitive outcomes in many countries through effective engagement with private education providers (Barrera-Orsorio and Raju 2010; French and Kingdon 2010; Barrera-Orsorio 2006).

**Figure 1. Private enrollment as a percentage of total primary enrollments, by country income level**



Source: Baum et al (2014).

**This report presents an analysis of how effectively the current policies in Swaziland engage the private sector in basic (primary and secondary) education.** The analysis draws on the Engaging the Private Sector (EPS) Framework, a product of the World Bank's Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER). SABER

collects and analyzes policy data on education systems around the world, using evidence-based frameworks to highlight the policies and institutions that matter most for promoting learning for all children and youth.

SABER-EPS research in Swaziland has found that at both the primary and secondary levels, quality and equity are challenges. The private sector plays an increasingly significant role in education at both levels. Based on a review of existing policies, SABER-EPS offers the following recommendations for Swaziland to enhance private sector engagement in education in order to meet the challenges of access, quality, and equity:

- 1) Empower parents to make informed educational choices, while providing additional support to disadvantaged groups.
- 2) Strengthen accountability mechanisms to ensure that all students receive a quality education.
- 3) Strengthen the policy environment for the non-state sector to promote transparency and an adequate supply of school places.

The rest of the report provides an overview of SABER-EPS findings, followed by a description of the basic education system in Swaziland that focuses on the private sector and government policies related to the private provision of education. The report then benchmarks Swaziland's policy environment utilizing the SABER-EPS Framework and offers policy options to enhance access and learning for all children in primary and secondary school.

## Overview of SABER-Engaging the Private Sector

In many countries, the extent and activity of the private sector in education is largely undocumented and unknown. SABER-EPS is working to help change that. SABER-EPS assesses how well a country's policies are oriented toward ensuring that the services of non-state providers promote learning for all children and youth.

The aim of SABER-EPS is not to advocate private schooling. The intention is to outline the most effective evidence-based policies specific to each country's current approach toward non-state provision of education. SABER-EPS assesses the extent to which policies facilitate quality, access, and equity of private education services. Data generated by SABER-EPS can further the policy dialogue and support governments in engaging private providers to improve education results.

### Four policy goals for engaging the private sector

SABER-EPS collects data on four key policy areas that international evidence has found effective for strengthening accountability mechanisms among citizens, policymakers, and providers (box 1). These policy goals were identified through a review of rigorous research and analysis of top-performing and rapidly improving education systems.

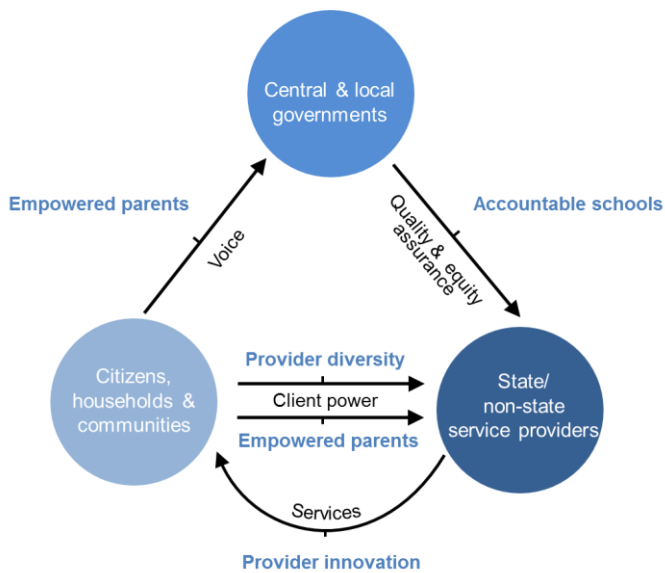
The four policy goals enable a government to increase innovation and strengthen accountability among the critical actors in an education system (figure 2). Empowering parents, students, and communities enhances the ability of parents to express their voice and hold policymakers accountable for results. Additionally, when parents are empowered, in most contexts, they can have greater influence over provider behaviors. Increasing school accountability strengthens the quality- and equity-assurance mechanisms between the state and education providers. Encouraging innovation and promoting diversity of supply can allow providers to respond to local needs. Increasing school-level autonomy in critical decisions improves the services provided to students. Allowing a diverse set of providers to enter the market can increase client power and enable citizens to choose from a wider range of models. By developing these policy goals, a government can improve the accountability of all providers in an

education system and, subsequently, have a positive impact on educational outcomes.

#### Box 1. Key Private Sector Engagement Policy Goals

1. **Encouraging innovation by providers.** Local decision making and fiscal decentralization can have positive effects on school and student outcomes. Most high-achieving countries allow schools autonomy in managing resources (including personnel) and educational content. Local school autonomy can improve the ability of disadvantaged populations to determine how local schools operate.
2. **Holding schools accountable.** If schools are given autonomy over decision making, they must be held accountable for learning outcomes. Increases in autonomy should be accompanied by standards and interventions that increase access and improve quality. The state must hold all providers accountable to the same high standard.
3. **Empowering all parents, students, and communities.** When parents and students have access to information on relative school quality, they can have the power to hold schools accountable and the voice to lobby governments for better-quality services. For empowerment to work equitably, options for parents and students should not depend on wealth or student ability.
4. **Promoting diversity of supply.** By facilitating market entry for a diverse set of providers, governments can increase responsibility for results, as providers become directly accountable to citizens as well as to the state.

**Figure 2. Relationships of Accountability for Successful Service Delivery**



Source: Adapted from the World Bank (2003).

SABER-EPS recognizes that the four policy goals outlined in box 1 can assist governments in raising accountability for the education services provided in their countries. The tool allows governments to systematically evaluate their policies and implement practices that are effective across multiple country contexts.

### Four types of private provision of education

Across the world, governments can implement numerous strategies to improve educational outcomes by supporting non-state education provision. SABER-EPS benchmarks key policy goals across the four most common models of private service delivery:

1. Independent private schools: schools that are owned and operated by non-government providers and are financed privately, typically through fees.
2. Government-funded private schools: schools that are owned and operated by non-government providers, but receive government funding.
3. Privately managed schools: schools that are owned and financed by the government, but are operated by non-government providers.
4. Voucher schools: schools that students choose to attend with government-provided funding; these schools can be operated by the

government or non-government providers or both, depending on the system.

SABER-EPS analyzes laws and regulations to: (1) identify the types of private engagement that are legally established in each country and (2) assess each education system's progress in achieving the four policy goals. **The aim of the SABER-EPS Framework is to provide policy guidance to help governments establish strong incentives and relationships of accountability among citizens, governments, and private education providers, with the goal of improving education results.**

## Benchmarking Education Policies: The SABER-EPS Methodology

The World Bank has developed a set of standardized questionnaires and rubrics for collecting and evaluating data on the four policy goals for each type of private school engagement established in a given country.

The policy goals are benchmarked separately for each type of private engagement. A point of emphasis here is that **these tools only assess official and established policies governing private education provision. Additional tools determine on-the-ground implementation of these policies.** The SABER-EPS information is compiled in a comparative database that interested stakeholders can access for detailed reports, background papers, methodology, and other resources; the database details how different education systems engage with the private sector.

For each indicator associated with the respective four policy goals, the country receives a score between 1 and 4 (figure 3), representing four levels of private sector engagement: 1 (latent), 2 (emerging), 3 (established), or 4 (advanced).

**Figure 3. SABER Rubric Benchmarking Levels**



Source: Baum et al. (2014).

The overall score for each policy goal is computed by aggregating the scores for each of its constituent indicators. For example, a hypothetical country receives the following indicator scores for one of its policy goals:

- Indicator A = 2 points
- Indicator B = 3 points
- Indicator C = 4 points
- Indicator D = 4 points

The hypothetical country's overall score for this policy goal would be:  $(2+3+4+4)/4 = 3.25$ . The overall score is converted into a final development level for the policy goal, based on the following scale:

Latent:	1.00 – 1.50
Emerging:	1.51 – 2.50
Established:	2.51 – 3.50
Advanced:	3.51 – 4.00

**The ratings generated by the rubrics are not meant to be additive across policy goals. That is, they are not added together to create an overall rating for engaging the private sector.**

### Use of the SABER-EPS tool

SABER-EPS is not intended to be used as a prescriptive policy tool, but rather, as a tool to generate an informed assessment of a country's policies vis-à-vis current knowledge about effective approaches. The results of this benchmarking exercise serve as a good starting point to discuss potential policy options that could be considered, based on the nuances of the local context and national education system. Education systems are likely to be at different levels of development across indicators and policy goals. While intuition suggests it is probably better to be as developed in as many areas as possible, **the evidence does not clearly show the need to be functioning at the advanced level for all policy goals.** National education priorities lay at the center of recommended policy options; countries may prioritize higher levels of development in areas that contribute most to their immediate goals.

For more information on the global evidence underlying EPS and its policy goals, see the SABER framework paper, "What Matters Most for Engaging the Private Sector in Education" (Baum et al. 2014).



## Education in Swaziland

Swaziland is a lower middle-income country in Sub-Saharan Africa with a population of 1.2 million. Gross domestic product (GDP) per capita (current US\$) in Swaziland was US\$ 3,042 in 2012. The country's average annual growth rate from 2009 to 2013 was 1.5 percent, and was projected to be 2 percent for 2014 (World Development Indicators). Swaziland is divided into four administrative regions: Hhohho, Manzini, Lubombo, and Shiselweni.

Swaziland recognizes education as a catalyst for socio-economic development and national economic growth. The mission of the education system is “[t]o provide relevant, quality, and affordable education and training opportunities for the entire populace of the Kingdom of Swaziland in order to develop all positive aspects of life for self-reliance, social and economic development, and global competitiveness” (MET 2011b).

Education in Swaziland is regulated by the 2005 Constitution, the Education Act of 1981, and the Free Primary Education Act of 2010. The basic education system in Swaziland follows a 7-5 structure: 7 years of primary education (grades 1–7) and five years of secondary (forms 1–5) education. The Free Primary Education Act of 2010 (article 3) says, “Except as provided in this Act every Swazi child enrolled at a public primary school is entitled to free education at that public primary school, beginning with grade 1 up to and including grade 7.” Schools are considered public if they are “maintained with public funds to the extent of at least 51 percent of its needs” (article 2) (Swaziland 1981).

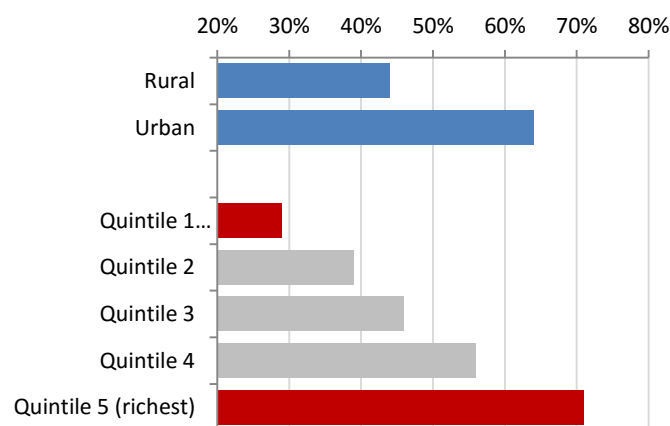
The Ministry of Education and Training implemented free primary education (FPE) in all grade 1 and 2 public schools in January 2010. The FPE program was designed to expand to grade 3 in 2011, grade 4 in 2012, and so on in subsequent years until the whole primary school cycle is covered in 2015 (MET 2014).

In 2007 the primary net enrollment rate in Swaziland was 85 percent (Edstats). After the introduction of free primary education in 2010, first-grade enrollment increased by 32 percent in one year (MET 2014). The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) of 2010 found that 97 percent of children aged 6–12 were attending primary or secondary school. The MICS found no marked differences in primary attendance by gender, rural-urban

status, or wealth quintile (Central Statistical Office and UNICEF 2011).

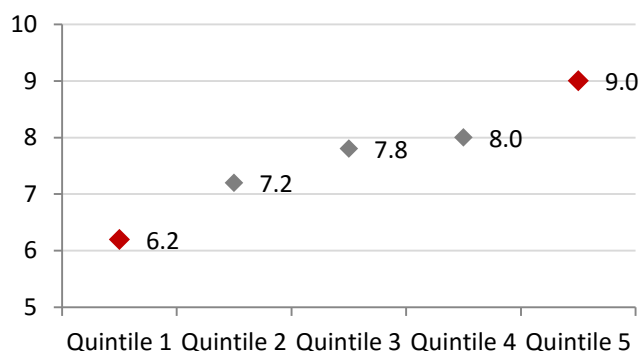
In secondary school, attendance rates drop substantially. In 2011 the enrollment rate was a mere 35 percent (Edstats). The reasons behind the drop include both low access by poorer households, but also a limited supply of secondary education. The SACMEQ III (Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality) Report noted that due to the “pyramidal” structure of the Swazi education system, there are not enough spaces in secondary school for all students who pass the end of primary examination (Shabalala, Nxumalo, and Nkambule 2012). Moreover, pupils from rural and poor households are disadvantaged in accessing secondary education. For instance, 64 percent of children in urban areas attended secondary school in 2010, compared to only 44 percent in rural areas (figure 4). The rate of attendance also increased proportionally with household income: whereas 29 percent of children from the poorest quintile attended secondary school, 71 percent of their peers from the wealthiest quintile did (figure 4).

**Figure 4. Secondary Enrollment Rate by Rural-Urban Status and Income Quintile, 2010**



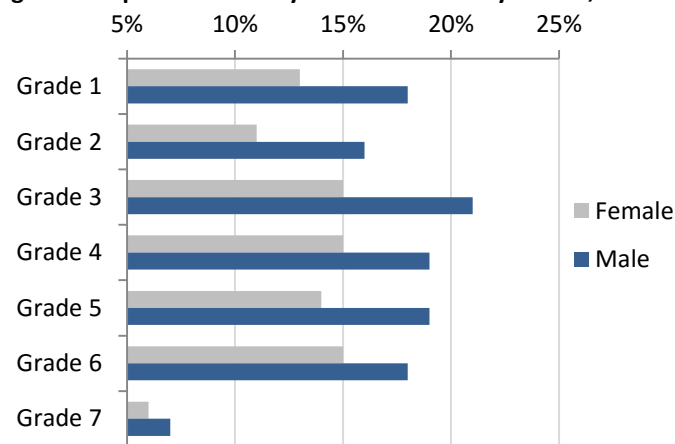
Source: Central Statistical Office and UNICEF (2011).

Overall, average years of schooling for a child in Swaziland is strongly related to the socio-economic status of the household. As shown in figure 5, the duration of a child's schooling increases with household wealth. Children from the poorest quintile have, on average, 6.2 years of schooling, whereas children from the wealthiest households have 9 years (figure 5).

**Figure 5. Average Years of Schooling by Income Quintile, Age 15–19, 2006**

Source: Edstats.

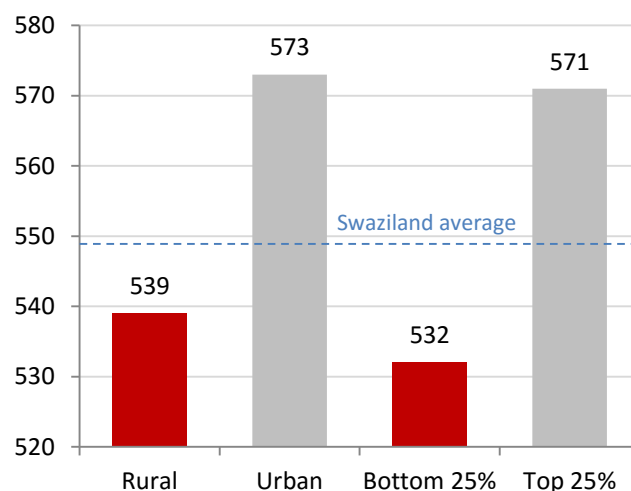
Repetition in primary school is a challenge across the board, even though boys repeat grades at higher rates than girls. In 2011, 15 percent of all students repeated their grade. The repetition rate in first grade was 18 percent for boys and 13 percent for girls (figure 6). These rates remained very high through grade 7, with 21 percent of boys and 15 percent of girls repeating grade 3 (figure 6). In lower and upper secondary, the overall repetition rate also remains high—11 percent at both levels in 2011 (MET 2011a).

**Figure 6. Repetition Rate by Gender in Primary School, 2010**

Source: MET (2011a).

In terms of student learning, Swaziland has performed above average on standardized tests in mathematics and reading. At the national level, the country has improved in the period from 2000 to 2007. In the SACMEQ projects administered in 2000 and 2007 to students in grade 6, Swaziland ranked above average on both occasions (Edstats). For instance, Swazi students scored 530 points on average in reading in 2000 and 549 points in 2007 (compared to a regional average of 500).

Despite this notable performance, there are distinct differences in learning outcomes depending on the location of a student (urban-rural), as well as the socio-economic status of the pupil's household. For instance, the latest SACMEQ examination, in 2007, shows that students from rural areas scored over 30 points lower than their urban peers in reading, while the difference between the poorest and wealthiest students was almost 40 points (figure 7) (SACMEQ 2010). It is important to note that a difference of approximately 50 points represents a difference of one year of schooling (Chitiga and Chinoona 2011). Accordingly, students from the poorest quintile are nearly a year behind their wealthiest peers in schooling.

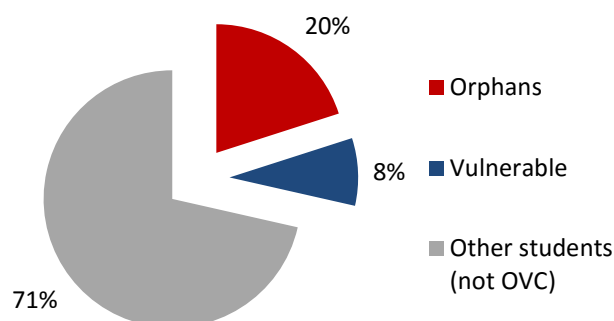
**Figure 7. Performance in Reading by Location and Socio-economic status, Grade 6, 2007**

Sources: Edstats; SACMEQ (2014).

A pertinent reality that impacts Swaziland's education system is the high number of orphaned and vulnerable children, largely attributable to the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the country. In 2011, the total number of orphans and vulnerable children in schools was 68,251, or almost 30 percent of all primary school students (figure 8) (MET 2011a). These are children who have lost one or both parents, or who are vulnerable because of various factors, such as living with a guardian unable to care for them, staying alone, living with elderly grandparents or a sibling-headed household, or having no fixed place to stay.



**Figure 8. Share of Orphaned and Vulnerable Children among All Primary School Students, 2011**

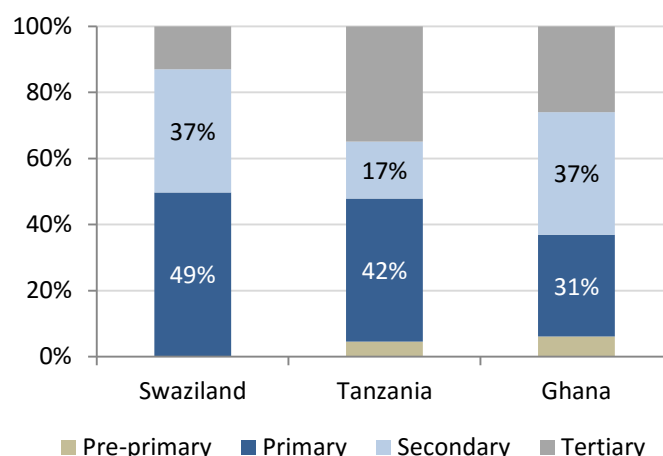


Source: MET (2011a).

The Government of Swaziland has demonstrated a commitment to supporting orphans and vulnerable children to access education, for instance, by implementing the All Children Safe in School Initiative in 2003–2005. Key parts of the program included providing grants to schools to cover children’s school fees and organizing school meals in some schools. In the communities that benefited from the program, primary school enrolment increased by approximately 20 percent (UNICEF 2009).

Since 2000 public spending on education has increased substantially in the country. While education spending made up 5.5 percent of GDP in 2000, it made up over 8 percent in 2011 (Edstats). As a share of total government expenditures, educational spending increased from 17 percent to nearly 24 percent over the same period. In terms of allocations by education level, Swaziland spent the majority of education funding on primary education, nearly 50 percent, in 2011. In the same year, expenditures on secondary education stood at 37 percent, and on tertiary education, 13 percent (figure 9). Swaziland’s spending on education is compared to two low-income and lower-middle-income countries, Tanzania and Ghana, respectively (figure 9).

**Figure 9. Educational Expenditures in Swaziland, Tanzania, and Ghana, by Level, Various Years**



Source: Edstats.

Note: Swaziland statistics from 2011; Tanzania and Ghana statistics from 2009.

## Private Education in Swaziland

In Swaziland, the Education Act of 1981 provides the legal foundation for private schools to operate, so long as they are registered with the government. The Education Act also allows the Minister of Education to establish regulations governing education, and in 2009, the Ministry of Education used this mandate to issue The Education (Establishment and Registration of Private Educational Institutions) Regulations Notice (MET 2009).

A number of Swaziland’s other key policy documents recognize the potential role of the private sector in improving access to and the quality of basic education services. For example, The Swaziland Education and Training Sector Policy (MET 2011b) applies to “all learners, teachers, employees, managers, and other providers of education and training in all public and private, formal, and non-formal learning institutions, at all levels of the education system in the Kingdom of Swaziland.”

There is currently a vibrant mix of public-private partnerships in the education sector in Swaziland. The non-state sector plays a major role in delivering basic education services, but the Government of Swaziland plays a major role in financing these services. Building on the most common models of private service delivery identified by SABER, there are currently government-funded and independent private schools in Swaziland, in addition to public schools. These categories are outlined below, as well as further distinctions to be made within

government-funded private schools in the case of Swaziland:

#### Government schools

These schools owned by and fully financed by the government.

#### Government-funded private schools

Based on the SABER-EPS definition, community schools, mission schools, and private and/or aided schools are considered government-funded private schools for the purposes of this study. They are defined as follows:

- **Community schools** are owned by the government and employ teachers that are paid by the government. Communities pay for the support staff and other costs of these schools.
- **Mission and/or government schools** are owned by faith-based or religious organizations, but the government employs and pays their teachers.
- **Private and/or aided schools** are owned by private organizations, but the government pays their teachers' salaries.

#### Independent private schools

Schools that are considered independent private schools in Swaziland are defined as follows:

- **Private and/or non-aided schools** that are owned by private organizations and fully funded by private, non-governmental sources (i.e., tuition and school fees).

Only one percent of primary schools are funded solely by the government (table 1). Although the government funds 60 percent of those primary schools considered community schools, such schools also receive significant resources from their communities. Faith-based/religious organizations own and operate 34 percent of primary schools, which are also partially funded by the government. Other private organizations own the remaining 5 percent of primary schools, but of those, half (2 percent) are also funded partially by the government (table 1).

**Table 1. Primary Schools in Swaziland by Ownership and Funding Source, 2011**

Ownership	Source of Financing			Total (%)
	Gov't only	Both gov't and non-state	Non-state only	
<b>Government</b>	1%	60% (Community schools)		61
<b>Faith-based organization</b>		34% (Mission/Gov't schools)		34
<b>Other private organization</b>		2% (Private/aided schools)	3% (Private/non-aided schools)	5
<b>Total (%)</b>	1	96	3	100

Source: MET (2011a).

Thus, although 40 percent of primary schools are owned by non-state organizations, the government funds or at least partially funds nearly all (96 percent) of these schools. These schools can thus be considered government-funded private schools, on the basis of both public and non-state involvement in the schools' ownership and/or financing. Only three percent of all primary schools are considered to be independent private schools—that is, completely funded by non-governmental sources. In 2011, there were 21 such independent private schools. Not surprisingly, those independent private schools enrolled only one percent of the primary school population (MET 2011a).

Similarly, at the secondary level, we see that the vast majority (93 percent) of schools receive some funding from public sources (table 2). As at the primary level, the majority of schools (68 percent) are community schools. 89 percent of secondary schools can thus be considered government-funded private schools, as ownership and/or financing of the school consist of both public and non-state actors. Only seven percent of secondary schools are considered independent private schools. In 2011, all independent private schools (17 in total) at the secondary level provided senior secondary education (MET 2011a). The only providers of lower secondary education were community schools and mission schools.

**Table 2. Secondary Schools by Ownership and Funding Source, 2011**

Ownership	Source of Financing			Total (%)
	Gov't only	Both gov't and non-state	Non-state only	
Government	4%	68% (Community)		72
Faith-based organization		19% (Mission/Gov't)		19
Other private organization		2% (Private/aided)	7% (Private/non-aided)	9
<b>Total (%)</b>	4	89	7	100

Source: MET (2011a).

The proportion of students attending independent private schools is relatively stable: around one percent for primary schools (table 3) and two percent for secondary schools (table 4).

**Table 3. Primary Enrollment in independent Private Schools, as a Percentage of Total Primary School Enrollment**

Year	2009	2010	2011	2012
Number of students in private/non-aided schools	1,126	2,588	2,515	3,610
Total primary school students	231,449	241,231	239,124	
Private enrolment as % of total	0.5%	1.1%	1.1%	

Source: MET (2012).

**Table 4. Secondary Enrollment in Independent Private Schools, as a Percentage of Total Primary School Enrollment**

Year	2009	2010	2011	2012
Number of students in private/non-aided schools	1,376	2,070	1,666	1,938
Total secondary school students	83,089	88,850	90,950	
% of Total	1.7%	2.3%	1.8%	

Source: MET (2012).

## Benchmarking Swaziland's Private School Policies

This section presents the results of SABER-Engaging the Private Sector Framework tool for (i) independent private schools and (ii) government-funded private schools, as Swaziland has decided to involve these providers in offering basic education services.<sup>1</sup> The following text discusses the benchmarking results against the established recommended practices. For more information on the global evidence underlying these policy goals, see the SABER framework paper, "What Matters Most for Engaging the Private Sector in Education" (Baum et al. 2014).

The main policies, laws, and official documentation used to benchmark Swaziland's education sector include:

- 2005 Constitution
- Education Act No. 9 of 1981
- Free Primary Education Act of 2010
- Teaching Service Act of 1982
- The Education (Establishment and Registration of Private Educational Institutions) Regulations Notice of 2009

### Goal 1: Encouraging Innovation by Providers

The highly particular and contextualized nature of education delivery necessitates decision making at the school level. In order to be aware of and adapt to changing student needs, school leaders require autonomy over the most critical managerial decisions.

The methodologically rigorous studies assessing the impacts of local school autonomy on student learning outcomes generally find a positive relationship (Hanushek and Woessmann 2010; Bruns, Filmer and Patrinos 2011). A few studies find evidence that local autonomy for school leaders is associated with increased student achievement, as well as reduced student repetition and failure rates (King and Özler 2005; Jimenez and Sawada 2003; Gertler, Patrinos, and Rubio-Codina 2012).

### Box 2. International Best Practice – Encouraging Innovation by Providers

The following decisions/processes are made at the school level:	
•	Establishment of teacher qualification standards.
•	Appointment and deployment of teachers
•	Teacher salary levels
•	Teacher dismissals
•	The way in which the curriculum is delivered
•	Class-size decisions
•	Management of the operating budgets

#### Development level:

*Independent private schools:*



*Government-funded private schools:*



In Swaziland, most education policies allow both independent and government-funded private schools a high degree of school-level autonomy. With an overall score of **established**, current policies for both independent and government-funded private schools meet the standards of good practice.

Independent private schools have the legal authority to appoint, deploy, and dismiss teachers without review by the central government. The policies that allow independent private schools this autonomy are currently informal.

Both independent and government-funded private schools are allowed to determine teacher standards and how to deliver the curriculum. There are certain basic requirements for teachers set by the government, which vary by the type of teacher vacancy in question. These basic requirements are the same across all schools, but independent and government-funded private schools are allowed to set additional criteria. Class sizes are set by the government, with maximum outlined in the Education (Education Standards) Regulations, section 14. For primary school the maximum class size is 45 pupils; for secondary school, the maximum is 40.

While government-funded private schools have autonomy over their operating budgets, they do not have the legal authority to appoint and deploy teachers. Since the government (via the Teaching Service Commission, or TSC) pays teachers' salaries in these schools, it also maintains the authority to appoint and

<sup>1</sup> As of May 2017, this report had not yet been validated in country. Data on Swaziland's laws and policies pertaining to nonstate education provision were collected in 2013. Consequently, potential policy options may either

have diminished or have varying relevance, depending on current circumstances in Swaziland and its education sector.

deploy teachers centrally. Most government-funded schools “top-up” teacher salaries with their own resources. To recruit a teacher, a government-funded school announces the vacancy and any additional hiring criteria to the TSC, which then seeks a suitable candidate.<sup>2</sup> Government-funded schools may also present a candidate to the TSC.

**Table 5. Goal 1: Encouraging Innovation by Providers**

<i>A. Common policies for independent private schools and government-funded private schools</i>		
Item	Score	Justification
Who has legal authority to set teacher standards?	Advanced ●●●●	Schools have the legal authority to set minimum standards for teachers.
Who has legal authority to determine teacher salary levels?	Advanced ●●●●	Schools have the legal authority to determine teacher salary levels without government review.
Who has legal authority to dismiss teachers?	Advanced ●●●●	Schools have the legal authority to dismiss teachers without government review.
Who has legal authority to determine how the curriculum is delivered?	Advanced ●●●●	Schools have the legal authority over how the curriculum is delivered.
Who has legal authority to determine maximum class size?	Latent ●○○○	The central government has the legal authority to determine class size.
<i>B. Independent private school policies</i>		
Item	Score	Justification
Who has legal authority to appoint and deploy teachers?	Advanced ●●●●	The school has the legal authority to appoint teachers without review by central authorities.
<i>C. Government-funded private school policies</i>		
Item	Score	Justification
Who has legal authority to appoint and deploy teachers?	Latent ●○○○	The central government has the authority to appoint and deploy teachers.
Who has legal authority to manage school operating budgets?	Advanced ●●●●	Schools have the legal authority to manage their operating budgets.

<sup>2</sup> Interviews with the Ministry of Education and Training, April 2014.

Based on the benchmarking results for encouraging innovation by providers, the **suggested policy options** for Swaziland include the following:

- Strengthen the regulatory environment for the non-state sector.
- Increase schools' flexibility with respect to the use of additional resources and curriculum delivery which meet the needs of the local community.

For government-funded private schools:

- Allow schools to appoint and deploy teachers at the school level.

## Goal 2: Holding Schools Accountable

On average, students perform better in schools with higher levels of accountability to the state (Abdulkadiroglu et al. 2011; Carnoy and Loeb 2002; Woessmann et al. 2007; Hanushek and Raymond 2005). For non-state providers, when government funding is tied to accountability standards, schools are incentivized to perform more efficiently (Barrera-Orsorio and Raju 2010; Patrinos 2002). A strong accountability system requires that the government, parents, and educational professionals work together to raise outcomes. The government must play a role in ensuring that superior education quality is delivered by schools. SABER-EPS assesses multiple policy indicators to determine non-state provider accountability. A list of the key indicators is provided in box 3.

### Box 3. International Best Practice – Holding Schools Accountable

- The central government sets standards regarding what students need to learn, including deadlines for meeting these standards.
- Students are required to take standardized examinations; exam results are disaggregated by school, socioeconomic status, gender, etc.
- Schools are required to report on the use of public funds as a condition of continued funding.
- The central government or an external agency performs school inspections as determined by school need.
- Schools produce school improvement plans.
- School performance is tied to sanctions and/or rewards.

### Development level:

*Private independent schools:*



*Government-funded private schools:*

Swaziland's policies for holding independent schools accountable are **emerging**, while its policies for holding government-funded private schools accountable are **established**, demonstrating systematic instances of good practice.

While students at independent schools take the same standardized exams as students at all other schools, policy does not require most independent private schools to undergo inspections. However, if schools do not meet all required criteria at the time of registration, they are awarded only provisional registration. In those cases, after one year of provisional registration, private schools are required to undergo an inspection to become fully registered. The Education (Education Standards) Regulations, article 7, establish that: "The director shall appoint officers with authority to enter and inspect any school, or any place at which it is reasonably suspected that a school is conducted, at any time, without notice, and to report to him with respect to the school or any aspect thereof" (MET 2009).

Private schools are also required to provide the principal secretary with "such particulars, information, documents or returns as the principal secretary may from time to time require. This includes statistics, information and inspection" (MET 2009, article 10).

In contrast, for government-funded private schools, policies pertaining to standardized exams and school inspections demonstrate good practice. For these schools, the government sets standards on what students must learn and requires inspections. Although there is no standard timetable for inspections, inspection reports outline the strengths and weaknesses of schools and recommend specific priorities for school improvement. Primary schools are required to submit school improvement plans following inspection recommendations. Neither sanctions nor rewards are administered as a result of school inspections or school performance on standardized exams. However, these policies are currently informal. While the government has stated its intention to inspect all schools, in practice resource constraints may prevent inspectors from



reaching some schools, especially government-funded private schools.<sup>3</sup>

The Swaziland Examinations Council is responsible for developing, administering, and processing national examinations in Swaziland. All public and private schools and students studying the primary, lower secondary, and upper secondary curricula take national examinations at the end of grade 5, form 3 (grade 10), and form 5 (grade 12), respectively.

The Education Act (article 20) stipulates that “The Permanent Secretary may appoint any person to inspect schools and adult education centres [sic] for the purpose of—

- Ensuring that proper standards are maintained in relation to the health of pupils, teachers and other members of staff and the cleanliness of buildings, premises, and other facilities;
- Examining the records of any school or adult education centre [sic] and any other matters relating to the teaching at or management of such school or centre [sic].” (Swaziland 1981).”

**Table 6. Goal 2: Holding Schools Accountable**

<i>A. Common policies for independent private schools and government-funded private schools</i>		
Item	Score	Justification
Are students required to take standardized exams, with results disaggregated?	Advanced ●●●●	Standardized exams are administered in select grades annually and results are disaggregated.
Are sanctions administered based on the results of school inspections or performance on standardized exams?	Latent ●○○○	There are no sanctions in place for underperformance.
<i>B. Independent private school policies</i>		
Item	Score	Justification
Does the government set standards on what students need to learn and by when?	Latent ●○○○	The government does not set standards on what students need to learn and by when.

Are school inspections determined by school need?	Latent ●○○○	The government does not require independent private schools to undergo inspections.
Does the inspection report outline the strengths and weaknesses of the school?	Latent ●○○○	Not applicable if the government does not require schools to take part in inspections.
<i>C. Government-funded private schools</i>		
Item	Score	Justification
Does the government set standards on what students need to learn and by when?	Established ●●●○	The government sets standards on what students need to learn and by when.
Are school inspections determined by school need?	Emerging ●●○○	The government requires government-funded private schools to undergo inspections, but the term is not specified.
Does the inspection report outline the strengths and weaknesses of the school?	Established ●●●○	Inspection reports include strengths and weaknesses of the school, plus specific priorities for improvement. Primary schools are required to submit a school improvement plan following an inspection.
Are schools required to report to the government on the use of public funds as a condition of continued funding?	Latent ●○○○	The government does not require schools to report on the use of public funds as a condition of continued funding.

Informed by the results of the benchmarking procedure, the following **suggested policy options** would help Swaziland increase the accountability of non-state schools:

- Require schools to undergo a standard-term inspection.
- Establish appropriate sanctions as the result of

<sup>3</sup> Interviews with the Ministry of Education and Training, April 2014.

underperformance on standardized exams and/or school inspections.

For independent private schools:

- Set standards on what students need to learn and by when.

For government-funded private schools:

- Require schools to report on the use of public funds as a condition of continued funding.

### Goal 3: Empowering all Parents, Students, and Communities

Empowering parents, students, and communities is one of the foundations for creating quality learning opportunities for all students. Poor and marginalized children, together with youth, disproportionately lack access to quality education services. To overcome this obstacle, governments need to increase providers' accountability to all clients, particularly underserved groups. Educational access and the performance of schools and students can be substantially impacted by openly disseminating comparable school performance information (Andrabi, Das, and Khwaja 2009; Pandey, Goyal, and Sundararaman 2009; Björkman 2007; Reinikka and Svensson 2005); increasing parental influence in the school (Skoufias and Shapiro 2006; King and Özler 2005; Jimenez and Sawada 1999; Gertler, Patrinos, and Rubio-Codina 2012; Di Gropello and Marshall 2005); and implementing demand-side interventions, such as scholarships, vouchers, or cash transfers, to help the most vulnerable students (Orazem and King 2007; Filmer and Schady 2008; Lewis and Lockheed 2007; Patrinos 2002; Barrera-Osorio 2006). Effective policy practices for non-state providers include some of the indicators listed in box 4.

#### Box 4. International Best Practice—Empowering All Parents, Students, and Communities

- Information on standardized tests and school inspections is made available by multiple sources.
- Parents and students are included in the inspection and improvement-planning processes.
- Admission processes for entry into publicly funded schools are not based on student background; a lottery is used in cases of oversubscription.
- School choice is not hindered by mandatory financial contributions.
- Tax subsidies, scholarships, or cash transfers are available to families whose children attend independent private schools.

#### Development level:

*Private independent schools:*



*Government-funded private schools:*



In Swaziland, policies for empowering parents, students, and communities for independent private schools are **latent**. For government-funded private schools, policies are **emerging**.

For both independent and government-funded private schools, only ad-hoc information on standardized exam results is made available to parents through multiple sources, including newspapers, PTA meetings, and SMS messages; different schools use different methods. No programs are in place to provide information on standardized exam results to hard-to-reach groups, and schools do not have to give parents or students access to inspection reports. For independent and government-funded private schools, neither students nor parents are interviewed as part of inspections; independent private schools are not even required by law to undergo inspections. The government does not provide any tax subsidies or cash transfers for children to attend independent private schools.

The empowerment of parents and students is further restricted in government-funded schools by compulsory parental contributions, as well as the selective admission criteria applied by these schools. According to informal policy, government-funded schools are not allowed to discriminate by academic ability.<sup>4</sup> However, schools are ranked by performance, which gives them an incentive to apply selective admission criteria.

<sup>4</sup> Information was obtained from interviews with the Ministry of Education and Training in April 2014.

**Table 7. Goal 3: Empowering all Parents, Students, and Communities**

<i>A. Common policies for independent private schools and government-funded private schools</i>		
Item	Score	Justification
Are standardized exam results and inspection reports provided regularly to parents?	Emerging ●○○○	Ad-hoc information on standardized exam results is made available to parents.
<i>B. Independent private schools</i>		
Item	Score	Justification
Are parents and students interviewed as part of the inspection process?	Latent ●○○○	Independent private schools are not required to undergo inspections.
Does the government provide tax subsidies or cash transfers for families whose children attend independent private schools?	Latent ●○○○	The government does not provide tax subsidies or cash transfers for families whose children attend independent private schools.
<i>C. Government-funded private schools</i>		
Item	Score	Justification
Are parents and students interviewed as part of the inspection process?	Emerging ●●○○	Neither students nor parents are interviewed as part of the inspection process.
Are schools allowed to apply selective admission criteria when admitting students?	Emerging ●●○○	Schools are allowed to select students based on academic performance and/or geography.
Are schools allowed to charge additional fees or accept contributions from parents?	Latent ●○○○	Parental choice is restricted due to compulsory monetary contributions.

Informed by the results of the benchmarking procedure for Swaziland, the following **suggested policy options** would help empower parents and students to influence the quality of education services provided by non-state schools:

- Guarantee parents access to comparable information on the quality of schooling, such as

standardized exam results and school inspection reports. This could also be done through school report cards.

For independent private schools:

- Consider cash transfers for disadvantaged pupils (such as orphaned and vulnerable children and those from poor and rural households) to attend independent private schools.

For government-funded private schools:

- Remove the ability of schools to use selection criteria that may discriminate against marginalized groups.

### Goal 4: Promoting Diversity of Supply

By opening education to a more diverse set of providers, governments can increase client power and make providers directly accountable to students and parents for results. Although the public sector will always remain an important (and, in most cases, the predominant) provider of education services, educational choice can be used as part of a package of reforms to improve education access and quality in both the public and private sectors (Hoxby 2003; Levin and Belfield 2003; De la Croix and Doepke 2009; Carnoy and McEwan 2003; Himmeler 2007; Angrist et al. 2002; World Bank 2003). In order to facilitate quality improvements through increased school competition and choice, governments can (i) allow multiple types of providers to operate; (ii) promote clear, open, affordable, and unrestrictive certification standards; and (iii) make government funding (and other incentives) available to non-state schools. This policy goal aims to increase the ability of diverse providers to provide education services. In order to do so, a number of policy indicators are suggested, as outlined in box 5.

**Box 5. International Best Practice—Promoting Diversity of Supply**

- The central government allows different types of providers to operate schools.
- Certification standards do not prohibit market entry.
- Information on market-entry requirements is available from multiple sources.
- Regulatory fees do not prohibit market entry.
- Publicly funded non state schools and public schools receive equivalent student funding; funding is increased to meet specific student needs.
- The central government provides incentives for market entry, such as access to start-up funding, public land, and public buildings.
- Schools are able to plan budgets six months in advance of the academic year.
- Privately managed schools are not restricted by student numbers, school numbers, or location.
- The central government does not restrict tuition levels at private independent schools.

**Development level:***Private independent schools:**Government-funded private schools:*

In Swaziland, the policies in place to promote diversity of supply for independent private schools and for government-funded private schools are **established**, representing systematic good practice.

Overall, government policy supports the market entry and relatively unburdened operation of multiple private providers. The Swazi government allows all types of providers—community, not-for-profit, for-profit, and faith-based organizations—to operate private schools. Schools are free to set their own tuition fees. The minimum standards for operating a private school are the same as those for public schools. Regulatory guidelines are available to the public, but only upon request.

The following required steps for registration are outlined in the Education (Establishment and Registration of Private Educational Institutions) Regulations Notice of 2009, article 5:

“2) If the Principal Secretary is satisfied that-

a) the school or other facilities provided or to be provided at the school are suitable and adequate in accordance with the prescribed minimum requirements applicable to public schools: and

b) the owner of the school undertakes to the satisfaction of the Principal Secretary that

i) adequate financial provision has been made or guaranteed for the maintenance of the school for a reasonable period;

ii) the teaching staff to be employed at the school is sufficiently qualified for the purpose of efficient provision of qualitative basic education;

iii) the school will provide a standard of education not inferior to the standard maintained in comparable public schools;

iv) the school will not impose restrictions of whatever nature with respect to the admission of learners based on race, ethnic origin, color, or creed; and

v) the school will not impose restrictions of whatever nature with respect the recruitment and appointment of staff based on race, ethnic origin, or color;

he may cause the private school to be fully registered or to be provisionally registered” (MET 2009).

As noted earlier, if a school is provisionally registered, it is inspected after a period of one year. The principal secretary can register the school if he is “satisfied that the school has fully complied with the terms and conditions imposed” (Ibid.). However, failure to comply with the terms of the regulation will lead to a notice to remedy the remaining defects within six months. At the end of this period, the Secretary can order the private school to be closed if defects remain.

Specified minimum criteria for school registration include a land and staffing requirement. Primary schools must have 1 hectare for every 100 pupils, while secondary schools must have a land area of 1.5 hectares. Regarding staffing, one teacher per class is required for primary schools. For secondary schools, the minimum number of teachers varies by form (grade). Additionally,

schools are required to submit information on the following issues in the application form:

- Number of students
- Curriculum to be followed
- Standardized exams to be followed
- List of buildings by type (including size of rooms, construction materials used)
- List of furniture and equipment (MET 2009)

Although the application does not indicate that certain facilities are obligatory, the required list describing the type of buildings suggests that schools should strive to have the following facilities:

- Principal's office
- Offices for head(s) of department
- Office for school secretary
- Staff room for teachers
- Library
- Storeroom for school records
- Biology/life science laboratory
- Physical science laboratory
- Toilet facilities (separate for girls, boys, teachers)
- Sport facilities

Private providers also need to justify which specific needs the school will provide that are not already provided for in public schools (MET 2009, section 7).

Independent private schools are able to operate without having to pay fees, other than a one-time registration fee.

For government-funded private schools, the central government provides the same level of teacher salaries that it does for public schools, though government-funded private schools receive lower amounts of non-academic budgets. Most public (i.e., government) schools are boarding schools, which receive additional government support in the form of support staff salaries, transport, and utility payments.

Government-funded schools are provided information on the amount of their upcoming government funding more than six months in advance of the beginning of the academic year. However, schools receive neither targeted funding to meet individual student needs, nor start-up funding.

**Table 8. Goal 4: Promoting Diversity of Supply**

<i>A. Common policies for independent private schools and government-funded private schools</i>		
Item	Score	Justification
Does the government allow multiple types of providers to operate a school?	Advanced ●●●●	The government allows community, not-for-profit, faith-based, and for-profit providers to operate schools.
Are there minimum standards for registration to enable independent private schools to operate?	Established ●●●○	Certification standards, which are not linked to education outcomes, restrict market entry including one of the three following criteria: land, facilities, or assets.
Are guidelines that outline the requirements for school registration clearly publicized by multiple sources?	Emerging ●●○○	Registration guidelines are available to the public, but only upon request.
Are schools able to operate without paying fees?	Established ●●●○	Schools only have to pay a one-time registration fee.
<i>B. Independent private schools</i>		
Item	Score	Justification
Who has legal authority to determine tuition fee standards?	Advanced ●●●●	Schools are free to determine their own tuition fees.
<i>C. Government-funded private schools</i>		
Item	Score	Justification
Does the government provide equivalent funding for public and government-funded private schools?	Emerging ●●○○	Academic operating budgets are equivalent to per-student amounts in public schools.
Do government-funded private schools receive any start-up funding?	Latent ●○○○	Government-funded private schools do not receive any start-up funding.
Is information on the amount of government funding provided in a timely manner?	Advanced ●●●●	Schools receive information more than 6 months in advance of the academic year.

Informed by the results of the benchmarking procedure for Swaziland, the following **suggested policy options**

would help to better promote diversity of supply for independent private schools:

- Publish clear registration guidelines by multiple sources in order to ease the market entry of new providers.

For government-funded private schools:

- Consider providing schools with access to start-up funding and/or access to government facilities or land in areas where the supply of secondary school places is low.



## From Analysis to Action: Policy Options for Swaziland

Following the introduction of free primary education, Swaziland has nearly achieved universal primary education, with 97 percent of children aged 6–12 attending school in 2010. However, serious challenges remain at both the primary and secondary level, including high repetition rates of both boys and girls in primary school; performance at the end of primary school being linked to location and socioeconomic status; and low access to secondary school, particularly for the poorest students. Swaziland faces the particular challenge of ensuring equal opportunity for the approximately 30 percent of children who are orphaned and vulnerable.

Based on the results of the benchmarking exercise, three suggested policy options are offered to strengthen the government's engagement with independent and government-funded private schools in order to ensure learning for all:

1. Empower parents to make informed educational choices, while providing additional support to disadvantaged groups.
2. Strengthen accountability mechanisms to ensure that all students receive a quality education.
3. Strengthen the policy environment for the non-state sector to promote transparency and an adequate supply of school places.

These policy options are supported by international evidence, best practice, and examples of countries that have used innovative interventions to improve from a variety of starting points.

### Policy Option 1: Empower parents to make informed educational choices, while providing additional support to disadvantaged groups.

The empowerment of parents, students, and communities is foundational for providing quality learning opportunities to all students. Poor and marginalized children and youth disproportionately lack access to quality education. To overcome this obstacle, governments need to use various mechanisms to increase providers' accountability to all clients—

underserved groups in particular. Ensuring that information on school performance is made available and enabling families to respond to that information through open enrollment policies can be a powerful means for equalizing opportunities (World Bank 2011). Ensuring that all students are afforded the same opportunities, however, sometimes requires redistributive action.

#### i) Provide parents with comparable information on standardized exams and/or inspection reports.

Central governments should not be the only monitors of school performance. Access to comparative information can enable parents and students to influence school quality through increased choice and direct voice to providers. Based on current policies, the government of Swaziland could increase the information provided to parents on school quality.

School report cards can provide information in one place that allows parents to easily compare schools in their area. Information usually includes school demographics, classroom assessment results, examination results, and inspection reports. Evidence from Pakistan found that school report cards improved learning by 0.1 standard deviations and reduced fees by almost 20 percent. The largest learning gains (0.34 standard deviations) were for initially low-performing (below median baseline test scores) private schools, with the worst of these more likely to close (Andrabi, Das, and Khawja 2009).

The Ministry of Education and Training could create a mechanism to inform communities about the inspection and exam results of both private and government-funded private schools, inspection action plans, and other information of interest to parents and communities. This mechanism could also function as a discussion forum where different stakeholders could exchange experiences and opinions on the performance of private schools.

#### Country examples

An early adopter of school report cards was Parana state in Brazil. Between 1999 and 2002 report cards were introduced to inform school communities and stimulate greater involvement in the school improvement process. The report cards were disseminated to a wider range of

stakeholders including all schools, PTAs, municipal education authorities and all 70,000 state education employees, including 46,000 teachers. Results were reported in the state education secretariat's monthly newsletter, used in teacher and PTA workshops, disseminated via press releases and press conferences (EQUIP2).

In the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua, a USAID-funded program – Civic Engagement for Education Reform in Central America – implemented a school report card that focused on indicators in four areas:

1. **Context:** basic profile information (number of students in each grade, etc.) and access to services at the school (sanitation, electricity, etc.)
2. **Inputs:** class size, access to resources (notebooks, pens, etc.), and access to social services (school meals, health programs, etc.)
3. **Processes:** student and teacher attendance, school plan implementation, and parent participation
4. **Results:** coverage and efficiency (repetition and retention)

The results of the school report card are used by communities to develop and monitor implementation of school action plans (CERCA 2006).

In Andhra Pradesh, India, the Vidya Chaitanyam intervention used citizens to monitor and advocate for higher quality service delivery from government and non-government basic education providers. This was intended to strengthen the oversight function in the state due to the lack of capacity at the Local Education Offices whose responsibility is to carry out school inspections. The program included members of Women's Self Help Groups, who were often illiterate and semi-literate, to assess the quality of basic education provision through the use of school scorecards. The results of the scorecards were shared with district officials, the local School Management Committee, and at local Women's Self Help Group meetings (CfBT 2012).

**ii) Remove the ability of schools to use selection criteria that may discriminate against disadvantaged or marginalized groups.**

The ability of schools to use selective admission criteria

can currently hinder the transition of students from primary to secondary school, especially those from disadvantaged and marginalized backgrounds. In grade 6, student performance is strongly linked to socioeconomic background: the poorest 25 percent of students scored over 40 points less than their wealthiest peers in reading on the SACMEQ III exam in 2007 (Shabalala, Nxumalo, and Nkambule 2012). If schools are allowed to select students for secondary school based on academic ability, this will particularly impact rural and poor students. Therefore, Swaziland needs to focus on ensuring that, regardless of background, all students have access to quality schooling.

**iii) Consider increasing support to disadvantaged and marginalized students in order to promote equity.**

In Swaziland, inequality persists in the access to secondary education. The rate of attendance increases proportionally with household income: whereas 29 percent of children from the poorest quintile attend secondary school, 71 percent of their peers from the wealthiest quintile do.

Redistributive mechanisms can protect poorer students without negatively impacting the growth of the private education sector. Swaziland could consider one of two options in order to support disadvantaged and marginalized students, particularly orphans: either providing conditional cash transfers (CCTs) to these students to attend independent private schools, or introducing a voucher system, whereby the government provides funding to the school that a student chooses to attend.

Such options can increase equity in the educational system and have positive impacts on quality. For example, voucher reform in Chile increased both the demand for private schooling and secondary school attainment and graduation rates across all income levels (Bravo, Mukhopadhyay, and Todd 2010). Moreover, when government funding for vouchers is tied to accountability standards, it creates an incentive for schools to perform more efficiently (Patrinos 2002).

With both vouchers and CCTs, effective targeting is critical. The voucher system in Chile has been criticized because schools can decide not to offer vouchers to disadvantaged groups. Moreover, private schools are

allowed to ask parents for additional contributions to “top up” the voucher, as well as to select students, both of which have been argued to create inequality (Gonzalez, Mizala, and Romaguera 2004). Evidence from Cambodia suggests that to promote quality as well as equity, a two-step targeting approach might be preferable: first, target low-income individuals, then among them, target based on merit (Barrera-Osorio and Filmer 2013).

### Country examples: Vouchers

The Right to Education Act in India is the largest school voucher program in the world. The Act outlines that all children between the ages of 6 and 14 have the right to free and compulsory elementary education at a neighborhood school. There is no direct (school fees) or indirect cost (uniforms, textbooks, mid-day meals, transportation) to be borne by the child or the parents to obtain elementary education. The government will provide schooling free-of-cost until a child’s elementary education is completed. In order to increase access to education, the Act outlines that 25 percent of places in private schools must be allocated to economically weaker section (EWS) and disadvantaged students (Government of India 2010).

In Pakistan, the Punjab Education Foundation launched an Education Voucher Scheme (EVS) in 2006 to benefit children in less affluent and underprivileged areas, who otherwise could not access education due to financial and social constraints. The scheme was immensely popular due to its positive effects on poorer segments of society. The scheme enables children aged 4–17 years to attend a nearby EVS private school of their choice for free. The Scheme particularly targets out-of-school children, orphans, children of widows and single parents, as well as children who cannot afford school. There are no up-front infrastructure costs, as existing schools express their interest in participating in the EVS. A partnership between the school and EVS is dependent on continuous quality assurance, including school visits and bi-annual quality assurance tests (QAT) that assess improvements in student learning outcomes.<sup>5</sup>

### Country example: CCTs

In Cambodia, two evaluations of the impact of scholarships for lower secondary school have shown substantial increases in school enrollment and attendance as a direct consequence of the programs. Recipients were 20–30 percentage points more likely to be enrolled and attending school as a result of the scholarships. Impacts on learning outcomes were, however, limited (Filmer and Schady, 2008, 2009, 2011). A new approach to scholarships at the primary level were subsequently tried, using two different targeting mechanisms. One was based on students’ poverty level and the other, on baseline test scores (“merit”). Both targeting mechanisms increased enrollment and attendance. However, only the merit-based targeting induced positive effects on test scores.

The results suggest that in order to balance equity and efficiency, a targeting approach should first target low-income individuals, and then award scholarships based on merit (Barrera-Osorio and Filmer 2013).

### Policy Option 2: Strengthen accountability mechanisms to ensure that all students receive a quality education.

A country’s accountability mechanisms are crucial for ensuring high-quality service delivery. During a year of schooling, students with a poor teacher typically master less than 50 percent of the curriculum, while students with a good teacher average one year of progression, and those with great teachers, one-and-a-half years (Hanushek and Rivkin 2010). But while good teaching is essential, systems must also ensure that accountability mechanisms are effective and aligned with the goal of monitoring teaching and learning.

There are currently great differences in learning outcomes in Swaziland depending on the location and socioeconomic status of a student’s household. As noted earlier, students from rural areas scored over 30 points less than their urban peers in reading on the latest SACMEQ exam (2007), while the difference between the poorest and wealthiest students was almost 40 points (Shabalala, Nxumano, and Nkambule 2012). To raise the

<sup>5</sup> “Education Voucher System,” webpage of Punjab Education Foundation, Lahore, Pakistan (accessed May 2014).

accountability of non-state schools, Swaziland could set standards for all private schools, strengthen the inspection system and oversight mechanisms, provide parents with information about school quality, and establish appropriate sanctions and rewards.

**i) Strengthen the inspection system by requiring standard-term inspections.**

On average, students perform better in schools with higher levels of accountability to the state (Abdulkadiroğlu et al. 2011; Carnoy and Loeb 2002; Woessmann et al. 2007; Hanushek and Raymond 2005). In Swaziland, the principal secretary can currently appoint inspectors to any school, but no term is specified for such inspections. The MEST Inspectorate should be mandated to inspect not only government-funded schools, but also independent private schools, at a set frequency. The government could also create mechanisms to ensure that the number and location of inspections are actively monitored and follow-up action is taken by schools based on inspection recommendations.

**Country examples**

In Malawi, the inspection framework covers private independent schools, religious schools, and public schools. Schools are inspected once every two years. Malawi also has need-based inspections based on the following criteria:

- a) Schools with poor examination results
- b) Schools that are poorly managed
- c) Schools that have not been inspected for more than two years
- d) High-performing schools (in order to learn good practices)

Malawi also has four different types of inspection (table 4).

**Table 4. Types of School Inspections in Malawi**

Type of inspection	Objective	Who carries it out	Duration
Full inspection	Evaluation of all aspects of the school: curriculum, organization of teaching and learning, general school administration and documentation, buildings and grounds, equipment	Team of inspectors: 3–6 inspectors, depending on size of school	Full day
Follow-up inspection	Evaluation of extent to which recommendations made in the full inspection report have been implemented	1–2 advisors	2 hours
Partial inspection	Examination and evaluation of one or a limited number of aspects of school life	1–2 advisors	Depends on gravity of aspect(s)
Block inspection	Improve inspection coverage of schools in a specific period of time	6–8 supervisors from different districts	1–2 weeks

Source: Government of Malawi.

The inspection report includes information on the type of school visited, enrollment, staffing, and a rating of various aspects of school performance, as well as general strengths and weaknesses of the school. After the inspection, school staff members and the head teacher are briefed on its findings. This discussion gives them a chance to start working on the weaknesses identified in the school.

**ii) Consider establishing sanctions based on poor performance.**

There are currently no sanctions in place for underperforming independent or government-funded

private schools in Swaziland. The use of sanctions for poor school performance is a policy intervention that has helped raise the quality of education in many countries (Patrinos 2002; Barrera-Orsorio and Raju 2010; Chiang 2009; Rockoff and Turner 2008). When schools face closure, re-organization, and other sanctions as the result of underperformance, there are strong incentives to make school improvements. Any sanctions need to take into account the local context and how to best meet the needs of students.

### Country examples

In the Netherlands, if a school's performance fails to improve after an improvement plan is implemented, school management receives an official warning. Subsequently, if the school still fails to improve, it is reported to the Minister of Education, who can then impose administrative sanctions (Onderwijs Inspectie 2010).

#### iii) Set clear student standards for independent private schools.

The government does not explicitly outline student standards for independent private schools, although schools do take part in standardized examinations administered at grade 5, form 3 (grade 10), and form 5 (grade 12), respectively. The government could set standards on what students should know at each stage of the learning process in these schools in line with expectations of public schools. This could be done by individual grade or by setting a learning standard for the end of each school level: kindergarten, primary school, lower secondary school (form 3), and upper secondary school (form 5).

### Country examples

In British Columbia, Canada, the top performing Canadian province on international tests, the Education Standards Order (ESO) requires that all children educated by independent private providers reach the expected intellectual, human, social, and career development goals. The ESO also sets standards for education delivery for students with special educational needs. Schools are expected to implement Individual Student Education Plans to support them (British Columbia 2013).

## Policy Option 3: Strengthen the policy environment for the non-state sector to promote transparency and an adequate supply of school places.

### i) Clearly outline governance and financial arrangements of schools in policy documents.

In Swaziland, the regulatory environment could be strengthened for both independent and government-funded schools. Policies and laws should explicitly outline the governance and financial arrangements in order to ensure that the system promotes transparency and quality education. This is particularly important in the area of school autonomy, where informal guidelines often apply. Methodologically rigorous studies that have assessed the impacts of local school autonomy on student learning outcomes generally find a positive relationship between the two (Hanushek and Woessmann 2013; Bruns, Filmer, and Patrinos 2011). A few studies find evidence that local autonomy for school leaders is associated with increased student achievement, as well as reduced student repetition and failure rates (King and Özler 2005; Jimenez and Sawada 2003; Gertler, Patrinos, and Rubio-Codina 2012).

For government-funded private schools, accountability for the use of public funds also needs to be strengthened. Currently, government-funded private schools in Swaziland are not required to report on the use of public funds as a condition of continued funding. Greater transparency and more rigorous compliance would ensure that funding is used efficiently by private providers. Communities can also be actively involved in monitoring the use of public spending on education.

### Country example

In England, when the Department for Education extended their engagement with the private sector, they explicitly outlined the governance and financial arrangements with the schools in the 2010 Academies Act. This Act was then revised when Free Schools became an additional type of private sector engagement. The Department for Education also provides guidance notes to both Free Schools and Academies in order to more effectively implement the policies. For example, the Act outlines that schools are able to make their own personnel decisions and adapt the curriculum. In



practice, some schools opt to use the government teacher standards while other schools tailor these to meet the needs of the local community.<sup>6</sup>

In Uganda, a survey in 1991 showed that only 13 percent of government funds were reaching schools. This led the Government of Uganda to disseminate information on monthly transfers to the districts via newspapers and radio. Schools were also required to show use of intended funds per student. By 1999, around 90 percent of funding was reaching schools and being used to support student learning (Reinikka and Svensson 2005).

**ii) Ensure that the regulatory environment promotes an adequate supply of school places, particularly at the secondary level.**

Swaziland should ensure that its regulatory environment promotes access and encourages new providers to enter the market in areas where the supply of school places does not meet demand. Overall, secondary enrollment represented only 35 percent of students of secondary school age in 2011. According to the SACMEQ III report, secondary school places in Swaziland were limited, and not all those who had passed primary could transition to secondary education (Shabalala, Nxumalo, and Nkambule 2012). Swaziland could consider public-private partnerships to promote access to secondary schooling, for instance, by funding additional school places in existing schools or by offering incentives to new providers to expand the supply of school places in disadvantaged areas. The latter policy could be achieved by offering private schools start-up funding, support for academic budgets, or other incentives (e.g., access to government land or buildings, tax exemptions).

In order to simultaneously promote equity, support and/or funding could be granted on the condition that a

specified number of school places are allocated to poor, disadvantaged, and marginalized students. As part of promoting the diversity of supply, Swaziland should ensure that registration guidelines for new providers are readily available from multiple sources.

### Country example

In Uganda, the Government is using a public-private partnership (PPP) to support its Universal Secondary Education (USE) Program. Under this PPP program, the government finances the education of USE-eligible students in participating private schools on the condition that the private schools do not require any additional fees for these students' participation. Students that cannot be accommodated in public USE schools are channeled to the nearest private school participating in the PPP program. This contract between government and private schools is formalized as a memorandum of understanding signed by the Ministry of Education and participating private schools. Around 650 schools are included in the program, including purely private schools, community schools, and even some faith-based schools (Barrera-Osorio, De Galbert, Habyarimana, and Sabarwal 2016).

In Burkina Faso, a PPP was set up to increase enrollment in lower secondary schools, resulting in an increase from 20 percent in 2004 to 33.5 percent by 2009. Through the partnership, the Government supported the construction and equipment of 80 private schools and hired and paid two teachers per school. The schools aimed to reduce disparities in choice of secondary schools among the provinces. The 18 provinces with the lowest coverage benefited from 70 percent of program funding. These schools then operated at a lower cost than typical private schools. No recurrent costs were incurred by the government.

<sup>6</sup> "Opening a Free School or Studio School," U.K. Department for Education, <http://www.education.gov.uk/a0075656/free-schools-faqs-curriculum#faq3>, Department for Education, Manchester, UK.



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## Annex I: SABER-Engaging the Private Sector Rubrics

The following tables display the indicators and scales utilized for benchmarking an individual country's policy on private sector engagement in education. Across the four types of private schools, the indicators pertaining to each goal are largely the same; where a certain indicator pertains only to certain school types, this is noted within the table.

**Table A1.1 Policy Goal: Encouraging Innovation by Providers**

Indicator	Latent	Emerging	Established	Advanced
<b>Teacher standards</b>	The central government has the legal authority to set minimum standards for teachers.	Regional or municipal governments have the legal authority to set minimum standards for teachers, with final review by central authorities.	Regional or municipal governments have the legal authority to set minimum standards for teachers without final review by central authorities.	Schools have the legal authority to set their own teacher standards without final review by central authorities.
<b>Teacher appointment and deployment</b>	The central government has the legal authority to appoint and deploy teachers.	Regional or municipal governments have the legal authority to appoint and deploy teachers. Appointments are subject to final review by central authorities.	Regional or municipal governments have the legal authority to appoint and deploy teachers without review by central authorities.	Schools (i.e., individual school principals, school councils, parent associations, etc.) have the legal authority to appoint teachers without review by central authorities.
<b>Teacher salary</b>	The central government has the legal authority to determine teacher salary levels.	Regional or municipal governments have the legal authority to determine teacher salary levels, with final review by central authorities.	Regional or municipal governments have the legal authority to determine teacher salary levels without review by central authorities.	Schools have the legal authority to determine teacher salary levels without review by central authorities.
<b>Teacher dismissal</b>	The central government has the legal authority to dismiss teachers.	Regional or municipal governments have the legal authority to dismiss teachers, with final review by central authorities.	Regional or municipal governments have the legal authority to dismiss teachers without review by central authorities.	Schools have the legal authority to dismiss teachers without review by central authorities.

**Table A1.1 Policy Goal: Encouraging Innovation by Providers**

Indicator	Latent	Emerging	Established	Advanced
<b>Curriculum delivery</b>	The central government has the legal authority over how the curriculum is delivered.	Regional or municipal governments have the legal authority over how the curriculum is delivered, with final review from central authorities.	Regional or municipal governments have the legal authority over how the curriculum is delivered without final review from central authorities.	Schools have the legal authority over how the curriculum is delivered without final review by central authorities.
<b>Classroom resourcing</b>	The central government has the legal authority over how resources are allocated to the classroom (e.g., class sizes).	Regional or municipal governments have the legal authority over how resources are allocated to classrooms, with final review from central authorities (e.g., class sizes).	Regional or municipal governments have the legal authority over how resources are allocated to classrooms without final review by central authorities (e.g., class size).	School have the legal authority over how resources are allocated to classrooms without final review by central authorities (e.g., class sizes).
<b>Budget autonomy</b> (not applicable to independent private schools)	The central government has the legal authority over the management of school operating budgets.	Regional or municipal governments have the legal authority over the management of school operating budgets, with final review by central authorities.	Regional or municipal governments have the legal authority over the management of school operating budgets without final review by central authorities.	Schools have the legal authority over the management of school operating budgets without final review by central authorities.

**Table A1.2 Policy Goal: Holding Schools Accountable**

Indicator	Latent	Emerging	Established	Advanced
<b>Student Standards</b>	The national government does not set standards on what students need to learn.	The national government does set standards for what students need to learn, but it does not indicate how well or by when.	The national government does set standards for what students need to learn and also indicates EITHER by when OR how well.	The national government does set standards for what students need to learn, by when, and how well.

<b>Student Assessment</b>	Students do not take standardized exams.	Standardized exams are administered, but not annually.	Standardized exams are administered annually.	Standardized exams are administered annually and results are disaggregated by school, socioeconomic background, gender, and other criteria of student disadvantage.
<b>Inspection</b>	The central government does not require schools to undergo inspections.	The central government requires schools to undergo inspections, but no term is specified.	The central government requires schools to undergo standard term inspections.	The central government requires schools to undergo inspections, with the frequency of inspections depending on the results of the previous inspection.
<b>Improvement planning</b>	Not applicable if the government does not require schools to take part in inspections.	Inspection reports include strengths and weaknesses of the school.	Inspection reports include the strengths and weaknesses of a school, as well as specific priorities for improvement.	Inspection reports include strengths and weaknesses of the school. Schools are required to submit a school improvement plan with specific priorities for improvement following the inspection.
<b>Sanctions and rewards</b>	Sanctions are not administered based on the results of school inspections or school performance on standardized exams.	Sanctions include additional monitoring and/or warnings; they are administered based on the results of school inspections or school performance on standardized exams.	Sanctions include additional monitoring and/or fines, which are administered based on the results of school inspections or school performance on standardized exams. <i>For government-funded, privately managed, and voucher schools: rewards may also be used.</i>	Sanctions include additional monitoring, fines, and as a final measure, school closures; decisions are made based on the results of school inspections or school performance on standardized exams. <i>For government-funded, privately managed, voucher schools: rewards are also used.</i>



<b>Financial reporting</b> (not applicable to independent private schools)	The central government does not require schools to report on the use of public funds as a condition for the continuation of funding.	The government requires schools to report on the use of public funds as a condition for continued funding, but on an ad-hoc basis and not according to a standard-term schedule.	The central government requires schools to report on the use of public funds as a condition for continued funding according to a standard term.	The central government requires schools to report on the use of public funds as a condition for continued funding on a standard-term basis, with greater monitoring of schools that have failed to adhere to report requirements in the past.
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**Table A.1.3. Policy Goal: Empowering All Parents, Students and Communities**

Indicator	Latent	Emerging	Established	Advanced
<b>Information</b>	No information is provided to parents on the results of standardized exams or inspection reports.	Ad-hoc information is provided to parents on standardized exam results or inspection reports.	Regular information is provided to parents on standardized exam results or inspection reports.	A variety of sources provide parents regular information provided on standardized exam results (disaggregated by school, socioeconomic background, gender, and other criteria of student disadvantage.) and inspection reports. Policy specifies information on interventions designed to targeted disadvantaged student groups.
<b>Voice</b>	Not applicable if the government does not require schools to take part in inspections.	Neither students nor parents are surveyed as part of the inspection process.	Students and/or parents are interviewed as part of the inspection process.	Student and parents are interviewed as part of the inspection process.

**Table A.1.3. Policy Goal: Empowering All Parents, Students and Communities**

Indicator	Latent	Emerging	Established	Advanced
<b>Selection</b> (not applicable to independent private schools)	Schools are allowed to select students based on both academic performance and geography.	Schools are allowed to select students based on academic performance or geography.	Schools are not allowed to select students but schools are not required to use a lottery if oversubscribed.	Schools are not allowed to select students and are required to conduct a lottery if school is over-subscribed.
<b>Contributions</b> (not applicable to independent private schools)	Parental choice is restricted by compulsory monetary parent contributions that, if not paid, prohibits a child from attending the school.	Parental choice is restricted by voluntary monetary contributions (i.e., contributions to a school fund).	Parental choice is restricted by voluntary nonmonetary contributions (i.e., in-kind labor or goods) to a school.	Parental choice is not restricted by any type of required parental contributions.
<b>Financial support</b> (for independent private schools only)	The central government does not provide tax subsidies or cash transfers to families whose children attend private schools.	The central government provides tax subsidies to families whose children attend private schools.	The central government provides tax subsidies and cash transfers to families, which can be used to enable their children to attend private schools.	The central government provides targeted cash transfers that can be used by disadvantaged students attending private schools.

**Table A.1.4. Policy Goal: Promoting Diversity of Supply**

Indicator	Latent	Emerging	Established	Advanced
<b>Ownership</b>	The central government allows one of the following types of organizations to operate schools: Community Not-for-profit Faith-based For-profit	The central government allows two of the following types of organizations to operate schools: Community Not-for-profit Faith-based For-profit	The central government allows three of the following types of organizations to operate schools: Community Not-for-profit Faith-based For-profit	The government allows all of the following types of organizations to operate schools: Community Not-for-profit Faith-based For-profit

**Table A.1.4. Policy Goal: Promoting Diversity of Supply**

Indicator	Latent	Emerging	Established	Advanced
<b>Certification standards</b>	Certification standards, which are not linked to education outcomes, restrict market entry. These include all of the following: 1. land (undulating, distance from public venues, etc.) 2. facilities (separate science labs, weather vanes, etc.) 3. assets (ownership of land or buildings)	Certification standards, which are not linked to education outcomes, restrict market entry. These include two of the three following criteria: 1. land (undulating, distance from public venues, etc.) or 2. facilities (separate science labs, weather vanes, etc.) 3. assets (ownership of land or buildings)	Certification standards, which are not linked to education outcomes, restrict market entry. These include one of the three following criteria: 1. land (undulating, distance from public venues, etc.) 2. facilities (separate science labs, weather vanes, etc.) 3. assets (ownership of land or buildings)	Certification standards, which are not linked to education outcomes, do not restrict market entry.
<b>Market entry information</b>	Registration/certification guidelines are not officially outlined.	Registration/certification guidelines are not made public and available only upon request.	Registration/certification guidelines are made public, but by a single source.	Registration/certification guidelines are made public and by multiple sources.
<b>Regulatory fees</b>	Schools are able to operate while paying four or more types of fees.	Schools are able to operate while paying two to three types of fees.	Schools are able to operate while paying one type of fee.	Schools are able to operate without paying fees.
<b>Tuition fees</b> <i>(for independent private schools only)</i>	The central government sets standardized tuition fees.	The central government does not set standardized tuition fees, but imposes a tuition cap (an overall amount or percentage increase).	Schools set fees, but those fees are subject to review by the central government.	Schools set fees without any review by the central government.
<b>Funding</b> <i>(not applicable to independent private schools)</i>	Academic operating budgets are not equivalent to per-student funding amounts in public schools.	Academic operating budgets are equivalent to per-student funding amounts in public schools.	All budgets — academic and other, such as for facilities and transport — are equivalent to per-student funding amounts in public schools. Schools do not receive targeted funding to meet specific student needs.	All budgets — academic and other, such as for facilities and transport — are equivalent to per-student funding amounts in public school. Schools receive targeted funding to meet specific student needs.

**Table A.1.4. Policy Goal: Promoting Diversity of Supply**

Indicator	Latent	Emerging	Established	Advanced
<b>Incentives</b> <i>(not applicable to independent private schools)</i>	No incentives exist.	Schools are supported by one of the following: 1. start-up funding similar to that provided to public schools 2. access to government land or unused government facilities 3. exemption from local taxes (i.e., property taxes) similar to that granted to public schools	Schools are supported by two of the following 1. Start-up funding similar to that provided to public schools 2. access to government land or unused government facilities 3. exemption from local taxes (i.e., property taxes) similar to that granted to public schools	Schools are supported by all of the following 1. Start-up funding similar to that provided to public schools 2. access to government land or unused government facilities 3. exemption from local taxes (i.e., property taxes) similar to that granted to public schools
<b>Planning</b> <i>(not applicable for independent private schools)</i>	Schools are provided information on the allocations to be transferred to them less than 1 month before the start of the academic year.	Schools are provided information on the allocations to be transferred to them between 1 and 3 months before the start of the academic year.	Schools are provided information on the allocations to be transferred to them between 4 and 6 months before the start of the academic year.	Schools are provided information on the allocations to be transferred to them more than 6 months before the start of the academic year.
<b>Coverage</b> <i>(for privately managed schools only)</i>	Coverage of charters is restricted by three of the following: 1. student numbers 2. school numbers and location (i.e., certain cities or districts) 3. only new or only existing schools are able to become charters	Coverage of charters is restricted by two of the following: 1. student numbers 2. school numbers and location (i.e., certain cities or districts)  No restrictions due to new/existing school status.	Coverage of charters is restricted by one of the following: 1. student numbers 2. school numbers and location (i.e., certain cities or districts).	No restrictions. Charters are not restricted by student numbers, school numbers, or location (i.e., certain cities or districts).

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 of **engaging the private sector in education**.

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