

# Challenges of Education Sector Budget

## “A missed Opportunity to Transform Education Sector”

Policy Brief 2:2013

### Introduction

At the time of independence in 1961, a World Bank publication reported that, of the three East African British colonies (Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania), Tanzania was the least well off. At that time, only 16,691 students were enrolled in secondary schools, and all general education at higher levels was provided outside the country, these were therefore named as major education challenges in Tanzania.

The goals of post-independence educational policy were therefore distribution and equalization of educational opportunities and the expansion of the system at all levels, including the attainment of universal primary education. Fifty years down the line and the sector is still haunted by even more challenges than before. Though statistics reveal an increase in total enrollment rate in secondary schools by 54.1% (1,884,272 students) to 2012, the performance and quality of education are reportedly decreasing despite the efforts and investments done into the sector. So where are the gaps? Where did Tanzania go wrong?

This brief, examines some of the missed opportunities that if taken, can help transform education in Tanzania.

### 1. Lack of Transparency in the Education Sector Budget

Taxpayers are fed up of many phrases about the priority of the government to properly fund the education sector in Tanzania. With little or no information on the actual allocations for the whole sector in manner that is relevant and useful to the citizen. The budget speech for the Ministry of education only tells how much has been allocated to the Ministry of education and not to the whole sector (Only 689.7 billion shillings 2013/14), over 1.300 Trillion shillings allocated to the sector is unclear as to where

#### Budget classification

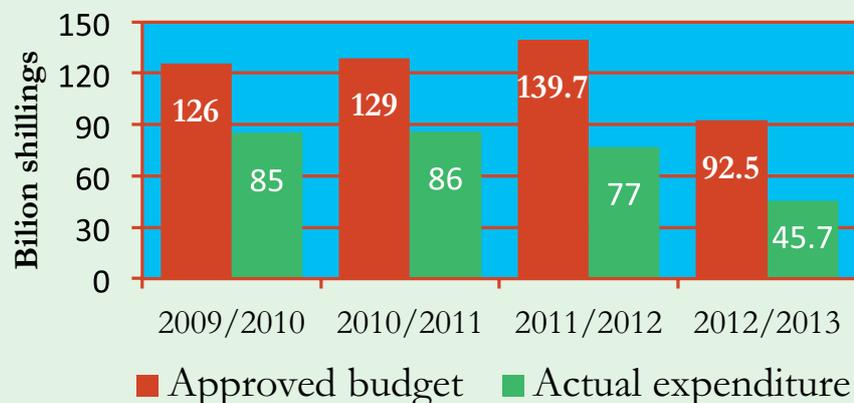
According to a technical note produced for the IMF, a government's budget classification system should include a minimum of three classification; Economic, Administrative and Function classifications. Meanwhile the classification system in Tanzania comprises only of economical and administrative classification which does not categories government activities according to objectives or purposes.

they have been taken. The leeway to justify this absence or lacuna has always been the budget classification system and the notion that some sector's funds and activities are normally being implemented through other Ministries like the PMO-LARG and Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children (MCDGC). Increasing transparency will help taxpayers understand the budget allocations better and enable them to take their rightful role in demanding for accountability and improved education outcomes.

## 2. Under Spending Woes in Development Projects

Analysis of the implementation of allocated budget within the education sector shows that duty bearers have not been accountable enough to implement

**Graph 1: Allocations vs expenditure development budget (education) 2012/2013**



respective plans and activities that were aimed at improving education in Tanzania. Trends show that the education budget, more specifically development budget allocated has been underspent for quiet sometime now and lead to underperformance. A report<sup>1</sup> informs that only

45.7 billion shillings (49%) of 92.5 billion shillings allocated to the education's development budget 2012/13 was spent leaving 51% of the allocated funds unspent to March 30, 2013. This is literally under spending which to a different context would be considered as savings. However to our context (Development budget) under spending is completely mismanagement of funds and underperformance. The 50% under spending to the education sector's development allocation is a weakness that informs that up to the end of the third quarter of spending not even half (50%) of planned projects or intended investments in education were done or completed.

## 3. Funds Disbursement Challenges

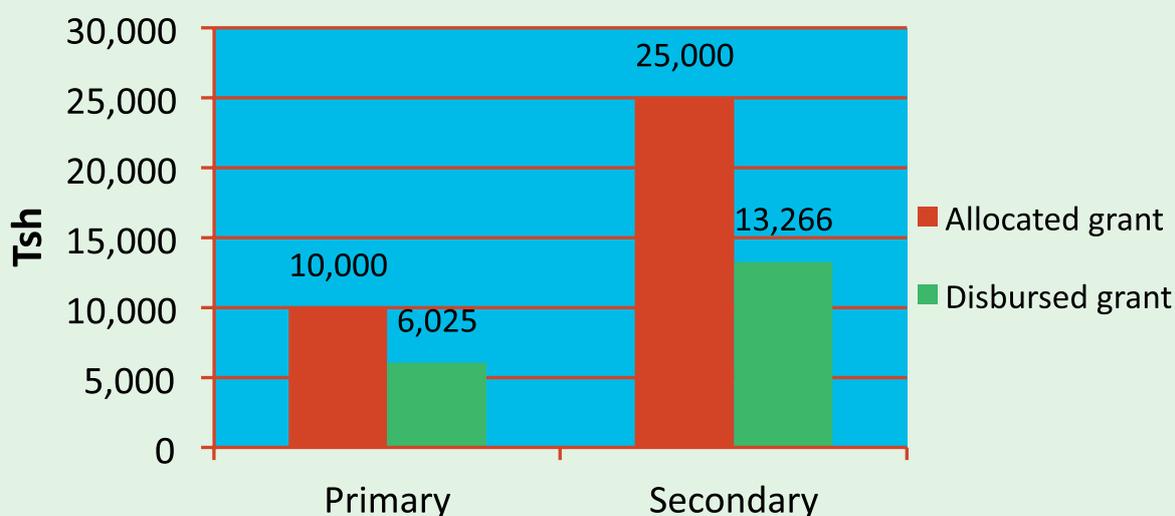
Two components are associated to this, "timely disbursements and mismatching ratio". During fiscal year 2012/13 an average of 13,266/= per each student per year reached secondary schools instead of 25,000 planned as capitation grant

1 The 2013/14 Ministry of education speech reporting on the 2012/13 sector's budget spending

while only an average of 6,025/= out of 10,000/= reached each primary school pupil per head per annum, this mismatch affects implementations in schools. Disbursing fewer amounts than budgeted, leads into a serious miscarriage of planned activities in schools. Management plans, learning and teaching programs are normally affected by this and turns into poor results. Capitation grants were meant to help learners to improve learning by providing them with adequate books, teaching and learning materials, in the event that teachers are only using 47% of the allocated teaching time, we would expect children to be supplied with enough books, laboratory's equipment and libraries with enough materials to help them reduce or cover the misused 53% teaching time which were supposed to be used by teachers in classes.

However as if the effects of the mismatch are not enough, even the disbursed amount reaches schools late. Analysis by HakiElimu shows up to 30<sup>th</sup> March 2013 capitation grants disbursed for third quota (Jan – March 2013) had not been received by schools. This is also another opportunity we miss to do right in education. Figure below elaborates;-

**Graph 2; Status of capitation grants disbursment to schools**



#### **4. Meager Inspection Budget**

Presenting the 2013/14 education budget estimates in parliament on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2013, The Minister for education Hon. Shukuru Kawambwa admitted in his budget speech that the sector is faced with serious financial and human resources constraints within the Inspection department. According to the Minister, this deficit has affected the ministry's capacity to inspect schools and colleges that would have ensured adherence of agreed learning and teaching standards within learning institutions. Taken as a confession to inadequacy, the minister pointed

**Table 1: School inspection**

	<b>Target</b>	<b>School Inspected</b>	<b>Percentage of Inspected</b>
Primary	7,200	3,835	53.3%
Secondary	4,000	1,577	39.4%

out that departmental capacity to inspect is falling below 50% which leaves over a half of the prevailing learning institutions (Schools and Colleges) uninspected every year. The contemporary inspection reports reveal that during the financial year 2012/13, the inspection department managed to reach and inspect only 3,835 out of 7,200 planned primary schools, only 1,577 out of 4000 planned secondary schools, and only 177 teaching colleges.

This makes the department to have inspected a total of only 5,527 institutions out of 10,528 planned to be inspected in that particular fiscal year. Despite all these, in the 2013/14 budget allocations the inspection department is shown to have been allocated with only 3 billion shillings instead of 10 billion shillings recommended by experts in the field and Members of Parliament. Again this is a missed opportunity that we need to address so as to improve our education sector in both quality and quantity dimensions.

## **Conclusion**

The government has NOT been accountable enough when it comes to the execution of the education sector budget. Should it be necessary to proceed allocating education sector's budget to other ministries (of which we discourage), then it is important to adopt functional budget classification that will inform the total budget of different sectors including education, will help government spend valuably on the disbursed funds, and become effective in allocating according to needs and priorities. This will increase transparency in allocations and management and help promote accountability within the sector and improve performance.

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