

The Tanzania Budget Explorer

Opening up Information on Government Spending



www.twaweza.org/tz-budget

Background

Information on how the government spends tax money in Tanzania is becoming much easier to access. During 2011 for example, the Treasury posted Budget Books for Financial Year 2011/12 on its website (www.mof.go.tz). Still, the format in which this information is presented, in reports or budget books, is too bulky and complex to grasp.

To be useful, this data needs to be analysed and presented in formats that are easier to absorb and use. This makes it possible to grasp the narratives associated with the data and the implications of the way resources are allocated, on livelihoods, equity and development of the country.

The Tanzania Budget Explorer developed by Twaweza (www.twaweza.org/tz-budget) is an attempt to make this possible. Using visualisations it shows otherwise complex data in formats that are easy to understand. The portal is interactive with clickable graphs/charts and help text to assist the viewer to quickly make sense of how the government allocates tax resources. And what's more, no expertise in budget analysis is required.

Information used in creating the visualisations has been gathered from Budget Books produced by the Treasury, the Local Government Finance Information System (www.logintanzania.net) hosted by the Prime Minister's Office Regional Administration and Local Government and the National Bureau of Statistics.



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Overview of the portal

Visualisations (graphs, charts and maps) display distribution of public resources in the government budget at three levels:

- Total spending
- Spending by Central Government (Ministries, Departments and Executive Agencies)
- Spending by Regions and Local Government Authorities (geographical)

Spending is also displayed according to different modes of classification that are used by the government (functions of government, sectors and purpose to which the resources are applied and type of spending). There is an option to view spending either in aggregate or per capita (per person).

Ways to view the data

Functions of Government: Defense and Security; Governance – Economic Services; Governance – Judiciary; Infrastructure; Production Services; Social Services; and Sovereignty.

Sectors: Administration; Agriculture; Education; Energy; HIV / AIDS; Health; Judiciary; Others; Roads; and Water.

Clusters from the National Poverty Reduction Strategy (MKUKUTA): Cluster I (growth and reduction of income poverty); Cluster II (quality of life and social wellbeing); and Cluster III (good governance and accountability)

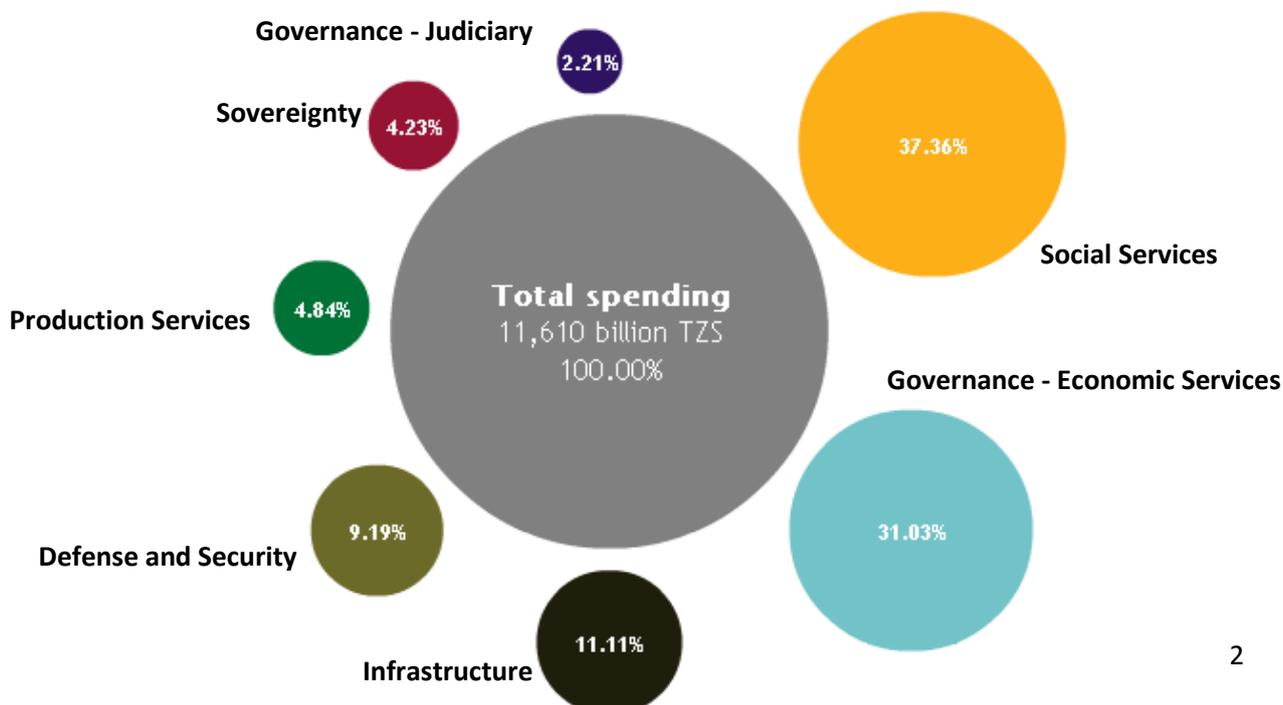
Type: recurrent (running costs); and development (developmental spending)

Purpose: current transfers; debt services; equipment; goods and services; infrastructure; maintenance; other capital; studies; wages

Total Spending

This shows the entirety of government spending (sum of central and devolved spending), as bubble or bar charts. Users can also view spending over time (for the years in which data are available). Spending can further be split by purpose to which it is applied, by sector, by function of government and by type.

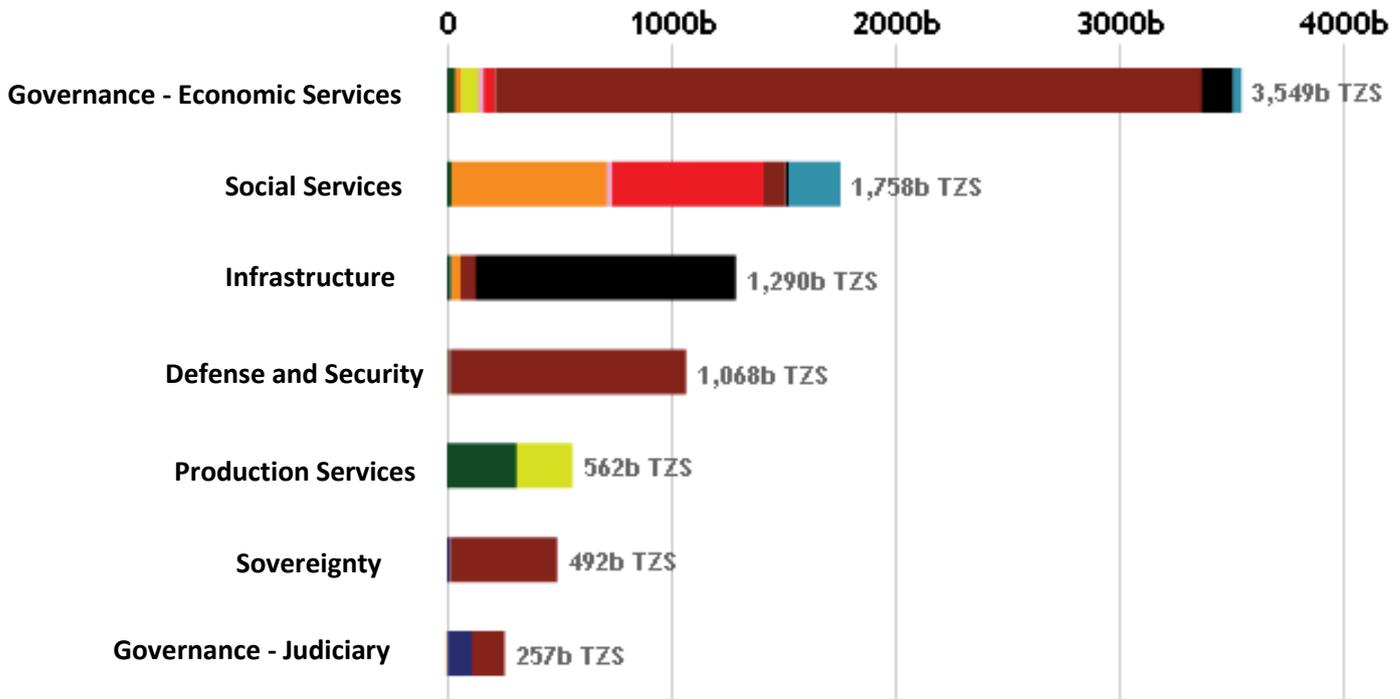
Total spending (bubble chart) | Total resources in government budget, by sector 2010 - 2011



Central Government (MDAs)

This shows total government spending by the central government (Ministries, Departments and other Executive Agencies). Resources may be split by purpose, sectors, type and function. This allows users to discover where spending is directed and compare spending between agencies.

Central government spending (bar chart) | All MDA spending by function and sector 2010 – 2011

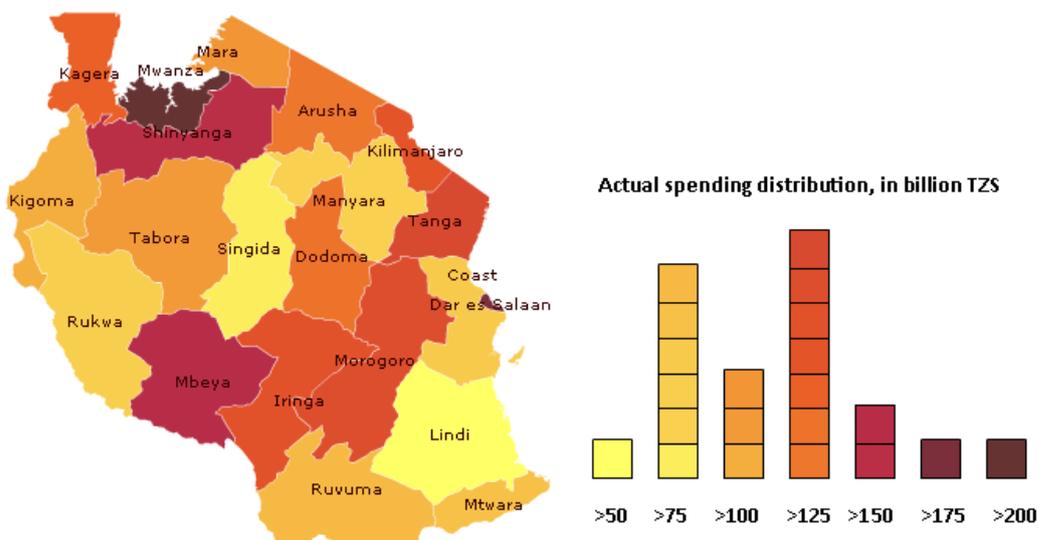


Sub-National level Spending

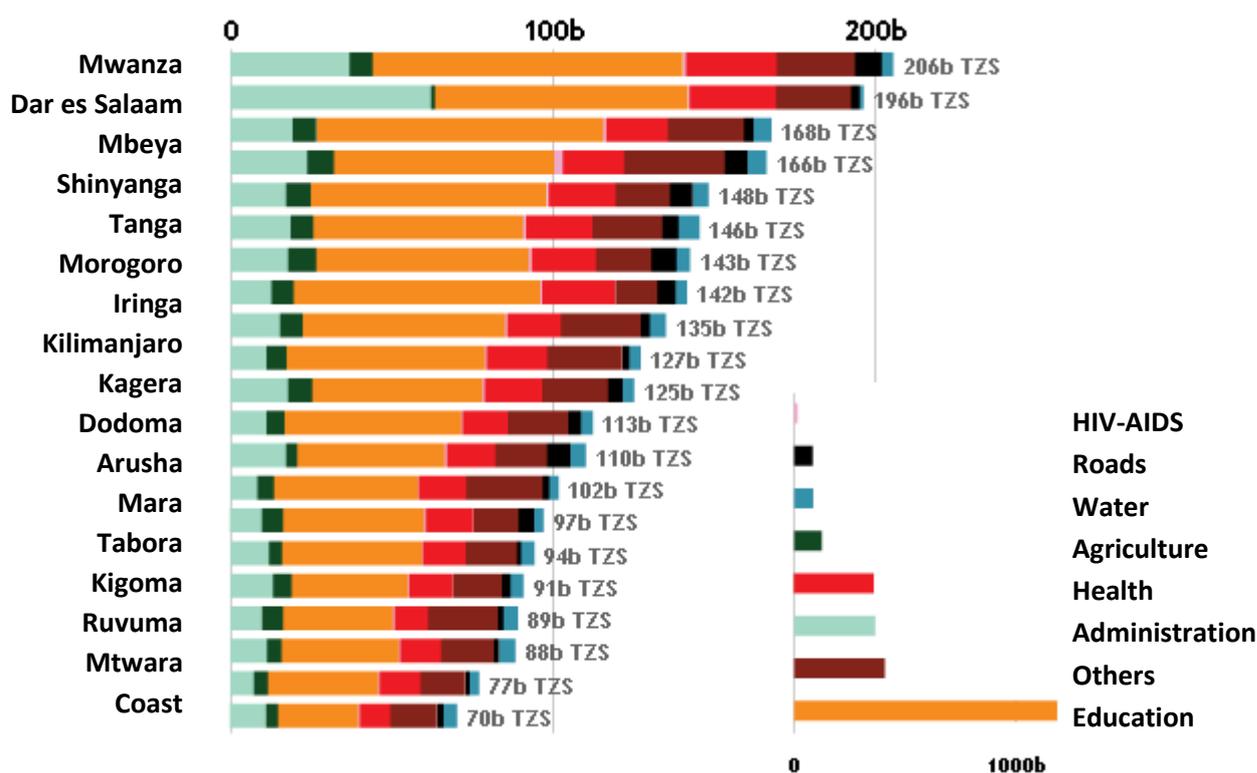
Local Government Authorities (LGAs), reintroduced in Tanzania in 1984, have become—under the process of decentralisation by devolution—the key providers of public services to communities. Resources allocated to LGAs as of 2010/11 are estimated at 22% of the government budget.

The budget explorer shows spending by Local Government Authorities (councils) in each region collectively and individually. It provides tools for comparing spending between regions and between councils, and to analyse trends within councils over time. The variation between resources allocated per person in different regions can also be compared.

Sub-national spending (map) | Spending in regions 2010 - 2011



Sub-national spending (bar chart) | Spending in regions per person by sector 2010 - 2011



Useful features of the Budget Explorer

- Available in both official languages used in Tanzania (English and Swahili)
- Options for downloading, printing and sharing of images in the portal
- Users can download the whole dataset used to create the visualisations
- Contextual help function (that varies by visualisation and mode of analysis selected) - for users to understand the information being displayed and navigate the explorer more easily
- Spending displayed in absolute/actual shillings and in shillings per capita (per person) at national and sub-national levels.
- Ease of navigation between views using the back and forth button in the explorer

Comment

To comment on the tool, share ideas and information, or join the debate:

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