



A New Dawn?

Citizens' views on new developments in education



1. Introduction

In February 2015, the Government of Tanzania launched a new Education and Training Policy. The new policy extends the threshold of basic education (which has been compulsory and fee free since 2001 when the Primary Education Development Program (PEDP) was introduced) to include secondary education. Since his election in October 2015, President Magufuli has vowed to implement the new policy. At the official opening of the Eleventh Parliament, he assured parents with children in primary and secondary school that they will not be asked to pay any contributions to education from January 2016¹. President Magufuli has declared that all necessary funding will be sent directly to schools, adding “I am certain that those being sent the money will use it well, I warn them not to use it badly².”

Although this commitment to educate every Tanzanian child to secondary level represents a milestone in the country's history, access is not the only challenge facing Tanzania's education system. The quality of education is also critical³. There is no value to citizens or the country overall if children are in school but they are not learning. The 2014 Uwezo report found that just 19% of students in Standard 3 were able to read a Standard 2 level English story³. Fewer than 68% of students who took the Standard 7 exams in 2015 passed⁴. While this is an improvement of about 11% from 2014, too many students are still being left behind⁵.

- 1 Taylor, Ben. “Free Basic Education.” *Tanzanian Affairs*. N.p., 1 Jan. 2016. Web.
- 2 “Quality Education Must Be Tanzania's Priority.” *The Citizen*. N.p., 6 Jan. 2016. Web.
- 3 “Are Our Children Learning? Literacy and Numeracy in Tanzania 2014.” (n.d.): n. pag. Twaweza East Africa. Web.
- 4 “Standard Seven Exam Results Released, up by 11pc.” *The Citizen*. N.p., 31 Oct. 2015. Web.
- 5 *ibid*

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Given the primacy of education to any country's development, and the changes to the sector currently being rolled out across the country, it is important to understand citizens' perspectives about the public education system. What do citizens think of the current state of education? What is their opinion of public school teachers and the quality of the education their children receive? Do they expect that free education will improve quality? How much have parents been contributing to schools? And how has their money been used? This policy brief presents citizens views and experiences with the public provision of basic education. We hope that the findings will also provide a starting point by which to measure the achievements of implementation of the new policy over time.

Data for this brief come from Twaweza's flagship *Sauti za Wananchi* survey. *Sauti za Wananchi* is a nationally-representative, high-frequency mobile phone panel survey. It is representative for Mainland Tanzania. Information on the overall methodology is available at www.twaweza.org/sauti. For this brief data were collected from 1,894 respondents from the second *Sauti za Wananchi* panel. This was the seventh round of calls to the new panel, conducted between 10 December 2015 and 2 January 2016.

The key findings are:

- Almost 8 out of 10 citizens (76%) believe that the provision of free education will also improve its quality
- About 9 out of 10 parents say they make a financial contribution towards their child/ children's education in public schools.
- Parents' financial contributions pay for security (66%), tests (57%), and desks (34%).
- Almost half of all citizens believe that financial contributions collected by schools do not serve their intended purpose
- About 8 out of 10 citizens believe that teachers do not like their profession
- Half of all citizens think that the quality of primary education has deteriorated or remained the same over the past 10 years and half think it has improved

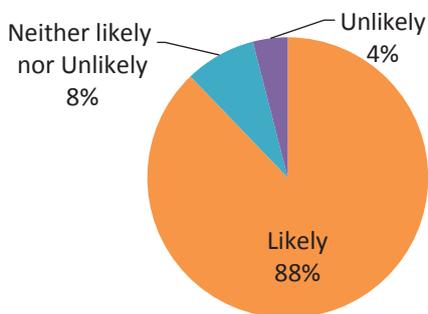
2. Six facts about education in Tanzania

Fact 1: Citizens are optimistic about the promise of free education

Almost all citizens (97%) are aware of President Magufuli's announcement that secondary education would be fee free from January 2016⁶, as per the new policy and the party's manifesto commitment. In addition, almost 9 out of 10 citizens (88%) were confident that this promise would be implemented on schedule.

6 *Sauti za Wananchi* Mobile Phone Survey – Round 7 (December 2015/January 2016). Full dataset available at www.twaweza.org/sauti.

Figure 1: What is the likelihood that this promise of free education will be implemented on the announced date?



Source of data: *Sauti za Wananchi* Mobile Phone Survey – Round 7 (December 2015/January 2016)⁷

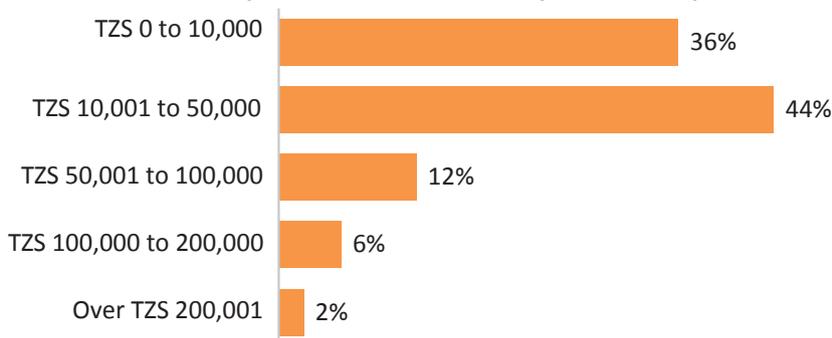
Furthermore, a significant 3 out of 4 citizens (76%) believe that the provision of fee free education will also improve quality by improving the teaching environment (55%).

Despite this general optimism, 15% of citizens stated that free education would not improve quality, as the surge in enrolment would stretch resources⁸. Almost half (49%) believe that students will fail due to prohibition of extra classes that teachers run to help struggling students and earn extra income, and 22% fear there won't be enough teaching materials⁹.

Fact 2: About 9 out of 10 (89%) parents contribute to public education

Parental contributions, or “michango,” have become a feature of the education system since the expansion of Universal Primary Education. When asked, 9 out of 10 parents (89%) report contributing money to public schools. When parents were asked how much they contributed 80% reported paying TZS 50,000 or less annually, while 8% reported paying over TZS 100,000¹⁰.

Figure 2a: How much do you contribute towards your child’s (public) education?



Source of data: *Sauti za Wananchi* Mobile Phone Survey – Round 7 (December 2015/January 2016)

7 *Sauti za Wananchi* Mobile Phone Survey – Round 7 (December 2015/January 2016). Full dataset available at www.twaweza.org/sauti.

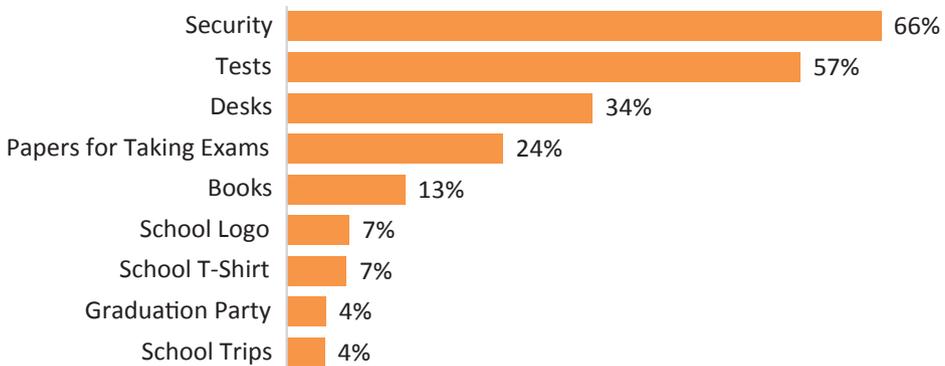
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Contributions to public schools are used for security (66%), tests (57%) and desks (34%), and a smaller share goes to graduation parties (4%) and school trips (4%). The formula for Capitation Grant allocation is: 40% for textbooks and other reading/reference materials; 20% for writing materials (pens, exercise books, pencils etc); 10% for administration and 10% for examination papers and printing. So a number of items that parents are required to contribute can only be drawn from the administration allocation of the capitation grant.

Figure 2b: What do parental contributions pay for?

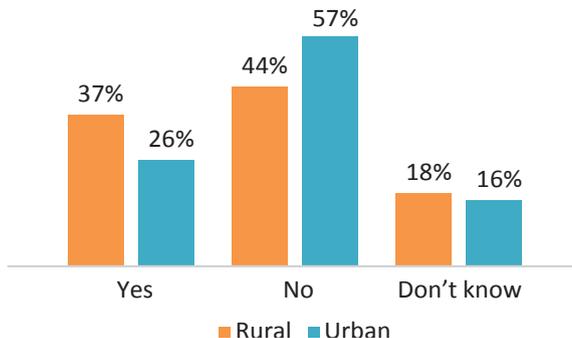


Source of data: *Sauti za Wananchi* Mobile Phone Survey – Round 7 (December 2015/January 2016)¹¹

Fact 3: Half of citizens believe parental contributions are not used as intended

Despite the fact that so many parents make these extra contributions, 49% of citizens believe that this money is not used as intended. Urban citizens are more sceptical, with 57% stating that contributions are not used as intended, compared to 44% of rural citizens. In addition, 58% of all citizens believe that these contributions are not authorized by the government and 89% believe that public school teachers collect this money as a source of extra income¹².

Figure 3: Do you think the contributions serve the purpose for which they are intended?



Source of data: *Sauti za Wananchi* Mobile Phone Survey – Round 7 (December 2015/January 2016)

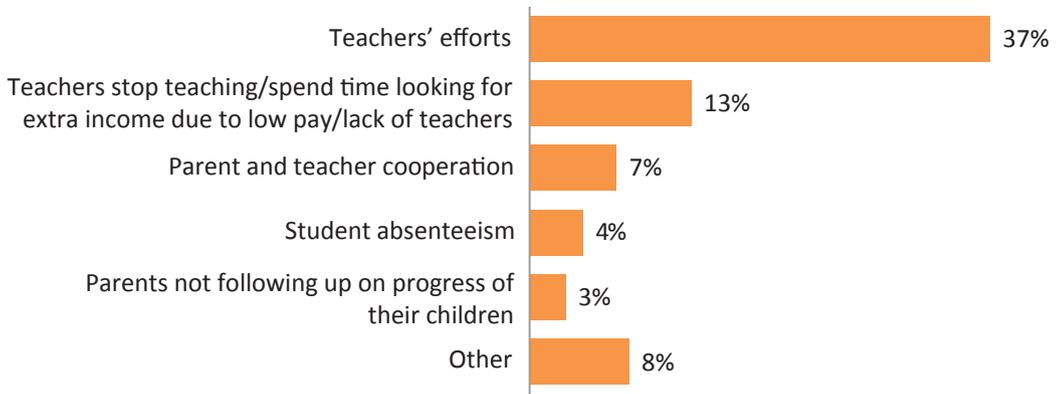
11 Multiple responses were permitted

12 *Sauti za Wananchi* Mobile Phone Survey – Round 7 (December 2015/January 2016). Full dataset available at www.twaweza.org/sauti.

Fact 4: Citizens connect learning outcomes to teacher effort

Citizens were asked what they think drives Standard 7 results in their community (good or bad). Half of citizens attribute the results to teacher effort (or lack thereof)¹³, while only 7% mention challenges related to parents or students¹⁴. Interestingly a substantial 1 in 3 citizens (29%) do not know what drives learning outcomes at the end of primary schooling.

Figure 4: What do you think is the main reason that contributed to this outcome?



Source of data: *Sauti za Wananchi* Mobile Phone Survey – Round 7 (December 2015/January 2016)¹⁵

Fact 5: 8 out of 10 citizens believe that teachers are proud of their profession but do not like their jobs.

More than 9 out of 10 citizens (93%) believe that teaching is the profession that lays the foundation for the nation. However, although 79% of citizens believe that teachers are proud of what they do, 80% state that teachers do not like their job and only do it for financial gain.

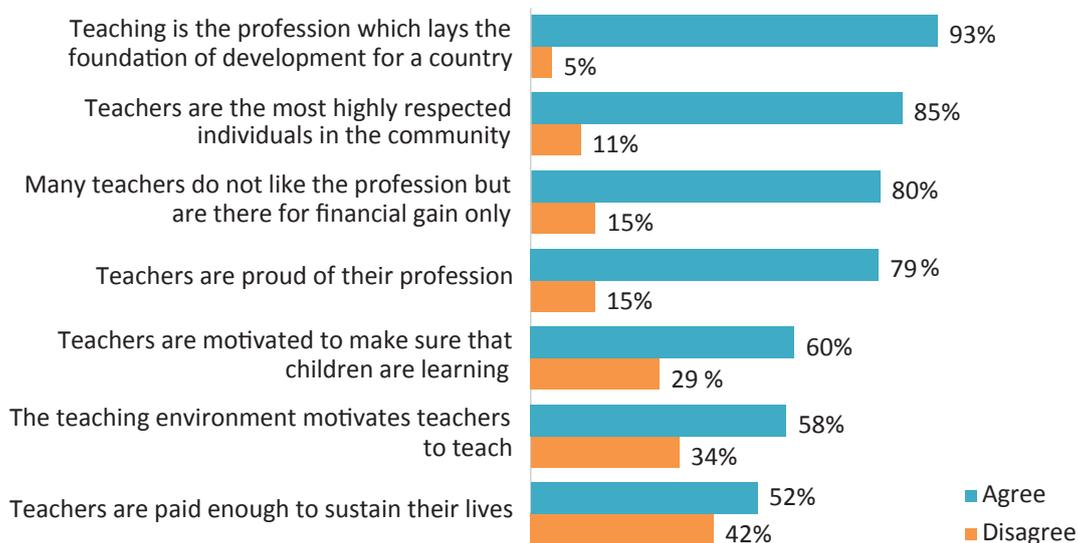
Why would teachers be proud of their profession but not like the job? The answer, according to some citizens, seems to be salary and working environment. In total 42% of citizens believe that teachers are not paid a living wage, and 34% believe that the work environment does not motivate them to teach. Although these are still minority views (with higher numbers of citizens agreeing with opposite statements), they may provide some indication of why citizens think teachers don't like their jobs.

13 Teachers efforts/following up on students + Teachers stop teaching/spend time looking for extra income due to low pay

14 Student absenteeism + Parents not following up on progress of their children

15 'Don't know' responses are excluded

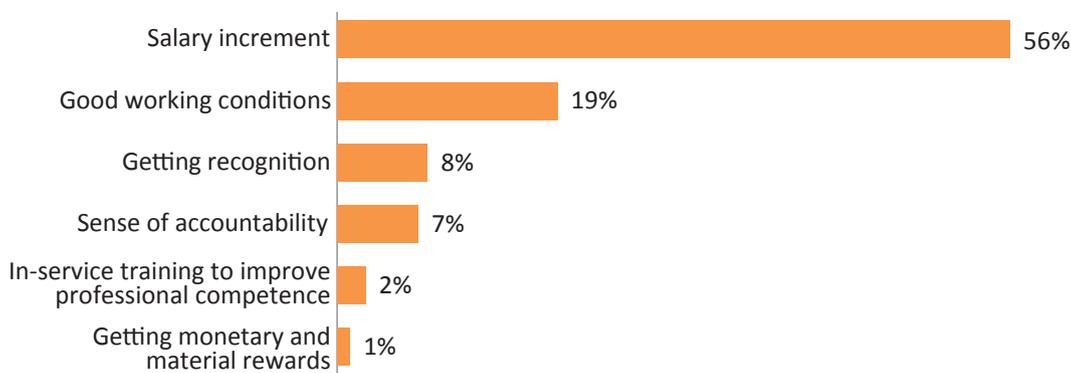
Figure 5a: How much do you agree with the following statements:



Source of data: *Sauti za Wananchi* Mobile Phone Survey – Round 7 (December 2015/January 2016)

When asked about what would motivate teachers to provide quality education to children, 56% of citizens cite salary increments and 19% mention good working conditions.

Figure 5b: What do you think could be done to encourage teachers to provide good learning to the children?



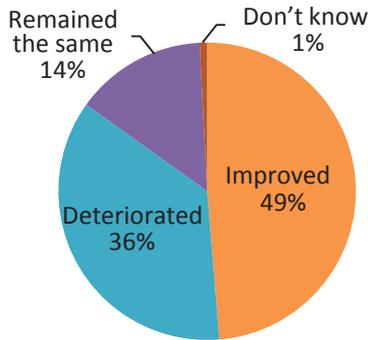
Source of data: *Sauti za Wananchi* Mobile Phone Survey – Round 7 (December 2015/January 2016)¹⁶

Fact 6: Citizens are divided about the quality of primary education

When asked about education quality, exactly half of citizens believe that the quality of primary education has deteriorated or remained the same over the past decade while the other half say it has improved.

¹⁶ 'Don't know' and 'other' responses are excluded

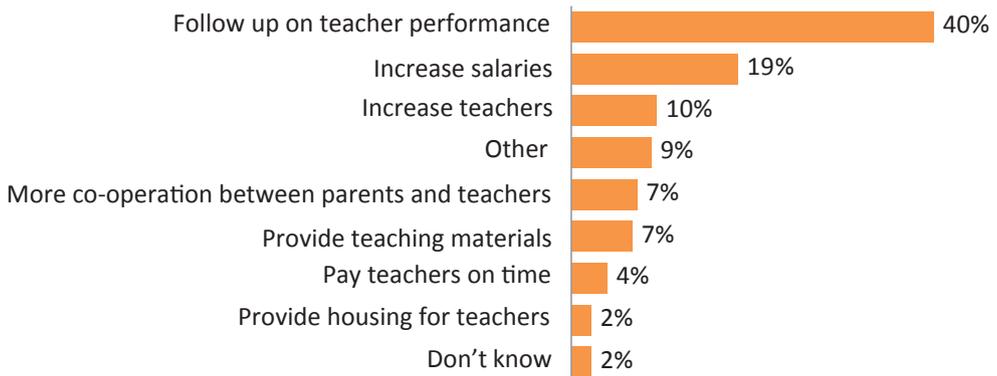
Figure 6a: Over the past 10 years do you think the quality of primary education has:



Source of data: *Sauti za Wananchi* Mobile Phone Survey – Round 7 (December 2015/January 2016)

The majority of citizens believe that the key to improving the quality of primary education is to focus on teachers. Citizens offer the following advice to government for improving education: follow up on teacher performance (40%), increase teachers' salaries (19%), and increase the number of teachers (10%). Just 7% mentioned teacher-parent cooperation as way of ensuring that children learn.

Figure 6b: What would you advise the government to do to improve the quality of primary education?



Source of data: *Sauti za Wananchi* Mobile Phone Survey – Round 7 (December 2015/January 2016)

3. Conclusion

The new government has focused heavily on the provision of free primary and secondary education, and citizens are both excited and optimistic about it. Citizens generally believe that free education will be achieved in a timely manner, and that education quality will improve. Another vital concern for citizens seems to be the importance of teachers in achieving a high standard of education. When asked about how to improve the quality of primary education, citizens focused on teacher salaries, number of teachers in schools and especially, teacher performance.

Citizens are not alone in emphasising the role of teachers; according to Davidson, the lack of teacher motivation is a key factor affecting the quality of education in Tanzania¹⁷. Anecdotal evidence from a Twaweza survey of 272 teachers show that 96% of those teachers were dissatisfied with their jobs. In addition, 1 out of 3 stated that they would not choose a teaching job again, citing a harsh work environment (34%) and low salaries (26%) as their main reasons. It seems then, that teachers and citizens are largely seeing the same picture. Since the new administration has placed consistent emphasis on education, they should also begin to address teachers' issues and improve the quality of teaching in Tanzania, in addition to increasing accessibility.

As the new education policy is implemented, it is important to monitor the changes made and the impact achieved. There is currently some hesitation about the concept of 'fee-free' education; school administrators are concerned about just how much TZS 10,000 per child per year can achieve. One example of this is the provision of security. As shown above, the biggest share of parents' contributions in 2015 went to security (64%); however, this is not covered in the capitation grants that are being sent to schools. At best these costs could be covered from the 10% capitation grant allocation for administration. So assuming that all the money designated for schools is transferred directly and reaches the intended recipients in full, questions remain as to whether this amount per child is sufficient to ensure that children learn.

Another critical issue is the question of resource management. Capitation grants were transferred directly to schools until 2002 when the flow of funds was directed to district authorities. And now we are switching back to direct transfers, largely due to the inefficiency of the new system: between 2010 and 2013, an average of TZS 2,202 per student actually reached schools. But how will we ensure that transfers directly to schools will lead to a different outcome? Are schools equipped to manage these resources well; both in terms of preventing leakage and wastage but also in directing expenditure to the most essential items? What systems are in place at school level, particularly in terms of checks and balances on spending decisions? In order to ensure that we are getting value out of our education spending, the disbursement and use of funds will need to be monitored at school level.

And finally, perhaps most importantly, the new administration has been largely silent on the challenge of improving learning outcomes. Expanding access to primary school for millions of Tanzanian children is a remarkable achievement. However, after more than ten years of this policy, we are also cognisant of the pitfalls of enrolling millions of children in school without paying sufficient, careful and deliberate attention to issues of quality. Will there be enough teachers for these students? How will we ensure that they learn? Over the past ten years, the country saw a huge expansion in the number of secondary schools and students. It was also accompanied by a commensurate rise in the number of students failing secondary school examinations. What can this administration do differently to ensure that Tanzania is not producing more unskilled graduates? How can we ensure that the education system offers a real opportunity for all Tanzanians to live better and to help drive the country's development? Although the presidential directives to focus on education offer a hopeful start, it will take years of partnership and fine-tuning to make high-quality, fee-free education a reality.

17 Sauti za Wananchi Mobile Phone Survey – Round 7 (December 2015/January 2016). Full dataset available at www.twaweza.org/sauti.