

Where does the primary education money go?

Key Findings

- Government spending per pupil has increased 70 percent since the introduction of free primary education in 2001.
- Pupil to teacher ratios have worsened since 2001; pupil to classroom ratios remain very high.
- The annual primary education budget is sufficient to pay for teachers’ salaries, as well as six books, a new desk, and TZS 10,000 capitation grant for every pupil.
- It is unclear, how education inputs can be so poor if Government is spending so much money.

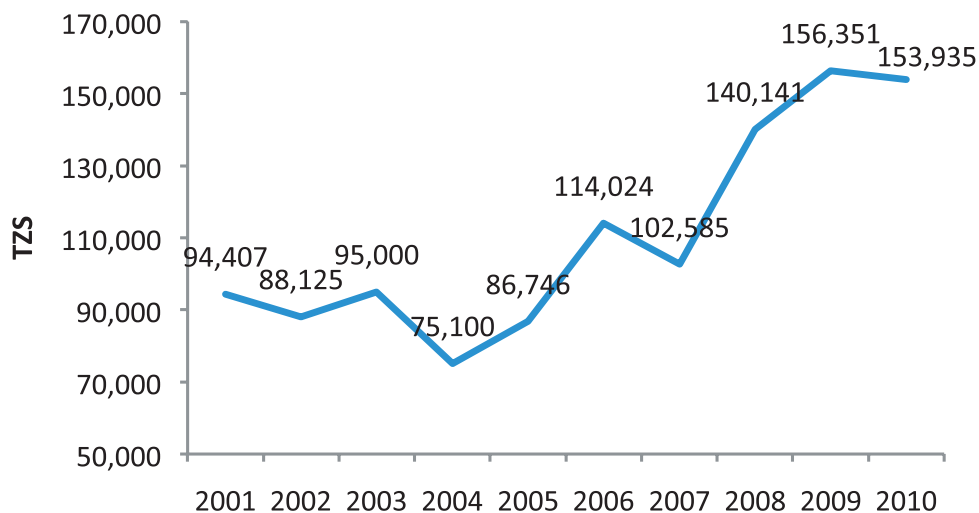
Introduction

When the Government introduced free primary education in 2001, enrollment increased from 4.9 million pupils in 2001 to 8.3 million in 2010. The increase in pupil numbers has been accompanied by a significant increase in the primary education sub-sector budget, from TZS 237 billion in fiscal year 2001/02 to almost 6 times as much 9 years later (TZS 1.3 trillion in 2010/11). While this spending increase has been commensurate with student enrollment, the average pupil:classroom ratio is still 73:1, and the pupil:teacher ratio of 51:1 in 2010 is worse than it was in 2001 (46:1). This brief questions how the Government’s primary education budget is utilised.

Fact 1: Since 2001, spending per pupil has increased by 70 percent

Since the introduction of free primary education, the budget for primary education has risen manifold to TZS 1.3 trillion in fiscal year 2010/11. Part of the increase can be explained by the swell in enrollment; part can be explained by inflation. It is possible to control for these factors by expressing spending in constant (2010) shillings per pupil. This reveals that spending per pupil has increased by about 70 percent since 2001. Expressed in 2010 shillings, the Government now spends TZS 154,000 per pupil, compared to TZS 94,000 in 2001.

Figure 1: Primary education budget per pupil in 2010 shillings



Fact 2: It is unclear how the education budget is spent

Put differently, with 51 pupils per teacher, it can be estimated that the Government spends about TZS 7.8 million per teacher per annum. Of this amount a significant share is paid in teachers' salaries. At an average salary of TZS 300,000 per month, or TZS 3.6 million per teacher per year, it is estimated that the Government spends approximately 46 percent of its education budget on teachers' salaries. This leaves 54 percent of the budget or about TZS 4.2 million per teacher per year, for allocation to other items. How is this money spent?

Figure 2: Many pupils still sit on the floor at school



Photo credit: Chiku Aboud Lweno

The construction boom that accompanied the introduction of free primary education is over. There is little evidence of Government spending much on capitation grants (in fact it has consistently failed to deliver the full amount), books, or desks. If the Government did spend money on these things, then the lack of inputs that currently affects so many schools could be resolved in a short period of time. As the box below illustrates, after paying teachers' salaries, there is sufficient money in the budget to provide each pupil each year with a new desk, 6 books and TZS 10,000 in capitation grant to cover expenses for facility repairs, teaching guides, chalk, exercise books, administration, paper and examination papers(*). Beyond that there would still be money left to pay for water, security etcetera.

Table 1: Example of possible allocation of annual primary education budget on a per-teacher basis

Budget per teacher (51 pupils)	TZS 7,800,000
	minus
Estimated salary per teacher	TSZ 3,600,000
6 books @ TZS 5,000 per book @ 51 pupils	TZS 1,530,000
1 desk @ TZS 30,000 per desk @ 51 pupils	TZS 1,530,000
Capitation grant @ TZS 10,000 per pupil @ 51 pupils	TZS 510,000
	=
BALANCE	TZS 630,000

(*). As per policy, the capitation grant should be \$ 10 per pupil or about TZS 15,000 at the 2010 exchange rate. The capitation grant also includes spending on books, which has been listed separately.

Source of data

This brief draws its data from the Basic Education Statistics published by the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training. The data can be downloaded from <http://moe.go.tz/statistics.html>. Inflation numbers were obtained from the National Bureau of Statistics (<http://www.nbs.go.tz>).



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