

# Resource mobilisation and fundraising in basic schools

A case study of Copperbelt and  
North-Western province

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## Acronyms

DEBS	District Education Board Secretary
EFA	World Conference on Education for All
FBE	Free Basic Education
FPE	Free Primary Education
GER	Gross Enrolment Rate
HIPC	Highly Indebted Poor Countries
NER	Net Enrolment Rate
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
SNDP	Sixth National Development Plan
UPE	Universal Primary Education

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Like many other countries, Zambia removed a major barrier to access to primary education when it abolished user fees for Grades 1–7 in 2002. The resulting fall in basic schools' income, however, has not been relieved by adequate government resources trickling down through the complex school funding system. In an attempt to address their funding problems, some schools have adopted fundraising ventures as a way of supplementing government resources. The successes and practicability of implementation of such ventures remain to be seen. There is a lack of information about the adequacy of such measures and no institutional framework to guide their implementation.

This study explores the range of resource mobilisation and fundraising activities adopted by basic schools. It looks into how basic schools are raising funds and how these funds are being utilised based on a sample of 30 basic schools (15 each from Copperbelt and North-Western provinces). The research was conducted through questionnaires with head teachers and school accountants/bursars as well as interviews conducted at the provincial and district level.

### Main findings:

- The schools face significant infrastructural constraints, with a significant minority lacking access to clean and safe water and not connected to the electricity grid.
- Funding flows from government is inadequate and erratic. On average, the schools receive only 10–15% of the amounts in the budgets they submit, and some wait over a year to receive it.
- Only 29% of the surveyed schools cite government as their main source of funding, relying heavily on other sources to manage their daily operational needs and financial obligations. Grade 8 and 9 user fees are the largest source of funding, followed by PTA contributions.
- PTA fees are charged by most schools, which use the funds for a variety of purposes, most notably school rehabilitation and maintenance. Collecting PTA fees can be difficult as parents maintain that education is supposed to be free.
- Schools engaged in a range of direct fundraising activities, the most important of which are civilian/career days, agricultural production units, tuck shops, and room hire.
- Though not strictly classified as a fundraising venture, Grade 8 and 9 user fees were very important sources of income for schools. The recent abolition of such fees will have far-reaching consequences for the schools.
- It is difficult to assess how much fundraising supplements government funding because schools' financial record keeping is so poor.

It is clear that a combination of all the fundraising modes could contribute significantly to raising the financial status of schools if managed strategically. There was, however, a general argument from respondents that schools' must not engage in fundraising as a major source of

funding, but as a supplement to government funding. Planning, executing and managing fundraising activities requires a lot of time and effort, which can come at the expense of quality service delivery. Further, rural schools feel that fundraising is futile as they are surrounded by poor communities who can barely afford even the minimal amounts involved in fundraising activities.

# 1 INTRODUCTION

Recognising the role of education in local and national development, Zambian governments past and present have striven to put in place policies and strategies aimed at improving the educational sector. From the First National Development Plan (1966–1979) to the present Sixth National Development Plan (2011–2015), Zambian governments have sought to harness education as a driver of socio-economic development by improving quality and increasing access. In practice, though, this has proved difficult.

Increasing access to education, in particular, has not been easy. In many countries, one of the major barriers to education for the poor proved to be the existence of user fees (Riddell 2003; Subrahmanian 2002; Kattan & Burnett 2004; World Bank 2004). The realisation that user fees in primary education were a serious obstacle to enrolment and completion led many governments to abolish primary school user fees, and in Zambia's case this resulted in a surge in enrolments (Kattan 2006; Riddell 2003; IOB 2008; MoE 2009).

Removing fees, however, implies a significant reduction in disposable income available to the schools. Fees used to constitute a considerable proportion of funding to schools in many countries (Kattan and Burnett 2004; Riddell 2003). In Zambia, this problem was exacerbated by the fact that government funding was not sufficient to relieve the increased pressure brought about by increased enrolments, and evidence suggested that government grants were inadequate and the quality of education was suffering (Kattan 2006).

In an attempt to address their problems, some schools have adopted fundraising ventures as a way of supplementing government resources. The successes and practicability of implementation of such ventures remain to be verified. There is a lack of information about the adequacy of such measures and no institutional framework to guide their implementation.

This paper is a critical review of fundraising and resource mobilisation in Basic Schools in Zambia. It explores the range of school resource mobilisation and fundraising activities and how these are impacting on school finances and outputs. Section 2 provides a background to free education in Zambia and sets the context for the study. Section 3 provides the study objectives and methodology. Section 4 presents the findings and Section 5 makes concluding remarks and recommendations.

## 2 BACKGROUND

Education is fundamental for helping people out of poverty. It is at the centre of many poverty reduction strategies (Das et al. 2004) and provides the training and skills necessary to drive economic and social development (MoFNP 2011). It is positively associated with human development as it is reflected in economic growth, a productive labour force, improved health and birth control. Its status as a basic human right has been widely recognised.

Poverty in the education sector manifests itself in several ways, including low enrolment rates, high dropout rates, poor performance and progression, poor attendance, poor learning environments and lack of opportunities for appropriate skills training (MoFNP 2002). The importance of education for development and poverty reduction provides a strong case for investment in the education sector.

One of the major reasons for poor educational outcomes in many developing countries is underinvestment in the sector, resulting in poor quality schools (Subrahmanian 2002). Without adequate investment, the synergies between educational access, economic growth and poverty reduction may not be capitalised upon (Mukudi 2004). This section provides a conceptual discussion on free education, with an emphasis on basic education. It will set the stage for the study and provide insights into the different perspectives on the concept of free primary education.

### 2.1 Genesis of free basic education

Free basic education (FBE) means the abolition of school user fees for the first nine years of schooling as a means of preventing children from poor socio-economic backgrounds from failing to participate in education or dropping out of school (ADB 2003). The concept emanates from the 1990 Jomtien World Conference on Education for All (EFA) when the achievement of universal basic education was established as a top development priority. This was reconfirmed in 2000 at the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal, and at the United Nations Millennium Summit, where 189 nations promised to guarantee universal basic education by 2015. EFA has thus been embraced as a major strategy for development all over the world, envisaging a holistic approach to education of the society, encompassing the formal and non-formal systems of education, adult education, and the literacy movements and other conventional and non-conventional methods of schooling.

Access to education can be achieved rapidly by various combinations of policies, including building more schools, lowering the costs to parents, supplying instructional materials, and recruiting more teachers. But the policy that has gained prominence in promoting access has been the abolition of user fees. The past decade has seen several countries in sub-Saharan Africa abolishing primary school tuition fees, typically as an attempt to resurrect declining education systems characterised by falling enrolments (Riddell 2003). Whereas in the 1980s and early to mid-1990s, the policy of cost sharing had been promoted by international financial

institutions such as the World Bank, the direct (and indirect) costs to parents of their children's education became obstacles to their attendance and continued enrolment.

## 2.2 Implications of free education

Riddell (2003) shows that abolishing tuition fees overcomes some of the obstacles to attending school, as can be judged by the gross and net enrolment rate increases experienced in five countries including Zambia following introduction of free primary education (FPE) (see Table 1).

**Table 1. Five countries' experience with free education**

	<b>FPE provisions</b>		<b>GER</b>	<b>NER</b>	<b>Finance</b>	<b>Role of external agencies</b>
<b>Kenya</b>	<i>January 2003</i>	2000/1	94	68.5	Education: from	2003: WB
	Free education and no school levies. Costs remain: uniforms, exam fees.	2002 2003	87.6 115		29% to 36% of budget; 55% on primary education. 6% of GDP	approved \$50m; DFID \$21m; several other donors' small amounts, bridging immediate gaps in advance of strategic plan.
<b>Malawi</b>	<i>October 1994</i>	1992		77	Education: from	About 40% of
	Free tuition, books, stationery. Uniforms not compulsory.	1996	138	67	11% (1990/1) to	primary education
		2000/1	136.9	100.6	24% (1997) of budget; 65% of this on primary education. 5.4% of GNP	budget.
<b>Tanzania</b>	<i>October 2001</i>	1999	62	46.7	Education: 25%	Over 60% of
	Free tuition (7–10 yr-olds first, then extended). No mandatory cash contributions. Uniforms not compulsory.	2002	100.4	99.3	of budget; 62% of this on primary education. 3.4% of GDP	primary education budget, not including direct budget support.
<b>Uganda</b>	<i>January 1997</i>	1995	74.3		Education: from	Over 50% ODA
		2000/1	135.8	109.5	12% (1992) to 25% (1998) of budget; 70% of this on primary education.	

<b>Zambia</b>	<i>February 2002</i>	2001	76.9	65.1	Education: from	About 50% basic
	User fees abolished. Uniforms not compulsory. Fees can be levied by PTAs and Boards, but no pupil can be denied an education because of cost.	2002	81	66.1	13.2% (1996) to 20.1% of budget; 56% of this on basic education.	education budget: 27% of total education expenditure (2000)

*Source: Riddell 2003*

While the macro policies of introducing FPE appeal to governments and donors alike, the micro challenges loom large and require differential treatment. These micro challenges cover all aspects of educational development, including: the vision of the educational system as a whole; the relevance of the curriculum; the appropriateness of the examination system for recognising achievement and enabling selection for post-primary education; teacher education; textbook production and distribution; school health and nutrition; reaching the marginalised and most disadvantaged; language policy, monitoring and evaluation; community participation; financial management; and supervision. With the introduction of FPE in many countries, these micro challenges have not been addressed sufficiently (Riddell 2003).

Enrolment in itself must not be seen as an end, but must be accompanied by quality service provision if meaningful development outcomes are to be achieved in the long term. Quality education is what keeps pupils in school. Unless quality is attended to from the beginning, high enrolment rates will not necessarily lead to an educated population (Riddell 2003).

Strategic plans can lay out what is meant by education quality using key indicators: for instance, the percentage of qualified teachers, pupil–teacher ratios, pupil–textbook ratios, and increases in learning achievement. But this is meaningless if not implemented on the ground. In an attempt to address educational quality issues brought about by FPE, different countries have adopted different policies toward the linchpin of educational quality: teachers. According to Riddell (2003), strategies have included using untrained teachers in Malawi, developing a new teacher education programme in Zambia and Kenya, and engaging in mass recruitment and deployment in Tanzania and Uganda.

The financing of education obviously has a large bearing on its quality. What is quite evident from different countries is that the governments are dependent to a large extent on external finance for funding FPE, and this looks likely to be the case in the medium- to long-term. Increasingly, sector-wide approaches including direct budget support have overtaken discrete projects as the dominant aid modality. Thus it has become about indicators, value for money, and explaining expenditure patterns rather than patterns of learning and language and pedagogy. It is about analysing whether targets are achieved and not about the appropriateness of the targets in directing educational development (Riddell 2003).

## 2.3 Free education in Zambia

Free basic education (FBE) was introduced in Zambia in February 2002 when the government declared that primary education would be free for all in Grades 1–7. A move rooted in the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative, the FBE policy was reflected in Zambia’s 2002 PRSP, which highlighted the elimination of user fees for basic education as a way to reduce poverty. The 2003–2007 strategic plan for the education sector also called for the abolition of school fees.

The implementation of the FBE policy was based on a set of indicators, risks and assumptions reflected in Table 2. The aim was to substantially increase the gross enrolment rate and general delivery of quality education service provision. The intentions of the policy were good, but there were concerns that the quality of education had been compromised in order to meet the HIPC trigger points as the Zambian government underestimated its spending needs (Global Campaign for Education 2004). This was further exacerbated by the fact that the abolition of user fees at basic education level in Zambia constituted a marked reduction in income for the schools and may have had more far-reaching consequences on service delivery than anticipated. This has created considerable financial pressure on the education system (HDAR 2008) which, as a consequence, is limping when it comes to meeting some of the key performance indicators.

The four key performance indicators that measure progress made in access, efficiency, quality and equity are the:

- Net Enrolment rate (NER)
- Completion rate
- Pupil–teacher ratio
- Gender Parity Index (GPI).

NER has improved tremendously since the implementation of the policy. The other indicators have yet to gain meaningful ground.

**Table 2. Education policy matrix**

<b>Narrative summary</b>	<b>Indicators of achievement</b>	<b>Risks/assumptions</b>
<p><b>Policy goal</b> Increased skills for poverty reduction, employment and economic growth</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved economic indicators</li> <li>• Improved social indicators</li> <li>• Increased formal/informal sector activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GRZ is able to maintain economic growth of 4–5% a year</li> <li>• GRZ is able to implement economic and institutional reforms</li> </ul>
<p><b>Policy purpose</b> Equitable access to relevant quality education and training that incorporates HIV/AIDS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100% basic school net enrolment by 2012</li> <li>• 60% high school net enrolment by 2015</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current GRZ budgetary allocations are maintained and increased</li> </ul>

interventions

- Learning achievements by grades 1-9 improved by 70% by 2015
  - Learning achievements for grades 10-12 improved by 75% by 2015
  - CPs maintain sufficient external funding to address the financing gap
- 

### **2.3.1 Funding of FBE in Zambia**

In 2009, funding to the education sector constituted 18.9% of total national expenditure. The flow of funds in the sector is complex, trickling down from the Treasury through the MoE to the District Education Board Secretary (DEBS) and then to basic schools. The Ministry of Finance and National Planning (MoFNP) executes the domestically resourced budget through a system of monthly releases to the spending authority using the cash budget system for its disbursements. Funding to schools is then administered through a three-tiered administrative hierarchy involving the provincial offices, the district offices and the schools. Funding to basic schools comes under two distinct categories: “grants to basic schools” paid to the schools by the office of the DEBS; and “grants for Free Basic Education” paid to the DEBS office for procurement of teaching and learning supplies for the schools.

There is thus a profound difficulty in distinguishing between proposed budgets, approved budgets, cash approbation and actual cash allocation and transfer when it comes to basic school funding. Basic schools submit a budget, but there is often no information on whether or not approval has been given and what the basis of allocation is (Assist Associates 2007).

### **2.3.2 Consequences of FBE in Zambia**

The free education policy has resulted in an overwhelming rise in enrolments (Riddell 2003; Kattan 2006). This has put tremendous stress on the education system. Increased enrolments outweigh teacher availability, so most schools have been forced to implement multiple shifts. This has implications on the amount of pupil–teacher contact and ultimately affects the quality of education. Further, there is evidence that the pupil to teacher ratio increased from 46:1 to 52:1 between 2001 and 2003, and to approximately 67.3 in 2009 (MoE 2007, 2008 & 2009). Further, this increase in enrolment has not been matched with appropriate increase in funding resulting in inadequate infrastructure and facilities in the schools. In 2004, government spending per pupil was ZMK 210,000 (which roughly translated to 8.6% of GDP per capita) while in 2006 it was ZMK 304,000 (9.3% of GDP per capita), which is relatively low (Assist Associates 2007). As a consequence, schools are beginning to take the initiative to mobilise resources in order to safeguard the quality of educational outcomes in their schools.

Some schools have adopted different methods of fundraising and resource mobilisation as a means of addressing some of their identified funding gaps. This study is of relevance as it deals with the different strategies adopted by schools to address their funding challenges.

### 3 STUDY OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

This study explores the range of resource mobilisation and fundraising activities adopted by basic schools to cope with insufficient government funding. It looks into how schools are raising funds, how these funds are being used, and the extent to which resource mobilisation at school level can affect service delivery and influence learning outcomes.

Copperbelt and North-Western provinces were selected for the study. The choice was based on their contrasting performances in the education sector: the Copperbelt ranked highest among provinces in terms of the four key performance indicators in 2009, while North-Western ranked lowest. The districts covered were Kitwe, Ndola and Luanshya (Copperbelt), and Solwezi and Kasempa (North-Western).

#### 3.1 Sample design

Basic schools are defined in this study as all schools with enrolment from Grade 1 to Grade 9. A sample of 30 basic schools (15 in each province) was selected randomly from a schools database provided by the Ministry of Education (see Table 3). The sampled schools were officially notified by the Ministry of Education through the provincial and district offices.

**Table 3. List of sampled schools**

<b>Copperbelt Province</b>		<b>North-Western Province</b>	
1.	Twalubuka Basic School	1.	Kimiteto Basic School
2.	Ndeke Basic School (Ndola)	2.	Tumvwananai Basic School
3.	Twikatane Basic School	3.	Rodwell Mwepu Basic School
4.	Chifubu Basic School	4.	Mushitala Basic School
5.	Buteko Basic School	5.	Kimale Basic School
6.	Chaisa Basic School	6.	Kikombe Basic School
7.	Mpatamato Basic School	7.	Kimasala Basic School
8.	Ndeke Basic School (Kitwe)	8.	Mashimpi Basic School
9.	Kafue Bridge Basic School	9.	Miombe Basic School
10.	Mama Monty Basic School	10.	Kanongo Basic School
11.	Rokana Basic School	11.	Nselauke Basic School
12.	Baluba Basic School	12.	Lufupa Basic School
13.	Kawama Basic School	13.	Shapenda Basic School
14.	Kanini Basic School	14.	Kalusha Basic School
15.	Kamfinsa Basic School	15.	Kasempa Basic School

## **3.2 Data collection**

Both quantitative and qualitative data were required for this study. Two sets of questionnaires and an interview guide were used to collect data. The two questionnaires were targeted at the head teachers and the school accountants/bursars. The interview guide was used for the key informant interviews at the district and provincial level. All data was treated as anonymous and confidential. The reference period for the study was 1999–2009.

## **3.3 Data analysis**

The quantitative data collected was analysed using the statistical software package SPSS while the qualitative data was analysed using ATLAS.ti.

## 4 STUDY FINDINGS

### 4.1 School structure and capacity

The sampled schools fit the general profile of a typical public rural or urban school in Zambia. Table 4 shows the general characteristics of the sampled schools in terms of pupil population, numbers of teachers, and pupil to teacher ratio. The pupil–teacher ratios were within acceptable limits for Copperbelt urban and North-Western rural schools, but they were relatively high for the Copperbelt rural and North-Western urban areas. It should be noted that the pupil–teacher ratio was calculated on the basis of total enrolment. The largest surveyed school had 41 classrooms while the smallest had five (See Table 5 for school facilities). The sampled schools had 149 houses for 890 teachers. The housing problem is more serious in the rural schools as rented accommodation is difficult to find.

**Table 4. General characteristics of sample schools**

		North-western				Copperbelt			
		mean	median	min.	max.	mean	median	min.	max.
<b>Rural</b>	Boys enrolled	411	363	80	1242	832	569	466	1724
	Girls enrolled	442	352	79	1419	833	549	463	1770
	Teachers	21	20	6	52	23	25	6	36
	P/T Ratio	41	36	27	51	51	45	155	97
<b>Urban</b>	Boys enrolled	922	863	590	1625	1007	1008	489	1782
	Girls enrolled	748	865	450	908	1049	984	391	1879
	Teachers	23	16	12	48	42	43	13	73
	P/T Ratio	73	108	87	53	49	46	68	50

In terms of utilities, 70% of the schools had access to electricity; the rest were not connected to the electricity grid. The percentage of schools that had access to clean and safe water either through the supply of piped water or borehole water was 80%; the remaining 20% did not have access to clean water and relied on open wells or nearby streams for their water. Pit latrines are the most common toilet facilities in the sampled schools, with only 40% having water borne toilets.

The figures in Table 4 and Table 5 show an education system with infrastructural constraints in which multiple expenditure shifts have to be employed to accord the learners some level of access to the facilities.

**Table 5. Facilities at sampled schools**

		Classrooms	Offices including staffroom	Boys toilets	Girls toilets	Male teacher toilets	Female teacher toilets	Desks	Houses
<b>North- Western</b>	Rural	121	30	32	31	12	11	1434	67
	Urban	113	27	40	43	7	7	1012	24
	Total	234	57	72	74	19	18	2446	91
<b>Copperbelt</b>	Rural	56	18	14	14	5	5	926	26
	Urban	257	116	97	114	18	21	4440	32
	Total	313	134	111	128	23	26	5366	58
<b>Total</b>	Rural	177	48	46	45	17	16	2360	93
	Urban	370	143	137	157	25	28	5452	56
	Total	547	191	183	202	42	44	7812	149

## 4.2 School budgeting and planning

Planning and budgeting is an integral aspect of management, necessary to ensure that both a financial and implementation strategy is in place for the year ahead. It is in principle a straightforward process that entails establishing the resource needs per child and then multiplying this with the number of children. All but one of the sampled schools had annual work plans and budgets in line with the funding ceilings provided by the DEBS office.

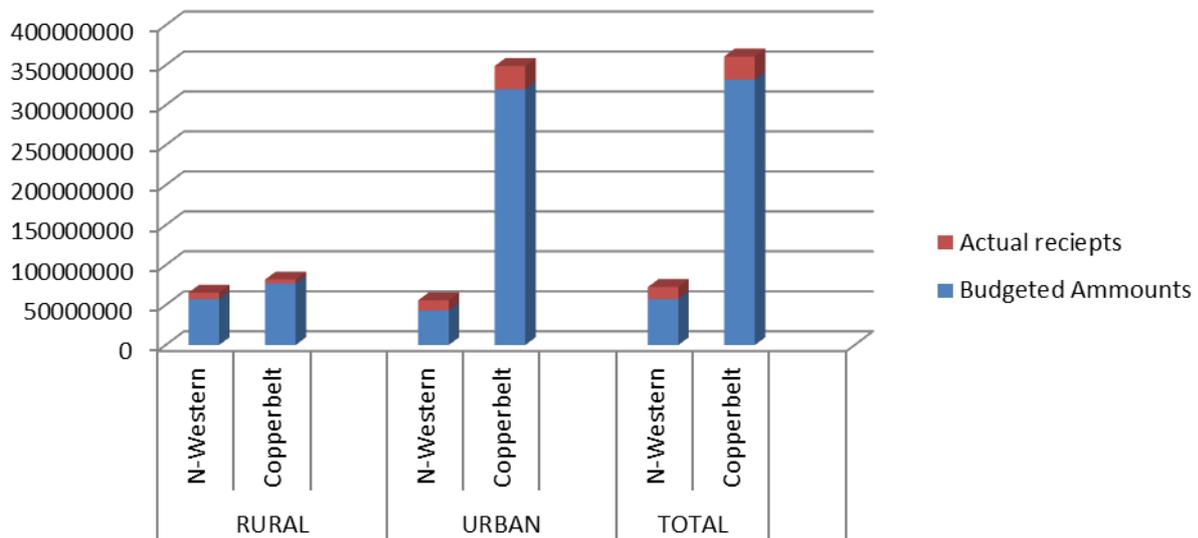
Receiving the budgeted funds is another matter, however. The rural school that did not have a work plan and budget described the process as a futile activity that adds no value as the budgets are not seriously considered and the little funding available is either erratic or not forthcoming at all. This sentiment was echoed across the other schools. Figure 1 shows actual receipts against budgeted amounts. On average, both rural and urban schools receive between 10% and 15% of their budgeted amounts. This is not to say that submitted budgets must be fully funded, but to stress the point that budgets reflect realistic needs and should be funded within reasonable limits if quality service delivery is to be achieved and maintained.

The frequency with which schools received approved funding varied: 3% received their funding quarterly, 13% termly, 40% annually and 43% could not state how often they received the funding as they had not received funding for over a year (even up to two years). The situation was especially dire for rural schools.

Ten years into the implementation of the FBE policy, the financial flows from government to the basic schools still leaves much to be desired. All the surveyed schools felt that the financial flows to the schools were not only erratic, but had also become inadequate as the funds were not sufficient to cover needs. There appears to be no standard when it comes to the disbursement of funds from the DEBS office to the schools. The DEBS in all sample districts

acknowledged this as they are only able to disburse funds to the basic schools as and when they receive funding from the Ministry of Education. It was also observed that no arrears or backdated funds were provided for any missed monthly allocations.

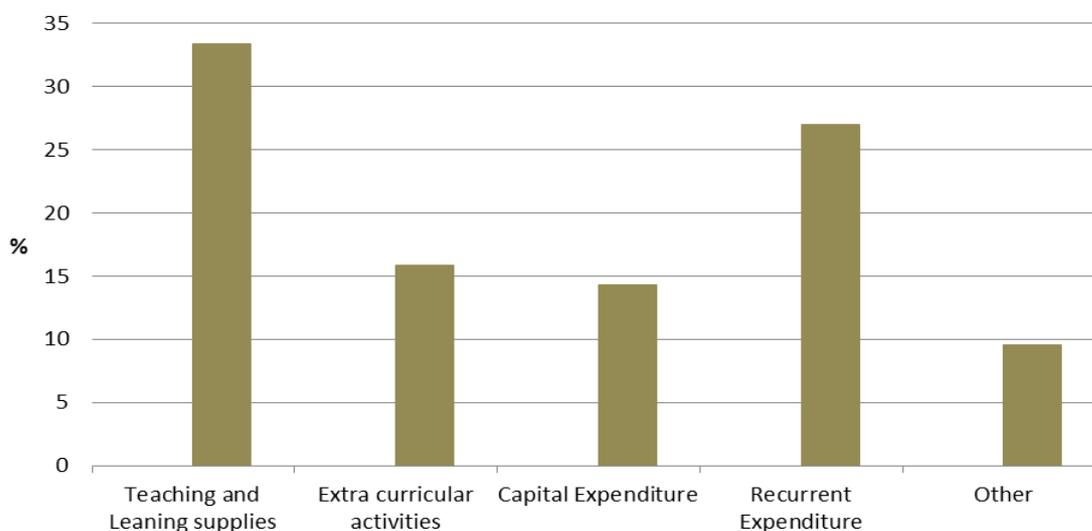
**Figure 1. Actual receipts against budgeted amounts**



Only 29% of the schools cited the government as the main source of their funding. This implies that the schools are heavily reliant on other sources of funding to manage their daily operations and meet financial obligations.

The schools employed a consultative process in which members of staff and parent-teacher association (PTA) representatives were involved in the development of their annual work plans and budgets. This challenges the notion that school budgets are unrealistic and that the process is not real budgeting.

**Figure 2. Key basic school budget lines**



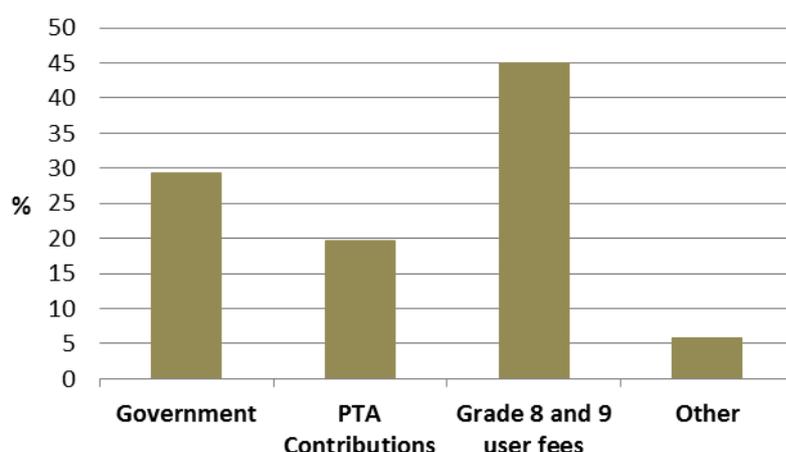
The key budget expenditure lines as reported by the schools were 33% for teaching and learning supplies, 16% for extracurricular activities, 14% for capital expenditure, 27% on recurrent expenditure and 10% on other expenditures which include auxiliary staff salaries (Figure 2). These budget lines are important for the overall operations of the school and cannot be completely forgone. They are supposed to be met by the government through the “Grants to Basic Schools” and “Grants for Free Basic Education” budget lines. A limited financial flow tracking exercise (Assist Associates 2007) attributed the delays and anomalies in school funding to the manner in which cash management and cash allocation decisions take precedence over the budget at central level. Once delays in funding occur it is practically impossible for the school to catch up on their funding. Arrears are rarely provided for any missed monthly funding. This creates a funding backlog and ultimately a funding gap. Schools have adopted various financial coping mechanisms to address these funding gaps.

The area of funding flows to basic school has already been the subject of much research, with the same conclusions that funding to basic schools is inadequate. The focus of this study is therefore not the funding flows but *how the schools are addressing these funding challenges* – the coping mechanisms schools adopt in order to stay afloat.

### 4.3 Financial coping mechanisms

Due to the low and erratic levels of government funding, the schools have adopted financial coping strategies. Delving into the operations of the schools reveals that schools cope through a combination of different funding sources. Figure 3 shows the different funding sources as reported by the schools in terms of their contribution to overall school budgets. On average, 45% is derived from Grade 8 and 9 user fees, 29% from government, 20% from PTA contributions, and 6% from other sources including fundraising.

**Figure 3. School budget funding sources**



The user fees and PTA contributions are the most “guaranteed” form of contribution to the school budget as they are collected at the school level. Grade 8 and 9 user fees were collected in 29 of the 30 sampled schools. PTA contributions were likewise collected in 29 of the schools.

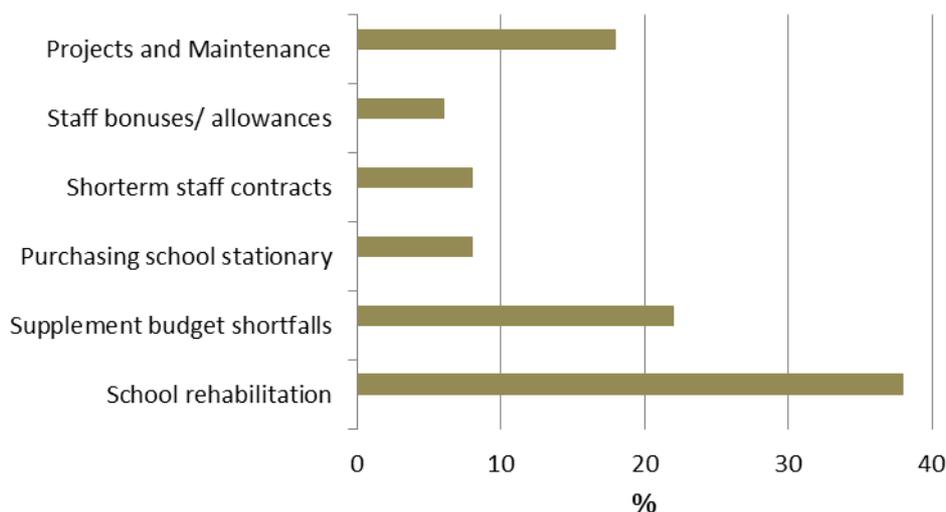
### 4.3.1 PTA contributions

Despite the free education policy stipulating that user fees be scrapped and attendance not be tied to any payments, schools have continued to charge PTA fees. 93% of the sampled schools charged PTA fees ranging from ZMK 3,000 a year in rural schools to ZMK 50,000 a year in urban schools. 55% of the schools charged PTA fees of ZMK 20,000 or more. In the case where PTA fees were not charged, the school was located in a poor community in which parents could not afford to pay. While this fee is not compulsory for the lower basic (i.e. Grades 1 to 7) there is a subtle push towards encouraging parents to pay this amount as it constitutes a significant proportion of funds available to the schools.

As an illustration of the potential of PTA fees to contribute to the financial situation of the schools, we can use the minimum and maximum enrolment figures reflected in Table 4 and the minimum and maximum PTA fees actually charged to show that, with all other things being constant, the PTA fees could contribute between ZMK 470,000 and ZMK 7,950,000 a year at the lower end of the scale, and between ZMK 10,983,000 and ZMK 183,050,000 a year at the higher end.

PTA fees are collected for various reasons as reflected in Figure 4, which shows that school rehabilitation and projects and maintenance feature prominently. However the schools acknowledged that it is quite difficult to collect this fee as parents maintain that education is free and so there should be no money paid to the schools. This has affected the effectiveness of the PTAs, especially in rural schools.

Figure 4. Use of PTA funds



### 4.3.2 Fundraising and resource mobilisation

In an attempt to bridge the funding gap schools have adopted different forms of fundraising ventures to raise supplementary funding for their schools. These modes of resource mobilisation can be divided into direct and indirect modes. The direct modes are those in which the pupils are directly involved and the school directly receives funds, while the indirect

modes involve donations and contributions from non-school participants (outside entities), and do not necessarily imply cash transactions.

In terms of **direct modes**, 29 of the sampled schools were involved in one or more direct forms of fundraising. The fundraising ventures adopted by the schools include, among others, agricultural production units in which crops were cultivated at schools for sale, room hire for functions and churches, running a school tuck shop, and wall advertising. Table 6 shows the number of schools engaged in each form of fundraising. The most common ventures were the civilian/careers day and production units, which featured in 23 and 22 schools respectively.

A majority (57%) of the schools had a main fundraising activity that accounted for most of their funds. The most frequently occurring main mode of fundraising was the agricultural production unit (29%), followed by tuck shops and civilian/career days (24% each). Also included among the other forms of fundraising are evening classes/night school and the sale of school uniforms. Despite the mandate that school uniforms should not be required, all the sampled schools required students to wear uniforms. This could be the result of ambiguity in FBE guidelines that allow schools to use uniforms as long as they do not profit from them.

School uniforms were sold in eight of the sampled schools but this was only considered as fundraising in six of them. The average price for a uniform set ranged from ZMK 30,000 to ZMK 65,000. The cost of uniforms was significantly cheaper at rural schools compared to urban schools.

**Table 6. Number of schools engaged in specific fundraising activities**

<b>Fundraising activity</b>	<b>Number of schools</b>
Tuck shop	9
Variety show	8
Room hire	15
Wall adverts	2
Fete	1
Civilian/career day	23
Production unit	22
Communication tower	1
Other	4

**Table 7. Main fundraising activity**

<b>Main activity</b>	<b>Proportion of schools</b>
Tuck shop	24%
Room hire	12%
Civilian day	24%
Production unit	29%
Cell tower	6%
Other	6%

In terms of the **indirect modes** of resource mobilisation, 60% of the schools received donations during the reference period. Table 8 shows the types and proportions of donations received by the schools. The cash donations were in the form of scholarships for Grades 8 and 9. The main sources of donations to the schools were non-governmental organisations (NGOs), church organisations, community based organisations, service clubs and the mines. The NGOs were by far the biggest contributors. Their support was not solicited and was based on their assessments of the schools' needs. Support from the mines, on the other, was solicited in all instances.

**Table 8. Types of donation received**

<b>Type of donation</b>	
Cash	33%
Books and stationery	10%
Building materials	15%
Volunteer workers	20%
Shoes and uniforms	23%

### 4.3.3 Grade 8 and 9 user fees

Though not a fundraising venture in the true sense of the term, Grade 8 and 9 user fees are prominent among what schools consider as fundraising ventures. This is especially true within the context of free basic education where the rest of the pupils (i.e. Grades 1–7) do not pay user fees. Table 9 shows the maximum, median and minimum user fees charged in the two provinces.

**Table 9. Grade 8 and 9 user fees per term (ZMK)**

		<b>Maximum</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Median</b>
<b>North-Western</b>	Rural	150,000	30,000	90,000
	Urban	128,000	70,000	100,000
	Total	150,000	30,000	90,000
<b>Copperbelt</b>	Rural	230,000	180,000	200,000
	Urban	420,000	150,000	300,000
	Total	420,000	150,000	300,000

Urban schools can raise more from user fees than rural schools as they have higher enrolments and their fees are pegged at higher rates. Depending on their enrolment of grades 8 and 9 and their locality, the schools are able to raise anywhere between ZMK 39,690,000 and ZMK 789,030,000 a year from user fees. The fact that these user fees are the financial backbone of the schools puts pressure on Grade 8 and 9 pupils and has implications for access to secondary education as the transition from not paying fees to paying fees is often taxing for families.

The recent announcement on the abolition of the Grade 8 and 9 fee will therefore have far-reaching consequences for the schools. The income forgone by the 30 sampled schools will be in excess of ZMK 8,378,640,000 a year. The government will have to address this problem seriously: the current system of funding will not suffice if the schools are to remain afloat.

#### **4.3.4 Impact of resource mobilisation**

While it was the intention of the study to assess the extent to which fundraising supplements government funding, it was impossible to do so as financial records were not well kept and generally unavailable. It is worth noting that only 11 (37%) of the sampled schools had trained accountants to handle financial matters; the rest relied on volunteers (i.e. teachers) for this. This clearly has far-reaching consequences on the quality of financial records maintained and financial management within basic schools.

When school accounting personnel were questioned on the impact of direct fundraising on contributing to school income, only 3% rated the programmes as very effective. 13% rated them effective, 27% moderately effective, another 27% slightly effective, and 30% rated their programmes ineffective in addressing the financial woes of the schools. Yet 63% of the head teachers felt that their direct fundraising ventures improved the financial standing of the schools. On the impact of the indirect mode of resource mobilisation, 50% of head teachers rated the ventures as extremely effective while the other 50% remained neutral.

It is clear that a combination of all the fundraising modes could contribute significantly to raising the financial status of schools if managed strategically. There was, however, a general argument from respondents that schools' must not engage in fundraising as a major source of funding, but as a supplement to government funding. Planning, executing and managing fundraising activities requires a lot of time and effort, which can come at the expense of quality service delivery. Further, rural schools feel that fundraising is futile as they are surrounded by poor communities who can barely afford even the minimal amounts involved in fundraising activities.

## 5 RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the study the following recommendations and conclusions can be reached:

1. FBE needs to be integrated within a poverty reduction and economic growth strategy that anticipates and provides for the forward and backward linkages of the expanded system. This must involve economic, political and social considerations that must be orchestrated down to the village/school level. The focus therefore should not only be on primary education in isolation from other economic components, but on how the elements of the entire system feed into and build on each other for the promotion and sustenance of real sectoral growth.
2. The recent scrapping of the Grade 8 and 9 fees means that the schools will now have less disposable income to meet their daily operational costs. Unless the government increases funding to schools the financial situation is expected to worsen. This will have serious consequences for teaching and learning outcomes. Schools are already under stress from inadequate infrastructure and teaching and learning supplies. Unless the government matches income forgone with new funding, the future of the public school system in Zambia appears dire. It is important to remember that the removal of user fees does not in any way alter the cost of educating a child. Over 12% per capita GDP spending on education is ideal.
3. Fundraising in schools must be institutionalised. While the efforts adopted by the schools are commendable, it is important that procedural guidance is provided. There must be increased attention to resource mobilisation as a policy issue in the education sector. This can be integrated into the overall education strategy to ensure that there is sufficient funding to support positive learning outcomes. Strengthening financial systems in schools is also important. There are no clear guidelines at school level on how funds received or raised should be managed and used. This is an especially urgent problem for funds raised, which can be highly susceptible to abuse as records are very poor.
4. Basic schools have made commendable efforts to develop their own capacities and engender sufficient community participation to ensure that education is responsive to local needs. The fundraising and resource mobilisation strategies employed have the potential to contribute positively to the funding situation of schools. These must be supported through a policy framework and implementation strategy to ensure accountability and that the benefits are transferred to the main target of the education sector, the learner.

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