

# The bedrock of inclusion: why investing in the education workforce is critical to the delivery of SDG4

## TANZANIA RESEARCH SUMMARY

March 2021

*This document summarises key findings research carried out in Tanzania, as part of a multi-country study undertaken on behalf of [ActionAid](#), [Education International](#), and [Light for the World](#). The research explores the current state of investment in the education workforce for disability-inclusive education and investigates what is realistically required for putting inclusive education into practice. Full reports can be accessed [here](#).*

### Tanzania has made steady progress on inclusive education

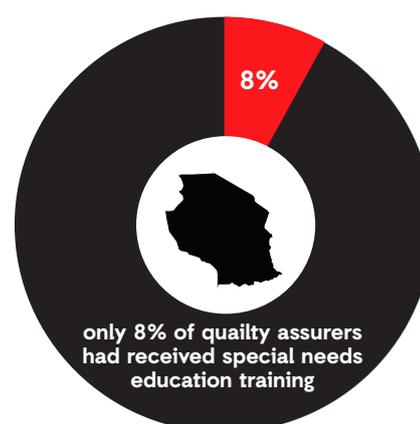
The Government of Tanzania has made several commitments to inclusive education. In 2010 the right to inclusive education was enshrined in the Persons with Disabilities Act following the 2009 ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).<sup>i</sup> The first National Strategy on Inclusive Education (NSIE) was drafted in 2009, followed by the second NSIE in 2018.<sup>ii</sup> However, there is still a long way to go.

- There are an estimated 400,000 school-aged children with disabilities in mainland Tanzania.<sup>iii</sup>
- In 2018/2019 a total of 60,404 children with disabilities were enrolled in school (49,655 at primary and 10,749 at secondary level), i.e. around 15% of the estimated 400,000 children with disabilities across the country.
- In Zanzibar this is estimated to be much lower, at 2%.<sup>1</sup>

Nevertheless, there has been progress in moving towards inclusive education in Tanzania.<sup>2</sup> There are currently:

- 41 special schools (schools for children with specific disabilities, such as deaf, blind and autism) in 24 different local authorities
- 561 special needs units within regular schools across 144 local authorities in mainland Tanzania.<sup>iv</sup>
- 2,485 mainstream primary schools have been identified as 'inclusive', representing 15.3% of the total 16,212 primary schools on the mainland.<sup>v</sup>
- In Zanzibar, 28% (or 119) of the total 426 government schools are reportedly implementing inclusive education.<sup>vi</sup>

### Children with disabilities in/out of school.



1. It should be noted that the figures for Zanzibar are from 2014 and therefore may be a little outdated, as there are no newer government figures available. Ref: Zanzibar Education Development Plan II 2017-22  
2. A summary of available secondary evidence suggests this, including: Thompson, S. (2017). Education for Children with disabilities. K4D Helpdesk Report

Despite this progress, gaps remain, especially at secondary level, where disability intersects with other disadvantages and vulnerabilities, especially for girls.<sup>vii</sup> The 2017 Joint Education Sector Review noted that implementation of the NIES was being held back by:

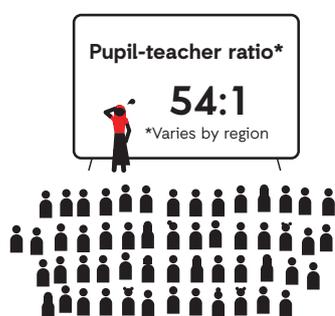
- shortages of trained teachers
- lack of resources in regular schools to support children with special needs
- lack of statistics on the performance of children with disabilities
- poor quality of support to children.<sup>viii</sup>

### Tanzania has a massive teacher shortage, a major barrier to inclusive education

One of the biggest barriers preventing Tanzania from effectively delivering inclusive education is the availability of a workforce capable of practicing inclusion.

- In 2018/19 the average pupil-teacher ratio in government primary schools was 54:1.
- This varies greatly by region; the lowest average pupil-teacher ratio is in Kilimanjaro at 37:1. However, Geita, Simiyu and Shinyanga have average ratios exceeding 70:1 and rising to 83:1 in Katavi. These are considerably higher than the UNESCO maximum recommended ratio of 40:1

Overall, there is an estimated shortage of 6,279 pre-primary and 47,229 primary teachers.<sup>ix</sup> Practicing inclusive teaching is incredibly challenging, if not impossible, in classrooms with such high learner numbers; clearly more teachers need to be recruited, trained and supported.<sup>x</sup>



Overall, Tanzania **needs an estimated 47,229 primary school teachers** just to maintain an average pupil-classroom ratio of 60:1.



PHOTO: PAULINA TEVELI/ACTIONAID

### Teacher training must be improved to support inclusion

Tanzania has a very high proportion of qualified teachers (98.3% at primary and 98.7% at secondary level) compared to the other four countries in this study.<sup>xi</sup> However:

- The number of teachers qualified in special education is inadequate.
- There are very limited incentives, for schools or teachers, to focus on special education.<sup>xii</sup>
- While teachers can qualify with a certificate, diploma or degree in special needs education,<sup>3</sup> there is no licensing board for inclusive education; once qualified not all special needs teachers can gain relevant employment.
- Teachers lack motivation due to shortages of accommodation, transport and training opportunities, and low salaries.<sup>xiii</sup>

As the NSIE notes, *“The shortage of teacher education in special needs education and inclusive education is pervasive because the training of special teachers is the main responsibility of only Patandi Teachers’ College.”*<sup>xiv</sup> Currently:

- There is no standardised or systematic approach to in-service training.
- An inclusive education curriculum has been developed but is yet to be mainstreamed across teacher training colleges in Tanzania.
- In Zanzibar, there is both pre- and in-service teacher training at diploma level, but these programmes

3. The different qualifications depend on the level of education, as well as whether taken as a specialism.

are voluntary, and inclusive education is not a compulsory element of training to become a teacher.”<sup>xv</sup>

In order to address the shortage of teachers trained in inclusive education, the NSIE includes costed plans for:

- training additional teacher trainers on inclusive education.
- equipping 35 teacher training colleges with teaching and learning materials for inclusive education and establish two additional teacher training colleges offering pre-service training in special needs education by 2021.

However, no funds were available for either activity when the plan was approved.<sup>xvi</sup>

The ratio of trained special needs teachers to children with disabilities enrolled at primary level is 1:20.<sup>4</sup> According to the 2019 report by the Controller and Auditor General (CAG) the country needs a total of 4,428 special needs primary teachers to meet demand and the targets in the current NSIE, against the current total of 2,460 - indicating a shortfall of 1,968 or 44%.

### **Government needs to strengthen its commitment to financing inclusive education**

The NSIE 2018-2021 includes detailed costings for many of the areas required for inclusive education. These include allocations for training teacher trainers, teachers, volunteer and community teachers and providing vital teaching and learning materials and equipment. The total strategy for 2018-21 was costed at US\$ 153.6 million (US\$ 38.4 million per year), although when approved only US\$ 61.2 million (i.e. 39% of the total budget) was reportedly available.

In January 2020, the Global Partnership for Education approved a total grant of US\$ 112 million to Tanzania<sup>xvii</sup> for the Literacy, Numeracy and Education Support initiative, known as LANES II. This builds on a previous grant (LANES 2014-2018) and aims to strengthen the capacity of the education sector to promote learning for children with special needs through enhanced skills, materials and equipment to facilitate learning.<sup>xviii</sup>

LANES II is expected to contribute to the achievement of targets related to in-service teacher training, distribution of capitation grants, and identification and referral of children with special needs, whilst building teacher capacity to respond to the learning needs of children with special needs and disabilities and ensuring the availability of accurate, quality and timely education data.

### **Resources are not sufficient to deliver inclusive education**

**Fully responding to these needs and transforming the workforce for system-wide inclusive education, will require a huge scale-up of financing and substantial increases to public budgets. This can be supported by applying ActionAid’s “4S education financing framework” and increasing the share, size, sensitivity and scrutiny of the public budget to ensure adequate resources to meet SDG4 are being allocated and spent.**

### **SHARE: Tanzania needs to maintain a high proportion of the budget to education**

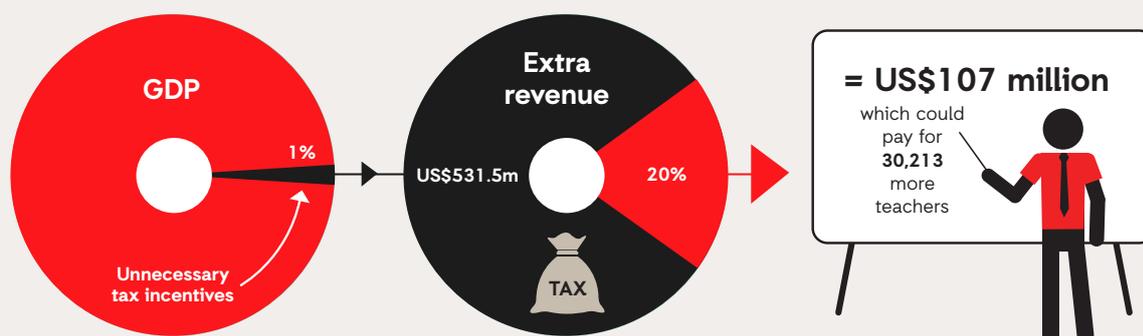
Overall, the education sector budget experienced a declining share of the national budget between 2014 and 2018, from 20% to 15%. This is a cause for concern with regard to progress on inclusive education in Tanzania.<sup>xix</sup>

- In 2018, government expenditure on education was 3.9% of GDP and 15% of the total budget, just about reaching the lower end of the international benchmarks of 4-6% of GDP and 15-20% of the budget recommended in the SDG4 Framework for Action.<sup>xx</sup>
- To meet SDG4 targets, Tanzania will need to work harder to maintain the budget share for education at a sustainable level around or above the upper benchmarks.
- Fiscal space in Tanzania is currently constrained, impacting the Government’s ability to expand the workforce for public services,<sup>5</sup> and reduce pupil-teacher ratios to deliver on targets in its inclusive education strategy.

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4. Author’s calculations based on figures from the NSIE and the 2019 report of the Controller and Auditor General  
5. For instance, wages and salaries were at 5.8% in 2015/16 but have reduced downwards as a percentage of GDP since then, and have remained largely stagnant from 2017 onwards at around 5.2%. See: IMF Country Report No. 18/11 (2018). Projections for 2018/19 suggested that the wage bill would need to expand in order to take “account of recruitments that are needed to address human resource gaps in the health and education sectors”. However this is currently stagnant. See: 2018 African Economic Outlook Country Note, Tanzania.

### Tax loss vs number of teachers that could be recruited



The education sector in Tanzania is mostly funded from domestic sources. In 2017/2018 external donor contributions (mainly for development costs) made up just 6% of the overall education budget.<sup>xxi</sup> Despite the welcome injection of funds from the GPE-LANES II grant, the CAG’s 2019 report highlighted the need for the Government to prioritise a sustainable funding model for special needs education, rather than relying on relatively short-term external grants.<sup>xxii</sup>

Overseas Development Aid (ODA) to education will be more important than ever to mitigate against the negative effects of the global financial downturn brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic and ensure that progress towards SDG4 to date is not irrevocably reversed. Conversely, the pandemic is also expected to put significant pressure on aid budgets as donor governments struggle to respond to the economic crisis.<sup>xxiii</sup> As such, the Government of Tanzania must continue to increase the amounts it allocates to education, by raising more funds through progressive domestic resource mobilisation and tackling debt. In 2019, 19.5% of government revenues were allocated to debt servicing.<sup>xxiv</sup>

### SIZE: Tanzania needs to increase government revenues to fund inclusive education

The government must strengthen its focus on increasing the size of the overall public budget, to raise new revenues for education.

- Currently Tanzania has a very low tax-GDP ratio, at 11.9%.<sup>xxv</sup>
- Not only is this well below the sub-Saharan average of 17.2%<sup>xxvi</sup> it is also well below the minimum threshold of 15% considered necessary to finance even the most basic of state functions.<sup>xxvii</sup>

Reducing the amount of revenue lost to tax incentives and tax treaties could free-up considerable additional funds to invest in the inclusion of children with disabilities:

- In 2018, ActionAid estimated that the Government of Tanzania lost US\$ 531.5 million each year to harmful tax incentives and tax treaties.<sup>xxviii</sup>
- To put this in context, this is enough to pay for the entire NSIE (US\$ 153 million) more than three times over.
- Just 20% (US\$106.3m) of this amount would be enough to cover the salaries of 30,213 newly qualified teachers (60% of the primary school teachers needed across the country).<sup>6</sup>

### SENSITIVITY: Budgets need to better address inequalities to support inclusion

Tanzania has made strong progress in using the budget as a tool to overcome inequalities:

- ‘Capitation Grant’ allocations aim to redress disadvantage by allocating higher per capita

6. This calculation, for advocacy purposes, is an estimate based on information on current teachers’ salaries obtained through a combination of methods such as direct observations and informal conversations within the researchers’ private and social networks.

spending for children with disabilities (this has recently doubled from TZS 10,000 to TZS 20,000).<sup>xxxix</sup>

- By the end of 2021, the NSIE expected 8,000 schools to be receiving these grants, for which US\$ 1,280 000 was made available, working out at approximately US\$ 160 per school.<sup>xxx</sup>
- This has strong potential to help to embed inclusive education, serving as an incentive for schools to enrol and cater for children with special educational needs.<sup>xxxi</sup>

The Government recognises the need to use the new Primary Teacher Deployment Strategy to ensure that teachers are equitably deployed.<sup>xxxii</sup> The CAG's 2019 report showed that:

- Most of the sampled schools had either above or below the recommended pupil-teacher ratios for children with specific disabilities due to inequitable distribution of teachers against needs.
- Due to '*financial constraints*', over 600 qualified special education needs teachers had not been allocated to special needs education schools.<sup>xxxiii</sup>

## **SCRUTINY: Budget allocations to inclusive education need to be easier to monitor**

Budgets are regularly published in Tanzania allowing for robust oversight by citizens and civil society. Education Sector Performance Reports include information on the recruitment, training and deployment of teachers in special needs and inclusive education, as well as the purchase of accessible teaching and learning materials. However, these are not directly linked to NSIE targets, making it impossible to assess the extent to which the strategy has been implemented.

In 2019 the CAG's audit of the management of education for pupils with special needs raised several concerns. These included: the failure of the Regional Administration and Local Government office to adequately include special needs education activities in its annual plans and budgets; the reallocation of TZS 272 million intended for acquisition of special needs education facilities to other activities; and the inadequate storage and maintenance of specialised equipment.<sup>xxxiv</sup>

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Tanzania has made solid progress in implementing inclusive education in both mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar. However, given that only around 15% of children with disabilities are currently enrolled in school, achieving SDG4 will inevitably require ongoing efforts and investments to recruit, train and motivate sufficient teachers and education support personnel. Despite a recent injection of funds from the LANES II initiative, longer-term efforts to raise adequate funds for education are under threat from reductions to the budget and spiralling debt. The Government of Tanzania must take action to expand domestic revenue by tackling its overly generous tax incentives, to rapidly raise new and sustainable sources of funds for quality, inclusive education.

**As such the research recommends that the Government of Tanzania:**

- 1. Continue to embed inclusive education into policy planning, budgeting and monitoring.**
- 2. Ensure more robust and accurate data to improve planning and budgeting for inclusive education and monitoring change.**
- 3. Address the high pupil-teacher ratios which prevent teachers from practicing inclusion in the classrooms, focused on teacher deployment to areas of most need.**
- 4. Develop a workforce that can practice inclusion, including a focus on transforming training to equip teachers to practice inclusion.**
- 5. Carry out credible costings for supporting inclusive education, which include education workforce development.**
- 6. Support teachers to embed inclusive education.**
- 7. Raise significant new funds for education to transform education systems in general, and the education workforce in particular, for inclusion. In Tanzania this requires:**

- **Increasing the share** of the budget, and preventing reductions to the education sector, with a clear timetable for progress towards the international standard of 20% of budget and/or 6% GDP allocated to the education sector. Pressure from debt servicing must be managed so it does not erode these investments.
- **Increasing the size** of domestic revenue through actions to widen the tax base in progressive ways and significantly increase the tax-to-GDP ratio from the current 11.9%. This includes stopping the allocation of harmful corporate tax incentives and only selectively using tax incentives to facilitate truly strategic national development and build more progressive tax systems.
- **Improving the sensitivity** of the budget to support inclusion, ensuring that measures such as capitation grants are improving the enrolment and learning experience of children with disabilities.
- **Enabling greater scrutiny** of future allocations and expenditure on allocations to disability-inclusive education. This will help to assess the extent to which commitments have been achieved, targets met and funding disbursed according to plans.

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