

Government, Donors and MPs challenged to go for results

7th December 2010

Government, donors and Members of Parliament have been challenged to make decisions that will enable Tanzanians achieve better results from their tax and donor money.

In a policy brief released today, Uwazi at Twaweza presses for a more transparent budget process; implementation of the recommendations of the Controller and Auditor General (CAG), and a focus on learning in primary schools.

The brief titled, *Achieving Results: Four Challenges to Government, Donors and MPs*, says effective management of public resources remains elusive because the budget process is opaque, and citizens and oversight bodies lack a substantive voice in it. It notes further that efforts to improve primary education have disproportionately focused on increasing enrolment, failing to ensure that children actually learn while in school.

The brief observes that the budget process remains almost exclusively the turf of insiders in government and the donor community. Quoting from the Open Budget Survey 2010, the brief notes that the budget process is not transparent, and that citizens, civil society and even MPs lack substantive information about how tax and donor money are allocated and spent. According to the Open Budget Survey 2010, Tanzania publishes only three out of eight key budget documents, even though five of these documents are already being prepared by the authorities. The brief also notes that when documents are shared, it is often too late to be of use to citizens and Parliament.

The Uwazi brief questions the slow pace in addressing the recommendations by the Controller and Auditor General to improve public financial management. Those not following procurement and financial rules currently go unpunished as incentives are lacking to rectify the wrongs identified by the Controller and Auditor General. As good performance is not rewarded an accumulation of unresolved audit queries is the result. As a consequence between 2006/07 and 2009/10 tax payers resources involved in unresolved audit queries increased from 1.3 percent to 15 percent of the government's budget.

On quality of education the brief quotes a recent survey by Uwezo that uncovered how the majority of children in primary school lack basic literacy and numeracy skills. The brief suggests focusing the primary education program on learning, rather than enrolment alone. This can be done by aligning incentives of teachers and schools with learning and by reinventing the school inspection programme.

Donors are sitting with the Government this week for the 2010 General Budget Support (GBS) Annual Review to evaluate achievements of the past year and to make commitments for the

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next. At this meeting, Uwazi notes that Government and donors need to keep in mind that citizens expect tax and donor resources to deliver results. Specifically:

- Make the budget process more transparent, by producing on a timely basis all key budget documents and creating time and space for budget scrutiny by the public and Members of Parliament;
- Align incentives in the public sector to ensure proper management of public funds as recommended by the CAG; and
- Ensure learning in primary schools, by aligning teacher and school incentives to focus on children's learning outcomes (starting with basic literacy and numeracy) and establishing an autonomous and effective school inspections department.

For more information contact Rose Aiko, Research Analyst, Uwazi at Twaweza: e-mail: raiko@twaweza.org or info@uwazi.org. The brief can be downloaded from www.uwazi.org

Signed,

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About Uwazi

Uwazi (www.uwazi.org) seeks to 'liberate' data and information so as to better inform public discussion. Our mission is to enable key actors to have access to timely, reliable, relevant and easy to understand information and analyses which enhance public debate and accountability, and that contribute to citizen agency and action. Uwazi is part of Twaweza (www.twaweza.org), an initiative that seeks to enable millions of people to access information and use it to make a difference.

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