

# BUDGETARY ANALYSIS

# EDUCATION

## 2019 | 2020



*Burundi*

unicef   
for every child



## Key messages and recommendations

- The share of the national budget allocated to education in 2019/2020 is 20%, against 20.6% in 2018/2019.
- The government continues its efforts to support the education sector and has signed up to international commitments that require that 20%<sup>1</sup> of state budgets go towards education.
- Schooling is characterized by widespread access in the first cycle but a primary completion rate of only 53% of children aged 11 and 62% of children aged 12 years in the 2017/2018 school year.
- It will be necessary to strengthen efforts to improve the quality of basic education, including through building the competencies of teachers and providing adequate teaching and pedagogical materials.
- A key factor in reforming basic education consists of increasing the capacity of the education system to take students in. To ensure this reform is realized, it is critical to channel a part of the available external resources towards the construction, rehabilitation and sustainability of school infrastructure.
- A preschool development strategy was signed off on in January 2019. Nevertheless, the share of the budget allocated to preschool education is at only 0.02% of the total education budget. To achieve the desired results and to bring Burundi up to the East African Community level, will be important to mobilize additional financial resources and to strategically increase the share of the budget dedicated to this education sub-sector.



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## Introduction

In Burundi's National Development Plan 2018–2027, the education sector is part of the strategic direction for inclusive and quality-oriented education. It is organized based on the International Standard Classification of Education defined by the UNESCO Institute of Statistics. Since 2019, the country's education system falls under two ministries: the Ministry of Education and Technical and Professional Training and the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research.

Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 underlines the importance of offering children a complete basic education cycle. A Transitional Education Plan covering the period 2018–2020 has been put in place in Burundi. Reforms to basic education to achieve universal access to nine years of basic education were initiated in 2010 and have been implemented since 2013. Thus, formal education consists of five levels of training: preschool; basic education; post-basic education (general, pedagogical and technical); professional education and job training; and higher education.

An Education and Training Sector Plan, for the period 2012–2020, has been adopted by the Ministry and is being implemented with the support of technical and financial partners. Since 2017, a three-year Transitional Education Plan has been structuring and guiding interventions in the sector.

As a result of measures introduced in 2005 to abolish primary school fees, access to schools has seen a spectacular increase. Access to primary school in basic education is nearly the same for all children, and gender parity was achieved in 2015 in the first three cycles of this level of education. Nevertheless, quality is weak, owing to limited teacher competencies and lack of appropriate school infrastructure, adequate school equipment, and teaching and pedagogical materials.

The joint efforts of the state and its development partners have contributed to accelerating the development of the education sector, in particular in terms of access to schooling. The gross enrolment rate in pre-primary went

from 4.8% to 10.2% between 2010 and 2017; in the first three cycles of basic education, it fell from 144.9% in 2010 to 112.9% in 2017<sup>2</sup>. This shows that the country is able to draw in the whole of the school-age population. Nevertheless, the completion rates in basic and post-basic education in 2017 were, respectively, 62% and 28.7%, which reflects a drop in the quality of learning.

Around 557,000 children aged 6–14 years remained out of school in 2013/2014, or 23% of the target population, despite a gross enrolment rate of 135% and an admission rate into the first three cycles of basic education that exceeds 100%<sup>3</sup>. The phenomenon of out-of-school children is strongly related to the place of residence and the socio-economic situation of parents, which reflects a basic inequity in the education system. In 2012/2013, around 93% of out-of-school children were located in rural areas. At the same time, among out-of-school children aged 7–16 years, around a third come from the poorest households (the first quintile). This rises to 60% when we look at both the first and the second quintiles. These figures hold for other age groups too<sup>4</sup>.

All sections of the education system have seen impressive growth in the student population, according to the Bureau of Education Planning and Statistics (2017/2018). At preschool level, the number of students went from 9,673 in 2010 to 57,611 in 2017. In the first three cycles of basic education, the number rose from 1,720,287 to 2,376,036. In the general and pedagogical post-basic sections, it increased from 250,478 to 341,093 during the same period.

**Table 1. Key statistics in the education sector**

Indicator	Value
Gross enrolment rate in primary	119.1%
Gross enrolment rate in pre-primary	10.2%
Retention rate (Grades 1–9)	50%

Source: Education Statistical Digest 2017/2018

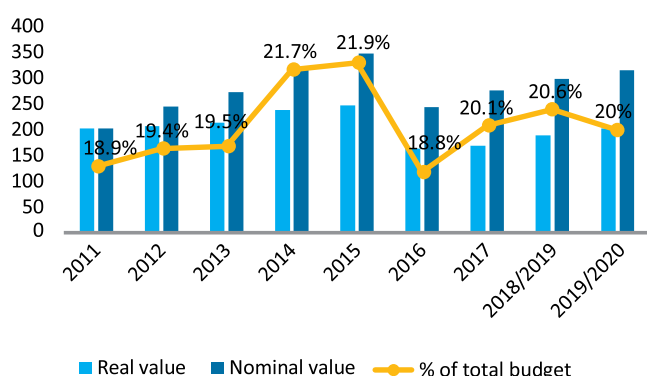
## Trends in budgetary allocations to the education sector

The resources allocated to this sector have seen a rising trend, from BIF 201.7 billion in 2011 to 346.5 billion in 2015, or an overall growth rate of 0.7% in five years. This period saw significant external financial from the Education Pooled Fund, with a budget in 2015 of BIF 87.1 billion. However, from 2016, after the withdrawal of a number of development partners, the budget allocated to the education sector saw a drop of around BIF 100 billion.

From 2017, resources to the sector began to grow again. The budget allocated to education rose from BIF 297.3 billion (US\$160,135,534.06) in 2018/2019 to BIF 314.5 billion (US\$160,784,259.58) in 2019/2020, or an increase of 5.8%. The real value, taking into account inflation, shows the same trend. The share of the state budget allocated to education is 20.0% in 2019/2020, against 20.6% in 2018/2019.

As a share of gross domestic product (GDP), expenditure on education has remained more or less constant, around

**Figure 1. Trends in budgetary allocations in nominal and real terms (BIF billions)<sup>5</sup>**

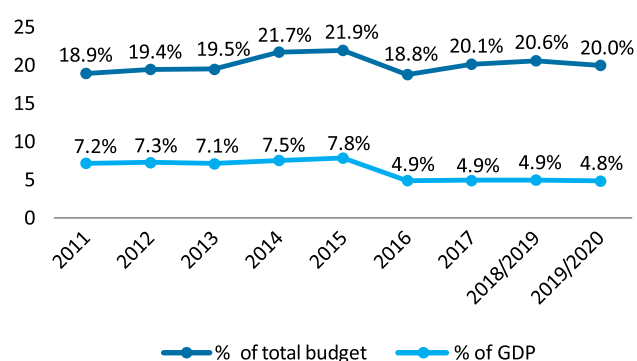


Source: Finance Laws 2011-2019/2020

4.9%, over the period 2016-2019/2020. However, the share spent on education in 2015, at 7.8%, remains high.



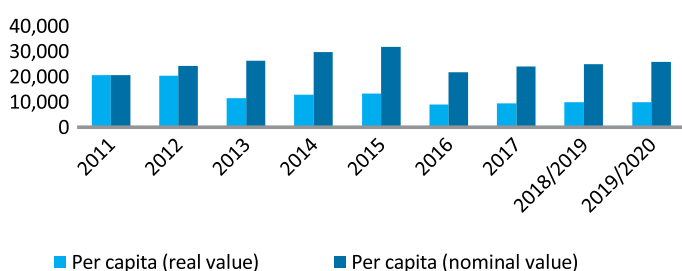
**Figure 2. Evolution of expenditure on education as a share of GDP and a share of the total budget (%)**



Source: Finance Laws 2011-2019/2020

Figure 3 shows the evolution of per capita education expenditure. In 2019/2020, this had fallen to BIF 9,850 in actual value, as against BIF 9,928 in 2018/2019.

**Figure 3. Trends in per capita education expenditure (BIF)**



Source: Finance Laws 2011–2019/2020

## Composition of education sector expenditure

Although expenditure on the education sector is fairly high in Burundi, a look at the composition of this expenditure by level shows that a number of inequalities exist with regard to preschool education. Basic education, which has benefited from the abolition of school fees and the prioritization of completion rates at this level (SDG 4.1), is the most financed schooling level and has the highest attendance. As a result, a large share of the education budget (53.2%) is reserved for this level of the system. Even so, the operating costs of the education system are also high, with 75% of the sub-sector budget covering salaries. Analysis of budgetary allocations by education level (Table 2) shows that basic education captured an important share (53.2%) in 2019/2020. Meanwhile, budgetary allocations to pre-primary education and early childhood remain low (0.02%). Within the implementation framework of the new strategy adopted with regard to this level of the education system, we hope to see an increase in budgetary allocations to this sub-sector.

**Table 2. Share of expenditure by level of education (%)**

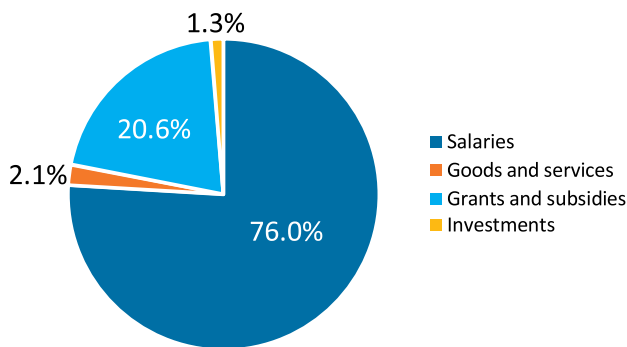
Schooling level	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018/2019	2019/2020
Preschool	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.02
Basic	51.1	47.0	50.3	51.5	52.1	53.20
Post-basic and administration	27.9	31.7	30.6	32.1	32.7	31.66
Higher	20.9	21.3	19.1	16.3	15.2	15.12

Source: Finance Laws 2014–2019/2020

With regard to the use of financing within the sector, Figure 4 shows that the biggest portion of expenditure goes towards administration, with 76% covering salaries and 21% grants and subsidies. This demonstrates the commitment of the government to allocating a significant amount to the sector. However, resource constraints mean that the investment budget remains low. Such investments represent only a small part of the state budget, and local authorities and communities often have to organize the construction, rehabilitation and equipment of schools themselves. The government deals with teacher availability and remuneration, through the regular recruitment of teaching staff. Nevertheless, this body of personnel remains insufficient with regard to the available classrooms. Meanwhile, inequalities persist in terms of numbers of teachers per province, and in particular between urban and rural areas. One solution adopted to circumvent these difficulties is the government’s move to redeploy teachers to the communities that register significant shortages. This has contributed to a reduction in the teacher deficit in recent years.



**Figure 4. Share of education expenditure by economic type in 2019/2020**



Source: Finance Law 2019/2020

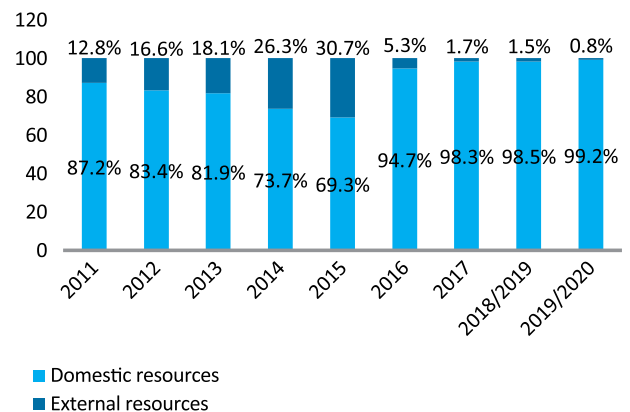
### Sources of education financing

In 2008, a special budget destined for the education sector was put in place (the Education Pooled Fund). Five donors (Belgium, UNICEF, Sweden, the World Bank and the Global Partnership for Education) contributed to this. Until 2015, the share of external financing to the education sector was at 30%, or BIF 106.5 billion. From 2016, this funding began to decline; in 2019/2020, it represents only 0.8% of the state budget. The domestic share in total education

expenditure has risen substantially, from 69.3% in 2015 to 99.2% in 2019/2020.

Development partners have continued to support the sector and the government of Burundi has benefited from assistance from the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) (US\$20.1 million for the period 2016–2018/2019). New financing from GPE has been allocated to Burundi in 2019. Additional funding of US\$21.3, for which a financing request must be generated, is also available from GPE for Burundi.

**Figure 5. Sources of education financing**



Source: Finance Laws 2011–2019/2020

<sup>1</sup> Algiers Declaration, April 2005: “Devote at least 20% of the national budget to the education sector, with 50% to primary education.”

<sup>2</sup> Bureau of Education Planning and Statistics

<sup>3</sup> Burundi Household Living Standards Survey 2013/2014, carried out by RESEN 2018

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Budgetary allocations in nominal terms are those that are given for a given period. Budgetary allocations in real terms are those that are adjusted according to a rise in prices compared with a base figure or reference (here, a figure from 2011).

This budget brief is part of a series of budgetary analyses of the social sectors for fiscal year 2019/2020.

### Acknowledgements

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