

*IIEP-UNESCO and UNICEF Policy seminar on  
Decentralization in Education: Overcoming challenges and achieving  
success –The Kenyan experience*

*26-27 November 2012*

# **Challenges to the implementation of the Free-Primary Education policy and the usefulness of the school grant**



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



International Institute  
for Educational Planning



**KENYATTA UNIVERSITY**  
*Elimu ni Nguvu*

# **Presentation based on 6 thematic area**

**Theme 1: Formulation and dissemination process of school grants policies**

**Theme 2: Criteria and mechanism of grants' distribution**

**Theme 3: The source, amount and use of school grants**

**Theme 4: Decision making process for the use of school grant at school level**

**Theme 5: Monitoring and control**

**Theme 6: Overall Assessments of School Grant**

# Theme 1: Formulation and dissemination process of school grants policies

**Major Finding:** In Kenya genesis of school grants policy was a political promise

## **Challenge:**

- 1) Lack of clarity of the role of the government versus parents
- 2) Most parents in Kenya adopted a 'literal' understanding of the FPE policy and assumed a 'hands-off' approach to their children's education.

## Theme 2: Criteria and mechanism of grants' distribution

### Criteria:

- ❑ Kenya use simple formula: same per pupil allocation

### Challenge:

- 1) Simple formula lacks focus on equity. There are some countries which use a complex formula that addressed equity, e.g. Malawi, Ethiopia, Uganda.
- 2) Simple formula (same per pupil allocation) puts small schools as well as newly established schools without adequate infrastructure at a disadvantage.

*Comment in  
Favour of Criteria  
“Watoto ni wa  
serikali na  
mungu” =equal (A  
parent)*

*Comment Against  
the Criteria  
“...a school with 70  
pupils has the same  
needs as the one  
with 400 pupils for  
some vote heads like  
watchman and local  
travel.” (HT)*


### **Mechanism:**

### **Major Finding:**

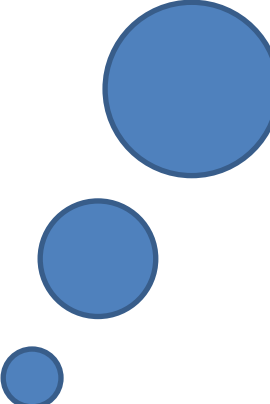
- ☐ From central level to school account ( no leakage)

### **Challenge:**

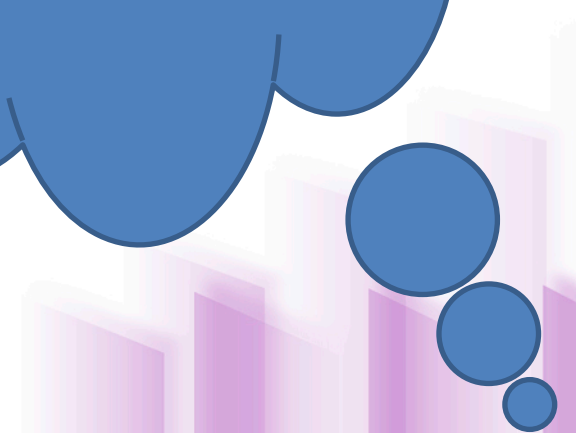
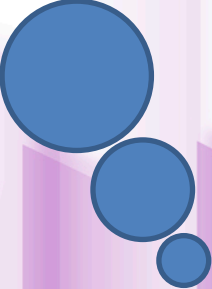
- 1) Late and inconsistent disbursements-grant get to schools late sometimes at the middle of the term
- 2) There seems to be no fixed disbursement schedule.



Sometimes we suffer  
a lot due to delay (in  
disbursement) and  
parents are not  
willing to contribute  
(HT)



...We are forced  
to break the  
law and secure  
goods on credit  
(HT)



# Theme 3: The use of school grants

## Sources:

❑ FPE grant has emerged as the major source of funding in a majority of the schools.

## Challenge:

### 1) Parents still making contributions:

- i. Fees used to employ extra teachers
- ii. Contributions related to specific projects the school wishes to undertake
- iii. Examinations fees: Parents in some of the schools were paying money every term to facilitate assessment of their children ranging from Kenya shillings 20 per child per term to Kenya shillings 300
- iv. Money paid to teachers so as to give extra tuition to the pupils beyond the official timetable



2) Negative impact of parents' contributions:  
those pupils who are unable to pay  
discriminated against.



Use of the term *free*  
has made parents  
adopt a hands off  
approach and no  
longer wish to make  
any contribution  
even to build a  
toilet (SMC)



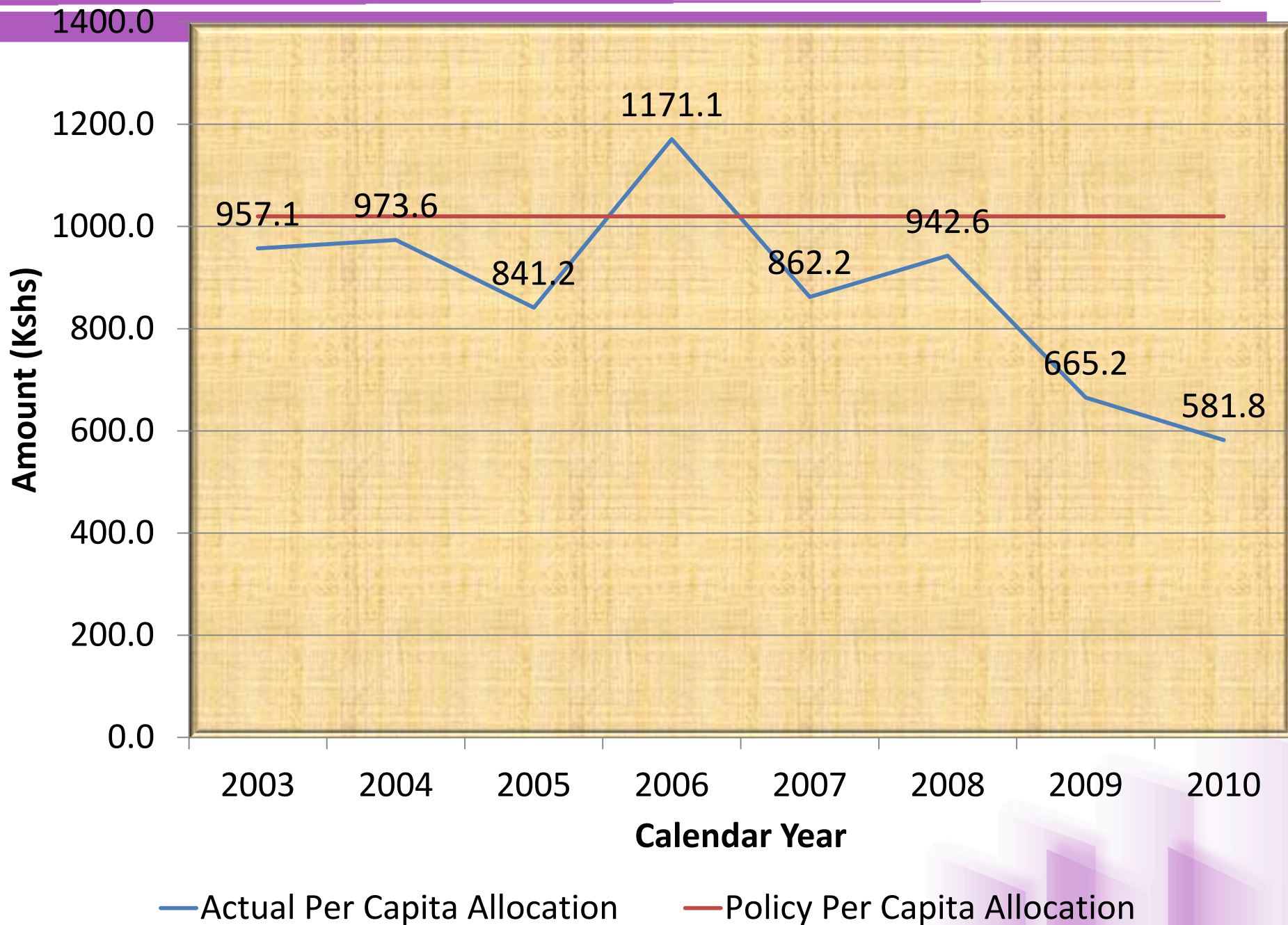
It took me (as  
chairman SMC)  
more than one  
year to get KES  
50 (\$0.59) from  
each parent to  
renovate a toilet  
(SMC Chair)

## **School Grant Amount:**

- ❑ Based on the enrolment

## **Challenge:**

- ❑ There was a **general consensus** by the school actors that the per capita allocation was:
  - Inadequate
  - Reducing rather than increasing to cater for inflation
  - Inconsistent: Amount varied from year to year.



## *From the graph*

- ❑ Data from the District Schools Auditors which captured 150 schools (39 and 111 in South and North districts respectively) revealed that in 2009, average per capita allocation for the two Districts was Kenya shillings **595.1. (7 USD)**
- ❑ This is 58.3% funding (**41.6% under funding**)

## **Use of school grant:**

- ☐ Use of grants guided by the MOE guidelines.

## **Challenge:**

- ☐ Due to the guidelines, schools lack autonomy. This results to under-spending and over-spending on some of the vote heads.
- ☐ While majority of the school actors favoured the FPE grant circular they do not like the Orange book.



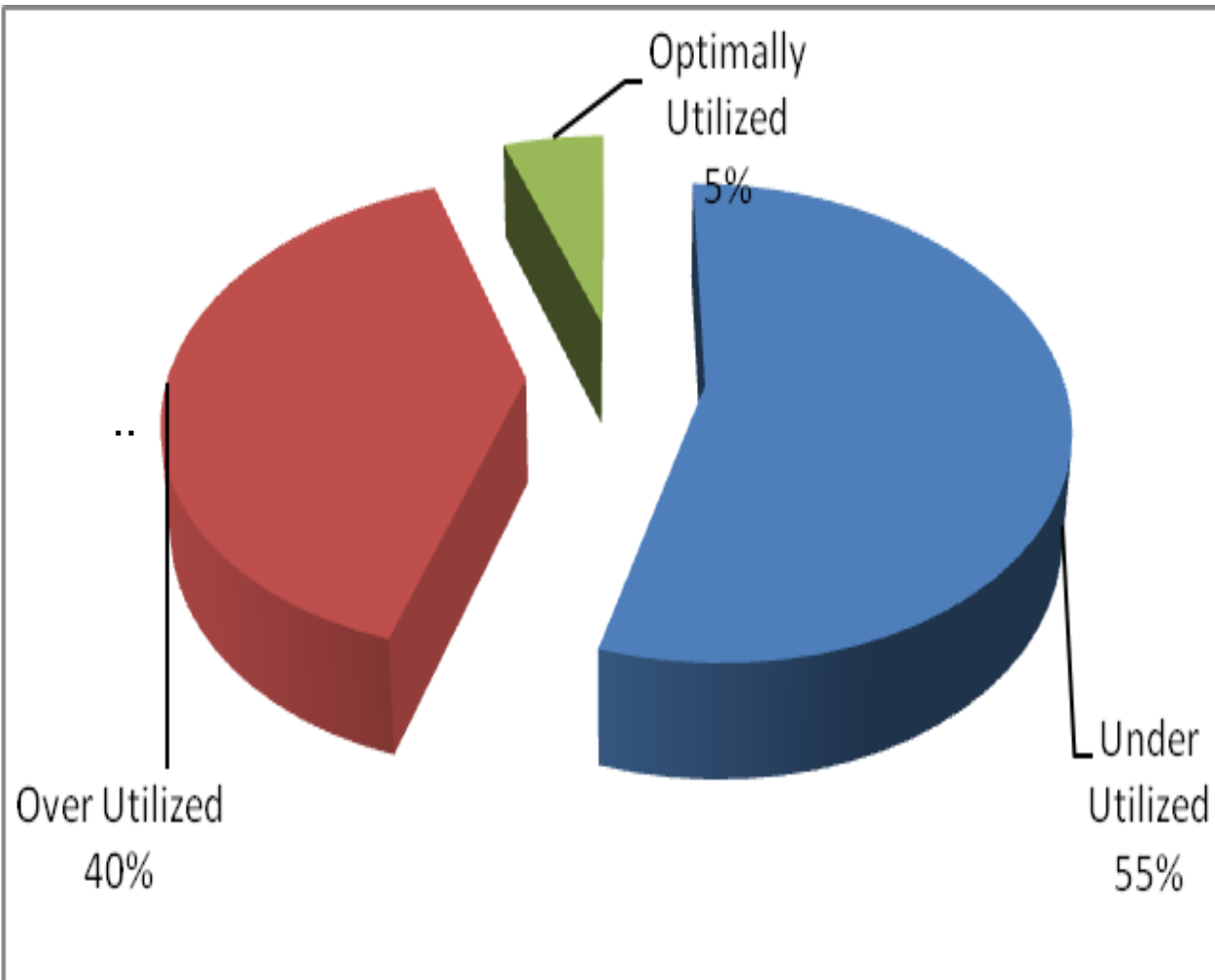
## Comments on Orange Book

We teachers know what to teach and which books are good. We really have problems with this yellow...orange book.

(Teacher)



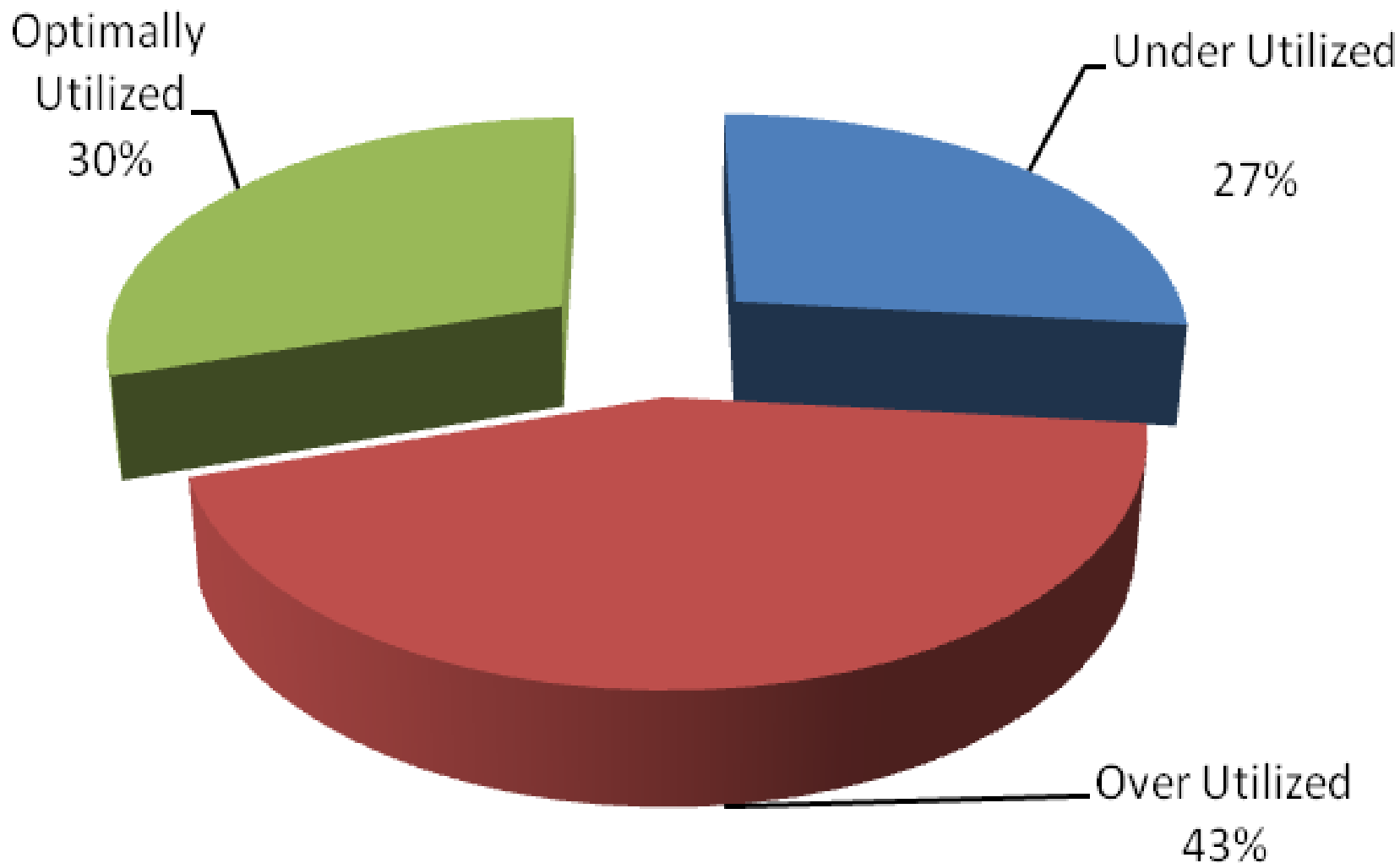
# Level of grant utilization by schools, 2009



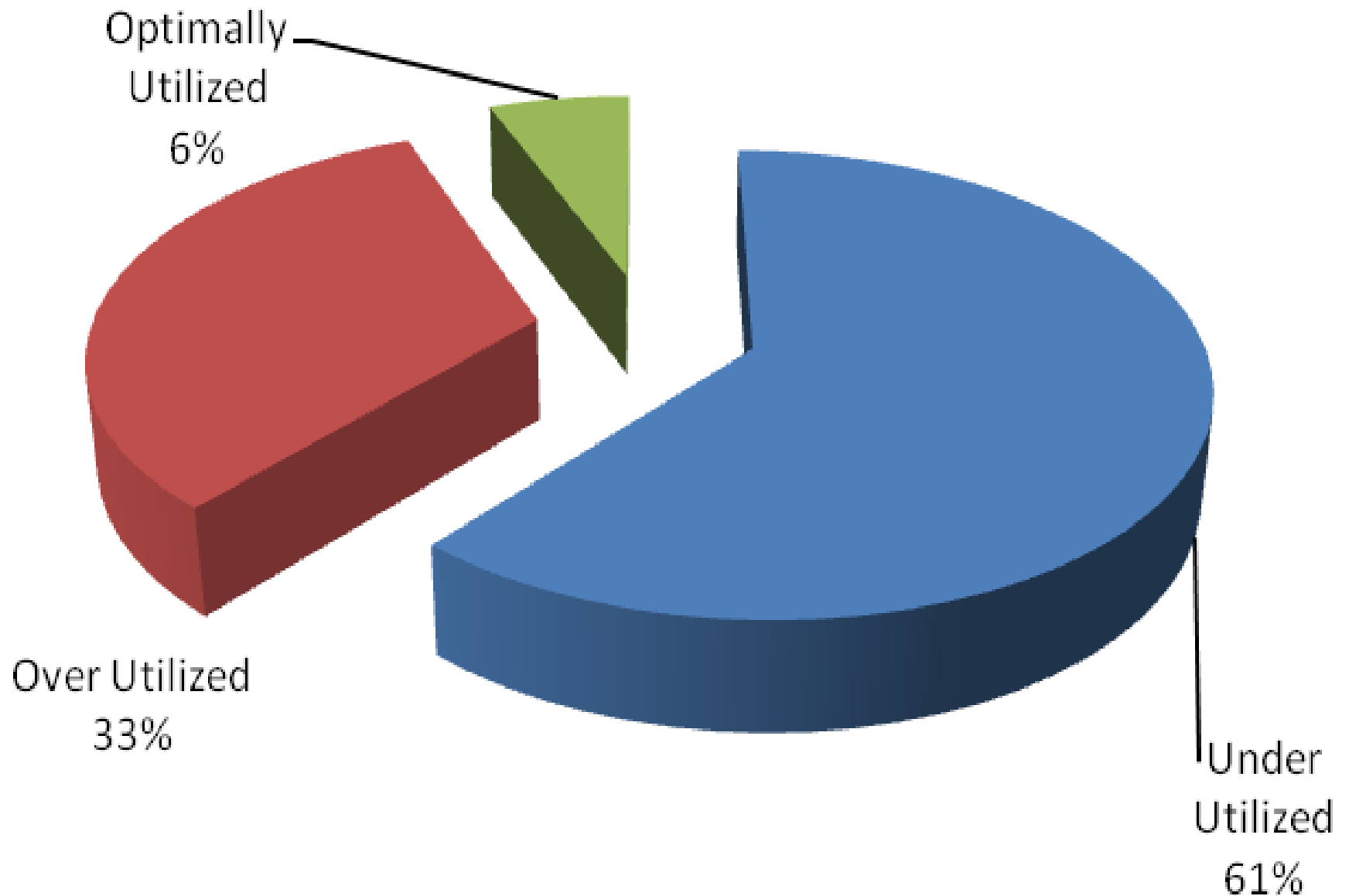
55% of schools under-spent their allocation, 40% of the schools overspent their allocation and 5% of schools optimally utilized the FPE grant.



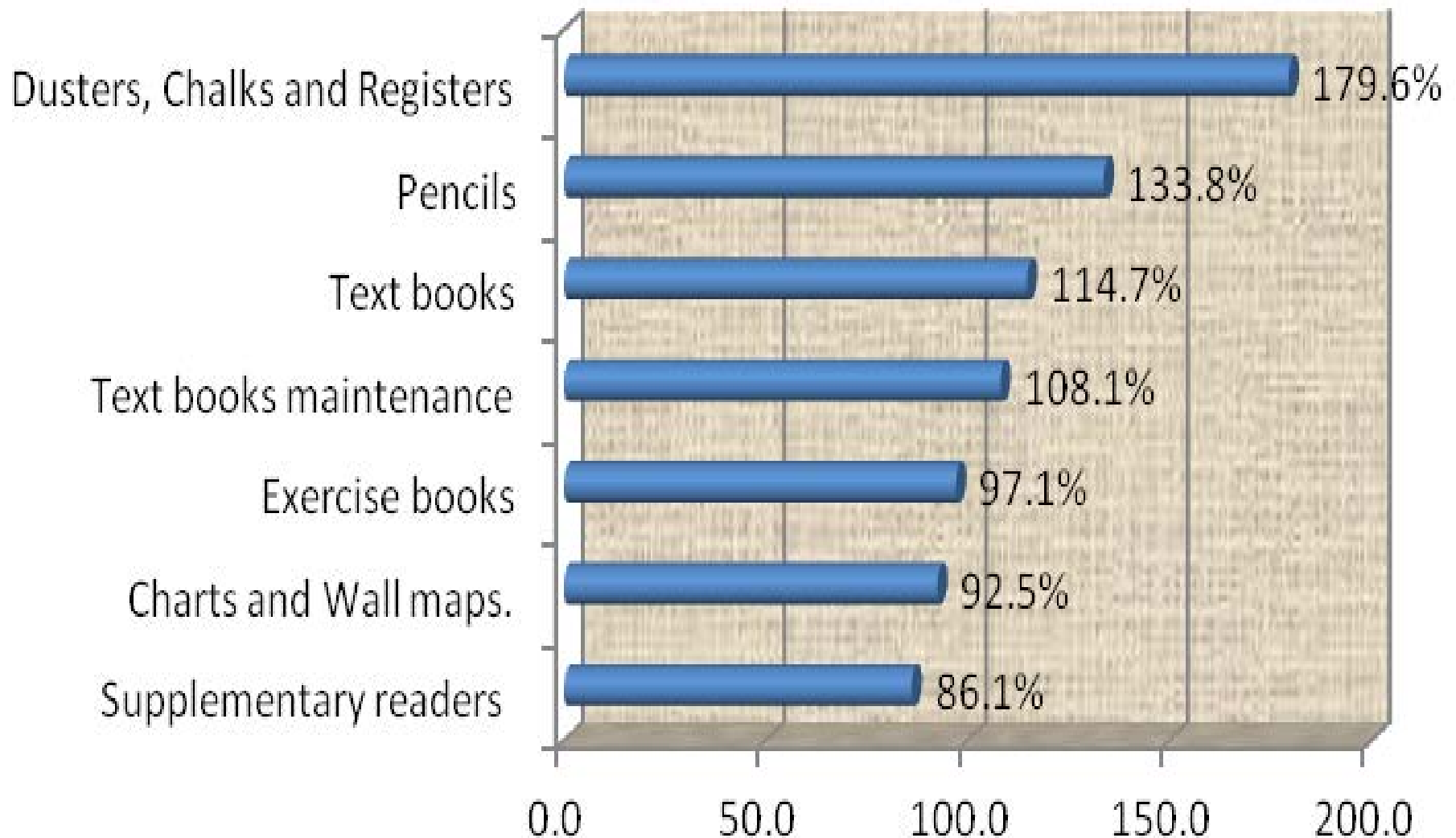
## Level of utilization of SIMBA grant by schools, 2009



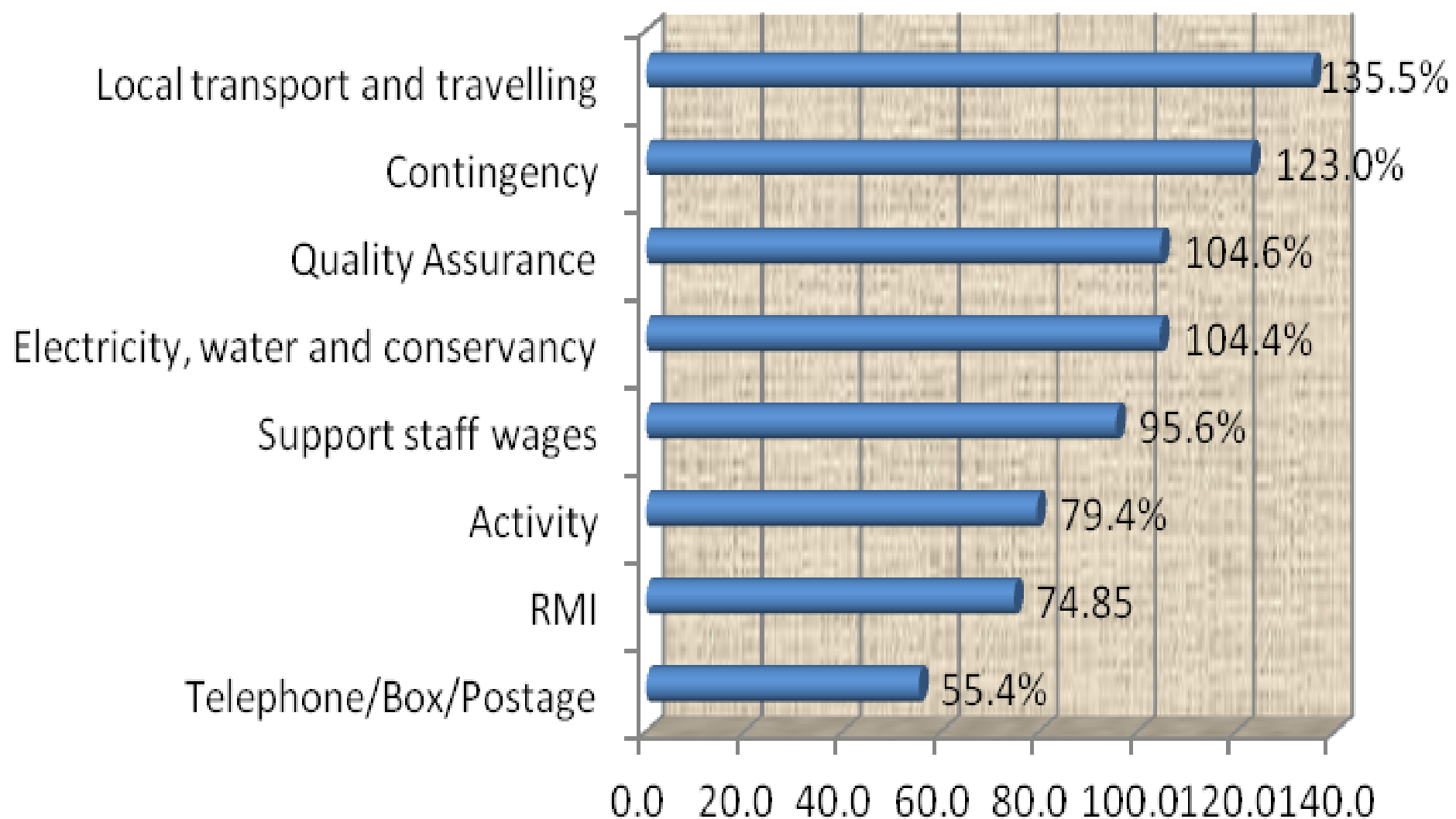
# Level of utilization of GPA grant by schools, 2009



# Level of utilization of SIMBA grant by vote head, 2009



## Level of utilization of GPA grant by vote head, 2009




# Theme 4: Decision making process for the use of school grant at school level

## Major Finding:

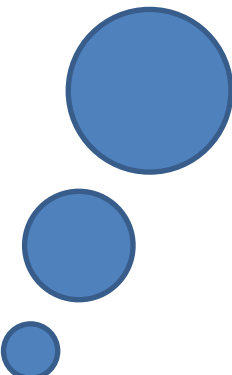
- ☐ Decisions on the SIMBA grant - School Instructional Materials Selection Committee (SIMSC)
- ☐ Decisions on GPA grant -School Management Committee (SMC).
- ☐ All the 13 schools had a functional SIMSC and SMC.

## Challenge:

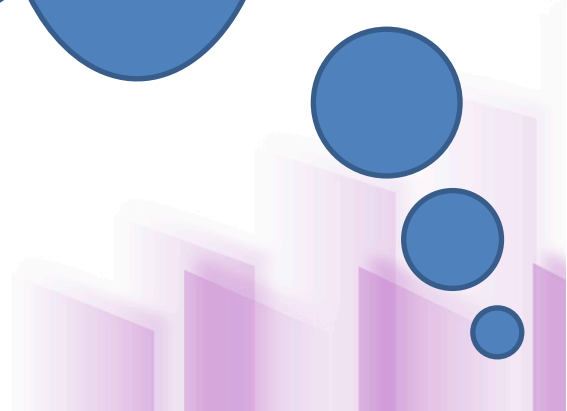
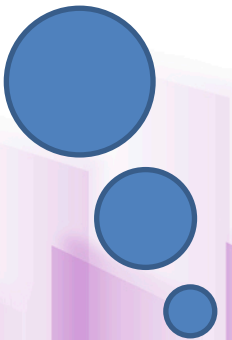
- 1) Pupil participation in the decision making process limited.
- 2) Head teacher dominates decision making process



We can identify  
our needs without  
a big influence of  
the head teacher  
who just guides us  
through the  
process  
(A teacher)



*"I am on the  
ground more  
than the SMC."*  
(A Head teacher)



# Theme 5: Monitoring and control

## Major Finding:

- ❑ Monitoring done at two levels: internal and external.

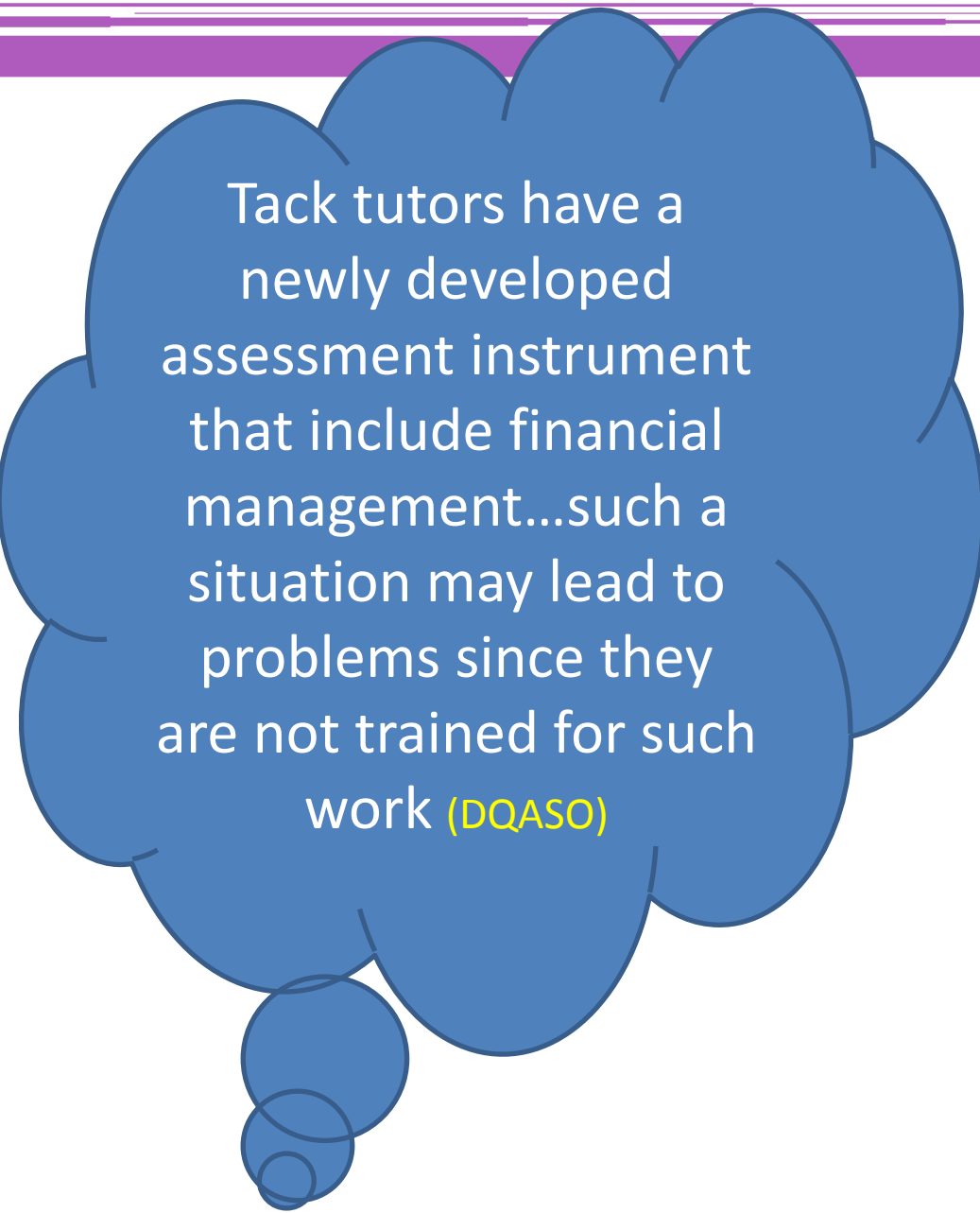

**Challenge:** Overall monitoring system is weak.

- 1) There is no structured monitoring system at school level.
- 2) External monitoring specifically through DEO is hampered by inadequate personnel and finances.
- 3) The profile of the actors involved in this process,


## ***Theme 5: Cont'd***

- 4) Irregularity of external monitoring.
- 5) Work overload on head teachers caused by the need to keep books and to prepare financial reports.
- 6) Results of external monitoring though given to the head teacher are rarely shared with other school actors.





Tack tutors have a newly developed assessment instrument that include financial management...such a situation may lead to problems since they are not trained for such work (DQASO)



# Theme 6: Overall Assessments of School Grant

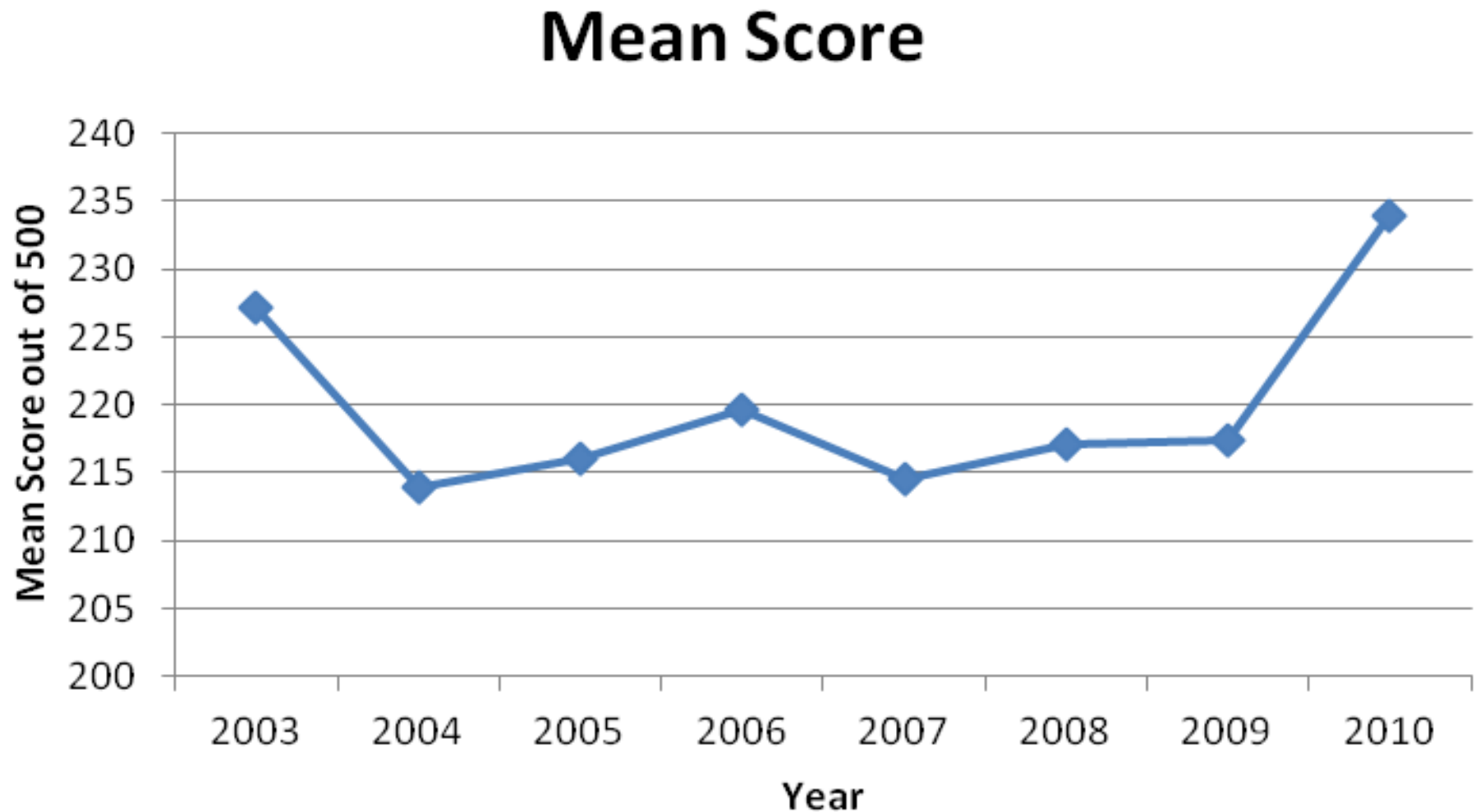
## Major Findings

- ❑ Increasing access to education

## Challenges

- ❑ Quality (dilemma)
  - ❑ Textbooks provided but inadequate teachers and classrooms
- ❑ Increased disparities
  - i. Among schools- small vis as vis large
  - ii. Within school- parents contributions

# Performance in KCPE examinations for 12 schools, 2003-2010





Thank you

