

# Chapter 9:

## Government Grants

In many systems, voluntary agency schools are entitled to apply for various government grants. These may be of several types:

### *1. Recurrent Grants*

*(a) Salaries for Teachers:* In some systems the government pays the salaries of all approved teachers in voluntary agency schools. In Lesotho and Papua New Guinea, for example, this arrangement was introduced at the time of the unification of the church and state education systems.

If governments feel they can afford it, the arrangement has several advantages:

1. the grants can be linked to standard pay scales so that teachers with the same qualifications and experience are given the same salaries even though they work for different agencies,
2. it can incorporate arrangements for pensions,
3. it relieves the voluntary agencies of a very heavy burden,
4. it can be used as an incentive to persuade the voluntary agencies to agree to other controls, e.g. in curriculum, inspection, and the qualifications of teachers.

However the arrangement is very costly, and many governments may feel that they cannot afford it. An alternative is to go half way — to pay only the salaries of headteachers, or of a set quota of staff per school. This system is used in some Harambee schools in Kenya, for example.

In many systems, the salaries of government-paid teachers go directly into their bank accounts. Alternatively, the Ministry of Education might send a monthly cheque to each school, calculated to match the salary entitlements of specific individuals. These are

not general grants which the school can subdivide as it sees fit. Usually, the monthly cheques are accompanied by forms which the teachers must sign to indicate that they have been paid. This prevents the money being put to other uses, and makes sure that the salaries of teachers who have left the schools are not taken by unauthorised individuals.

*(b) Salaries for Administrators:* Some governments also provide grants to help pay the salaries of Church Education Secretaries. They do this in recognition that the Secretaries' work is essential for the smooth running of the system. In Papua New Guinea, each church is entitled to a grant equivalent to the salary of a base-level primary school teacher for every 100 teachers covered by its education secretaries. If an education secretary has only 99 teachers, the church is not supposed to get the grant. If he has 199 teachers, the church gets a grant equivalent to only one teacher's salary. If he has 200 teachers, the grant is equivalent to two salaries. When the church does not receive a grant, or when it wishes to give the secretary a higher salary, the extra money must come from its own funds.

*(c) Other Recurrent Grants:* Many governments also provide recurrent grants to cover chalk, food, exercise books, maintenance and so on. Usually, this is calculated as a fixed amount of money multiplied by the number of pupils. For example, the Botswana government gives grants of P80 per secondary school pupil, and the Zimbabwe government gives grants ranging from Z\$8 for Grade 1 pupils to Z\$21 for Grade 7 pupils. Governments using this system would be wise to make spot checks on the accuracy of reported enrolments.

## **2. Grants for Capital Expenditure**

Although in many systems buildings and other capital works are the responsibility of communities, governments sometimes provide fixed, matching or full grants. The box on the next page indicates the fixed grants provided for voluntary agency schools by the Zimbabwe government. The grants are not expected to cover the full costs of the buildings, so the agencies must find the balance. Provision of these grants allows the government to require minimum standards of construction.

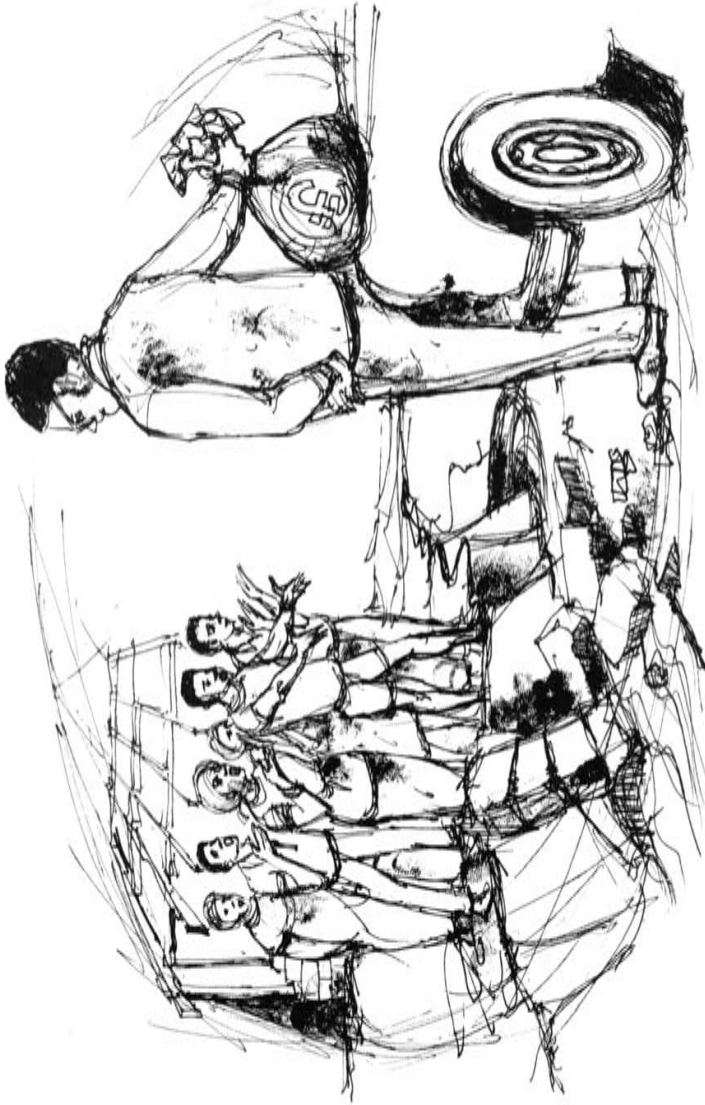
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<b><i>Building Grants in Zimbabwe</i></b>	
<i>Administration Block</i> .....	Z\$9,000
<i>Library</i> .....	5,350
<i>Classroom</i> .....	2,500
<i>Geography Room</i> .....	5,550
<i>Laboratory &amp; Store</i> .....	10,150
<i>Woodwork Room &amp; Store</i> .....	5,650
<i>Metalwork Room &amp; Store</i> .....	6,400
<i>Housecraft Room &amp; Store</i> .....	5,200
<i>Agricultural Building</i> .....	3,400
<i>Toilet Block &amp; Tool Store</i> .....	2,950
<i>Dormitory &amp; Toilet Block for 36 pupils</i> .....	990
<i>Kitchen, Dining Rm &amp; Store for 144 pupils</i> .....	2,090
<i>Source: Zimbabwe Ministry of Education &amp; Culture</i>	

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A matching grant means that the agency puts forward a sum, and the government ‘matches’ it, dollar for dollar. This is a good way to encourage communities to collect money, for they feel both that the government cares about their efforts and that their fund raising exercises will be particularly productive. However, it is important for governments to know in advance how much they may become committed to — otherwise they may find that their commitment is too open-ended and that they are issuing a ‘blank cheque’.

Matching grants do not necessarily operate in equal proportions. In one Lesotho project, for example, local churches have been required to provide only 25% of the cost of buildings. The project was substantially funded by foreign aid, but the government wanted to secure some contributions from the churches so that more money would be generated and so that the voluntary agencies would be more appreciative of the outside input. Accordingly, classrooms were built with 75% government money and 25% voluntary agency money. One big problem which has arisen, however, is that little allowance was made for maintenance. This was supposed to be a voluntary agency responsibility, but in practice was widely neglected.



**Sometimes, both parties get frustrated: the government officer has cash, and the communities need it. But organisational factors act like a great gulf which prevents the system from working properly.**