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YOUTH EMPLOYMENT
AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

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YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

I. PERSPECTIVES

The problem: providing welfare, skills, jobs

With increasing concern African nations are turning to the critical problem of youth employment—of young men and women, in both rural and urban areas. Governments (as well as voluntary organizations and public-spirited individuals) have come to recognize that, in large measure, success in achieving sustained and meaningful long-term development depends on the national ability:

- (1) to promote welfare measures that will maintain or improve the physical and mental well-being of youth before and after their joining the national work force;
- (2) to provide the facilities for their necessary basic education and skill training;
- (3) to create an economic environment in which productive and rewarding work opportunities are available for youth.

Depending on resources, as well as particular characteristics of the social and economic scene, each African nation has its own patterns for dealing with these needs. But the basic problem is the same for all nations: of providing welfare, skill training, and employment for youth within the context of other economic and social priorities in development.

The reasoning behind this determination to help youth is clear enough. Apart from understandable humanitarian motives, these young people are considered as having perhaps 30 to 40 years of working life in front of them. Given the opportunities, they are the ones whose contributions will help to modernize the society and the economy. Given direction, their energies and ideas will be vital to the process of nation-building.

There is, also, the other side to the picture. Poor health and lack of physical stamina at the time of entry to the national work force can result

in low performances, in personal distress of many kinds, and can retard self-improvement on the job. Similarly, lack of skill training of the most suitable kind may lead to waste of reservoirs of latent talent that could be put to good account in work processes throughout the economy. Furthermore, where there exist large and increasing numbers of hopeful, yet idle, youth—a condition that applies in varying extent to every African country at the present time—the negative implications can be far-reaching. Such unemployment among youth (or their dissatisfaction with whatever modest tasks they may find to perform), especially when continued over a lengthy period, is destructive to the lives of these young people themselves, brings grief to their parents and relatives, and ultimately considerable loss of productive power to the nation.

Welfare programmes for youth are, of course, part of the total welfare outlays of the nation.^{1/} When the local environment is improved by such measures as eradicating malaria and smallpox, extending modern medical facilities, improving nutrition, providing a clean water supply and encouraging better sanitation, then parents can give their children a healthier start in life. There are also specific programmes undertaken by governments, voluntary organizations, and local leaders for youth: (1) providing recreation and a sense of belonging (youth associations of all kinds in both rural and urban areas); (2) giving supplementary occupational learning (for young men—farmers' or fishermen's clubs, for young women—sewing or homemaking clubs); (3) supporting special groups (centres for blind and those handicapped in other ways); and (4) giving corrective or remedial training (homes for juvenile delinquents). No African nation—for that matter, no nation anywhere—is in a position to do all it would wish to in the field of welfare for its youth. Difficult choices have to be made in establishing priorities.

^{1/} For an analysis of youth and general welfare, see: Family, Child and Youth Welfare Services in Africa (Social Development Section of the Economic Commission for Africa), Social Welfare Services in Africa, No. 5, December 1966.

Confronted by rising numbers of school-age children and by advances in science and technology requiring long-term investment in new and higher-level skills, those responsible for educational planning also have before them complex decisions. Above all, ideals of a larger, more diversified, improved system of general and technical education have to be matched continuously with competing claims for the use of present and future resources. It is practical in this context to make a distinction between formal and non-formal education. Formal education includes the levels from primary to university based on regular, full-time classroom instruction. Non-formal education includes all kinds of on-the-job training, community-improvement education, and so on. Outside the orbit of government-supported education are the in-training programmes offered by some of the larger commercial firms and industrial enterprises; also the apprenticeship training given in crafts, small industries, transport, and markets. Any policies for skill-training of youth must therefore consider not only formal education but these many complementary types as well.

Neither measures for welfare needs nor provision of skill-training, however, can have meaning unless there exists an economy of opportunity for youth to find beginning jobs that are productive and remunerative. Such openings derive in large part from the pace and patterns of economic development. Generally, the higher the rate of growth that is achieved, the greater the number of employment opportunities that are revealed. There are, nevertheless, crucial decisions about encouraging higher labour intensity where this proves economically and technically feasible. Whatever balances are chosen between rural and urban development also affect the types of work available for youth.

Rising numbers and the future

In present-day Africa, most national economic and social plans are designed on at least a three-to five-year basis with horizons that stretch for a much greater period and thus allow the short-term plan to be viewed within longer time dimensions. In the same way, the focus on the needs of youth has to be extended in time. What are the expected numbers of young persons who will be reaching the age for joining the national work force

at particular stages in the future: five years, ten years, twenty years from now?

By world standards today, African nations have high annual net increases in their populations: typically between 2 and 3 per cent. For example, recent estimates show between 2 and $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent for Algeria, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Nigeria, Tanzania, Tunisia; and between $2\frac{1}{2}$ and 3 per cent for Guinea, Ivory Coast, Morocco, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda, United Arab Republic, Zambia. Whatever credence may be placed on the accuracy of the individual percentages, the indications are clear enough. Where an annual increase of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent is maintained, the population will double every 28 years; and the number of entrants to the labour force will double. With an annual increase of 3 per cent, the time interval is shortened to 23 years.

Accounting for these high rates of population increase is the wider dissemination of health education and medical services. Public awareness of basic hygiene and nutrition has improved. Also, the spread of markets and better transportation explain the lowered incidence of deaths through famine in some parts of Africa. Thus, more people live and for longer periods.

Within the present context, what are the implications of these rates of increase in populations? (1) There are high proportions of children to total populations. Frequently between 40 and 50 per cent are below the age of 15 with consequent dependence on adult workers for provision of their needs for food, clothing, health, education, and so on. (2) The rate of advancement in the economies has consistently to exceed the annual net increase in population in order that peoples' expectations for improvements in their living standards begin to be met. (3) Because of the increasing numbers of young entrants to the labour force each year, the problem of making the economic and social arrangements that would reveal suitable beginning employment opportunities for youth becomes more formidable.

Diversity in environments

Just as the needs for youth employment have to be seen in the longer time dimension, they must also be projected against the diversity of home backgrounds.

For any one African nation there is not one environment, but many. Different groups of people vary in their traditions, their ways of living, their initiatives and their responses. Different natural resources mean contrasts in degrees of wealth and poverty: some areas have cash crops, plentiful land, or mineral wealth; while others have only subsistence farming or perhaps a grave shortage of fertile land.

In recent years, economic and social change in Africa has taken place at unprecedented intensity, yet one of the characteristics of this rapid change is its uneven spread and uneven depth. In certain rural areas, families live now in almost the same manner as their fore-fathers have done for many generations. At the opposite extreme, some families in cities live as they might in any modern metropolitan centre anywhere in the world. Certain areas have vigorous local crafts and small industries; others have attracted a concentration of large industries; while still other areas have no signs of any industrial beginnings. Some places have had modern schooling for three or four generations; others have no schools yet. Thus, there are not only marked differences between individual societies within nations, but also many variations in the extent of modernization.

Because of these disparities in background, multiple approaches are necessary to the problem of youth employment, requiring close knowledge of local cultural and material conditions. What are the characteristic forms of social organization and of immediate and extended family relationships? How widespread have been the effects of such modern forces as the widening market, the school, introduction of new cash crops, beginnings of industrialization? What are the salient features of economic organization: communal, co-operative, private or family enterprise? What group associations, whether traditional or modern in origin, care for aspects of welfare for young people? How do young people develop skills in these varied local conditions? What are the usual lines of absorption of youth into the adult working scene? What is the role of young women in the evolving society? What contributions do local leaders (either traditional elders or particularly successful individuals) make in helping to meet the needs of young people? What has government and voluntary help so far accomplished?

There are, of course, several general elements which all African nations have in common: the relatively low average level of economic and social development; rapidly rising populations; the accelerated pace of urbanization in recent years (many cities are growing in numbers at 6 or even 8 per cent a year); the influence of mass media, especially of radio; and heightened expectations, particularly among youth, about improvement in living conditions.

Faced with these present-day realities of the needs of youth, each African nation is asking key questions: How can performances in the economy be stepped up so that the nation can provide more adequately for the welfare, skill formation, and employment of the younger generation? How does such assistance to young people in turn contribute to hasten the desired improvements in the economy and in the society as a whole?

II. LEARNING PROCESSES: TRADITIONAL AND MODERN

Traditional education

Young people growing up in Africa are exposed to either one or both of two distinct learning processes: the first comprises the various indigenous forms of learning; the second, the disciplines of modern classroom education. The indigenous learning, through a variety of means—ceremonies and rituals, songs and dances and story-telling, combined with arduous training in specialized arts and work processes—has passed on from generation to generation the spiritual values and technical knowledge of African societies. Modern classroom education has existed for varying periods in different parts of Africa. Both learning processes have multiple purposes. Both play their part in transmitting knowledge and cultural values and in preparing youth for undertaking their life vocations.

In Africa today, the percentages of children who are gaining formal primary education vary widely: a number of countries have more than 40 per cent of school-age children in classrooms, some have less than 10 per cent. The average for all countries taken together would probably be around 30 per cent. (Adult literacy also varies considerably with a few countries greater than 25 per cent, some less than 10 per cent, and an average for all countries somewhat less than 20 per cent.) At the secondary level, a few countries in Africa have been able to provide for more than 10 per cent of that age group.

Clearly, any appraisal of the needs of youth must consider all youth and the varied processes of learning, both in the classroom and out.

How does a child who does not attend school learn the basis for his life work and become absorbed into the labour force? For many children, in fact, the transition from helping with duties inside the family and beginning to work purposefully is imperceptible. The characteristic form of enterprise in any African country is the self-employed family unit: the farm, the craft or artisan workshop, the stall in the market or the shop, the small transport business. Children who do not go to formal schools often become "economically active" at around age 7 and learn on the job. Some children in a family may

learn the occupations of their parents; others may be apprenticed to relatives to diversify their training.

Take a boy who has no opportunity for formal schooling and whose father is a farmer. At about the age when others start to school, he begins his training by accompanying his father to the family farm plots. At first his duties may not be very hard; he carries tools, assists where he can with the hoeing and harvesting, helps to bring back some of the farm products to the family home. Gradually as he grows stronger, he becomes more experienced and knowledgeable about the duties and techniques involved in farming. In many societies, by the time he is ready for marriage, he is prepared to start farming on his own. During his lifetime of work, he will contribute his share to the national effort, perhaps by raising some cash crops for export, certainly by growing food crops to provide for his own family and possibly some surplus to sell in the local market.

Or a young girl becomes apprenticed to a relative who is a woman trader in textiles. In the mornings she sweeps the premises; gradually she learns to make correct money transactions; finally she is trusted to go out herself with lengths of cloth to sell. After years of experience and the accumulation of modest savings, she will begin trading on her own.

Another boy, whose father is a farmer, may be apprenticed to a relative who is a master carpenter. In the beginning, he will help to keep the workshop neat, learn to use the saw and the hammer and to measure correctly, and in slack seasons he may help on his master's farm. After perhaps five years, he will become a journeyman; and later he will become a master carpenter and take in his own apprentices.

This widely-spread indigenous skill-training is central to any explanation of the emergence and growth of private and family productive enterprises in Africa. Through this system, young people (including, nowadays, youth who have attended formal schools) are learning a wide range of arts and crafts, from the traditional skills of wood-carving and bronze-casting to the contemporary ones of electrical wiring and dry-cleaning. These young people spend long hours in markets, in work-shops, on building sites, in motor parks, and

behind the tailboards of lorries plying between near and distant points. They are learning to trade, to drive vehicles, to collect passengers and freight, to handle tools and machines. They are learning to make clay bricks and concrete blocks, to build houses, to bake bread, and to repair cars, trucks, typewriters, and household electrical equipment. They are acquiring the techniques of working with wood (carvers, carpenters), with metals (blacksmiths, tinsmiths, goldsmiths), with leather (shoe and sandal makers, tanners), with cloth (tailors, seamstresses), with raffia and cane (hat, chair, and mat makers).

The distinction is sometimes made that indigenous learning processes are static, passing on only traditional skills, while modern education alone provides the dynamic approach necessary to transform societies. Such a sharp contrast is misleading, particularly when it can be shown that new techniques and new skills are being infused through this indigenous learning system. What is clear, however, is that parents or masters cannot teach skills to their children or their apprentices which they do not themselves possess. It follows that any assistance to raise the technical performance of adults—for example, through agricultural extension or through a business extension service—will eventually help these young learners. This applies in village, town, and city. This is an indirect means: to raise the skills of fathers and masters is to help sons and apprentices. Or youth can be helped by such direct means as short course for young women in poultry-keeping or sewing, for young men in particular aspects of farming or craft work. Any national or local policy for youth employment should thus consider ways for upgrading skills on the job—for youth who have had no formal education (and for those who have had primary schooling as well).

Experiments in introducing "functional literacy" for adults with the objective of combining instruction in literacy and help in heightening productivity in a particular occupation can also have meaning for unschooled youth, either by taking them later as adults or by extending the programme to younger people.

Systems of modern education

In its widest sense, the purpose of a modern formal education system is to help bring about, and respond to, the desired directions and rates of change in the society and economy. By providing both general education and training in specific skills, this system encourages social progress and helps to raise output in all sectors of the growing economy. At the higher levels it generates engineers, doctors, veterinarians, teachers; while at its lower levels it creates literate youth ready to take up new vocations or to help initiate improved techniques in the traditional ways of making a living.

Recognizing the urgent need to have widespread education and skill training for youth, education policy-makers in African countries are asking leading questions. How high a proportion of the national and local income can reasonably be spent on education? How can existing educational programmes be operated with greater efficiency? What types of education now require priority? Are there indications that the economy is not growing fast enough to absorb the output from certain stages in education? How can this formal education system be more closely meshed with economic development?

Such planning of education is increasingly being recognized as an integral part of national development planning. Formal education competes with other demands for whatever scarce financial resources can be made available from the public and private sectors of the economy; and, at the same time, its pupils become potential agents for economic and social advancement. The impact of formal education, in fact, will be more or less effective depending on whether its share of expenditures is consistent with its significance in relation to other development needs (such as improving agriculture, encouraging industry, building dams and electrical-power plants) and whether it is inter-acting with these forces to achieve a balanced progress. In African countries, central government expenditures on formal education range from 10 to 25 per cent of total budgets.

It is obvious that the growth of an economy can be retarded by having a formal education programme which is too small or emphasizes the wrong types of education. And it is equally evident that the growth of an economy can

be hindered by having an education programme (or part of it) which is too large for requirements, or too costly for the economy to bear, or obtains results at an unjustifiably high cost. As a general principle, then, the formal education system should be progressive enough to provide (as economically as possible) the essential general education and the professional and technical skills required in the future, yet fit into the chosen pattern of total resource use.

The view is sometimes expressed that formal education (particularly primary schooling) should be regarded as a basic right of citizenship. The provision of schools, with their attendant equipment and yearly payments for running costs, is thus considered a form of social welfare similar to the provision of modern medical facilities. Thought of in this way, education is an end in itself; its expansion is seen as a moral necessity and carried through on the principle of equality of opportunity rather than on more closely defined national objectives.

More widely accepted, however, is the view that formal education has multiple functions to perform, chief among which is the creation of well-educated people who will bring their talents, knowledge, and experience to bear as they take their diverse parts in the social and economic organization of the nation. All types and levels of formal education (including primary schooling and technical and vocational training in classrooms) are thus considered a form of investment in the infrastructure of the changing society and economy. It is this approach that is usually regarded as more significant in determining the optimum amount of education and its balanced distribution among types and levels.

Following this approach, a rough guide to the required layout of the education system at its higher levels can be obtained from the economic plan and its projected rates and directions of growth. This gives a basis for manpower assessments: an inventory of higher-level skills classified by occupations and levels, gauged for a period of about twenty years ahead. From these expected demands for qualified people—by governments, industry, agriculture—the dimensions of education needs can be better appraised.

Because education is such a long-term investment with its returns delayed for one or two decades, these projections can at best be only approximate. They can, however, provide some basis for comparison with similar calculations for other investments, inside and outside the formal education programme.

Because in most African countries the early spread of education was so patchy, there are still today wide disparities among different areas in the proportions of children attending school; some areas remote from roads and rail have a far lower percentage of children in primary schools than for the nation as a whole. Other inequalities are found in the lower number of girls than boys attending school in many areas and of rural children compared to those in towns and cities. At the opposite extreme are areas where parents early discerned the possible benefits from modern schooling. Here education facilities multiplied to meet the demands, and a dynamic tradition grew up of pushing family members to the highest levels of education—and thus to positions of enhanced responsibility on the national scene.

In expanding educational facilities, governments may thus be faced with a conflict in the use of resources: whether to promote primary schooling in areas which have been relatively neglected (and where demands may still not be strong) or whether to place more emphasis on building up technical and other kinds of higher education for higher-level skills; in other words, whether to provide greater equality of opportunity or to push for efficiency in meeting more closely determined manpower needs.

Some African countries have made the decision to hold, for the time being, the proportion of children attending primary schools to a defined percentage. Tanzania, for example, aims to build up and maintain its primary school attendance at 50 per cent of school-age population. This percentage is considered as providing a sufficient basis both for the selection of entrants to secondary and technical education and as being not excessive in relation to demands on public and private funds for the development of other aspects of the economy.

While in principle there is a stringent logic to the planning of resource use for education, the realities of the scene require a high order of flexibility. For example, there must be a healthy scepticism about easy correlations between more education and higher levels of economic performance. People with very little or no formal education do make considerable contributions to development. (In West Africa, there is the example of the women traders, who have created large networks for the distribution of goods involving millions of pounds). A further danger is the possibility of placing too much emphasis on projections for the future: the economy may develop in such a way that surpluses of educated persons may occur. Yet when these and similar reservations have been made, it is clear that the achievement of well-balanced programmes of formal education are vital to the process of modernization.

III. TRANSITION FROM SCHOOL TO WORK

The search for jobs

While the challenge of providing welfare, skill training and jobs means taking into consideration all the youth of a nation--rural and urban, young men and young women, those with formal schooling and those without, those following traditional occupations and those hoping for jobs in the modernizing economy--there are certain groups who call for special attention: who because of the rapidity of social change have become displaced from their home communities and are living more or less precariously at the margins of city life. In some African countries, these youth include those who have had no formal education but for varying reasons have left their home areas for the adventure of the city. But in most of these countries, these young men and young women who have hopefully set out from rural areas to search for jobs in cities are those who have had some years of formal schooling.

By the nature of its disciplines, modern basic education creates a break with traditional life and occupations. It opens the minds of young people to aspirations which are often far out of alignment with the local scene. For example: to the boy who has completed primary school in the village, it may seem only logical for him to move away by the time he is 15 or 16. He has learned to read and to write in the national language. He can now read the newspapers published in the capital city. He has also learned that by perseverance and by submitting himself to the progressive steps of the school system, he can in time improve his abilities. He wants to continue this process of self-advancement, but around him he sees a technologically static environment.

The family farm looks much the same as it has always looked: with bush fallow, fragmented plots, and the usual food crops--perhaps yams, millet, cassava, maize. In many areas, these subsistence crops are the only ones. In more fortunate areas, there may be tree crops as well (such as cocoa, coffee, or rubber) or ground crops (perhaps groundnuts or rice) which bring cash returns. If the school leaver follows his father to the farm, he will be doing something that he could have done without going to school at all.

Both he and his parents have greater hopes. He cannot see any possibility in creating—unaided—any marked change in the pattern of crops grown, or in the system of farming itself, which might bring a higher and more steady income. Very likely there is a school farm plot, measuring perhaps an acre or less, where he and his classmates were required to spend some time each week hoeing and slashing with a machet. If this farm training has taught him improved methods, still there is little encouragement for him to put these practices into effect or later to establish on his own.

Again, the school leaver may be one among several sons of his mother, who in turn may be one among several wives of his father. Depending on the succession rights and his place in the family—if, for instance, he is the third son of the second wife—the school leaver may have little prospect of making an independent living by staying in the village. All he can see in front of him are years of hard work with elementary tools, duties varying with the change of seasons, but little chance for financial progress. He is also aware that if he is one of the fortunate to get a job as a wage-earner, then his annual income will probably exceed the yearly money returns of his father after a lifetime's hard work.

In most countries of Africa, rising populations and rapidly expanded facilities for elementary schooling have meant vastly increasing numbers presently passing out from primary schools. Secondary schools and vocational training centres are able to accommodate only a small proportion of this number. Many of the rest search for jobs and often remain unengaged in any constructive work for long periods. One effect of modern education is thus to convert a situation of underemployment in villages into one of open unemployment in towns and cities.

This gathering unemployment among school leavers may be illustrated in terms of a simple model: the rate at which these young people are leaving school is rising much faster than the rate at which beginning opportunities for rewarding employment are expanding within the economy. And thus, given the attitude that many have towards traditional farming and other low-income rural occupations, the backlog of uncommitted youth grows.

Expansion of basic education in Africa may be thought of as having three distinct stages. In the first stage only a relatively small proportion of children attend school. The second stage comes when some 30 to 50 per cent receive four or more years of elementary education. The third stage is reached when nearly the entire population gains primary schooling; there is then acceptance by the whole community that all people, including farmers, need preparation for their economic tasks through exposure to the disciplines of formal school work.

In the first stage, those who pass through primary schools, even without attending secondary or vocational schools, are usually able to find work at a regular income outside farming. They find jobs as clerks in central and local governments and trading firms, as messengers, as assistants to produce buyers, and so on. In the second stage, the number of school leavers has been multiplied many times over while the number of jobs with a steady income has increased only slightly. Unemployment among school leavers then prevails and may last a long time. The advance towards universal primary education thus reveals itself as an opportunity—but also a dilemma.

A few African countries are still in the first stage. Most, however, have reached the second, and from all points of view—social, economic, and political—this is the most difficult stage.

A school leaver may be defined simply as a person who has received a certain amount of schooling and who cannot go further with formal education either because of limited family finances or because of shortage of institutions for further schooling. Thus, for example: for every 1,000 who go through primary schools, less than 10 per cent (in most African countries, considerably less) go on for secondary schooling or formal technical training. Therefore, over 900 of every 1,000 pupils who complete primary school have a cut-off point in their formal education and they must find some kind of vocational training on the job. They are still young, perhaps 16 if they started late, but in some countries as low as 13 or 14. Studies in some African cities show the average age of unemployed school leavers to be around 19.

Indications for the years ahead in some African countries are already becoming clear: university graduates will be required to accept employment at

a lower starting salary and with promotions coming slowly; secondary school leavers will have to accept jobs of a lesser order; and primary school leavers will have little chance for beginning wage-paid work.

For most countries, however, it is the job-seekers with from 4 to 10 years of formal schooling for whom immediate policy action is required. The reasons for such attention can be summarized:

- (1) The problem is getting bigger; each year the number of jobless youth in the cities grows.
- (2) Aspirations have been aroused through the process of formal education. Nor is it only the ambitions of school leavers themselves: there are also the hopes of parents and relatives who have usually denied themselves other forms of expenditure in order to promote their children's education and to prepare them for a better way of making a living. The problem of unemployment among school leavers thus represents a deep-set social condition in most African countries.
- (3) Too great an exodus from rural areas can lower farm production and delay agricultural modernization.
- (4) Too rapid an influx into cities brings pressure on the municipal water supply and sanitation, sometimes leading to urban squalor and vast shanty towns on the fringes of cities. Governments may then be pressed to provide heavy expenditures on amenities, which may further widen the contrast between rural and urban development.
- (5) When unemployment stretches over a long period with consequent insecurity, there follows the threat of increasing juvenile delinquency and crime, physical ill-health and mental disturbance, resort to drugs and prostitution.
- (6) Heavy expenditures of scarce public resources, as well as private funds, have been devoted to the education of these youths. The payoff from this investment is being delayed.

- (7) If the society becomes more and more divided into those who enjoy the conspicuous comforts of modern living and those who are excluded, large numbers of unemployed present a distinct threat to national stability.
- (8) Unemployment of any kind has a high social and economic cost. Those not working reduce the standard of living and the potential savings of those who are. And for the nation--when development is urgently being sought--unemployment of any kind means a tragic waste of human resources.
- (9) If long-term solutions in harmony with the general pattern for economic advancement are not designed now, some countries may be pushed during an emergency to adopt stop-gap, or even coercive, measures that could turn out to be very costly. Temporary set-ups organized under pressure have a way of turning into permanent institutions--which may not be the ones desired by the architects of national progress.

There is an argument, sometimes forcefully stated, that nothing needs to be done about this problem. According to this view, the problem is a transitory one and in the long run, after several decades, everyone will be literate and the economy will be advanced enough to provide a wider range of employment opportunities. The difficulty is, however, that the long run is just too far ahead.

A variant of this argument is that these young people are not vocationally trained and thus not useful in most jobs. The quality of education has fallen in some areas in recent years and some primary school leavers are barely able to read and write. They are too young, too lazy, too unqualified. All of these criticisms may be true in particular cases, yet it can easily be demonstrated from everyday experience that, given the opportunities, young Africans do win their way to self-improvement on the job according to their individual talents.

One thing is certain. The aspirations of school leavers searching for jobs are for personal and family gain, but these aspirations are consistent

with the much-needed driving force required to reconstruct and push ahead the development of African economies.

Education with a wider meaning

In meeting this problem, there appear to be a number of approaches open to governments—central and local—from both the side of education and the side of employment.

A solution sometimes put forward is to restrain educational opportunities. The reasoning goes that if more and more school leavers are migrating to the cities and towns and remain unemployed, then facilities for primary schooling should be cut back or at least not expanded to match the growing school-age population. Those in rural areas should be encouraged to stay there. The money saved by not investing in primary education can then be used for general economic development or projects providing employment for the fewer school leavers. This is a logical and compelling view. But it is difficult to maintain in present-day Africa. Restricting education means widening the already existing inequalities in societies where formal education has for some generations provided the means for progression by merit rather than by status at birth. In a sense, it is too late in most African countries to attempt to cut back primary education; the awareness and the desire for it have already spread among families in both rural and urban areas.

In any case, what is the effect of primary education on productivity? During the period of recent expansion in African countries of primary education, the belief underpinning these policies was strongly expressed: that exposure of young people to the disciplines of school life and work would raise the quality of the future labour force and help to speed up modernization of the economy. Already some evidence has accumulated to show that primary education does raise productivity in the markets and workshops, in transport, on building sites, and also on farms. Many proprietors of small enterprises prefer school leavers to those who have not attended school at all: tailors and carpenters want apprentices who can measure accurately and keep rudimentary accounts; traders need assistants who can calculate and keep records. The position with farming is also becoming clearer: given

opportunities, selected and willing school leavers are likely to be more ready to innovate new crops and to try new methods

Lively debates on "curriculum reform" have gone on for decades in African countries. The issues have to do with relations of school to community,^{2/} of material being taught and its usefulness to the individual in his later service to society; the discussion is usually focussed on the suitable proportions of different types of education—general and vocational, literary and scientific.

In dealing with the problem of youth employment, one solution often put forward is to change the curriculum for primary schools, particularly in rural areas. This suggests that if farming were effectively taught, then school leavers would become farmers and not drift to the cities and towns. But primary education cannot be narrowly vocational. Pupils who complete the course should be able to read and write, to do a certain amount of arithmetic, to understand enough science and history to interpret the world around them, and to learn enough civics to be aware of their rights and responsibilities as citizens of their nation. This does not make pupils into farmers or carpenters or nuclear scientists; it is basic to all these careers. Education is not meant to adapt pupils to their society, but also to equip them to alter it. And it may well be that widespread primary schooling provides the foundation for modernizing agriculture—not by trying to teach pupils to become farmers, but by giving them the tools of literacy and the confidence to try new techniques for doing things. In recent years, some have pointed out the necessity for improving the quality of education; this is one of the formidable tasks facing educational administrators. There is also a need for curriculum adjustment (for example, much more science right through primary school taught at appropriate levels; more participation in local culture through music, dance, art, folklore).

^{2/} For an analysis of complementary changes throughout the educational system to make this compatible with economic and social realities, see the paper by Julius K. Nyerere, "Education for Self-Reliance", 1967.

In the context of evolving societies, the whole concept of education needs to be reformulated. Too often education is thought of only as a process that happens in classrooms with an examination at the end. Education is much more than this: for the individual, it is a lifelong process, and for the society, a means of conditioning the minds of people everywhere.

When education is viewed in its widest meaning—to include indigenous learning processes, on-the-job training, community-improvement education, as well as the formal types of classroom instruction—then certain questions arise as to what kinds of post-primary education are most suitable to prepare young school leavers for the transition from school to work. For those with a bent towards farming, what short courses or regular assistance can be given by agricultural extension to help them become progressive farmers while working on family land holdings? What is the role of young farmers' clubs? In the urban setting, what kinds of concentrated training (on the job or short courses) could be given to upgrade masters and apprentices in certain promising small industries?

Such non-formal education helps to direct the already achieved literacy of school leavers to the needs of development.

IV. ECONOMIC PROGRAMMES

Employment opportunities for youth in development

The presence of youth who are uncommitted, or only partly committed, to constructive work, sharpens perception of the underlying underemployment of labour that characterizes a wide variety of activities in African countries—for example, in farming, petty trading, small industrial enterprises. Such underemployment of labour is reflected in low productivity and is caused by lack of co-operating factors for labour to work with: of capital equipment, technical skills, entrepreneurial abilities, and effective resource organization.

The problem, therefore, of creating more productive work opportunities at rising levels of real income—that is, of reducing the incidence of underemployment and of open unemployment among youth—is to a large extent just the problem of development itself. By stepping up the rate of investment, by building capital and skills at key points in the economy, and by organizing well, the demand for labour will grow. This will be especially so if care is taken to adopt labour-intensive processes wherever technically and economically feasible.

What has been the economic record? The fact is that most African countries have been able to achieve positive—and in many cases, steady—rates of growth over the period since 1960, ranging from 2 to 5 per cent a year. But these economies have not been able to provide a sufficiently high level of meaningful employment. General development has opened up some work opportunities here and there—in government administration, public utilities, communications, large industries, commercial firms—and the heightened economic activity has conditioned an atmosphere in which people have created jobs for themselves and their apprentices. But not enough.

In many African countries, university graduates and trained technicians are urgently needed for positions at the higher echelons, but there has been neither the expansion nor the turnover at the lower levels to allow employment for any great numbers. Public services in many countries, in fact, have too many employees and a push for efficiency often

brings painful reductions in the need for lesser-skilled labour. Banks and bigger commercial enterprises are not taking in young recruits in any great quantity. Large plantations require many labourers at the beginning, during the planting period, but after that not many for maintenance. The large mines have, for the most part, stabilized their labour forces and are able each year to take only a few replacements; and these are usually selected from the miners' sons who have grown up on the mine compound. The modern building and construction industries hold greater prospects for wage-paid employment, but they are dependent on private and public funds as well as a continuing climate of political stability and business optimism.

Since the problem of large-scale unemployment among youth is a new one, answers cannot be found by a scrutiny of the development patterns of other countries. Practical solutions can be arrived at only by closely examining structures of the individual African economies, by analysing points of growth in relation to potential employment absorption, and then by considering priorities of government expenditures and effort.

From the employment viewpoint, African economies have certain significant characteristics in common: large agricultural sectors, accounting for over half of each country's total produce and engaging 75 per cent or more of the working population; small modern industrial sectors with, in most cases, only 2 to 5 per cent of the working population actually engaged in manufacturing or mining.

Creation of modern industries is a slow process. And since the trend in such industries is for greater mechanization with proportionately fewer—more highly skilled—workers, the capital investment needed to employ one worker often amounts to between £500 and £5,000. In the crucial period ahead, the flow of internal savings, together with foreign loans and investment, will create jobs in modern industry for only a small fraction of those demanding work. Even by 1980 it is unlikely that many countries will have more than 6 or 7 per cent of gainfully-employed people in factories. After some decades there will no doubt be

instances of self-generating economic systems, but in the meantime the few large-scale industries with secondary effects arising from their establishment cannot come near to providing the jobs so eagerly sought.

There is, therefore, an obvious and glaring inconsistency between what people are hoping for and what is being accomplished. To some extent this gap is understandable: hopes must run ahead in order to spur achievement. Even so, the presence of job-seeking youth at the present cumulative scale constitutes a serious warning.

African governments, central and local, have a powerful role in development. It is their channelling of public funds and their accompanying expertise that give a major stimulus towards higher performances in the economy: through creation of infrastructure (roads, bridges, dams), through participation in production (ownership or part-ownership and management of industries and large agricultural projects), through promoting education and training programmes of all types. Governments also help the efforts of producers in the private sector of the economy by other, more direct, ways. This is done by sponsoring crop research, by demonstrating new techniques in agriculture, by assisting in produce marketing and storage, by arranging subsidies for fertilizer and for newer varieties of seedlings, and much else. Beginnings have also been made in providing guidance to indigenous small-scale industries.

African governments account for over half of the total capital formation in their countries. The more immediate results can be measured: the lift in output, income, and number of wage jobs. But the less immediate results arising from the response of private enterprise to government participation in the economy are much more difficult to assess. These responses may be illustrated by countless examples from African countries. A new feeder road brings multiple results: transporters and traders move into the villages; more consumer supplies flow in; higher surpluses move out; a co-operative for marketing farm produce is started; farm extension work becomes more effective. And as incomes rise, more money is spent locally: the tailor has more orders; the carpenter has more business; more apprentices are required; more jobs are available. Or take another example. Government initiates a highly

selective programme for technical and other aid to small industries. After a time several firms meet success; others emulate; output and employment rises. By taking sufficient examples, gradually a record can be built that would be valuable in helping to determine future public spendings or to adjust present ones for maximum results in both productivity and employment.

Gradually, among policy-makers in Africa, the view is emerging that more prominence must be given to the creation of jobs while pursuing the ultimate goals of development: raising the living standards of the people everywhere. This is seen in the slanting of national expenditures away from less-urgent projects (such as lavish public buildings) towards newly-designed labour-intensive programmes.

Such a re-assessment, particularly of government expenditures (at both central and local levels), may turn out to have its own logic for development. It is sometimes argued that the push for high rates of economic growth is incompatible with the achievement of high levels of employment in a free economy, but the two objectives may well turn out to be more harmonious than is commonly supposed. Certainly there can be no real national development without involving the masses of the people.

Planning for employment and getting these plans into action (within the context of the best use of national and local resources) is a difficult exercise, requiring intimate understanding of peoples' responses to various familiar and new incentives. Yet it is just here—working with the smaller economic units—that the greatest emphasis will need to be placed if any headway is to be made in raising more work and training opportunities for youth.

Indigenous enterprise in urban and rural areas

Since there are limited possibilities for providing beginning jobs in sufficiently large numbers in the more modern establishments, what are the capacities of small-scale economic enterprises, in both urban and rural areas, to absorb more young people into profitable work?

These enterprises include the small businesses of traders, self-employed artisans, craftsmen, builders, transporters, and processors of agricultural products. As they vie for customers and strive to overcome obstacles, these indigenous enterprises represent, quite often, a really competitive element in these economies. They take many more workers in proportion to each unit of capital than do the large modern factories; they also provide low-cost training within the traditional apprenticeship patterns. And they are of fundamental importance to the progress of any country both in conveying a flow of incentive goods to farmers and in creating the atmosphere for entrepreneurial talent to develop.

But there are wide differences among countries in the variety and strength of these small enterprises. In parts of West Africa, for example, colourful markets thrive with the vigorous exchange of goods, and in every town and city small entrepreneurs energetically advertise their goods and services on a myriad of signboards. There are cases of those who have made the breakthrough from small beginnings to large-scale operations—in transport, building, and road contracting, and in modern furniture making. The women traders—with their shrewd intelligence and aggressive business sense—add an extra vitality to the West African scene. Not only do they train and employ girls in their activities, but they often accumulate large sums of capital for further investment.

In Zambia, on the other hand, where school leavers set out from their villages and trek as their adult relatives before them to the "line of rail", these small enterprises are by no means as flourishing. Because of the low order of exchange in local markets and the lack of transport facilities, the local economy in farming is less advanced. In many parts of the country the task is to create an agricultural economy—to encourage the production of surpluses for local and export markets.

The scene changes again in East Africa. Here the Asian members of the community have for several generations carried out the activities of produce buying, selling imported articles, and manufacture in small

industries such as tailoring. Against this accumulated experience, it has been difficult for Africans to start in competition and to win their way forward once having started. Most parts of East Africa also show restrictions on trading in urban areas, especially as to location, that are unknown to West Africa.

It is true, of course, that the impetus for these small enterprises to emerge and develop derives from the general strength of the economy of which they become a part. They are especially sensitive to movements in export trade and to the often related rise or fall in government spending on general development. But governments might now begin to think of industrial policy on a gradation stretching all the way from the modern large firms to these smaller industries. The aim of policy would be to help improve the techniques and management of these small concerns, to blur the edges of this so-called "technological dualism." After all, examination will reveal that in some instances this is occurring naturally.

For example, a mechanic working in a small workshop finds a job with a modern motor works; after some years of service and saving he sets up his own improved workshop. The old takes from the new and narrows the differences that exist.

Depending on local variations, governments can—at low cost—design policies to improve the functioning of these smaller enterprises which will in turn provide training and jobs for youth. Raising productivity in these firms will not reduce their demand for more labour. As the cost of production falls and the design and quality of products improve, the smaller industries are better able to compete against the cheaper range of imported articles. Foreign exchange will be saved. The result, in fact, will be the opposite: more products will be introduced into existing firms, new modern small firms will arise. A lift to one sector spurs the rate of growth of the economy as a whole. More jobs will be created.

To encourage these emerging small firms, an industrial extension service can be set up—organized with a clear set of economic principles and procedures and staffed with top-ranking technicians. This service

would arrange accelerated training programmes for apprentices and masters, recruited on a selective basis. Regular visits would be made to chosen small firms with advice on better product design, more efficient use of existing and new tools and materials, methods of expanding sales. Credit needs would be assessed. Such a programme would have spread effects through the force of competition and resultant emulation. At this stage of economic growth, shortage of capital is not as critical a limiting factor as shortage of skills.

In situations where the comparative economic advantage is clearly with the large factories, there is no point in pushing the modernization of crafts and small industries. That is, no African country should be placed in a position of subsidizing more costly methods of achieving greater output in the interests of a higher level of employment and of training facilities on the job. But the economies of scale are by no means always on the side of the large industrial units. In the case of shoe and sandal making, for example, it has already been proved that smaller enterprises with specific modern machines and some assistance in overcoming obstacles in production and marketing have been able to compete with large factories in both quality and price. Estimates could be made of the capital costs involved and the expected return in output and employment from different methods of production. When considering substitution of local products for the multitude of imported goods, the African scene offers many possibilities to the small industrialist—from food-processing to furniture-making in both urban and rural areas. And import protection becomes meaningful when a really concerted effort is being made to improve these enterprises.

Such a programme to help indigenous small industries could have several major effects. (1) Substitution of local products for imported goods with a consequent saving in foreign exchange. (2) A higher labour absorption of youth for training and eventual employment. (3) More jobs for skilled wage-paid artisans alongside the customary apprentices.

This extension service would also give impetus to rural industries by introducing new products and processes to existing units and by assisting those city-trained apprentices who are returning to establish in villages and towns. In some cases, a number of craftsmen might be brought together to work as private enterprise units, and to co-operate in buying materials and in marketing products.

The suggestion has been made that rural industries be created by giving special courses to youth and in this way training them to become entrepreneurs; but this plan is unrealistic as well as expensive. Far better to work with the natural process by helping existing craftsmen and former apprentices to improve their skills. They in turn will train apprentices.

Any precipitate move to introduce strict apprentice laws designed for more economically-advanced countries could have unfortunate results.

There appears to be no sense in trying to cover the field with new labour laws which are restrictive; they could do more harm than good. And they would be extremely difficult—if not impossible—to administer. At first, it is more important to concentrate on improving the directly productive sector; later on, as the system is being upgraded, such regulations can be put into effect.

There are some commentators who believe that African countries with little or no industrial tradition—except the older crafts—can hardly produce innovators capable of industrial transformations. But real innovators in any society are exceptional. First it is necessary to have—and in large numbers—skilled craftsmen with a sharpened business sense. They are imitators, adapting known techniques to local conditions—and at this stage of Africa's development are much more important than innovators.

Working with these craft enterprises and small industries, in both urban and rural areas, to improve their functioning means that the continuity in the emergence of new entrepreneurs is not broken. And Africans will progressively gain a stronger hold on the industrial future of their own country.

V. RURAL TRANSFORMATION

Making modern farmers

The greatest number of productive and rewarding jobs for young people must be found in the rural areas: in both farm and non-farm activities. Promoting such opportunities for youth depends on far-reaching measures that aim to transform the economic and social conditions of the rural areas as a whole.

These measures would be directed towards hastening improvements in the quality of existing crops and the introduction of newer varieties, for use by farm families and for sale locally and abroad. They would include the stepping-up of performances of crafts and small-scale industries that process farm products and that endeavour to meet local needs for goods and services of many kinds; they would also encourage the creation of further indigenous non-farm enterprises in all villages and townships throughout the rural areas. More than this: such measures would provide renewed stimulus to rural communities everywhere to carry through communal projects, assisted when necessary by an alliance with central or local governments which would help by advice or actual participation.

In order to make this policy of rural transformation acceptable to rural people, urgent and drastic action at national and local levels of government would be essential to remedy the existing distortions in the system of rewards to labour—among the salaried, the wage-earners, and the self-employed—particularly as between urban and rural areas.

As part of this concerted push to give a "new look" to rural areas, African governments at the same time would be encouraging youth, particularly school leavers brought up on family farms, to take up farming as a vocation. Governments have discovered, however, that it is no use telling these young people to go back to farming when no plans exist to help them. On reaching a sufficiently mature age, they will need some practical help, some on-the-job training, even if only by regular visits to ensure continuous improvement, which in turn gives them greater rewards and makes farming worth while from their viewpoint.

Arguments against policy measures for attracting unemployed youth back into farming are made by those who interpret the history of economically-advanced countries as the movement of the labour force from farms to the cities, from agriculture into industries. This movement has occurred and will continue to occur, of course, but only as agriculture becomes efficient enough to create a steady surplus of food and raw materials. It is the rise of productivity in agriculture that paves the way for industrial advance. Economic growth takes place not as a result of labour surplus moving to cities but rather because of farm surplus serving to finance industrial development.

Such rises in agricultural productivity, in the longer run, are most likely to happen as a result of the efforts of youth whose education has conditioned them to ideas of change and innovation.

Then, there are the despairing cries, "School leavers only want white-collar jobs". Naturally enough, they want the highest-paying jobs they can get, and as long as the returns of a clerk or a messenger in the city are considerably higher and steadier than those obtainable on the family farm, they will seek these jobs first. But this is an indication of their economic alertness. In fact, close enquiries show that African youth are most realistic and revise their expectations when they find that these jobs are not available.

Surveys conducted in several parts of Nigeria show that most unemployed school leavers who have migrated to cities are not averse to improved farming as a way of making a living. Their objections are to traditional farming in conditions where the prospect of achieving a reasonable income later, is very slim.

In the same way, control of the influx of young people into cities, perhaps with forced repatriation, is ultimately futile. Such controls not only create dissension but also are usually inefficient in their operation; moreover, they merely pass the problem back to the rural areas. They are no substitute for real incentives. As long as young Africans see in farming a poor and stunted life, they will seek for what seem to them the better opportunities of the cities.

What is wanted, first of all, is a really effective general policy towards agriculture which would demonstrate that improved farming can bring as much money and as rewarding a life as other occupations.

Yet, at the outset, countries are faced with what seem to be intractable problems in achieving low-cost changes within traditional farming patterns. Africans farm mainly for subsistence food, with some surpluses going to local and export markets. These export crops are valuable providers of foreign exchange: cocoa, cotton, groundnuts, for example. But most farming puts family needs first; specialization among farms is very small. Human power and the use of "the blade system" are everywhere; animal power is seldom used, and mechanical power rare. And the pattern of bush-fallow cultivation is universal. While suited to a low density of population, such a system is subject to strains when populations are rising at present rates. Then the cycle of fallow and cultivation gets shorter and shorter, which means eventual deterioration of soil by overcropping. Fragmentation of holdings is also widespread. Much African farming thus demands very hard work; and, when measured against the handicaps, it is often efficient. But productivity per person and per acre is low everywhere.

In the present context, what specific policies can be worked out that have meaning both for improving this system of farming while at the same time providing a future for youth? Experiments already underway in Africa show some possibilities: (1) establishing large farm settlements on unused tracts of land which might draw young farmers from a radius of, say, 40 miles; (2) encouraging smaller farm settlements on unused land close to their present villages; (3) helping individuals to introduce improved methods while engaged on family holdings.

Zambia and Western Nigeria, for example, took a courageous approach to the problem in establishing large farm settlements. The Zambian scheme at Mungwi (which accepts unschooled farmers as well as school leavers) and the Western Nigeria settlements were financed on a long-term loan basis. They have new model villages with such modern facilities as tap water.

The 13 farm settlements spaced throughout Western Nigeria began in 1959 with large sections of donated land—from 4,000 to 6,000 acres for each settlement, allowing some 200 school leavers (after two years' instruction in farm institutes) to be settled on individual holdings of from 20 to 30 acres. All-out efforts have been made to use modern technology (a tractor pool, for example) and tested scientific approaches in deciding on the combination of arable and tree crops, techniques of planting, possibilities of raising livestock, and co-operative marketing. These settlements are expensive: from £2,000 to £3,000 per settler, repayable over a period of 15 years beginning from the time the tree crops come into production. On the grounds of finance, of the concentration of scarce administrative talent, and of the many human problems that have emerged—when youth are striking out for themselves away from their familiar environment—the direct employment possibilities of schemes of this size are necessarily limited. Their demonstration effect, however, can be considerable; by showing what modern farming in the tropics can be, they make more modest follow-up schemes easier to execute.

Although these large farm settlements are too expensive to be widely imitated, some of their features can be retained in a greatly modified version. Experiments have begun in which villages provide land for their own youth and the government gives initial support with subsistence payments to the settlers, subsidized seedlings, and advances for buying tools. Settlers then pay their own way as they go along. Agricultural extension advises on blocking out the land into individual units of economic size which allow for expansion over a series of years and which combine suitable crops for the area in a judicious selection between income now and income later. Co-operative buying of requisities and selling of products has been introduced. Since in the early stages the young farmers live with their own families in the village, the costs are kept to a minimum. Yet these young farmers make a distinct break with traditional farming. And when the farm unit reaches its full size and the cash crops come into full bearing, they will have an income equal to, if not above,

the lower wage-earners in the cities. They will also have the greater security of growing their own food, ultimately living in their own houses, and not worrying about losing their jobs.

For those young men who start on their family land, agricultural extension workers can make regular visits to encourage them, individually or in groups, in overcoming the obstacles they meet in trying to put into practice improved methods. Small amounts of credit may be given, and advice on techniques of production and marketing. Such an approach to specialized training and settlement in existing villages has been tried out, for example, in Dahomey and Ivory Coast. These examples show that much can be accomplished under existing land tenure arrangements— without waiting for big change-overs in these patterns.

As sufficient farm extension staff becomes available, a start can be made in using visual aids and perhaps introducing local and national merit awards for high performances. Such awards can have immense incentive value during intense periods of innovation in farming. Finally, young farmers' clubs can be expanded everywhere to extend instruction, encouragement, and group feeling through the period before the youth is ready to start farming on his own; and, of course, after beginning on his own as well.

Any realistic programmes for helping to create young modern farmers based on arrangements of low cost and community self-help, and taking into account ethnic and sociological factors, will be steps in the right direction. The aim is two-fold: to initiate expanding economic farm units and to furnish a local exhibition of what improved farming could look like. Where new nutritional crops, higher-yielding strains of existing crops, better poultry, and more skilful methods of management are introduced by these young settlers, they represent an effective demonstration to local villagers. Adult farmers are likely to take greater notice of the accomplishments of their own sons than the work of government demonstration farms. They will then be more willing to meet farm extension officers and try out some of their suggested improvements.

Self-help programmes for community needs

In the rural areas, the provision of local amenities demands more attention. Lack of them has much to do with school leavers' rejection of rural life.

In some African countries, the recent period of brisk political activity has created an unfortunate climate that "Government will provide"; this has meant the virtual collapse of local initiative in meeting many collective needs in villages and smaller townships. Where this has occurred, new directions are required. Central and local governments, acting jointly, will have to formulate clear-cut policies towards making certain that local people know just what sort of counterpart help can be obtained through government as they themselves, under voluntary leadership, initiate projects for improved market stalls, for building dispensaries and schools, for constructing feeder roads, and the like.

Some of these projects, by their nature, are exclusively an affair of government initiative; others are better handled by government in alliance with local leadership; others again are more the business of local people's own efforts (but even here government surveys or planning advice can be helpful). Here then is one of the vital aspects of the traditional African scene—which in many countries needs to be re-defined and given a fresh start—self-help for meeting community needs.

In Senegal and some other countries of French expression, L'Animation rurale (stimulation of rural leadership) is an approach to awakening the masses of the population to the possibilities of self-initiated development. Administrative means have been organized to enable a dialogue to be carried on between rural people and officials so that development needs are considered in an active two-way process rather than something formulated from above. Specific training in leadership is given to selected individuals who then return unpaid to their communities to help generate and carry through particular projects.

The "Work for Honour" plan, launched by the Mali Government in 1961 and accompanied by effective nation-wide propaganda, gained the response of local communities throughout the nation in working for collective

projects without wages. Its appeal is to people's patriotism by making them feel they are taking part in national construction and to their immediate economic interests by helping them realize the resources they possess for their own advancement.

Such examples point up the major challenge to African leaders : to move ahead with programmes to upgrade the millions of peasant farms and the tens of thousands of small-scale industries in urban and rural areas; and to encourage local voluntary leadership in every area to undertake multitudes of projects to meet community needs. Working with natural processes in this way means a frontier effort in what may be called "development from below". When people feel part of such genuine nationwide movements, the rising numbers of hopeful youth (both schooled and unschooled) will have better chances of finding rewarding work for their lifetime ahead.

VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMMES AND SPECIAL YOUTH SCHEMES

Familiar social programmes

Every African nation has a variety of institutions and programmes promoting the welfare of young people. Some of these derive from traditional life and social organization, such as a dance group formed by a particular age-set of young women to perform at local festivals. Others are contemporary modifications of traditional associations; for example, savings clubs among city youth based on clan relationships. Others still are comparatively modern in origin and purpose, perhaps related to schools or churches or mosques. Some have international or regional affiliations, such as Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, YMCA, YWCA, Jeunesse Ouvriers.

The objectives of these associations vary widely, but they have certain effects in common: they foster a feeling of belonging to a group, give a sense of direction and purpose, provide experience for youth in organizing their own activities, develop discipline and a heightened sense of self-respect. Some clubs encourage the improvement of domestic skills for women, such as homemaking, child care, sewing, knowledge of hygiene and nutrition; of occupational skills for young men, such as young farmers' and young fishermen's clubs; of abilities in sports, such as swimming or football groups.

Some of these clubs provide badges for identification or as proof of special achievement. Sometimes uniforms are part of the show—or a particular article of clothing (perhaps a hat or head scarf) worn by all members. Competitions of various kinds may be part of the activities which stimulate higher performance.

All of these clubs for youth are important and need further emphasis, particularly in those rural areas where traditional forms of recreation and association have disappeared and no new forms have taken their place and in cities where so many young people are displaced from their home communities. They are significant for boys and girls in their early teens (from 13 to 15) as well as for older youth. Those organizations

which are relatively low-cost may need encouragement to become self-perpetuating and self-multiplying. They are worthy of the extra administrative attention from voluntary organizations and from governments.

Other forms of social welfare being developed in Africa are those dealing with special groups such as training for the blind, the deaf and mute, the physically and mentally handicapped. And there are institutions for juvenile delinquents, sometimes modelled on patterns from other countries but more and more adapted to meet the special conditions of the contemporary African scene.

Many of these programmes are of long standing; others have more recent origins. A large number have been started by voluntary initiatives, quite often registered with governments, which may in turn assume a supervisory or other active role, such as providing equipment.

These programmes can be of considerable benefit to growing African boys and girls in moulding their attitudes to work and training and thus stepping up performances in development.

The new training and work schemes

In recent years the gathering concern for idle urban and rural youth has given rise to a variety of schemes in almost all nations of Africa.^{3/} Although the range of these projects is very wide, they fall roughly into two categories: (a) largely specialized training schemes, which may include practical work, and (b) largely works schemes, usually of a temporary nature, in which vocational training is sometimes given.

Some of these schemes emphasise social objectives such as the discipline and dignity of work; they stress the idea of national service for its own sake, at the same time as building new skills. The great diversity of characteristics is revealed in the manner of recruitment (age of entry, whether selective, whether voluntary or with some degree of coercion); in the manner of operation (the proportions of training and work involved, money or other allowances, the means to enforce discipline,

^{3/} A survey and appraisal of these schemes on an international basis is contained in two contributions to the International Labour Review: "Youth Employment and Vocational Training Schemes in the Developing Countries" (September 1962) and "Youth Services for Economic and Social Development: A General Review" (April 1967).

the length of time youth are associated with the scheme); and in the provision, if any, made for helping these youth later in their attempts to find suitable work in the economy.

Specialized training schemes are usually on non-military lines, and are voluntary, with selective recruitment. Some give attention to furthering general education; some are "correctional"; all provide training in skills—usually farming or trades, or both. These schemes vary in the extent of local self-help, the contribution of voluntary workers (local leaders and others), and the amount of finance and organization provided by the local or central government. A few of these institutions aim to be self-supporting by charging fees to trainees or making products for sale.

Among the largely works schemes are: national construction, human investment, workers' brigades, national service (often an alternative to military service), civic service, labour volunteers. Most of these are found in French-speaking West African countries; notable exceptions are Kenya's National Youth Service and Ghana's Workers' Brigade. Some of these include unschooled youth and adults as well as school leavers. Some involve military-type discipline. A general recognition is growing, however, that when dealing with youth the less coercive the methods the more effective the responses; in particular, almost all African nations have agreed to the important conventions 29 (1930) and 105 (1957) of the International Labour Office on compulsory labour. Dedicated to the idea of national service, these schemes usually involve youth in physical work in creating national assets, such as building roads, dams, and irrigation systems. And whatever training exists is gained either before or while working on such projects.

On economic grounds, these schemes may lend themselves to criticism because of their high public cost and because they often divert scarce capital and administrative talent from more urgent development tasks. And often such labour-intensive works can be accomplished more cheaply by the use of machinery and perhaps with more experienced labour. Another difficulty frequently occurs in introducing specialization and differential

rewards for work done; without these, youths have less spur to self-improvement. Then, also, there are problems in finding continuous work that has meaning within the general development of the area and for which recurrent costs can be borne once the capital works have been completed. If a scheme keeps youth for a very long period, or has no definite time limit, the best answer may well be simply to recruit them to central and local government service for public works—as apprentices of various kinds—and thus give them the benefit of training on the job, participation in specialized work, with rewards changing as they gain ability and experience. But against these economic appraisals should be weighed the less measureable social gains of improved personal discipline and attitudes towards society and of practical expressions of patriotism.

The following examples from the wide array of national programmes illustrate the varied characteristics:

Malawi. The Young Pioneers Movement is a training programme directed towards settlement later in agriculture and participation in self-help development projects locally. The Movement began in 1960 and now has training bases for boys and girls throughout the country. "Dedicated to the ideal of selfless service to the nation".

The Movement provides instruction in the training camps in various aspects of agriculture. ("Land has life and will die unless properly looked after".) For girls, there is specialized training in homecraft.

Related to this training in skills are rigorous physical exercises including military-style training.

Provision has been made for settlement in farming by giving land and extending credit; the land being enough for 10 acres of cotton, 2 acres of food crops, 2 acres of forestry.

The Movement has also been introduced into secondary schools with the aim of improving civic consciousness and fostering a spirit of voluntary service for practical work. Thus, jobs are undertaken to assist village self-help projects in getting more effective results.

Zambia. The Youth Service provides further education and training for young people, both young men and young women between the ages of 16 and 25, who have received some education but are unemployed.

The course is designed for two years: 3 months of which is spent in a national camp for general education and general training, followed by 15 months in a specialized camp, with the last 6 months spent either training on the job or in a new settlement.

For boys, the specialized training is in agriculture and artisan skills of value in rural areas. For girls, there is home economics and such activities as poultry management.

The camps aim to provide a large part of their own food needs. In 1966 there were 1,250 youth in these camps.

Central African Republic. The Young Pioneers Movement, based on daily attendance at special centres, provides training for over 3,000 young men and young women between the ages of 14 and 19 who are not in schools. They receive general education, participate in sports, and learn agricultural and rural skills. After a period of one year's training, they are encouraged in their settlement plans in villages.

This programme is counted as an alternative to participation in military service.

Ivory Coast. The Civic Service gives a short general training followed by specialized training in agricultural and related skills. Recruitment is mainly of unemployed youth with little or no formal education whose origin is in rural areas, although many join after migration to the towns.

The scheme provides for supervision and help in later settlement for those trainees who have met required standards.

Mali. The Civic Service provides some variations on its own earlier experiments and those of nearby countries. The present programme gives special training to a selected group of "elite" rural youth (at present 2,000), who on completion of their two-year course will return to farm in their own villages and represent a model of what improved

farming should look like. More than this: the specially-trained young farmers will explain the new techniques to other villagers and take on the role as leaders in local improvements.

The training given to these selected youth includes agricultural techniques and the working of co-operatives, as well as providing a grasp of national objectives. Participants are excused from military training.

Kenya. (1) The Association of Youth Centres administers 164 youth centres distributed throughout Kenya, which now have a total membership of over 11,000 boys and girls. Many of these youth were primary 4 school leavers in earlier years. Ages range from 13 to 20, with junior centres taking in those from age 7 to 12.

Begun in 1957 "when youths were hanging around villages and townships with little or no parental control, with great potentiality for delinquency", the idea was to keep them occupied by providing general education as well as instruction and practical work in agriculture and elementary crafts and artisan skills. Girls learn domestic science. The youth wear badges to identify their affiliation with their centre.

This scheme is financed mainly by local self-help and through local authorities, using voluntary staff as well as paid employees.

Trainees are also directed in carrying out humanitarian services such as caring for the infirm, the crippled, and the aged by helping with thatch for houses, collecting firewood, and carrying water.

Plans are being discussed to provide widespread training in higher skills on a two-year basis for primary 7 school leavers.

(2) The National Youth Service, started in 1964, carries out economically useful public works which are beyond the means of self-help. Over 4,000 unemployed males between the ages of 16 and 30 are engaged on these activities. Whatever training is received comes through participation on the job.

Ghana. The Workers' Brigade in its original form was the first predominantly work scheme for youth. At present, 10,000 young men and young women (mainly school leavers) over the age of 16 undertake tasks related to agricultural development, particularly work on large-scale farms, with produce being marketed through national co-operatives.

Malagasy Republic. The Civic Service is a branch of the national service programme and is directed mainly towards work with an emphasis on social services. The scheme includes the breaking-in of new lands and providing leadership for rural improvements. There are at present some 1,500 young men undergoing a course of 6 months training; on completion of this period, they will work on projects for a year.

What lessons can be drawn from the variety of experience in all these African countries? By and large, the projects are too recent for any clear prototype to have emerged that could have wide validity as a guide for the future. Some are markedly experimental in design; there is a groping for correct procedures. This is a field, however, in which even the exchange of facts and events could be most valuable.^{4/} And the schemes that failed are as instructive as those for which some success is claimed. But in testing the validity of any scheme, there is always one ultimate question: what is the best use of the nation's scarce resources, particularly of capital and organization?

Experience all over Africa suggests one big problem related to both kinds of youth schemes. What happens to the youth once their courses of training and work have finished? Have the conditions of these camps and special schools made them better or less able to meet the competitive job market? Are those with farm training more or less willing to undertake farming in rural areas? How many later rejoin the ranks of the unemployed? Almost universally there is lacking an effective follow-through system which could both guide these youths and evaluate their experience.

^{4/} Under the auspices of the Commission for Technical Co-operation in Africa (C.C.T.A.), an African inter-governmental symposium was held at Dar-es-Salaam, 25-29 September 1962. A record of the proceedings is contained in C.C.T.A. Publication No.89, Symposium on Unemployed Youth (1963)

VII. YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PLANNING

National objectives

The greatest single contribution that an African nation can make for its youth is the creation of a climate of economic opportunity by providing enough beginning jobs that are productive and rewarding. These young people would then advance according to their individual merits and through helping their family and national fortunes. In large part, their welfare and training in skills follow from the existence of such jobs. They would be supplemented by special programmes sponsored by governments and voluntary initiatives.

Finding opportunity comes naturally to the sons and daughters of some families: they follow approaches that appear natural to them--on the family farm, in the local workshop, in the market, for example. But opportunity comes a great deal less naturally to other young people, particularly those who have spent some years in formal schooling under the expectant eyes of their parents and relatives. Their job search is usually cast more widely. Unemployment results. The aspirations of these school leavers, however engendered, however revised in the face of reality, are especially vital for the future progress of the nation.

The foremost policy issue, therefore, is how to make essential modifications in the functioning of the economy--by channelling investment to the public and private sectors in such a way that gives meaning not only to immediate economic growth but also to longer-run economic and social development. This means, in practice, that employment creation for youth must become a conscious objective within the development strategy, even if this results in some reduction of overall national economic growth in the short run.

Youth employment plan

In order to provide a focal point for the multi-dimensional policies relating to welfare, skills, and jobs for young people, a Youth Employment Plan might be worked out and kept continuously under revision. With manpower and education assessments, it would form an integral part of the nation's economic and social planning.

The Youth Employment Plan would bring together all the aspects of the problem into a meaningful pattern so that, instead of fragmentary solutions based on limited perspectives, the solutions would be viewed as reinforcing each other within the whole process of development. The problem would be analysed in all its diversity and within its immediate and long-term dimensions.

Thus, the difficult balance between rural and urban advancement will be more correctly appraised. Education, both classroom and non-classroom, will be more suitably related to local environments. Curriculum reform will be seen in its relation to agricultural extension. Vocational guidance and a flow of information can take place in relation to government schemes for helping young farmers and for aiding indigenous businesses. The respective roles of central and local governments can be worked out to mesh with the contributions of local self-help and voluntary organizations.

Essential, and urgent, adjustments needed in the systems of incentives and of rewards to labour within all occupations, and at all levels, will be placed in perspective.

The Youth Employment Plan would be helped by continuous research to determine the relative costs of various training and work schemes, to review pilot projects in terms of costs and results, and to exchange experience with other African countries.

Co-ordination programmes

In any African nation, responsibility for youth activities is usually highly decentralized. There is, no doubt, every reason why this should remain so. On the other hand, there are frequently no less than 5 or 6 ministries and perhaps 10 to 20 voluntary organizations which are involved in aspects of this work in the field. Clearly, much is to be gained by greater co-ordination of these national programmes. In fact, the trend, as observed in several African countries, is to bring this about. The question, therefore, is: how best can these programmes—involving welfare, skills, and jobs for youth—be brought into a more co-ordinated pattern, and merged with overall strategy of national and local development?

In similar manner: what procedures can be evolved to ensure co-operation among governments, in each region within Africa and for Africa as a whole, in the exchange of information on specific projects, the obstacles encountered and successes met?

Outside contributions to national youth programmes, including the provision of technical assistance, —for a nation, a region within Africa, Africa as a whole—again present a disparate picture. Major steps are, however, being taken among specialized agencies of the United Nations to rectify this through joint-agency meetings on youth activities in Africa and by exchanging experience through documentation. What further lines of action can be followed so that all contributors, and African nations themselves, can be kept better informed?