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**REVIEW OF CURRENT REFORMS IN SECONDARY
EDUCATION IN ANGLOPHONE WEST AFRICA^{1/}**

^{1/} Paper by Mr. A.A. Wuddah, Deputy Registrar, The West African Examinations Council, Headquarters Research Division, Accra Ghana

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ANGLOPHONE WEST AFRICA

ABSTRACT

In reviewing their educational aims, policies and systems, the five Anglophone West African countries in which the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) operates have evolved or are evolving programmes of educational reforms at the secondary level which call for diversified curricula in order to respond to individual and national development challenges. The paper gives a comparative account of the current policies and systems to show the factors that have led to the change and the innovative elements that distinguished them from earlier systems. The logical implications of the revolution on the educational systems are also examined.

The paper finally highlights the achievements and the shortcomings of the implementation programmes and appropriate recommendations are made.

REVIEW OF CURRENT REFORMS IN SECONDARY EDUCATION IN ANGLOPHONE WEST AFRICA

1. INTRODUCTION

Yoloye (1988) noted that with the coming of independence to West African countries in the 1960s, African governments questioned the relevance to the needs and aspirations of independent African nations, of educational practices inherited from colonial masters. Partly to satisfy this questioning, a Conference of African States was organised by UNESCO/ECA in 1961 with a view "to establishing an inventory of educational needs and of a programme to meet those needs in the coming years".

The report of that conference became the baseline policy document for educational development in independent Africa at the regional level. All African countries began actively to seek new directions for change and improvement in their educational systems through a variety of approaches. These approaches included the use of official commissions by Anglophone West African countries eg. Asby Commission (1960) in Nigeria; the Higher Technical Education Commission (1961) in Liberia; the Sleight Commission (1962) in Sierra Leone; the Sleight Commission (1965) in the Gambia and the Kwapong Commission (1967) in Ghana.

Government white papers emanating from these commissions formed the first generation policy documents for the independent nations. As the countries faced up to the task of creating new national identities, analysis of the structures and cultures of the society had to be made and furthermore, national objectives and aspirations which the educational system should help in achieving had to be formulated and produced in comprehensive policy documents which made their appearances in the 1970s eg. the Sierra Leone Education Review was developed in 1974; the New Structure and Content of Education for Ghana in 1974; the National Education Plan (1977) in Liberia followed by The New Liberian Philosophy in 1981. In Nigeria, the Federal Republic of Nigeria National Policy on Education was produced in 1977 and reviewed in 1981.

The reforms advocated in these national policies were in the areas of changing the structure of the educational system, increasing access to education, improving relevance and efficiency of education and the introduction of innovative elements in assessment and certification.

Any efforts in achieving relevance and efficiency in the educational system of a country inevitably dealt principally with the schools' instructional curricula. Indeed the 1961 UNESCO conference recommended that

"African educational authorities should revise and reform the content of education in the area of curricula, textbooks and methods, so as to take account of the African environment, child development, cultural heritage and the demands of technological progress and economic development especially industrialization".

As a consequence, specialised agencies (Curriculum Development Centres) for the revision and reform of the content of education were established over the years. In many countries these institutions are closely associated with the Ministries of Education eg. we have the Curriculum Research and Development Division (CRDD) in Ghana; the National Curriculum Development Centre in Liberia; the National Curriculum Development Centre in the Gambia; the Nigerian Educational Research Council (NERC) which is now the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC); and in Sierra Leone, a Curriculum Research Unit (CRU) which is now re-designated the National Curriculum Development Centre. The emergence of National Curriculum Centres was revolutionary in the sense that they now took over a function which had hitherto been the preserve of the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) namely, the determination of the curricula of schools especially at the secondary level.

The history of WAEC shows that it is itself a specialized institution created for the purpose of educational reform. Before the creation of WAEC in 1952, post primary institutions in the former British Territories of the Gambia, Sierra Leone, Gold Coast (now Ghana) and Nigeria had taken the examinations of the external British accrediting bodies. The establishment of WAEC constituted a lot to the review and reform of the content of education at the post primary level. Through its international subject panels, WAEC set about the task of what amounted to curriculum development making the content increasingly localised and more relevant to the realities of the member countries of WAEC.

Strickly speaking, what the Curriculum Development Centres took over was not exactly the same as what WAEC did. WAEC was concerned with

examination syllabuses whereas the Curriculum Centres were concerned with instructional curricula. They therefore went beyond the specification of syllabuses to the preparation of instructional materials such as textbooks and teaching guides.

Specialised agencies were also set up in member countries of WAEC to ensure that national policies were translated into concrete action.

Although the educational reform is envisaged to run through all levels of the educational system, this paper directs attention to only the secondary level because it is at this level that inevitably, most radical changes have taken place or are emerging.

2. THE OLD SYSTEM OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

Since independence, each Anglophone West African country in which the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) operates namely, Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Liberia and the Gambia has made significant efforts at evolving a national system of education which is relevant to her needs and aspirations. The result of the efforts is that the secondary school system has now been radically changed.

In the 1970s, the former Anglophone West African countries were similar in their educational structure at the secondary level. Broadly, there were two parts to secondary education namely, part one which was a continuous course of five years ending in the Ordinary Level (O/L) examinations and produced literates and clerical staff and part two which ended in Advanced Level (A/L) examinations lasting two years in sixth-forms. The second stage prepared students for admissions to overseas (mainly U.K.) and local universities and for training for the middle-level manpower demands of the public and private sectors. Liberia differed in that it had the typical American Structure of three years junior secondary school (grades 7-9) and three years senior secondary school (grades 10-12).

The secondary schools which existed prior to the current secondary school systems could be categorised broadly as follows:

- (1) The secondary grammar school - this was the most popular type of secondary school. The curricula were mainly literary disciplines in the arts and sciences with no serious vocational training. The programme offered experience leading to the O/L and A/L.

- (2) The secondary commercial school - was a parallel to the grammar school. It offered literary and commercial subjects leading to the School Certificate in commercial subjects and certificates of the Royal Society of Arts of London.
- (3) The secondary technical school - was also a parallel to the grammar school, but of broadened curricula with greater orientation towards technical education. From the beginning, a sizeable proportion of the intake of this category of school consisted of grammar school drop-outs. The curricula sought to relate to the needs of industries and to prepare graduates for higher education at the colleges of technology, polytechnics and professional departments in the universities. The terminal examinations led to the City and Guilds of London Institute qualifications.

The experiment at diversification of secondary school types could not be adequately sustained for several reasons:

- (i) The grammar schools were regarded as more prestigious since they led directly into the universities or Advanced Level certificates which led to the same destination;
- (ii) The other secondary school types were considered to be inferior and less academic;
- (iii) The cost of running the technical schools was found to be very high.

Evaluation and certification were conducted by Ministries of Education or by the West African Examinations Council. For the award of a School Certificate/GCE O/L, candidates entered and sat for a minimum of six and a maximum of nine subjects including English Language, Mathematics and a Science subject. Candidates for the A/L offered any number of subjects up to a maximum of five including the optional General Paper. The O/L and A/L examinations are conducted as international examinations across Anglophone West Africa. The WAEC also provides national examinations such as WAEC Technical Subjects Examinations and WAEC Business Studies Examinations which have replaced the City and Guilds and Royal Society of Arts Examinations which used to be provided by those British Examination Boards. This was the situation prior to the new system of secondary education in Anglophone West Africa.

3. REASONS FOR THE EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

The main reason for the educational change in Anglophone West Africa is the fact that the educational systems and their curricula which were largely inherited from past colonial experience did not fit graduates easily into the available jobs; rather, they tended to cater for a minority of the citizenry and thus excluded the majority of the nationals from full and useful participation in the modernisation programmes planned by their various governments. Equally important is the fact that the old systems tended to play down the rich cultural heritage of each country in favour of foreign culture without the benefit of providing adequate knowledge and skills in science and technology. Graduates were therefore miseducated and were of little use to themselves and to society.

The main objective of the reforms of the educational system was to change this situation by correcting the negative consequences of a steady decline in the quality of education over the past decade in order to generate in the individual an awareness of the ability of man, using the power derived from science and technology, to transform his environment and improve the quality of his life. Consequently, the current educational reform programmes contain new features which restructure the educational system, increase access to education, improve the relevance and efficiency of curricula thereby preparing school leavers not only for tertiary education but also for employment, including self-employment. To this end, there is greater emphasis on vocational/technical, scientific and technology subjects in the curriculum to relate to the socio-economic needs of each of the member countries of WAEC.

4. THE NEW SYSTEM OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

Needs of individual development of the citizens and national development are highly valued by Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Liberia and the Gambia. To this end, education in these countries should afford to the individuals the opportunities and capabilities to succeed in life through gainful employment. In Liberia, education means preparation for life with self-actualization, economic and social upward mobility and upholding of cultural heritage, beliefs and customs. In Nigeria, Ghana and Sierra Leone, needs and aspirations of the economy and society amount to what may be called the cult of efficiency; the need for efficient and effective citizens and public institutions could be

satisfied through educating for right attitude and skills needed for practical, productive job. Current educational reforms can therefore be said to constitute the most far-reaching aspirations of diversifying and making delivery of education to the population more efficient and productive.

In pursuance of the efforts at evolving national systems of secondary education which are relevant to each nation's needs and aspirations, the current national Policies on Education specify the ways each government hopes to achieve that part of the national objectives using education as a tool.

The broad aims of secondary education within the overall national objectives of member countries are to prepare the pupils for useful living within the society and higher education. The new programmes therefore involve expanding access to education, improving the quality of education, changing the structure of the educational systems and improving relevance and efficiency of education through reforms of the school curricula, development of syllabuses, production of relevant instructional materials and reforms of the examination system.

We may now consider specific aspects of the reforms in education in Anglophone West African countries particularly as they relate to secondary education. In this connection I will not give details of the content of the various national policies on education since they will be better treated in the country papers. The attempt here is to examine three areas of significant change in respect of secondary education in the five countries. Specifically, consideration will be given to

- (i) Orientation in the Structure of Education
- (ii) Orientation in the Content of Education
- (iii) Orientation in the Evaluation of Educational outcomes

(1) Orientation in the Structure of Education

Since, as stated earlier, the broad aims of secondary education in many Anglophone West African countries are preparation for useful living within the society and adequate preparation for higher education, in order to attain these objectives, secondary education is given in two stages - junior secondary and senior secondary - each of three years duration. For over thirty-three years Liberia had the typical American Structure of three years junior secondary

school (grades 7-9) and three years senior secondary school (grades 10-12). Nigeria in 1970 approved a 3-3 structure to begin in 1982 throughout the country but not all the states were able to begin in 1982. Now the entire country of Nigeria is on the programme. Similarly in 1976, Ghana approved the 3-3 structure of junior secondary school and senior secondary school and began operating an experimental junior secondary school in anticipation that junior secondary schools would begin on a national basis in 1980. This could not happen until 1987 when the entire country began the programme. Sierra Leone and the Gambia have also recently had the approval for the proposal to join the band-wagon of the 3-3 structure. The junior secondary school programme in Sierra Leone begins in 1993. One might say that the four Anglophone countries have simply joined the Liberian pattern of 3-3 structure. The new structure is anticipated to reduce the traditional 17 years schooling to 12 years.

Perhaps one has to also look at differences in the objectives of each stage. For example, while in the Liberian structure the junior secondary school is seen as a bridge between primary and senior secondary, where a pupil can correctly identify which stream of a diversified senior secondary school to enter into, in the structure of the other four countries, the junior secondary is envisaged as the end to basic education which may prove terminal for a number of pupils. It would enable the pupils to acquire useful skills needed by the individual and the society thus making education more relevant. The junior secondary schools therefore have more diversified curricula than the senior secondary which are essentially academic. It is very clear that even where the structures appear to be the same, there are fundamental structural differences reflecting national objectives.

(2) Orientation in the Content of Education

The emergence of Curriculum Development Centres in member countries of WAEC demonstrates clearly an evolutionary process in the reform of educational content. Reform means that national goals and objectives are first analysed and curriculum programmes and materials based on them are developed and utilised.

Everywhere, secondary school curricula are being diversified more than before; the secondary school curricula are being given renewed

orientation from the academic towards the scientific, vocational and technical. Consequently, the junior secondary school curricula in member countries of WAEC are designed to provide opportunities for pupils to acquire basic pre-technical, pre-vocational, scientific and life skills that will enable them to:-

- (i) discover their aptitudes and potentialities and induce in them the desire for self-employment;
- (ii) appreciate the use of the hand as well as the mind and make them creative and self-employable;
- (iii) understand the environment and make them eager to contribute towards its survival and development.

For the avoidance of doubt, of the vocational-technical orientation of junior secondary education, Ghana clarifies by stating that the objective is not to make artisans or tradesmen of the products. Rather, only to pre-dispose them to those skills they will require for future employment including self-employment. In Liberia, under a new educational plan (1978 - 1990), one critical objective for secondary education is to provide the pupil with greater opportunities and exposure to the world of work. Bull (1989) has also recommended that a greater emphasis be placed on technical and vocational education in Liberia to enable pupils to develop their individual potentials and satisfy the manpower needs of the country.

The subjects offered at the junior secondary school level in the Anglophone West African countries are presented in Table 1.

The compulsory 'core' subjects are those regarded as the foundation stones upon which the 'electives' are built. Both sets are essential for achieving the desired educational goals. While it is true that Secondary Education Curriculum cannot be constructed without goals, it is equally true that the goals can only be achieved if the curriculum is well designed, organised and effectively implemented.

TABLE 1
CURRICULUM STRUCTURE AT THE JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL

COUNTRY	CORE SUBJECTS	ELECTIVES	REMARKS
NIGERIA	Mathematics English Language Nigerian Language (2) Integrated Science Social Studies Art and Music Practical Agriculture Religious & Moral Studies Physical Education	<u>Pre-Vocational</u> Woodwork Metalwork Electronics Mechanics Local Crafts Home Economics Business Studies <u>Non-Vocational</u> Arabic Studies French	Any <u>two</u> electives may be selected. Select <u>one</u> or both electives.
GHANA	Mathematics Integrated Science Social Studies Cultural Studies English Language Agriculture Life Skills Technical Drawing Technical Skills French (optional) Ghanaian Language Physical Education	<u>Pre-Vocational</u> Catering Graphics Sewing Textiles and 8 other local crafts.	Any <u>one</u> elective may be selected.
SIERRA LEONE	Mathematics Language Arts Sierra Leone Language Integrated Science Social Studies French Agriculture Religious & Moral Education Physical & Health Education	<u>Pre-Vocational</u> Introd. Technology Home Economics Business Studies Electronics Local Crafts <u>Non-Vocational</u> Arabic Studies Creative Arts	Any <u>two</u> electives may be selected. Any <u>one</u> or both may be selected.
GAMBIA	Mathematics English Language Science Social & Environ. Studies Art & Craft Home Economics Physical Education Agricultural Science Religious Education French		Terminal examination would be in English Science Social & Environmental Studies to determine acceptance in High School or Vocational Institute/Centre.
LIBERIA	Lang. Arts & Litt. Social Studies Mathematics Science French Physical Education		Technical and Vocational courses are not offered.

At the end of the junior secondary school, pupils who do not meet the criteria for entrance into senior secondary schools are encouraged to enter an apprenticeship system or some other scheme for out-of-school vocational or trade centres. The curricula for these centres are geared towards craftmanship and manual skills development. Pupils with the necessary aptitudes and abilities can gain entrance into colleges and polytechnics from these centres.

The Senior Secondary School is however for pupils who are able and willing to have a complete six-year secondary education. It is comprehensive but has a diversified 'core' curriculum designed to broaden pupils' knowledge and outlook. The objectives are to:

- (i) reinforce and build on knowledge, skills and attitudes acquired at the junior secondary school level;
- (ii) produce well developed and productive individuals equipped with the qualities of responsible leadership capable of fitting into a scientific and technological world and able to contribute to the socio-economic development of their own areas and the country as a whole;
- (iii) increase the relevance of the content of curriculum to the culture and socio-economic problems of the nation.

The compulsory 'core' and 'elective' subjects for four of the countries (Nigeria, Ghana, Liberia and Sierra Leone) are presented in Table 2. It is to be noted that broad programmes of specialization have been added to the 'core' subjects to cater for the differing interests and abilities of students. The 'core' subjects are basic subjects which will enable a student to offer Arts or Science in Higher Education. It is also noteworthy that Liberia lacks technical/vocational subjects at this level too. (These are to be added in the new programme).

TABLE 2

CURRICULUM STRUCTURE AT THE SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL

COUNTRY	CORE SUBJECTS	ELECTIVES	REMARKS
NIGERIA	<p>English Language Nigerian Language Mathematics <u>One</u> of Physics, Chemistry and Biology</p> <p><u>One</u> of Litt. in Engl. History and Geography</p> <p>Agric. Science or a Vocational Subject</p>	<p>Add. Maths Geography Agric. Science Government Arabic Studies Health Science Auto-Mechanics History Bible Knowl. Home Economics Biology Islamic Stud. Book-keeping Metalwork Chemistry Music Commerce Physical Edn. Economics Physics Electronics Shorthand English Litt. Tech. Drawing Fine Art Typewriting French Woodwork</p>	<p><u>Three</u> elec- tives not already offered as core subjects may be selected, and <u>one</u> may be dropped in the third year.</p>
GHANA	<p>English Language Mathematics Science Agric. & Environmental Studies Life Skills Ghanaian Language Physical Education</p>	<p><u>Five types of Programmes</u> Agric. Education Technical Education Vocational Education Business Education General (Arts & Science) Edn.</p>	<p>Each student to select <u>three</u> sub- jects under a programme of his choice.</p>
SIERRA LEONE	<p>Mathematics Language Arts Sierra Leone Language Science ie. Physics Chemistry Biology Gen/Integrated Science Sierra Leone Studies</p> <p><u>One</u> of Vocational Subj. Techn. Subject Agriculture</p>	<p>Agric. Science Geography Applied Electr. Government Arabic Health Science Art History Auto-mechanics Home Mgt. Bible Knowl. Islam. Rel. Biology Studies Book-keeping Litt. in Engl. Bldn. Constr. Metalwork Chemistry Music Christ. Rel. Office Practice Studies Physics Clothing Physical Edn. Commerce Shorthand Economics Social Studies Electronics Tech. Drawing Foods & Nutr. Typewriting French Woodwork Further Maths.</p>	<p><u>Three</u> elec- tives not already offered as core sub- jects may be selected and <u>one</u> may be dropped in the third year.</p>
GAMBIA			<p>Students will conti- nue to study subjects for the 'O' and 'A' levels</p>
LIBERIA	<p>Lang. Arts Social Studies Mathematics</p>		<p>Technical and Voca- tional</p>

(3) Orientation in the Evaluation of Educational Outcomes

On assessment and evaluation of educational outcomes, Ghana, Sierra Leone and Nigeria have adopted a policy in which the final assessment of candidates at the terminal points of secondary education are not to be based only on a single final examination but on a combination of continuous assessment by teachers of participating schools and terminal examinations conducted by the Ministries of Education or by WAEC. The first examination for the senior secondary school in Nigeria was held in 1988. Continuous assessment contributed 30% of the candidates' total scores. The first examination for the Junior Secondary Schools in Ghana was held in 1990 and that for the Senior Secondary Schools would be held in 1993. Continuous assessment would contribute 40% of the candidates' total score. Continuous assessment is an innovation which has been built into the system since 1987. Similar assessment systems are being contemplated by The Gambia and Sierra Leone in the light of reforms in those countries. Sierra Leone proposes a 20% contribution of continuous assessment to the final score in the junior secondary school examination to be held in 1996. For over 30 years and before the advent of a National Examination in Liberia, students were promoted and/or certificated on the basis of continuous assessments within schools. There was no external criterion for comparing the performance of students from school to school. The National Examination was instituted in 1961 in an attempt to evaluate both students and schools to ensure uniformity of standards.

In 1978 at the invitation of the Government of Liberia, the WAEC formally took over the conduct of the National Examination from the Ministry of Education to improve upon set standards for the input of both the school grades (continuous assessment component) and the National Examination grade (external assessment component) for certification. The current assessment procedure in Liberia is being harmonised in line with the thinking in other member countries of WAEC.

Following the developments in Nigeria and Ghana, the Council decided in 1989 to work towards developing an international Senior School Certificate examination for its five member countries. The Secretariat is at the moment putting together relevant teaching syllabuses from Nigeria and Ghana, the examination syllabuses already in use

in Nigeria and Ghana, GCE Ordinary and Advanced Level syllabuses currently in use in West Africa and abroad, and Advanced Supplementary syllabuses of U.K. Boards, etc. Syllabus Committees have been set up in the various countries and it is hoped that the first drafts would be ready in 1993.

The programme aims at producing examination syllabuses for Council's approval in March 1994 so that the first International Senior School Certificate examinations, for the countries which are ready, will be administered in May/June 1996. As in the Council's GCE examinations, comprehensive arrangements will be made to provide for national differences in areas like Languages, Social Studies and in other special subjects.

5. ACHIEVEMENTS AND SHORTCOMINGS

Implementation of curricula reforms are always linked with national goals as are the literacy rates of a nation and its rate of development directly related. While attempts are being made in Liberia and the Gambia to review the curricula in these countries according to the needs of the individuals and the resources for national development, Nigeria and Ghana have already embarked on the new curricula programmes by translating the educational policies into concrete plans of action to enable them achieve the desired objectives. Sierra Leone contemplates a take-off in 1993 of the junior secondary school programme.

A review of the implementation programmes reveal achievements and shortcomings. For many countries, free and universal primary education no longer appear to be a realistic proposition because of rapid rate of population growth. There have been a marked increase in secondary school enrolment (Ghana reports of a 36.6% increase in 1991 and a 50% increase when the programme is stabilised) and to cater for this, new schools have been opened in addition to existing ones. The introduction of the double-shift system has also increased access to education. Despite efforts already exerted to increase access to secondary education, rapid expansion has also brought along with it financial constraints as well as inadequacy of human and material resources to run the system. This aside, we may now deal with the more exciting qualitative developments.

Having explicitly identified the goals for secondary education that secondary education should perform the dual function of preparation for useful living within the society and for higher education, we must now

concentrate on the various courses or programmes of study and other learning experiences. The specific objectives give an indication of how comprehensive the new secondary school is and also point to the diversification of the curriculum. The idea is that many courses are provided at the secondary school level of education in order to cater for the different aptitudes and interests of students. The expectation is that the product of the junior secondary school will be self-reliant, creative and a productive member of the society.

You will recall from the curricular prescriptions at this level by Nigeria, Ghana and Sierra Leone in Table 1 that basically Ghana has prescribed 13 compulsory subjects. Seven of these appear in the same form in the core curricula of Nigeria and Sierra Leone and six of them in Gambia's curriculum. Then Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone choose vocational skills, twelve of which were prescribed directly by Ghana but which Nigeria and Sierra Leone expect to attain through a choice of two out of seven and five pre-vocational subjects respectively. For Ghana's Cultural Studies, Nigeria offers both Art and Music and Religious and Moral Studies. French which is compulsory in Ghana and Sierra Leone is elective in Nigeria. Ghana has additional subjects such as Life Skills, Technical Drawing and Technical Skills. In Liberia, the secondary school programme is not flexible. It does not provide alternatives in subject areas and omits vocational programmes and religious courses. Music and Arts which are necessary for the artistic values of man are also missing.

For the senior secondary school (Table 2) Sierra Leone has a core of 6 subjects and 35 elective subjects. Nigeria has 6 core subjects and 28 electives. The idea is that every student will select three and study nine subjects altogether until the end of the second year of the senior secondary school when one of the electives may be dropped. Ghana has 7 core and three subjects under five different programmes.

The senior secondary schools in the three countries are expected to be comprehensive and diversified in such a way that each of such senior secondary schools is expected to have arts or science streams in higher education. The selection of subjects in the electives is expected to depend on the choice of career. The inclusion of technical, commercial and other vocational courses is also expected to make senior secondary school products immediately employable.

Guidance and Counselling services to aid selection into senior secondary schools programmes have featured in Ghana and Nigeria and should be developed in other member countries of WAEC.

(1) Instructional Materials

Curricula reforms are often accompanied with the production of instructional materials everywhere.

The Junior Secondary Schools in Nigeria, Ghana and Sierra Leone and the Senior Secondary School educational reforms have been supported by the production of syllabuses, a curriculum guide with general and specific objectives, pupils' textbooks and teachers' handbooks written by indigenous writers to impart the required knowledge and skills. Teaching materials and modules in the local languages were developed, while increased encouragement were given to science, technical and vocational subjects including agriculture, and with revival of extra-curricula activities in schools.

One problem with the syllabuses is that in some countries like Ghana, teachers agree that the content intended for the three-year each of junior and senior secondary school is overloaded. There are also concern about the prescribed textbooks and some teachers in Sierra Leone for example, prefer the use of other books which they think can best equip students into the required skills. It appears that the selection of books by the Ministry of Education has been influenced by what it can afford or elect to purchase or what it can obtain through gifts from donor countries.

Efforts being made to increase access to secondary education include the provision of textbooks to pupils. It was expected that a one-to-one supply of textbooks to pupils nationwide would have been achieved by 1990 but this was not possible. There is a reported book shortage everywhere due to inadequacy and defects in the distribution system. Liberia in 1984 for example, reported that about 80% of the pupils had no individual textbooks in most of the subject areas and a dire need of mathematics and science books in all schools. The situation was not different in Nigeria and Ghana. When schools are unable to provide books, each student is required to purchase them or an appropriate level of book-user fee is charged to ensure consistent supply. In three countries (Nigeria, Ghana and Sierra Leone), textbooks for secondary schools are being standardised, and provisions

(2) Educational Resources

The effective implementation of a secondary school curriculum is also dependent upon appropriate human, material and financial support. There has been inadequate supply of quality teachers in the new subjects like French, Integrated Science, Social Science, Technical and Vocational subjects as well as the local languages.

To ensure that teaching did not degenerate into rote learning and memorisation of facts and that teaching encourages inquiry, creativity and manipulative and manual skills, teacher education was re-orientated so that it concentrated more on imparting skills rather than purely academic knowledge which by itself did not promote full development. Teachers should therefore be trained for the teaching of the new subjects. Provision should also be made for continuous in-service training programmes for practising teachers to ensure that ineffective teaching is eradicated. A programme should also be developed to replace all untrained and inefficient teachers from the teaching field.

Heads of schools should be given in-service management and administrative courses to prepare them for effective running of schools. To improve inspection and supervision of schools, special programmes for providing well trained personnel to carry out these functions of both teaching and learning should be developed.

One problem in public schools is that qualification is not matched with the needs of the school. For example, a teacher in English may be sent to fill the vacancy in Science. Since he lacks competence in this area, large scale failures occur. The need for qualified teachers cannot be over-emphasised. When the few qualified ones are not properly and correspondingly placed, they abandon their profession for more lucrative jobs. Another factor is that teachers are not motivated to remain in the profession for long and therefore abandon the profession.

If the appropriate manpower needs are to be met, it is recommended that Heads of institutions and teachers be urgently afforded the opportunities to engage in short and long-term training programmes to upgrade themselves. Better recognition should also be given to the teaching profession and the salary and conditions of service of the teacher should be improved for his retention in the service.

(3) Funding

One of the most critical issues in secondary education is that of funding. There are financial constraints everywhere due to lack of foreign exchange.

In many countries, Government bears the lion share in financing education with contributions in cash and kind by parents, local communities, donor agencies etc. who provide experts, scholarships, physical facilities, equipment and materials which are in short supply. Realising that Governments are experiencing financial difficulties, it is imperative that parents, teachers and students devise fund-raising strategies to support the achievement of national educational goals.

(4) Assessment

Several aspects of the continuous assessment policy pose problems to teachers and to schools.

They include:

- (a) a lack of understanding of the system;
- (b) the disproportionate amount of time taken up by assessment compared to teaching;
- (c) problems arising from students changing subjects mid-stream ;
- (d) problems of continuous assessment of private candidates;
- (f) difficulties with computation especially of standard scores;
- (g) problems of comparability of teachers' assessment and
- (h) continuous assessment being open to abuse by teachers.

The majority of these problems are of an administrative or policy nature which should be within the competence of the Ministries Education to handle.

6. RESEARCH

One of the qualities often left unanswered when governments reform their educational systems is whether the reform in fact constitute a change for the better. For example, because of the initial difficulties being encountered by schools, teachers, students and parents in the implementa-

tion of the 3-3 policy in Nigeria and Ghana, many people tend to give the impression that the reform is a change for the worse and hold out very little hope for its success. Yet, it is premature to make any such judgement. What is needed is systematic monitoring, evaluation and research to determine the effectiveness of the reforms. Such research information is at present lacking in Anglophone West African countries.

Many countries emphasize in their educational policies the "equalisation of opportunities". It is clear that when we deal with the fundamental issue of equalisation of opportunities, we must be concerned not only with achievement of the youth in schools but also with the context and conditions under which they try to achieve.

7. CONCLUSION

Education is regarded as a tool to national development as well as individual development. Reviews in education aims, policies, structures, content and procedures have featured prominently in Anglophone West African Countries in recent times. Consideration for reconstruction of society in all aspects has been prominent. Objectives for secondary education are strongly in diversification and the strengthening of scientific, technical and vocational components. The structural and content educational reforms have been informed by the need for a basic education with a strong predisposition to skills likely to guarantee employment. The drive towards the 3-3 secondary education is therefore to be seen in this context. The reform in educational resources and educational assessment techniques are also to be seen as the logical implications for the reform of policies, structure and content.

The hope of Anglophone West African countries for their socio-economic and political development is to truly assess the capabilities and abilities of their youths and to tailor their educational systems, including their programmes to their needs.

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