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HUMAN RESOURCES IN AFRICA

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FOREWORD

It has now become quite evident that Africa is beginning to reverse its tremendous gains in the fight against illiteracy and the democratization of education. The United Nations Secretary-General, in his report to the Ad-Hoc Committee of the Whole of the General Assembly on the Final Review and Appraisal of the Implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development, 1986-1990, had this to say:

Gross enrolment ratios at the primary level slid from a high of 77 per cent in 1980 to 72 per cent in 1987 and even more drastically for girls. By 1990, they had dropped further to 70 per cent of the relevant age group. Primary school survival rates also worsened in the period 1986-1989. Of the pupils who enrolled in the first year in 1986, 20 per cent dropped out by the second year, a further 10 per cent by the third year and 5 per cent in the fourth year. Only 65 per cent of the children who enrolled in 1986 were in school by 1989. This is a serious trend in view of the fact that the expansion of primary and basic education has always been an important strategy employed by African governments, since independence, to eradicate illiteracy. The literacy figures themselves show a rather disturbing trend. Although illiteracy rates were brought down from 59.1 per cent in 1985 to 52.7 per cent in 1990, the absolute number of illiterate people increased from 133.6 million to 138.8 million adults during the same period - the first time such increases have been recorded since 1960. In particular, female illiteracy rates are extremely high, 66 per cent as compared to 46 per cent for males. The severe resource cuts to the education sector, as well as the adjustment policies of cost-recovery and containment were largely responsible for these declines. There was also a sharp fall in the quality of education due to the widespread shortages of teaching and learning resources, a demoralized and under-motivated teaching staff and an overall deterioration of the learning environment.

The United Nations Secretary-General thus succinctly and dispassionately summarized the stark reality prevailing in African countries with respect to the problem of education and skills development. Structural adjustment programmes have contributed significantly to the educational decline in Africa.

ECA has consistently argued against the implementation of policies, for whatever reasons, that result in the contraction of education. For it is only through education that Africa can hope to produce the human resources that are required to spearhead and sustain development. In fact, one important lesson to be learned from the socio-economic crisis is that Africa's human resources base for development is extremely fragile. A frontal attack on the crisis should thus have consisted of measures aimed at strengthening that base through the expansion and improvement of education and training programmes at all levels. Adjustment, though necessary, should lead to the building of human capabilities, the transformation of socio-economic structures and the promotion of development.

This Monograph No. 18 discusses issues of literacy, adult education and skills development in an era of adjustment. It discusses education reforms and human resources development as well as Africa's problems of illiteracy and restricted access to basic, primary and adult education.

The issues raised in this Monograph should be of interest to students, teachers, researchers and policy-makers. Any reactions to the points raised in this Monograph should be addressed to:

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ECA/PHSD/HRP/91/21[6.2(i)(d)]

CHAPTER ONE

**EDUCATIONAL REFORM
AND
HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT**

EDUCATIONAL REFORM AND HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

Since the mid-1980s, it has become apparent both to African governments and to their international development partners that a crisis in human development had been looming over the continent. Food security systems collapsed by 1984 leading to massive food shortages and widespread famine in most parts of Africa. The financial and economic crisis itself led to severe cuts in resource allocations to those sectors that enhance human development: education and training, health, rural development, sanitation, etc. The result was that the growth of illiteracy among the African population began to increase after the significant declines registered in the 1970s; the quality of education at all levels suffered as educational institutions ran short of teaching equipments and materials such as books, reagents, laboratory instruments, well-trained teachers, etc., and pupil/teacher ratios worsened; diseases that had been controlled started to reappear; malnutrition and morbidity rates increased; and absolute poverty levels increased to affect some 75 per cent of the African population.

The deterioration of conditions of human development affected the most vulnerable groups in African societies: children, women, rural communities, youths, the aged. Most households suffered as a result of the massive increase in unemployment and the 25 per cent drop of the real income of the average African. Educated unemployment increased to affect between 6 and 8 million African youths between 1980 and 1989 and by 1988, over 70,000 middle- and high-level Africans had migrated to the countries of the North.

What this situation clearly suggests is that there is a dire need for macro-economic reforms and adjustments to be undertaken in Africa. The crisis also indicates that human capacities and capabilities which had weakened to the point of being powerless to avert the crisis, need to be urgently strengthened so as to permit the African to function as the main agent of socio-economic transformation and development. To do so, requires stepped-up interventions in the education and training sector, with

a strong emphasis on behavioral and attitudinal change of the type that would be supportive of self-reliant development.

This paper examines those areas in African education that require reforms which would conduce to the building and strengthening of human capacities and capabilities to promote socio-economic development in Africa.

***THE MAJOR PROBLEM AREAS IN EDUCATION
AND HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT***

An analysis of the current situation in African education and overall human resources development reveals that the priority areas to which attention should be directed, relate to:

- (i) Measures to increase access to basic and primary education;
- (ii) Eradication of illiteracy;
- (iii) Achieving relevance in primary, secondary and tertiary education, and
- (iv) Orienting middle- and higher-education to the socio-economic development of African economies.

(a) Increasing Access to Basic and Primary Education

If the objective of eradicating illiteracy in Africa has proved difficult to attain, it is largely because of the avenues which African governments have created for providing access to education. The post-independence strategy adopted for the democratization of education concentrated almost exclusively on the expansion of primary education to the neglect of basic and non-formal education, adult and functional literacy programmes and rural development education programmes. As a result, by the 1980s, it became clear that not only had this strategy not eradicate illiteracy, but more important, rapid population growth and the related growing demand for education had outstripped the capacity of governments to provide the requisite resources and facilities to keep pace with the demand. Moreover, the crisis placed severe strains on government resource allocations to the education sector throughout the 1980s, thus virtually bringing educational

expansion to a halt by 1989. Primary school enrolment increases declined from 9.3 per cent per annum between 1975 and 1980 to 2.9 per cent per annum in 1980-84, and either stagnated or slid further throughout the rest of the decade. Thus for the first time since independence, the expansion of education fell behind population growth. At the second level of education, the drop was less dramatic - 13.7 per cent to 10.9 per cent during the same period. But at the tertiary level, the decline was by 66 per cent between 1980 and 1985.

Obviously, the objective of increasing access to basic education cannot be attained, given the present and projected resource constraints, by pursuing a strategy of expansion of formal education. Other forms of education must be resorted to if this all-important objective of education is to be met.

(b) Towards Greater Relevance in Education

High levels of educated unemployment, particularly when, as they often do in Africa, they are found to co-exist with high vacancy rates or high expatriate employment levels, are an indictment on the relevance of Africa's educational curricula, because educated unemployment simply means that the skills being offered in employment markets are not those being sought by employers. It is understandable that this situation has emerged as a major human resources utilization problem in recent years, because structurally, the African economy is changing towards more modern, more complex methods of production and service-rendering, which require more complex scientific/technological skills. Curricula in African educational institutions on the other hand, have remained by and large static, concentrating on the arts and the humanities. At the primary level of education, which is terminal for most African students, very little is done by way of providing functional/technical skills to the millions of youth who would enter labour markets directly upon completion of primary education.

At the secondary level, curricula remain largely academic, in preparation for tertiary education. Higher education curricula are the most dysfunctional vis-a-vis the skill needs of the African economy. The concentration is still on the liberal arts and the humanities, to the detriment of those disciplines required for the supply into the economy of agriculturists, agronomists, engineers, medical and veterinary scientists, technologists, etc.

A continuation of this situation would mean that not only would education not be cost-effective vis-a-vis its social returns, but also that it would fail to respond to the skill needs for socio-economic development in Africa.

(c) Eradicating Illiteracy

The majority of Africans are illiterate. Eradication of illiteracy from the continent has been a major objective of every African government. The constraints on development that are imposed by high levels of illiteracy within any society are many and well known enough not to warrant a repetition here. The point that needs to be made, however, is that the commitment to fight illiteracy has had very little backing by way of concrete action measures to do so on the ground in Africa. With the exception of a few countries - Ethiopia, Burkina Faso, Tanzania - which put in place literacy policies and mobilized resources to mount effective literacy campaigns, the problem of illiteracy has, generally, not been given the attention that it deserves in Africa. As a result, the incidence of adult illiteracy in Africa remains the highest in the world. Even though in the 1970s the reduction in the illiteracy ratio worldwide had been the sharpest in Africa, the economic crisis of the 1980s has brought about a social development lag which has resulted in slowing down and even in reversing the gains. In nominal terms, illiteracy actually increased on the African continent during the 1980s.

African governments have clearly articulated their policy priorities and strategies for socio-economic transformation and development. By these priorities and strategies, agricultural and rural development should serve as the pivot of development. Ironically, however, it is in the rural/agricultural sector that African illiteracy is most pervasive, and that human resources are the least developed. Unless the literacy and skill needs of African agriculture are addressed as a matter of urgency, it will be impossible for that sector to spearhead socio-economic development of the continent.

By the same token, informal sector labour markets, which account for over 60 per cent of employment in Africa, require education and training interventions so that skill and knowledge levels are raised and that productivity in this sector becomes significantly improved.

(d) Orienting Middle- and Higher-Education to Development

The population of Africa will approach one billion persons by the turn of the century, yet there are only half a million students enrolled in third-level educational institutions as of 1989. Most of these students are enrolled in disciplines that are not critical to Africa's development priorities. An ECA perspective study conducted in 1983 reveals that for the fertilizer industry alone, Africa would require some 220,000 engineers, chemists, managers, technicians and skilled & semi-skilled operatives, most of whom would require some amount of third-level education. The requirement for iron and steel development by the next century would be some 280,000 skilled manpower, most of whom would have to be produced by Africa's third-level educational institutions. These are only two industries out of the myriad that have to be developed to guarantee Africa's industrialization in the 21st century. If the skill needs of the entire economy-agriculture, services, government, etc. - were put together, it would become evident that facilities for providing opportunities for third-level education across-the-board are woefully inadequate. The obvious conclusion is that for Africa to reorient middle- and higher-education towards development one needs first to increase significantly, facilities for education at those levels in quantitative terms. This calls for more not less resources for middle and higher education to be provided in anticipation of the need.

Qualitatively, efforts to orient higher education to development call for emphasis to be placed first on development-oriented research, specially when, in the absence of backing from industry, universities are expected to provide much of the R & D support to development. Resources for research and especially for development-oriented research have been dwindling over the years as they have been for the maintenance, not to talk of the improvement of teaching/learning structures and infrastructures. Equally, much greater emphasis has to be placed on the scientific and technological disciplines as it has become evident that Africa's hopes for socio-economic development must be pinned on these areas of knowledge and skills. Unless reforms are undertaken in these directions, it will be impossible for higher education institutions in Africa to make any significant contributions to transformation and socio-economic development.

REFORM MEASURES

Reforms in the field of education should aim at a more effective development of human resources. Consequently, they should be targeted to the continent's objectives of socio-economic development and transformation. In this context, those reform measures being pursued under the World Bank's current regime of structural adjustment programmes are seen as anti-developmental in that rather than build capacities and capabilities, they are dismantling the structures and infrastructures needed for building a solid human resources base for development. The current reform policies are premised on the argument that African education systems are too expensive or inefficient; that African governments would be unable to mobilize resources to meet the demand for education; consequently, African governments must bring about adjustments in the education sector in view of this reality by concentrating resources primarily on those levels of education that are the most socially productive which, in Africa, according to the World Bank, is the primary level.

The adjustments being pushed through by the World Bank consist essentially of cost recovery and cost containment measures and greater private participation in the provision of educational opportunities. By these measures, the cost of secondary and higher education should be recovered from users, through the removal of subsidies for tuition, board, lodging, etc. and the levying of fees. Education should, in addition, be privatized and the management of education decentralized to local levels. It is argued by the World Bank that if these measures are pursued by African governments, financial resources for education would be increased and be more productive, and access to education would be democratized and expanded in favour of the poor and disadvantaged.

ECA's position on these reform measures has been made quite clear. The measures are too narrow and monetarist in intent. They are part of the package being imposed on African governments to switch resources from domestic development endeavours to servicing external debt and meeting other international financial obligations. The proposals for "reform" of African education would reduce access to education by the poor and disadvantaged; negatively affect quality at all levels; militate against the middle- and high-level manpower development objectives of African development; and in the long run, result in a weakening of human capacities and capabilities to sustain self-reliant development.

That reforms must be made in African education is a point that is not in dispute. The reforms that should be undertaken should aim at making African education more relevant to needs for development; broaden access to education particularly for the poor; strengthen the manpower base; and promote self-reliance and sustainability in socio-economic development. To this end the following are being proposed as the major directions for reform of African education:

(i) Expansion of Basic and Non-Formal Education

Resource constraints would make it difficult for African governments to democratize education by expanding the formal education system. Therefore, with rational expenditure switches - from the less productive sectors e.g. defence - it should be possible to significantly expand basic and non-formal education such that they reach rural communities, women, the urban poor, etc. The emphasis, to start off with, should be on the training of teachers and change agents, the development of curricula, the provision of instructional materials and the supply of ancillary inputs.

(ii) Eradicating Illiteracy

Through the same method of expenditure switches, it should, without any additional resources being mobilized, be possible to mount successful literacy campaigns and functional literacy programmes. The recent experiences of the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia demonstrate that with proper organization and a fraction of the resources allocated to formal education, it is easy to render millions of people literate within a very short period of time. The international community should encourage and support their partners in Africa along directions such as these.

(iii) The Search for Relevance

Resources for education could be rendered more productive if society were made to benefit more from the products of the educational system. As it now stands, educational institutions in Africa concentrate on areas of teaching and research that do not respond to the need in skills development of the continent. At the tertiary level of education, research has been found to be inadequate in terms of volume and relevance. Post graduate research

programmes are insufficient overall, but woefully so in the scientific and technical fields which are the expressed priorities of African governments.

Orienting African education towards development calls for curricula reform of the type that demands more resources. The search for relevance would perforce lead to a greater concentration on the scientific and technological disciplines which are more costly to run. But in addition to more innovative measures to mobilize fiscal resources, it is possible to make educational institutions income earners. Universities, for example, could be made to activate their income-generation potentials by developing their consultancy capacities, strengthening their R & D programmes and embarking upon learning-cum-production activities which would yield revenue. In addition, capital flight in the education sector could be arrested if African countries were made more self-reliant in the production of educational materials and equipment and if book production were indigenized. Resources thus secured could be ploughed back to support the development of scientific and technological disciplines in African countries. Post-graduate programmes which are provided, for the most part, externally and at tremendous costs to African governments, could also be indigenized, thus freeing more resources for the further development of programmes that are relevant to Africa's development. But it would not be realistic to expect each African country to undertake the reorientation being proposed because of the cost constraints involved. Therefore, groups of countries should be encouraged on a sub-regional and regional basis to pool their resources and create common institutions for this purpose.

(iv) Expanding the Manpower Base

As has been shown before, third-level educational enrolments are still inadequate, quantitatively, for Africa's skilled manpower needs to be met. Therefore, the requirement is for enrolments to be increased, not curtailed. This can be done by maximizing the use of existing resources, structures and infrastructures, operating a multiple-intake system on a shift basis, extending the length of the working week, reducing the length of the academic year so that at least two batches of students can be accommodated in any one year. It has been demonstrated that in this way, enrolments in third-level educational institutions can be doubled within three years and with little or no additional public outlays. At the secondary level, these

types of reform could increase secondary school enrolment by 102,000 pupils in Tanzania, 600,000 in Ghana and 6 million in Nigeria.

CONCLUSION

There are basically two divergent positions over the question of educational reform in Africa. The World Bank advocates a regime of reforms within structural adjustment programmes which would result in a contraction of education at all levels. It is argued that the major objective of reform should be the rational use of resources to improve quality and efficiency and maximize returns to education. Therefore, quantity should, if necessary, be sacrificed for quality.

The ECA's position, which is more development-oriented, argues for increases in both quantity and quality on the grounds that the human resources base for development is at present too weak, that illiteracy levels are too high and that the middle- and high-level manpower stock is too insufficient to propel and sustain socio-economic development.

In this discussion paper, an attempt has been made to show that if the major concern for reforms is the need to at least maintain the level of resource allocations to education, the ECA position is a more viable one in that it guarantees that the objectives of African governments in the area of education and human resources development can be met without placing undue additional strains on public resources. It is a position that merits serious consideration by Africa's development partners, particularly the World Bank.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERACY AND BASIC EDUCATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

LITERACY AND BASIC EDUCATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

Africa slid into a socio-economic crisis of unprecedented proportions during the decade of the 1980s, - a crisis which proves to be stubborn and persistent and promises to continue to the end of the century. The socio-economic crisis has exposed the roots of Africa's underdevelopment and the factors that render African economics vulnerable to a host of external shocks. The deleterious effects of the world recession, balance of payments problems and debt on Africa's development underscore the region's excessive dependence on export markets and on the wellbeing of the developed economics of the world. The food crisis underscores the continent's failure to develop internal capabilities to exploit its resources for its own consumption. The impact of drought and desertification on Africa's food security and self-sufficiency reveals the extremely low capabilities existing within the continent to create buffers to dampen the shock of natural disasters. The sum total of all this is Africa's chronic underdevelopment.

The understanding of Africa's condition of underdevelopment has gone through a number of stages of refinement since 1979, when African leaders and scholars began to reappraise Africa's underdevelopment and to work out strategies for realistically addressing Africa's plight. Each one of the strategies places education at the centre of the solutions to Africa's development problems. This has been so because education creates the preconditions of socio-economic development. It is a known fact that the high numbers of illiterates in African countries limits the continent's prospects for socio-economic development. Equally, the limited spread of education among Africa's population is itself a constraint on the chances of reaching an appreciable level of socio-economic development.

This paper looks at Africa's current development priorities with a view to examining their implications for the development of literacy and basic education on the continent. In so doing, a review of trends in respect of the spread of literacy and basic education over the years is undertaken. And, if in fact literacy and basic education are important preconditions for internalizing the development process, it will then be important to make a

prognosis of Africa's future prospects for meeting its socio-economic development priorities.

AFRICA'S SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE 1980s^{1/}

The decade of the 1980s removed the false sense of security and optimism of the immediate post-independence period - the 1960s and 70s - in Africa, and ushered in a series of crises that caused a complete breakdown of the continent's weak economic props which were eroded by world recession, a heavy debt burden, unfavourable terms of trade, energy and food crises, natural disasters of all sorts - drought and desertification, floods, volcanic eruptions, cyclones, locust infestation, etc. These together culminated in a socio-economic crisis of unprecedented proportions with every socio-economic development indicator showing a negative trend. Africa's already low per capita income and consumption levels fell on the average by 2.6 per cent per annum throughout the decade. Employment levels dropped by 16 per cent. Per capita GDP declined by about US\$300 to a low of US\$550 by the end of the decade. Gross fixed capital formation fell by 1.9 per cent and export and import volumes by 2.7 and 3 per cent respectively. The debt stock reached US\$256.9 million by 1989 amounting to 32.4 per cent of the export of goods and services. Africa's net transfers to the IMF alone kept on increasing: US\$1 billion in 1986, US\$1.1 billion in 1987 and US\$3 billion in 1988. In 1989, investment had dropped to half its 1980 level.

The crisis ushered in a set of policy reforms within the framework of structural adjustment programmes which failed to address the fundamental structural causes of Africa's development problems, and what is more, significantly worsened human development indicators - education, health, nutrition, employment - which became more and more marginalized during the decade of the 1980s. Between 1980 and 1989, gross enrolment ratios in primary education declined from 80 to 75 per cent; pupil/teacher ratios worsened and the quality of education became affected by chronic shortages of books, reagents and other teaching and learning materials.

^{1/} Data in this section are from ECA, Survey of Economic and Social Conditions in Africa, Addis Ababa, 1990.

The adjustment policies, coupled with the poor climatic conditions created food shortfalls that had a negative impact on nutritional levels in Africa. By 1989, there were 150 million severely undernourished people on the continent - up from 80 million in the mid-1970s. About 40 per cent of pre-school children suffered from acute protein energy deficiency. Primary health care programmes, structures and infrastructures were also negatively affected, thus adding to the continent's mortality and morbidity problems.

By 1989, there were four times as many unemployed persons in Africa as there were in 1979. The rate of job-creation fell by over 22 per cent relative to its 1975 level. Underemployment increased to affect some 90 million workers in 1989 - 30 million more than were underemployed five years earlier. Urban unemployment grew by about 10 per cent per annum on the average, the most vulnerable to unemployment being women and youths. The latter make up about 80 per cent of the unemployed.

At the end of the decade, real wages had fallen by 30 per cent relative to their 1980 levels. This, coupled with a contraction in formal sector employment, induced a massive growth in informal sector activities. It is estimated that this sector provided 19 million new jobs in the decade of contraction under structural adjustment programmes. While by itself this could be a good thing when viewed against the fact that the informal sector is a low-productivity and incomes sector, what in effect happened is that more Africans were pushed into marginal production activities for near-subsistence wages.

With the increased hardships imposed on households, family budgets themselves had to be adjusted to meet the most basic family needs. Items such as educational costs had to be struck off many family budgets. As a result, total school enrolment growth fell from an average of 8.7 per cent per annum in the mid-to-late 1970s to 2.9 per cent by the end of the 1980s.

These problems of human development were further compounded by wars, civil strife, cross-border conflicts and ethnic upheavals, which by 1989 created 50 million disabled persons and six million refugees. When natural disasters and difficult socio-economic conditions are added to the list, an additional 35 million displaced persons are to be counted. Apart from the suffering imposed on the victims, these social disequilibria cannot support development in that they are wasteful, disruptive and expend too

much of the region's energies in the pursuit of unproductive and largely negative ends.

All told the decade of the 1980s saw a further impoverishment of the African people for in that decade poverty spread to affect 80 per cent of the African people. The number of least developed countries increased from 17 to 28 - a most telling evidence of the impoverishment of a continent.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY RESPONSES

For fifteen years now, African governments have collectively been re-examining their development strategies and protesting against a world economic order that has been hostile to Africa's development. In 1979, an OAU symposium at which prominent African personalities and some heads of state participated, formulated a set of development objectives, and strategies for meeting them. At that symposium, it was observed that:

For the first time ever, we are asking ourselves a basic question: What kind of development does Africa need, and how can it achieve that kind of development? Underlying this question is the fundamental assumption that we are no longer satisfied with mimicking other countries or other economic systems; that we have come to realize that African countries cannot continue to pursue economic policies and strategies as if they want to be a poor imitation of America, England, USSR or China; that the time has come for us to think seriously of evolving a genuinely authentic African strategy for development that is not externally-oriented, that is not based on copying other societies, hook, line and sinker and that does not lead to acculturative modernization. In other words, that the time has come for African governments and peoples to begin to evolve their own uniquely African pattern of development and life styles which is built on their rich cultural heritage, their social structure and economic institutions and their considerable natural resources, a pattern of development and life style which, while borrowing

from other societies and other countries, is neither imitative, nor alienates us, the Africans, from our cultural heritage.^{2/}

Following closely on the heels of this symposium was the now-well-known African Economic Summit which convened at Lagos, the outcome of whose deliberations was the famous Lagos Plan of Action for Economic Development for Africa. The Heads of State and Government reviewed the economic performance of the continent over the years and concluded that their achievements in social and economic development fell short of expectations. In examining some of the reasons for this state of affairs, they declared as follows:

We view with disquiet the over-dependence of the economy of our continent on the export of basic raw materials and minerals. This phenomenon has made African economies highly susceptible to external developments and with detrimental effects on the interest of the continent.^{3/}

They decided to pursue self-reliant, inward-looking development strategies which would ensure that Africans produce goods and services to meet their own needs on a self-sustaining basis. Measures to be taken towards this end included reorienting agricultural policies towards a much greater emphasis on food production to forestall the eventuality of a food crisis in Africa, minimize food losses, ensure food security and boost food production. Account is also taken of the need to develop the relevant institutional support services if the new objectives for agricultural development are to be attained. In this, the plan identified scientific, technological and agricultural research as being indispensable.

With regard to natural resources and industry, the plan proposes measures which would, more effectively, link the two and contribute to the full development of eight basic industries by the year 2000. Other critical socio-economic development areas were considered in the Lagos Plan of Action. They include science and technology, rural development, transport

^{2/} OAU, What Kind of Africa by the Year 2000? Addis Ababa, 1979, p. 57.

^{3/} OAU, Lagos Plan of Action for the Economic Development of Africa, 1980-2000, Addis Ababa, 1980, p.7.

and communications, housing and urban development, trade and finance, human resources, etc.

Based on the aspirations expressed and the objectives and recommendations outlined in the Lagos Plan of Action, a 25-year perspective study was undertaken by ECA in 1983.^{4/} That study revealed that if present trends continue, Africa's "socio-economic conditions would be characterized by a degradation of the very essence of human dignity"^{5/} - a result of an almost total breakdown of the continent's social and economic fabric. To forestall this situation, the study proposes policies and strategies for implementation under a normative development scenario. In so doing, it states that,

... to avoid the spectre of increasing mass poverty, underemployment and general instability which are implied in the historical trend scenario, African countries must devise and implement adequate national, sub-regional and regional measures. In other words, the future emerging from the normative scenario depends mainly on the "will" of Africa, i.e. its people to initiate change.^{6/}

The study goes on to make prescriptions for action in the areas of food production, energy development, industrial development, transport and communications, trade and finance and general economic development policies. It emphasizes that for any meaningful impact to be felt on the continent's social and economic conditions, these measures must be implemented within the context of economic co-operation and with an eventual objective of regional economic integration in view.

Unfortunately, little was done to evolve policies and programmes that would be consonant with the several decisions taken to strengthen Africa's economic foundations. Meanwhile, conditions deteriorated rapidly and rendered Africa's economies so fragile as to make the continent buckle under the weight of one more adverse conditions - this time, drought.

^{4/} ECA and Africa's Development, op. cit.

^{5/} Ibid. p. 93.

^{6/} Ibid. p. 96.

African governments came together once more in several gatherings to ponder on the nature and extent of the social and economic crisis that had hit them and to agree on yet more courses of action that would render their economies and their societies less vulnerable to further repetitions. Notable among these meetings were the Tenth Meeting of the Conference of Ministers of the Economic Commission for Africa, which dealt in depth with the issue and prepared a Special Memorandum on Africa's Economic and Social Crisis for presentation to the 1984 session of ECOSOC and the 20th Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU; the Regional Ministerial Meeting on Africa's External Indebtedness, held in Addis Ababa during 18-20 June 1984. The OAU Summit of 1985 which adopted APPER^{7/}; and the Special Session of the United Nations on Africa's Socio-economic Crisis which adopted UN-PAAERD.^{8/} These conferences came up with a number of bold recommendations which require urgent action on the part of African governments.^{9/} They touch on economic, fiscal and investment policies; on certain structural reforms; on management development; on Africa's external indebtedness; but above all, on education, training and research activities within and among African countries.

Many countries attempted development policy reforms under regionally agreed programmes such as Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery 1986-1990 (APPER) and the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990 (UN-PAAERD). But the Programme with, by far, the biggest influence on African development was the structural adjustment programmes being implemented by most of the African countries.

^{7/} OAU, Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery, Addis Ababa, 1985.

^{8/} United Nations, United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development, New York, 1986.

^{9/} See for example "Special Memorandum by the ECA Conference of Ministers on Africa's Economic and Social Crisis", ECA, Addis Ababa, July 1984, and "Addis Ababa Declaration on the External Indebtedness of African Countries" (embodied in the Special Memorandum) as well as APPER and UN-PAAERD.

With time, it was discovered that rather than improve socio-economic conditions in Africa, structural adjustment programmes worsened them. These programmes were found to have a negative financial, economic and social impact on African development. Further, they are "incomplete" because they are often implemented as if fiscal, trade and price balances are ends in themselves and are virtually complete sets of means to production increases ... They are too mechanistic in being inadequately grounded in or sensitive to specific national economic, human and cultural realities. They are too short in time perspective. Africa cannot wait for the attainment of external equilibrium and fiscal balance before seeking to improve the human condition, nor can long-term human investment to strengthen the institutional, scientific, technical and productive capacity operating in environmental balance be postponed".^{10/}

The ECA, therefore, came up with an "Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programmes for Socio-economic Recovery and Transformation"^{11/} (AAF-SAP). The AAF-SAP recognizes that Africa must adjust to changing internal and external economic environments - but in a manner that promotes self-reliance, self-sustenance, growth, transformation and development. In other words, adjustment should hasten, not hamper, the attainment of the goals of the Lagos Plan of Action. Above all, it should promote, not harm human development.

The AAF-SAP, as did the Lagos Plan of Action before it, places human capabilities and capacities at the centre of any efforts to attain socio-economic development. The Lagos Plan of Action describes man as the "mentor and custodian"^{12/} of development. The AAF-SAP talks of a "human-centered" development, whose primary objective should be the attainment of food self-sufficiency, alleviating poverty and raising the welfare of the people. But over and above this, "to achieve and sustain development, it is necessary to ensure the education and training, health,

^{10/} UNECA, The Khartoum Declaration, International Conference on the Human Dimension of Africa's Economic Recovery and Development, 1988.

^{11/} UNECA, African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programmes for Socio-Economic Recovery and Transformation, Addis Ababa, 1989.

^{12/} OAU, Lagos Plan of Action, Addis Ababa, 1980.

well being and vitality of the people so that they can participate fully and effectively in the development process".^{13/}

The building of human capabilities and capacities is the major responsibility of Africa's education systems. Although the priorities of industrialization, the modernization of African agriculture and the development of science and technology would logically place emphasis on the development of middle and high-level manpower, without an educational base at the grassroots, the symbiosis that should necessarily occur between the initiators and the receptors of change will not take place. In other words, unless basic education is propagated at the bottom, development can truly not filter down to be internalized at the grassroots level. With pervasive illiteracy, rural transformation cannot occur, production systems cannot be significantly changed, anti-developmental beliefs and practices will block development and the objectives of self-reliance, self-sustenance and socio-economic transformation will not be attained.

LITERACY, BASIC EDUCATION AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

The majority of the African people live in rural areas and derive their sustenance from agricultural production. Improving their welfare would, of necessity, entail increasing agricultural productivity. Equally, it is self-evident that to attain food self-sufficiency for the continent at this moment, calls for dramatic increases in production and productivity in African agriculture. Measures to reach this goal have, in the past, concentrated on the provision of inputs and physical infrastructural support. The use of extension services to introduce new technology in agriculture has met with quite limited success. Health and nutrition levels are also an important requirement since a healthy and well-nourished worker is a more productive worker.

But all the efforts made to bring about change along these lines have had very little success. In fact, rural development has had some significant reversals in the decade of the 1980s. Agricultural productivity has certainly declined and poverty has spread much wider among the African population.

^{13/} UNECA, *AAF-SAP*, p. 11.

On another plane, the people have become more marginalized in the political decision-making process and there has occurred a certain reduction in democratic popular participation all over the continent. Yet democracy is the precursor of development, and without effective popular participation, development cannot occur for "popular participation is, in essence, the empowerment of the people to effectively involve themselves in creating the structures and in designing policies and programmes that serve the interests of all as well as to effectively contribute to the development process and share equitably in its benefits"^{14/}.

This poor record after three decades of independence in Africa may have been amplified by the economic crisis that plagued the continent. But at its core is to be found the constraints of illiteracy and ignorance which shackle the majority of the African people to persistent underdevelopment. Little wonder, therefore, that with all the attempts made to bring about higher levels of rural development, rural poverty is still widespread. For taking development ideas and new technologies to an illiterate is like putting new wine into old bottles.

(i) Literacy, Basic Education and Rural Transformation

That there is a very strong correlation between the level of literacy and the level of socio-economic development is a fact that cannot be disputed. The history of human development shows that only when education has reached a certain level and spread in society can there be any guarantees of social and economic development for that people on a sustained basis. The minimum requirement for the educational foundations of socio-economic development is that literacy must reach at least three-fourths of the population. As the Nigerian Federal Minister of Education put it: "it is not a mere coincidence that all the countries that have 80-90 per cent literacy are advanced and developed, while all the countries that

^{14/} UNECA, African Charter for Popular Participation in Development, adopted by the International Conference on Popular Participation in the Recovery and Development Process, Addis Ababa, 1990, p. 12.

have 60-100 per cent illiterates are underdeveloped - the less literate, the less developed"^{15/}.

Literacy empowers people to make more meaningful and positive contributions to the creation of political, economic and social structures and infrastructures, to be more receptive to internal and external development stimuli and be more amenable to being transformed from development liabilities to development assets.

In most African countries, it is through basic and primary education that people are made literate. Adults who have missed the opportunity of becoming literate in this way are in an increasing number of countries being reached and rendered literate through special literacy campaigns and non-formal education programmes. According to UNESCO, the point of permanent literacy is reached after five years of primary education. But as has been shown earlier, efforts to meet this important pre-condition of development in Africa have been frustrated by the socio-economic crisis. The figures speak for themselves: in 1970 gross enrolment ratios at the primary level of education stood at only 46 per cent. By 1980, they had jumped to an impressive 77 per cent from where they started the downward slid, such that by 1987 they had dropped by 5 percentage points.^{16/} Although illiteracy rates were brought down from 59.1 per cent in 1985 to 52.7 per cent in 1990, in absolute terms, illiteracy in fact increased from 133.6 million to 138.8 million adults during the same period.^{17/} The fact that resources were diverted away from literacy, adult and non-formal education programmes, certainly contributed to this situation. By UNESCO's projections, sub-Saharan Africa will be the only region in the world where the number of illiterates will increase by the turn of the century. In the year 2000, an estimated 147 million illiterates will inhabit the African continent. These statistics on illiteracy coincide with those on poverty which show that sub-Saharan Africa will be the only region where

^{15/} Aliu Babatunde Fafunwa, Welcome Address at the Launching of the 1990 International Literacy Year and the Blueprint for Mass Literacy, Lagos, 1990.

^{16/} UNESCO, Basic Education and Literacy: World Statistical Indicators, table 7, p. 9, Paris, 1990.

^{17/} Ibid., table 24, p. 41.

poverty would have increased by several tens of million people by the year 2000.^{18/}

It is a known fact that most of Africa's illiterates are in the rural areas and engaged in agricultural production activities. Their lack of literacy and their low skill levels will obviously limit their capacity to apply science and technology to production in ways that would increase their own productivity and total agricultural output on the continent. This in turn imposes a serious constraint on attempts to obtain food self-sufficiency within the region.

Illiteracy retards the pace of agricultural development. Studies in South and South-east Asia have amply demonstrated that illiterate agricultural producers less effectively seek, receive, store and apply new, more complex but more productive production ideas and techniques. In one study^{19/}, while per acre production per capita in India increased by 305 lbs between 1940 and 1970 in Japan, the increase during the same period was 1665 lbs. in spite of the fact that there was less land available for cultivation per capita in Japan than in India. The difference in productivity between Japanese and Indian farmers was traced to the difference in educational and skill levels, which allowed Japanese farmers to more effectively apply science and technology to production. Many other studies have indicated that productivity increases in agriculture correlate positively with increased literacy and educational levels.

It, therefore, stands to reason that literacy and basic education must first reach the majority of Africa's rural producers before Africa's priority of priorities in socio-economic development - the modernization of agriculture to attain food self-sufficiency - can be attained. But added to its direct impact on agricultural productivity, literacy is important for its other socio-cultural benefits (improved health and nutrition levels, greater openness to new development ideas, a greater tendency to put aside anti-developmental beliefs and practices, more responsible parenthood, etc.).

^{18/} World Bank, World Development Report 1990, OUP, Washington, D.C., 1990, p. 139.

^{19/} Owen and Shaw, Development Reconsidered, Lexington Book, Lexington, Mass 1974.

(ii) Empowering People for Development

Development cannot occur without democracy which may be defined as the existence of opportunities for people to participate freely in the political, social, economic and cultural life of the nation. The extent to which people are able to so participate determines the pace at which they are able to bring about positive changes in their conditions of living. Popular participation can be instigated through the active institution of government policies and programmes of mass mobilization as is the case in China, or through more passive means, such as simply creating an environment that is enabling enough to allow the people the leverage to participate in economic production and in social and political discourse within their communities. In either case, the ability of people to benefit from opportunities presented to them to be fully involved in socio-economic and political decision-making is circumscribed by their education and skill levels. It has already been argued that education is a major determinant of worker productivity levels. But, over and above the impact of education on production is the pervasive effects of education and literacy on the lives of people as individuals and on them, collectively, as a community. The effectiveness of popular participation in promoting socio-economic development is predicated on the level of awareness, the ability to be analytical and critical and the level of group consciousness among a people. True democracy, which is a precondition of development, cannot occur in situations of mass illiteracy. And even when structures and institution are created for the exercise of democracy, the people's ability to take advantage of these democratic provisions of government will be extremely limited by their level of education and literacy. Literacy thus becomes a precondition of democracy, which is, in turn a *conditio sine qua non* of socio-economic development.

(iii) Literacy, Basic Education and the Vulnerable Groups in African Society

Women, refugees, the handicapped, youth and rural dwellers are particularly vulnerable to adverse social and economic conditions in African countries. The gross enrolment declines in the education sector during the difficult decade of the 1980s, affected girls and children in rural areas and the urban peripheries. The austerity measures which caused a withdrawal of resources from important programmes such as basic, adult and non-formal education programmes, had their severest impact among rural

dwellers. Refugees and displaced persons suffer a fair amount of neglect as far as their educational needs are concerned. Yet when taken together, the vulnerable groups constitute the majority of the African population. Propagating literacy among them and raising their skill levels will render them more productive, more confident of their capabilities and thus less vulnerable to exploitation and neglect.

The urban-based informal sector is dominated by women and youth. This is a low-productivity sector of the modern African economy. Productivity levels in this sector are low, thanks in part to the high incidence of illiteracy and the low levels of education prevalent within it. Yet it has been shown to be an important contributor to GDP, to the provision of incomes, goods and services to the rural areas and to the formal sector of the African economy. The informal sector, which is dominated by the vulnerable groups could be rendered significantly more productive and be instrumental in forging a stronger integration of the African economy if illiteracy were removed among its operators and if skill levels were raised higher.^{20/} For example, women abound in informal sector, cross-border, intra-African trade. The incidence of illiteracy among them is very high. If this were reduced by 50 per cent, productivity among them could double. Productivity increases of this magnitude have salutary multiplier effects on employment creation, income increases and distribution and overall efficiency within the African economy.

PROGNOSIS FOR THE FUTURE AND PROPOSALS FOR ACTION

Literacy rates are still low in Africa in spite of the tremendous efforts made after independence to raise them. In sub-Saharan Africa, the literacy rate still stands at 48 per cent of the population, meaning that basic education and literacy programmes have still been unable to reach more than half of the African population.^{21/} Between now and the end of the century, the population of Africa would have increased by 165 million

^{20/} See ECA, "Policies and Programmes for Creating Employment and Raising Incomes in the Informal Sector", Addis Ababa, 1990.

^{21/} See UNDP, Human Development Report 1990, New York, 1990, p. 27.

people.^{22/} This would require the construction of 80,000 primary schools with an average intake of 2000 children per school per year just to keep the literacy rate constant at today's level.^{23/} As already indicated above, UNESCO itself has shown that the number of illiterates in Africa will increase by some eight million people between now and the year 2000. A continent with huge numbers of illiterates - almost 150 million people in Africa by the turn of the century - will be unable to initiate and sustain the development process.

It is, therefore, imperative that African governments take the initiatives necessary now, to ensure that significantly fewer people than what the projections indicate remain illiterate by the end of this decade. To succeed in this endeavour, it would be necessary for a number of action measures to be embarked upon.

These measures should obviously be directed towards increasing the quantum and quality of literacy and basic education packages in African countries, significantly improving the delivery of post-literacy programmes, strengthening and expanding non-formal education programmes for special groups such as women, the handicapped, refugees and rural communities and increasing primary school enrolment.

It is, however, most likely that the present resource constraints will continue well into the 1990s and that the trends of widespread resource scarcity that set in the 1980s will persist. Therefore, traditional fiscal arrangements for revenue generation for the education sector would have to be reviewed in order to ensure a guaranteed source of revenues to sustain the expansion of literacy and basic education among the African people. The following are recommended courses of action in that direction:

(i) Expenditure Switches to Support Literacy and Basic Education

The AAF-SAP has advocated the adoption of revenue conservation policies that aim at minimizing non-productive expenditures and military spending. "In Africa where needs are greatest, social priorities have

^{22/} See World Bank, World Development Report 1990, op. cit. p. 140.

^{23/} ECA, ECA and Africa's Development, op. cit., p. 59.

increasingly taken a second place to defence spending. The significance of budgetary disparities between public welfare and defence is illustrated by estimates that show that in the mid-1980s, developing Africa spent less public resources on education than on the military ... It is not difficult to imagine what it would mean to social welfare in Africa, with all its positive multiplier effects, if a saving can be achieved in defence spending and in non-productive expenditures".^{24/} UNDP has also alluded to the need to shift resources from the less productive or unproductive sectors to the more critical sectors of the economy.^{25/} In addition to switching resources away from defence to a more productive sector such as education, a number of other measures can be considered in a bid to conserve development resources within the domestic economy.

(ii) Reducing Capital Flight and Conserving Development Resources

Transnational corporations dominate in the manufacturing and service sectors in Africa. They enjoy very favourable term of investment which allow them to repatriate large proportions of their profits. But over and above this, they employ other means, mostly illicit ones, to transfer a good percentage of the rest abroad. These massive resource outflows can and should be stopped so that the amounts then saved are used to support important development activities such as basic education programmes.

Equally, every year, millions of dollars are illicitly transferred out of the African economy by public servants. Plugging this outflow of resources is an imperative during the decade of the 1990s if resources should be conserved for use in socio-economic development. In this, Africa's development partners in the international community have a major responsibility, because these transfers are, at times, made with the active collusion of public and private interests in the developed countries. A two-pronged attack on corruption from within Africa and from without is what is required to stop these leakages.

^{24/} UNECA, African Alternative Framework, op. cit. p. 35.

^{25/} UNDP, Human Development Report, 1990, op. cit.

African countries are two import-dependent. The main culprits are the industry, transport and consumer good sectors. Even in education, a good amount of the learning resources required have to be provided through imports. The resource wastage thus caused is immense. Efforts should be intensified to reduce these outflows through the institution of measures to create capabilities locally to produce more of the items which are at present being imported. Equally, the importation of skills through expatriate hiring and technical assistance should be reduced so as to conserve significantly more resources for domestic development.

(iii) The Debt Burden

Africa's external debt, as a percentage of GDP currently stands at about 85 per cent. Debt service amounts to over US\$30 billion or more than 40 per cent of exports. The net financial transfers from impoverished, debt distressed African countries to the IMF amounted to over US\$1.5 billion in 1990. Africa, the poorest region in the world is a net transferer of capital to the rich. In the process, development resources are being siphoned out of the domestic economy, thus frustrating efforts to finance socio-economic development endeavour. It is an urgent necessity that a formula should be found to ensure that Africa's debt obligations do not stand in the way of the continent's development. The creditor cartels of the London and Paris clubs as well as the major international financial and development institutions must accept an arrangement whereby only a certain percentage of Africa's export earnings is put aside for debt repayments and servicing. The AAF-SAP has proposed that debt repayments be pegged at no more than 10 per cent of export earnings. The added resources thus saved would then be utilized to finance programmes such as basic education and the expansion of literacy.

(iv) Commodities Issues

Terms of trade have been consistently unfavourable to African countries throughout the decade of the 1980s. The international community should compensate African countries for their unfavourable terms of trade by increasing concessional resource flows to Africa. It would be a welcome move if governments of the developed world agreed to devote a certain minimum (e.g. 0.5 per cent) of their GDP to assistance to African governments on a grant basis.

(v) Reviving the Investment Momentum

The investment momentum that set in the 1960s, maintained in the 1970 but lost steam in the 1980s, should be revived. It was the massive investments which governments of the region made during those decades that caused an explosion in education and the huge reductions in illiteracy. By the same token, the declines in development investment ushered in a decline in human development. Tackling Africa's commodities and debt problems should be linked to the need to restore the investment momentum for socio-economic development.

CONCLUSION

The building of human capacities and capabilities is an important precondition for socio-economic transformation and development in Africa. The very first step towards achieving this objective is to expand literacy and opportunities for basic education on the continent. This is important to ensure that people are made receptive of developmental ideas and practices and to enhance their ability to participate more positively and more actively in political, social, economic and cultural development activities. But the present financial and economic conditions prevailing within the continent are such as to render it difficult for resources to be made available to finance literacy and basic education, more so as the external pressures for Africa's development resources are heavy and those making these demands on Africa are most reluctant to relax their grip on the continent. Beyond doubt, problems of literacy and education boil down to problems of resource shortage, which in turn is caused by the financial haemorrhage from the African economy. The challenge in the 1990s is to stop the heavy outflow of Africa's development resources, so that socio-economic development which is predicated on the spread of literacy can set in and take root.

CHAPTER THREE

IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ADULT EDUCATION

(THE CASE OF NIGERIA)

IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ADULT EDUCATION

(THE CASE OF NIGERIA)

The concept of adult education embraces an enormous number of diverse events and structures and any attempt to study the substance under the concept of adult education is likely to be selective either implicitly or explicitly. Often, ways are needed to formulate explicit bases of selection and focus on adult education. Indeed one possible way of analyzing adult education has been to relate the concept of adult education to the concept of development.

Even then, one might say that there are less differences of opinions as to what adult education is and what it should do. The confusion on differences can be understood when account is taken of the fact that adult education as an organized and formalized activity is relatively new, and is also carried on in many different ways, under different names and by different agencies. It is, therefore, to be argued that adult education acquires focus from a consideration of what development means today. Since education is usually instrumental toward some more general social goal, rather than an end in itself, a study of adult education has clarity and usefulness to the extent to which it relates to development. This relationship is aptly put by Julius Nyerere when he said that:

Development has a purpose; that purpose is the liberation of man ... i.e., the liberated man - as the purpose of activity, the purpose of development. But man can only liberate himself or develop himself" in as far as "development is for MAN, by and of MAN. The same is true of education. Its purpose is the liberation of Man from the restraints and limitations of ignorance and dependency. Education has to increase men's physical and mental freedom - to increase their control over themselves, their own lives and the environment in which they live.^{26/}

^{26/} Julius K. Nyerere - an Article in Adult Education and Development
- German Adult Education Association, No. 30 March 1988, pp. 7-8.

This linkage between education and development is crucial for the consideration of adult education and as there can never be a real substitute for experience and wisdom of a sage. We will quote Nyerere again in this regard that:

If adult education is to contribute to development, it must be a part of life, integrated with life and inseparable from it. It is not something which can be put into a box and taken out for certain periods of the day or week, or certain periods of life. And it cannot be imposed: every learner is ultimately a volunteer, because, however, much teaching he is given, only he can learn.^{27/}

How does this relate to the general philosophy, aims and objectives of education in Nigeria and in particular to the aims and objectives of adult education in the country. According to a Nigerian educationist,

Nigerian education aims at producing an omoluabi. By omoluabi is meant a person who has been able to develop all his talents and who therefore is able to live in society. An omoluabi should be exposed to a good blend of all the literacies (literacy, cultural, humanistic, scientific, mathematical, technical, etc.) so that he can grow up knowing, i.e. attaining a sufficient and an appropriate level of knowledge of the disciplines; doing i.e. applying his knowledge to solving personal and societal problems; and behaving i.e. acquiring that type of attitude which enables him to interact meaningfully and purposefully with his fellow men for the overall benefit and improvement of society.^{28/}

This is the philosophy within which adult education has been developing in Nigeria and is in unison with the general definition of adult education and the objectives of adult education pursued at national level.

^{27/} Julius Nyerere - Adult Education and Development - op. cit. p. 9.

^{28/} P.A.I. Obanya - ed. Education and the Nigerian Society - Paper in Honour of J. Magasan, Ibadan University Press, Ibadan, 1981, p. 1.

Over the years, several attempts have been made to define adult education taking due cognizance of the fact that adult education is not the same as non-formal education, further education, vocational, literacy or technical education. Adult education is simply the "process whereby persons who no longer attend school on a regular and full-time basis undertake sequential and organized activities with a conscious intention of bringing about changes in information, knowledge, understanding or skills, appreciation and attitude or for the purpose of identifying and solving personal or community problems".^{29/}

Others have defined adult education as "any purposeful effort toward self-development carried on by an individual without direct legal compulsion and without such effort becoming his major field of activity".^{30/} It may also be defined as "any learning experience designed for adults irrespective of content, level and methods used".^{31/}

How do these definitions fit in the Nigerian context of developing adult education? An answer to this question reveals that unlike Tanzania where the objectives of adult education are expressed in a manner indicating the role of adult education in the political context, Nigeria's national objectives in adult education are very specific and are certainly more functional in their application. These entail:^{32/}

- (a) The provision of functional literacy education for adults who have never had the advantage of any formal education;
- (b) The provision of functional remedial education for those young people who prematurely dropped out of the formal school system;

^{29/} E.K. Townsend Coles - Adult Education in Developing Countries, Pergamon Press, Oxford, 1977, p. 5.

^{30/} B. Morgan, G.E. Holmes and C.E. Bundy - Methods in Adult Education, The Interstate Printers, Illinois, 1963, p. 13.

^{31/} E.K. Townsend Coles - op. cit. p. 5.

^{32/} Report of the Seminar on a National Policy on Education, Government Printers, Lagos, Nigeria, 1973, para 77.

- (c) The provision of further education for different categories of completers of formal education system in order to improve their basic knowledge and skills;
- (d) Provision of in-service, on-the-job, vocational and professional training for different categories of workers and professionals in order to improve their skills; and
- (e) Giving the adult citizen of the country the necessary aesthetic, cultural and civil education for public enlightenment.

Given these objectives and whatever concept of adult education, we may wish to adopt, we can, therefore, categorize four possible divisions of adult education in Nigeria based on the functions of adult education as delineated by the objectives.

- (i) The first which may be called Liberal Education relates to the provision of education to youths and adults outside the formal system. Such an education does not usually lead to any paper qualifications but does provide the client with functional knowledge and skills for productive work, e.g. literary education, community and extension education.
- (ii) The second category of adult education which may be called Formal Education relates to the provision of education to youths and adults outside the formal system leading to academic qualifications in a variety of subjects, including adult education itself as a field of study, i.e. instructional and credit programmes in adult education. This type of education is provided as an alternative or second chance education intended to have the same results in both paper qualifications and the attendant remunerations as formal education at all levels of the system. Examples of such programmes are correspondence education, distance teaching, university adult education courses, open university type courses, evening classes, etc.

- (iii) The third category which may be called Fundamental Education relates to the provision of education to both youths and adults outside the formal system by seeking to equip them with the fundamental knowledge, skills, attitudes and values necessary for living in society. This may also be thought of as an extension of informal or traditional education. Examples of such education include educational programmes on radio and television on a variety of issues such as the killer disease - aids; health and nutrition; child and maternity care; agricultural programmes, veterinary services and extension work. Within this category, we may also consider the process of life-long education as a necessary element for continued self-development, self-satisfaction and fulfilment. As neither change nor development are static, so the process of education should be provided on a continuous basis to ensure continued fruitful living.
- (iv) A fourth category which may be called Technical/Vocational and Extension Education relates to the provision of education to both youths and adults either within the formal system or in parallel non-formal institutions to enhance the clients educational attainment. In the first case, this is often undertaken in the form of evening or night classes using the same facilities as the formal system.

In the second case, a variety of industrial, technical, vocational and apprenticeship training is provided in non-formal institutions in a variety of trades and technical subjects such as carpentry, wood and metal works, brick-laying, motor mechanics, leather works and tannery, plumbing, electrical-mechanics; building and construction, blacksmithing, draughtsmanship, tie and dye, radio repairs, textiles, retailing, farming, veterinary services, bookkeeping, shorthand, office practice, home economics and community work.

As regards this last case, Nigeria is not short of institutions or centres which cater for training in the various trades or fields listed above. The majority of such training programmes are on-the-job training designed

to improve the practical skills of trainees as well as knowledge for productive use.

As has already been stated, the four categories of adult education are all present in Nigeria varying in degree of practice and quality. The question then arises, when one talks about improving the effectiveness of adult education in Nigeria, is one referring to one, two, or all of them? If we are talking about one or all of them, what are the implications; and how do we go about that improvement? To answer those questions, let us consider what is essential and of prime importance in the analysis i.e. the need for adult education.

THE NEED FOR ADULT EDUCATION

Many nations including Nigeria believe very strongly in the education of their children, but like H.G. Wells, they also contend that "it is not the education of children that can save the world from destruction, it is the education of adults". There are many reasons for saying this.

First, rapid changes in the world make it necessary for people to adjust to new knowledge, skills and attitudes. They need to adjust socially, politically, economically and morally to the changing conditions of the world. Science and technology invented by man have gone beyond man's strength and have made him helpless without education. One can only sound a well-known warning; "don't trust man with more power than he has until he has learned to use that little better". Unless people acquire new skills, knowledge and attitudes to cope with today's problems, it will not be possible to solve them without the education of adult minds, steeped in knowledge and endowed with the wisdom which only long study and experience can give.

Second, many of the problems in the world today are on the adult level, i.e. they require the knowledge, experience, maturity and judgement often expected of adults and not children or youths. Drought, famine, disease, floods, political or social problems, first and foremost are the concern of adults although their effects extend to children and the youth. But it is up to adults to find solutions to these problems, to take action, and have the ability to do so. For this reason, adults need to keep on learning.

Third, the mass of knowledge and skills in government, business management, health, economics, ethics, religion, language, science, technology, home and family living, cultural arts, civic duties, etc., have greatly changed and continue to change. The mass of knowledge in these fields cannot be acquired in a few years of school life. It takes an entire life time and not just a few school/college years.

Education received at school or college should be considered as the foundation and not the superstructure of knowledge. As the President of Harvard University once put it, "the world has become so complicated that if a man stops his education when he leaves school, college or even professional school, he is doomed to educational mediocrity. Things are changing so rapidly. And if your talents lead you to a professional field, there is no end of your profession".^{33/}In essence, therefore, change is the law of growth and also the law of life. People must continue to learn throughout life to keep pace with change.

Fourth, education must be maintained in line with one of its definitions that education is what remains when all what was learned at school or college has been forgotten. If education is a kind of vaccination against ignorance, it can only remain valid over time through renewed and periodic inoculations in study and thinking. If this is not done, people fall victim to a chronic type of ignorance which is often more dangerous than the acute form of a disease because the patient, incompetent to recognize the symptoms, does not know that he/she has the disease of educational decay. One has to keep on learning throughout one's life to rid oneself of educational ignorance and decay.

Fifth, adult education is the last and only chance for many people whose education may have been terminated for one reason or another. All human beings, youths or adults, men or women, need education, be it traditional or modern education to ensure the acquisition of communication skills and knowledge; life skills and knowledge; production skills; and higher skills needed by many of those wanting a second chance education for the acquisition of knowledge and skills in specific fields of their interests.

^{33/} James B. Conant, Former President of Harvard University, The Teachers' Digest, September 1945.

Lastly, adult education is efficient both in terms of time and money invested in it. Certainly it has limited time duration for its programmes; a low per capita or per instructional interest. At the same time, adult education allows for its programmes to be tailor-made for its clients i.e. it can be designed specifically to meet the needs of its clients. For instance, with the increasing role of women in national development, adult education can be designed specifically to answer this need. Gone are the days when we would say that the woman's place was in the kitchen! But then has man done anything to prepare the woman for her changed role?

Certainly, experience and research have shown that the old saying that "you can't teach an old dog new tricks" stems from wrong premise. Adults want to learn and effectively too! Provided we know what they want to learn and how that learning can be effected. We should, therefore, not confuse the ability to learn and the lack of opportunity to learn. No person, man or woman, is too old to learn, but lack of opportunity can deter a person from progressing educationally. The question to ask is: what kind of education is needed by adults?

CHARACTERISTICS OF EDUCATION NEEDED BY ADULTS

Most youths and adults engaged in adult education programmes demand an education which has intrinsic merit and which serves their recognized and identified needs. Adults will participate in a programme or activity which promises to provide an answer or solution to an immediate problem, personal or national. In this regard, therefore, one should take note of the following conditions:

- (a) For each learning situation, adults want to take that knowledge, those skills and attitudes which answer their needs. It is, therefore, important to ensure that adults are allowed to set their own purposes for learning and not necessarily those of the planner or course instructor.
- (b) Adults are not interested in storing away quantities of knowledge or information which they are not likely to use. They are interested in that knowledge and information which help them solve life problems and attain the goals they have set for themselves. They do not want to learn organized

knowledge as an avenue to experience. Rather they want to learn by doing, learn on the job or learn by direct experience through active participation.

- (c) Since adults are in the midst of life's pressing problems, they want their learning to be put to immediate use or foreseeable future and not to be subjected to that learning which will not fulfil their needs or purposes. In practical terms, Nigeria like many African countries demands proper qualifications when it comes to salaried employment. So for many adults wanting a second chance, any such learning should lead to proper qualifications as a stepping stone to employment. In this case, if adult education does not lead to acquisition of certificate or higher qualification, it may not be worth pursuing.
- (d) Adults want to be actively involved in the learning process, and as such, they require a rich, personal learning experience through doing. To effect this, one has to employ a variety of methods, strategies and techniques which foster the development of useful knowledge, skills, habits and attitudes. Such methods should be learner-centred rather instructor-centred. Certainly, methods suitable for children even if we were taking a literacy class should not be used for adults. In fact, adults want that kind of education which helps them develop their ability to control and enjoy their changing environment.
- (e) To assist adults, there is need for competent leaders who have a thorough knowledge of a special field and the ability to relate that field to the purposes of the learner. Instructors or leaders who show lack of leadership or lack of competence in their respective fields of specialization, often fail to hold the interests of adult learners or to have them continue attending classes.

Given these condition, therefore, education for adults must be dynamic and forward-looking, based on courses and curricular which are learner-centred rather than subject-centred. In today's world which is greatly influenced by science and technology, education whether for the young or adults cannot have fixed goals or stopping points, nor can it be

considered as an accomplishment to be used by an individual for the rest of his life. An ordinary level certificate, a vocational, technical or teacher's diploma, a bachelor's, master's or a doctorate degree are not adequate end products, unless the knowledge or skills which led to the acquisition of these certificates is effectively used by a person in adult life. It has to be remembered that certificates, diplomas and degrees, whether with credits or distinctions, only serve as milestones on the road of life-long education, because the real boundaries of education are coterminous with life. After all, people are remembered not for the credits and distinctions obtained at graduation, but for the deeds into which that knowledge was put.

Adult education should not follow a typical school curriculum focusing heavily on the past, although the past often acts as a prologue for future endeavours. This is one reason why traditional and informal education act as prologues to modern education through formal and non-formal modes of education. A point of emphasis, however, has been that both traditional and informal education have proved inadequate in solving present and future problems and hence the need for life-long education.

For adult education to be effective within this concept of life-long education four major changes would have to be made in the educational system, viz.:

- (i) The need for better distribution of the learning load to ensure that curriculum is not crowded at each level of the educational system. Adult education should be given proper amount of educational activity as a life-long process.
- (ii) The need for greater harmony between education and human development, to ensure that learning opportunities are organized in keeping with the facts of human development because current education practices tend to crowd much of the learning into the years of relative inefficiency when one is in primary or secondary school. Rather, much of the education needed should take place during the years of maximum learning about/between the early twenties and thirties. To the extent that this harmony is not available, education tends to be artificial, misunderstood, resisted and ineffective.

- (iii) The need for a more dynamic curriculum to take into account vast changes in social, economic, cultural, technological and scientific changes. A lot has been written about the child-centred curriculum, the community school, the experience curriculum, the core curriculum, the fused curriculum, and the integrated approach, all with a difference in organizing learning experiences. However, a dynamic adult education will be concerned primarily with the process and will, therefore, develop its content as necessary.
- (iv) The need for a new curriculum pattern so as to meet the needs of people at various developmental stages, and to meet changing economic, social, political and cultural conditions. In Nigeria today, the emphasis is no longer on oil production for export, but on food and agricultural production and on goods for domestic consumption. The knowledge and skills needed in each of these activities vary and, therefore, within the context of a dynamic society the curriculum should be subject to periodic reforms.

This then leads us to the examination of some of the basic issues relative to adult education in Nigeria.

ADULT EDUCATION IN NIGERIA: SOME BASIC ISSUES

One way of improving the effectiveness of adult education is to examine some of the critical and basic issues of adult education in this country. In this regard, a few questions will help us.

- Who are the clients of adult education in Nigeria?
- What is it that we expect adult learners to get from participation in adult education programmes?
- What is it that we want to improve:

- * Is it the delivery capability of adult education institutions?
- * The planning, implementation and evaluation of adult education programmes;
- * The curricula, content or methods of teaching adults;
- * The organization and management of adult education programmes?
- * Is it the optimal utilization of resources i.e. human material and financial? or
- * Are we concerned with improvement in all these areas?

(a) The Clientele of Adult Education and Their Learning Needs

The client of adult education are many and have varied learning needs.^{34/} The following categories, however, all need adult education.

1. Illiterates - youths and adults, men and women. According to UNESCO's estimates, Nigeria had 27.6 million illiterates in 1980 of those aged 15 years and above, and this gave an illiteracy rate of 70 per cent for the country. This rate would have dropped to 50 per cent by 1990. Of that illiterate population in 1980, some 86.0 per cent of the females were illiterate as opposed to 53.5 per cent of males. In terms of learning needs this group requires sufficient functional literacy and numeracy to write a letter, read a magazine, or a national paper and make simple mathematical calculations when doing business.
2. Special groups of youths and adults from both rural and urban areas such as:
 - (i) Traditional craftsmen/artisans, including vendors, entrepreneurs, cobblers, builders, carpenters, bricklayers, etc.;

^{34/} UNESCO - Office of Statistics, "Estimates and Projections of Illiteracy" CSR-E-29, Paris, 1978.

- (ii) Traditional healers, medicine-men, midwives, magicians, etc.;
 - (iii) Peasant farmers, small businessmen, hawkers, shift-workers, market women and men;
 - (iv) Clubs and special interest groups, e.g. youth/women's clubs, local co-operatives, etc.;
 - (v) Retirees, returnees, displaced persons, prisoners, detainees, handicapped, delinquents, refugees, etc.
3. Drop-outs/early leavers and left-outs of the formal system who are not at school for one reason or another. These need functional knowledge and skills for a productive life. They need positive attitudes towards work, community services and participation, and for engaging in national development activities.
4. Unemployed youths and adults in rural and urban areas, in economically depressed areas and in pockets of poverty.

Table 1Unemployment Rates by Age in Selected African Countries

	Urban Nigeria		Urban Kenya		Ghana	
Age Group	1974	1983	1978	1986	1960	1970
15-19	20.7	47.2	26.6	36.2	21.2	13.1
20-24	11.4	28.0	18.5	29.2	9.4	13.1
25-29	4.9	2.7	4.8	8.6	4.9	5.2
30-34	1.8	2.2	2.0	3.7	3.2	2.6
40-44	3.0	0.8	0.7	0.7	2.1	1.3
45-49	1.2	0.0	1.1	2.0	2.1	1.1
50-54	0.9	1.3	1.4	0.9	2.0	0.9
55-59	0.0	2.7	1.5	4.1	2.1	0.9
60-64	0.0	0.0	3.2	0.0	2.0	0.7
65+	0.0	0.0	2.2	0.0	2.2	0.5
ALL	6.2	7.3	6.7	9.7	6.0	6.0

Source: National Labour Force Surveys/ILO African Employment Report 1988, Addis Ababa, 1988.

As can be seen from Table 1, unemployment was highest in Nigeria among the 15-19 age group at 47.2 per cent in 1983 and 28.0 per cent in the 20-24 age group. Most of these unemployed perhaps had no education at all, and if they did, perhaps only primary and secondary. Surprisingly, however, 6.5 per cent of those unemployed in the urban areas of Nigeria were graduates (Table 2).

Table 2

**Composition of the Urban Unemployed
in Kenya and Nigeria by Level of Education**

Level of Education	KENYA						NIGERIA			
	Male		Female		Total		Total		1985	
	1977/78	1986	1977/78	1986	1977/78	1986	1974	1985	Urban	Rural
None	20.4	5.4	32.1	11.7	23.2	28.7	22.6	22.5	12.5	32.7
Primary	45.0	33.0	34.2	35.3	42.4	34.2	53.1	23.4	20.1	27.7
Secondary	29.5	59.6	28.4	49.8	29.3	54.5	24.0	50.3	61.1	39.6
University	3.7	2.0	3.0	3.2	3.5	2.6	0.3	3.3	6.5	0.0
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: National Labour Force Surveys.

All these unemployed, whether in urban or rural areas need some basic knowledge, skill or training knowledge to offer to an employer, or to become self-employed.

5. **Groups with common interests or varied interests:** Although we have distinguished some of the above groups, there are cases where people have common interests irrespective of their education attainment, primary, secondary or tertiary. These groups are often concerned with a particular vocational activity, or acquisition of a particular skill.

There is ample evidence to show that the informal sector in a number of African countries takes a good proportion of enterprises in a variety of sectors - industry, services, commerce, and transport. In Nigeria, for instance, the informal sector takes 45 per cent of enterprises in industry, and thus giving employment to 46 per cent of the employment as opposed to 48 per cent in Burkina Faso and giving employment of 21 per cent respectively. (Tables 3 and 4)

Table 3

Distribution of Informal Sector
Enterprises in Selected Countries (%)

COUNTRIES	INDUSTRY	SERVICES	COMMERCE	TRANSPORT
Benin	17	13	66	4
Burkina F.	48	20	28	4
Guinea	31	35	31	3
Nigeria	45	14	35	4
Average	32	14	50	4

Source: JASPA Data Bank on Informal Sector.

Table 4

Distribution of Informal Sector
Employment According to Industrial Categories (%)

COUNTRIES	INDUSTRY	SERVICES	COMMERCE	TRANSPORT
Benin	13	9	70	8
Burkina F.	21	7	64	8
Guinea	39	48	10	3
Nigeria	46	14	36	4
Average (weighted)	36	19	37	8

Source: JASPA Data Bank on Informal Sector.

Most of those engaged in the informal sector have one common purpose, and share a common goal - earning a livelihood, irrespective of their educational attainment. They all need to possess certain basic knowledge and skills for managing their business or enterprises. That is why market trading or any other trading in cities like Lagos or Accra, is subject to serious competition regardless of paper qualifications.

Adult education, therefore, can assist those engaged in the informal sector to sharpen their knowledge and skills and thus improve their productivity. When one considers that in Nigeria, 65.1 per cent of the urban labour force is engaged in the informal sector and 25.8 per cent of the country's total labour force, it is very important for adult education to direct part of its efforts towards that sector (Table 5).

Table 5

**Share of Informal Sector Employment in
Urban Areas in Selected African Countries (1985)**

COUNTRIES	TOTAL LABOUR FORCE (^{'000})	URBAN LABOUR FORCE (^{'000})	INFORMAL SECTOR EMPLOYMENT (^{'000})	INFORMAL EMPLOYMENT AS % OF URBAN LABOUR FORCE	INFORMAL EMPLOYMENT AS % OF TOTAL LABOUR FORCE
Benin	1763	661	480	72.6	27.0
Burkina Faso	3270	392	236	60.2	7.2
Burundi	2108	144	65	45.1	2.9
Congo	640	514	153	36.9	23.9
Cote d'Ivoire	3608	2332	1539	60.8	42.6
Gabon	465	211	46	21.8	9.9
Ghana	4671	1820	911	38.3	19.5
Guinea	2500	500	306	61.2	12.2
Madagascar	3932	838	190	22.7	4.8
Malawi	2655	578	133	23.0	5.0
Mali	2149	395	130	32.9	6.0
Nigeria	32232	12797	8332	65.1	25.8
Niger	2743	317	217	68.5	7.9
Rwanda	2681	246	116	47.2	4.8
Senegal	2478	625	283	44.3	11.4
Togo	1070	316	191	60.4	17.8
Zaire	10373	4919	3255	66.2	31.3

Source:

1. UN World Population Prospects: Estimates and Projections as assessed in 1984, New York, 1986.
2. Census Reports of Various Countries
3. Several JASPA Global Employment and Sectoral Missions.

(b) Second Chance Education Group

This comprises a host of people at work, out-of-school, and business or academic circles who want second chance education to improve on their educational attainment; or to achieve higher technical skills in their fields of operation. Many people without technical skills would like to undertake some technical/vocational training - a chance which they may not have had before. Adult educators should, therefore, ensure that such people are given a second chance to acquire such skills.

Given the will, commitment and determination, Nigeria has both the capacity and capability to provide second chance education to many aspirants of such education. Nigerian universities and other institutions of higher learning could give more adult education provided more resources are given to universities. But the tribulations of adult education and its personnel in Nigeria are well recorded by Michael Omolewa and Salome Nwosu, who lament the uneven allocation of funds, lack of rewards and motivation; lack and quality of teachers and instructors; frequent transfers and misuse of human resources; and the frustration, on the part of devoted Nigerians, to the cause of providing education to the majority of the population.^{35/}

(c) Effective Approaches and Methods Needed

The process of thinking provides the fundamental structures for method in adult education. Its elements enter deeply into learning. In so far as reflective thinking and scientific inquiry provide the best means for solving problems, the process of thinking is all important in designing educational procedures.

^{35/} M. Omolewa & S. Nwosu - The Tribulations of the Adult Education Personnel in Nigeria in Adult Education and Development, German Adult Education Association, Bonn, FRC, No. 26 - March 1986, pp. 111-116.

An approach as used here means any organized way of providing educational activities or learning experiences such as education television, education by radio, night classes, evening discussions, club programmes, or community discussions. A method therefore refers to the way in which people are organized in order to conduct these educational activities, i.e. by establishing the relationships between the learner and the facilitator through which the educational task is accomplished.

Many methods and approaches used in our countries in Africa are weak points in adult education because they have been copied from schoolrooms of formal education without much adaptation to the needs of adults: the way they learn and the way they think. Not every person who has a voice can teach! Teaching apart from being an art, is a profession that demands thorough training, devotion, commitment, an understanding of the laws of learning, and a continuous up-date of its practitioners.

To improve the delivery capability of adult education calls for the effective use of such methods as problem solving, lecture, case study, role-play, simulation exercises, panel and roundtable discussion, question and socratic methods. The effective use of these methods call for an understanding of motives for adult learning, their expectations and needs, and the social context within which learning takes place.

In essence, therefore, whatever methods or approaches we choose, adult education in Nigeria will be effective to the extent to which:

- (i) The adult learner has been adequately motivated to change his behaviour through tangible rewards;
- (ii) The learner is made aware of the inadequacy of his/her present knowledge, skill or behaviour through information provided to him;
- (iii) The learner has a clear picture of what gains in skills, or knowledge will be achieved by the anticipated change in behaviour;
- (iv) The learner puts his/her new knowledge or skill into practice. Experience has shown that many adults are frustrated because no one has given them the chance to put into practice the knowledge or skill acquired.

Many of those who go overseas for further studies have returned home as frustrated individuals doing somethings which have little or nothing to do with what they studied; and

- (v) The learner is given support through the provision of relevant and appropriate study materials. This is particularly important for literacy classes as most adults revert to illiteracy for lack of reading materials to sustain their acquired skill.

More important, perhaps, is that whatever methods or approaches we choose to employ, there must be:

- (i) An atmosphere of mutual trust and confidence between adult learners and adult educators, instructors, teachers and facilitators, without which little will be achieved;
- (ii) Familiarity with the ways of life of our clients. To provide meaningful adult education to traders or market women, we must be familiar with their ways of life, else we shall be doing the wrong thing;
- (iii) A clear understanding of their problems and needs; and
- (iv) An appropriate setting and the use of appropriate methods.

(d) The Content of Adult Education

Given the multifarious nature of the clientele of adult education, the content of adult education has to be all-embracing and be a vast web of educational activities. However big this web may be, it can be partitioned into four components or it can have four supports grouped as follows:

- (i) General Education consisting of a basic level of education focusing on literacy and numeracy which would lead to further studies of local and national

languages; mathematics, living skills of science and basic technology, civic and social studies.

- (ii) Technical/Vocational Training the content of which would vary according to the technical, trade or professional skills required. With a good portion of youths and adults engaged in the informal sector in Nigeria (Table 5) encompassing all forms of knowledge and skills, the content of adult education in this respect should be flexible to cater to the needs of many adults and youths.
- (iii) Civil and Social Education which should embrace civic education, family education, health and nutrition, leadership training, cultural education and should take into account individual interests.
- (iv) Educational Advancement and Training, the content of which should take into account all those who want to have second chance education, whether they are at work or out of work. In some cases, the content will be purely academic, leading to better paper qualifications, and in others it will be technical or professional training specifically geared to a particular job or field. Participants of second chance education have very specific objectives when participating in a programme. Therefore, the content should reflect their needs and expectations.

INCREASING EFFECTIVENESS OF LEARNING IN ADULT EDUCATION

One of the major reasons advanced in favour of adult education is that it is less costly in providing second chance education to the majority of the people. A major problem, however, is how to design effective measures so as to achieve not just quality but educational objectives and the long-term goals at less cost. The design of effective adult education, calls for a consideration of some of the following factors, viz.: motivation, expectations, abilities of the target population, and the rewards and reward

system in which the target population and the learning experiences operate. Let us examine these factors.

(a) Motivation

People are motivated by various factors to participate in a given programme. Some of these motives can be sociological; others psychological and yet others may be purely political. From the sociological point of view, people may participate in a programme simply to conform to societal norms and the requirements of society may prevail upon them to take part in a programme. From the psychological point of view, it may be curiosity, anxiety, ambition or anticipation of rewards which motivate them to a learning experience. But whether we consider sociological, political or psychological motives, we should be very clear in our own minds as to the type of motivation which exists in the target population and which is appropriate and in harmony with educational goals. The motivations so identified should be nurtured, enhanced and emphasized upon so that learning can be made more effective and meaningful.

(b) Rewards

In an earlier section, we showed the various clients of adult education. In that section, it was pointed out that some of the clients want to have a second chance education, and others want to have a learning experience which they never had before. Others do it for prestige, status, recognition, income, power-purposes or simply for self-fulfilment.

However, to ensure that adult education is made effective, it is important to know what benefits or rewards are expected from an educational programme. Most clients will follow the programme to its logical conclusion if they are fully aware of the benefits to be gained upon completion of the programme. In fact, adult learning is greatly enhanced if the rewards of the adult education programme can be easily demonstrated to the participants.

(c) Expectations

There are many questions which should be borne in mind when doing an adult education programme. One should address oneself to such questions as:

- What do learners/participants expect to get from instructors, tutors or teachers and other learners?
- What do they expect to get from the content of the programme?
- Do learners expect a theoretical or a practical programme?
- Is the learning situation immediately applicable to their problems, activities and situations.

To ensure an effective adult education programme, the expectations of programme designers should be married with those of participants, and the expectations of learners must be reinforced and nurtured by instructors/tutors conscious of their responsibilities and determined to fulfil the learners expectations.

(d) Abilities

Perhaps of even greater importance is to know the level of ability of the clientele. How much can they comprehend of the programme content, their reading or absorptive capacity and capability, their mechanical, mental and manipulative skills? For if the programme falls below their abilities, or is well above their ability, they will think it is a waste of time. It is, therefore, important to match a programme to the expected ability of the participants.

The foregoing does highlight though partially, the difficulty of designing an adult education programme, because adult education is not just about teaching adults to read, write or improve their educational achievements by getting a higher certificate; but for equipping them with knowledge, skills and attitudes for solving some of the life problems they encounter. To this end, therefore, strategies for the development of

effective adult education call for a consideration of at least some of the factors stated below.

*STRATEGIES FOR PLANNING
EFFECTIVE ADULT EDUCATION*

Adults, whether in rural or urban areas, are producers of goods and services and as such they must play a major role as agents of social change. In this regard, it is necessary to ensure that certain measures and strategies are taken care of when planning for effective adult education.

The first concern, therefore, is to be very clear in our minds as to the objectives of adult education and what we expect participants of adult education to achieve at the end of a programme, i.e. our objectives need to be very clear, definitive and task/job oriented. Since our task is to equip the target population with knowledge and skills for coping with their respective problems, the learning so designed should be practical and less theoretical and abstract, and should have specific goals and tasks to be performed in society.

Second, there is need to study the target population in relation to the motivations, value and reward systems within the target population's environment; their cognitive styles and capabilities in terms of their previously acquired skills and expectations about learning. Needless to emphasize that a precise description of the target population is absolutely essential for the successful implementation of an adult education programme.

A third aspect relates to the specification of institutional tasks by identifying and specifying the learning tasks and objectives and proposing the instructional experiences which would ensure the attainment of objectives. This can be done if we are aware of the full range of possible instructional alternatives to which the target population can be subjected, the cultural influences and the personalities of adult education clientele. To develop an efficient instructional system, there is need to develop instructional procedures, methods and techniques which promise to achieve the learning objectives at less the cost, e.g. using distance teaching methods or by correspondence.

A fourth aspect relates to the specification of support and management tasks and the way we plan to use resources - human, financial and material. Many adult education programmes fail because of our inability to use resources properly. Instructors, tutors/teachers or management staff may be ill-equipped for their tasks, and thus failing to deliver the goods; or instructional facilities may be of the improper type not suitable for adults.

A fifth aspect relates to the specification of the level of performance to be achieved by the target population. The level of performance refers to the minimum acceptable level of accuracy, or the quality level of the knowledge or skill which may be accepted as an achievement. In other words, what level of competence do we expect our target population to achieve? In this context, we must define clearly a set of standards which are considered as acceptable achievement of knowledge or skill.

A sixth aspect relates to the preparation of instructional materials for use in adult education programmes. Many adults who participate in adult literacy classes revert to illiteracy for lack of reading materials to reinforce and enhance their newly acquired skill. In preparing materials, account should be taken of the cognitive processes and pedagogical expectations of adult learners, and such materials should take into account cognitive differences and characteristics of adults.

A seventh aspect relates to the training of human resources for adult education - instructors, tutors, extension workers, discussants, facilitators, programme writers and developers who will play leading and supportive roles. Most of the people currently involved in adult education are there because they are committed to human development. Given the importance of human resources in development it is absolutely necessary for any government to give top priority to the training of personnel for adult education.

Another major aspect for effective adult education is to ensure that during the planning and design stages, evaluative procedures should be developed to ensure that the programme can be evaluated, i.e. assessing the strengths and the weakness of the programme, the content, methods used and the delivery systems. Information collected should be made known and available to the programme managers so that such data can be used for decision makings.

Prior to actual evaluation, the programme has to be implemented, but since evaluation is a continuous process, it must be done at the inception stage as well as during implementation and after implementation.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it may be said that adult education is concerned with the problems of learning effectiveness and real life situations. In this regard, it has no other justification beyond being instrumental to facilitating the acquisition of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values for solving life problems. Except for those types of adult education programmes which are provided as second chance formal education, or as an alternative form of formal education, adult education should be very specific both in its content, methods, applicability, and as well as in its orientation towards the acquisition of knowledge and skills for immediate and practical use.

For the effectiveness of adult education, the reality lies in the application and use made of the learning gained to the practical problems of life. Therefore, our concern for improving the effectiveness of adult education is not so much for providing second chance education, but a mandate which needs to be implemented with vigour to complement and supplement the effectiveness of formal education. With Africa's multifarious problems of ignorance, poverty, disease, hunger, drought, desertification and illiteracy, anything that can help us solve these problems is most welcome, and adult education must be seen as one of the instruments for getting a solution to these problems.