

MASS ADULT EDUCATION:

A necessary element in the development
of Socialism in Tanzania

by

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On the first of January 1970, the President of the United Republic of Tanzania began a speech with the following words:

One of the promises of a TANU member says: "I shall educate myself to the best of my ability and use my education for the benefit of all." For a long time we have been saying that "we must educate the adults of Tanzania." I myself have pointed out that we cannot wait until our children are grown up before we get economic and social development; it is the task of those who are already full-grown citizens of our country to begin this work. Yet although there has been a lot of talk about education for adults and quite a lot of people have been working in this field, we have never really organised ourselves for a major attack on our ignorance. The Central Committee of TANU has decided that we must do this in 1970. The coming twelve months must be "Adult Education Year," and we must give this work very high priority.¹

This was not the first time that President Nyerere had spoken out in recognition of the importance of adult education to the Tanzanian model of development. In a speech to Parliament on the introduction of the Second Five Year Plan in 1968, he said, "First we must educate adults. Our children will not have an impact on our own development for five, ten or even twenty years." During the intervening period which preceded the 1970 Adult Education Year speech substantial discussion and planning took place within the government as to what kind of organisation might be developed which could coordinate and stimulate adult education at all

levels to all people. Although it was realised that all people with skills and knowledge should contribute to the spreading of education, clearly a central structure was needed. During 1970 many organisations worked out their own plans for adult education, but the focus of the activities was at the Ministry of National Education.

THE NEW STRUCTURE

A key action in the organisation of adult education on a mass basis was the establishment of the Directorate of Adult Education in the Ministry of National Education. This structure is to administer and coordinate activities nationally with the help of District Education Officers in each of more than sixty districts. The objectives of the new structure are:

1. To give knowledge and skills that will improve the productivity of the people and help raise their standard of living.
2. To eradicate illiteracy.
3. To provide follow-up education to primary and secondary school leavers and to adults with a view of settling them in Ujamaa Villages and rural areas.
4. To provide leadership training in various aspects of rural life.

The basic unit for mass education in Tanzania is the community school. In accordance with the restructuring of education at all levels in order to bring a largely colonial education system in line with Tanzanian values, the primary schools have been designated as community schools which serve also as adult education centres. Primary school teachers have been given reduced teaching loads in order to be able to participate actively in the instruction of adults in the villages. Each school has an adult education committee whose duty it is to find out what subjects are desired in the community and to ensure smooth operations of the programme. In addition to the primary teachers themselves, there are other sources of teachers for the centres. If, for example, the committee feels that instruction in group farming is needed, a request can be made to the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives at the district level to arrange for the appropriate specialist to teach. It is common also for TANU (the political party) officials to be called upon to discuss aspects of philosophy and economics concerning

national policy. Political education occupies a major role in motivating adults to participate in the available activities.

TYPES OF SUBJECTS TAUGHT

The subjects taught vary from area to area. The choice depends on a combination of what the local needs are and on the availability of teachers. For example, most primary school teachers are quite adequate teachers of literacy but they are less comfortable teaching agriculture or basic technical subjects such as tin smithing or carpentry. A typical list of subjects for a given school might include the following:

- Literacy
- Agriculture
- Health
- Domestic Science
- Political Education
- Arithmetic
- Utamaduni* (local music and dance)

Nationally over 64 per cent of the total classes coordinated by the Ministry of National Education are literacy classes. Political education ranks second as both of these subjects are comparatively easy to find materials for. Agriculture has presented a problem at most of these centres due in part to the difficulty in finding adequate teachers at the local level. In June 1971, there were over 800,000 individuals enrolled in the thousands of centres throughout the country. About 54 per cent of this total were women.

TRAINING OF RURAL CADRES

In addition to the programmes of the Ministry of National Education, there are many other agencies involved in Adult Education activities. The Ministry of Regional Administration and Rural Development (*Maendeleo*) is concerned with bringing adults two kinds of skills: rural technology and ujamaa ideology. The ideological component involves the meaning and practice of Ujamaa and is designed to motivate the rural population to build socialist institutions. The technical skills are to enable the motivated to transfer ideas into practical improvements in the physical quality of life.

In order for these skills to be implemented in rural areas, training of local leaders must be undertaken. These cadres can then teach the people in their village. The focus for this training of cadres is the Ujamaa Village, where people have voluntarily joined together in collective agriculture or other production. The way these people are trained is through a network of 35 Rural Training Centres (RTC's). Each of these centres provides residential and meeting facilities for from 25 to 40 participants at a time. In 1970, the RTC's offered 450 courses to a total of 10,200 men and 2,500 women. Each RTC taught an average of 425 participants. Many of the participants were members of specialized work groups in their villages so that when they returned they were able to pass the skills learned on to the wider audience.

The exact nature of the programmes offered at the centres varies according to the priorities found in the Regional and District development plans. The plans are drawn up in order to take into account the extreme variations in crops, climate and resources available. During 1970 nearly all the participants received training in all training sessions although the main focus was in the areas of cooperatives, health, or rural technical skills such as brickmaking, carpentry, or poultry house building.

COOPERATIVE EDUCATION

The cooperative movement carries out education for three levels of participants in the movement: members, committee-men and staff. In each of the more than 1,700 cooperative societies throughout the country there are education secretaries as well. The members are of course the vast majority, but with ten committee-men in each primary society there are approximately 17,000 committee-men in the movement who are responsible for management and policy decisions. The full time staff members form the unified cooperative civil service. The organisations involved in the educational effort are the Cooperative Union of Tanzania (CUT), the Cooperative Education Centre (CEC) and the Cooperative College.

The CUT is the central body of the cooperative movement and is located in Dar es Salaam. The bulk of its educational activities are carried out by its education department located in Moshi called the Cooperative Education Centre. The CEC produces correspondence courses, radio programmes, and courses and seminars for those in the field. The CEC is organised with a system of regional centres known as

wings. In 1971 there were eight wings working closely with the education secretaries of the cooperative unions. The wings themselves are well equipped with transportation and facilities for making materials for teaching. There are two teachers attached to each wing. The wings offer courses and seminars for all three groups of cooperative participants.

Working with very close cooperation and coordination is the Cooperative College. The Cooperative College, also in Moshi, offers residential courses for committee-men and staff members in a variety of subjects. This organisation while part of the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, coordinates all of its activities with CUT and thereby the CEC. There are residential facilities for 300 participants at one time. A closer look at the educational programmes for the three groups of participants will demonstrate the close coordination which has been achieved.

Members' education is the newest programme in the cooperative education movement. The first priorities for the Cooperative movement when the training facilities were opened in 1964 was the training of staff and committee-men. In 1970, however, a major campaign was organised throughout the wings which made use of radio, articles in *Gazeti la Ushirika* and illustrated materials to focus attention on a series of one day courses. The courses drew nearly 25,000 participants, even though plagued with attendance problems due to farming schedules, national elections and religious holidays. Recruitment for the courses was done by having each of the ten committee-men bring five members.²

The provision for committee-men education has focused on three complementary approaches: correspondence studies through study groups, week-long courses for chairmen and vice-chairmen and longer courses for education secretaries. Correspondence materials have been produced by CEC and have been supplemented with radio broadcasts. The correspondence courses are the materials for the study groups and include subjects such as *The Work of the Committee*, *How to Read a Balance Sheet* and *Ujamaa Vijijini*. Each primary society is to have a study group which is permanently organised and meets at regular intervals. The groups have ten to fifteen members usually including the education secretary, committee-men and a few members. In 1971, there were nearly over 1,200 of these groups organised.

The staff of the primary societies also has several possibilities for education: correspondence study through

the study groups, two week follow-up courses for those who have been successful in the correspondence work and large variety of residential courses at the Cooperative College in Moshi. The residential courses which vary from two weeks to three months cover such areas as management and administration, accountancy, book-keeping, agricultural supply and store keeping. It is possible for individuals in the cooperative movement through the steps of correspondence courses, follow-up seminars and residential courses to learn and upgrade themselves professionally in the cooperative unified service (Cooperative Civil Service). The principle of promotion from within is a strong incentive for participation.

THE INSTITUTE OF ADULT EDUCATION

What is the role for university adult education to play in the development of a socialist Tanzania? The Institute of Adult Education has grown from the traditions of British extra-mural education which has offered courses of academic nature to those segments of the population who happen to live near enough to the university or one of its regional centres. In the case of Tanzania, courses were limited to those people with seven years or more of schooling who lived in Dar es Salaam, Mbeya Mwanza or Moshi. It has been for the Institute to find a meaningful way to expand its activities and contribute towards the education of the large number of people who had not taken part in the formal educational system and who were now outside of this network.

The Institute is only beginning to find the directions in which it will move. Bearing in mind the need to be more involved in mass education, several approaches are being tried.

RADIO STUDY GROUP CAMPAIGNS

The Institute has run three national radio study group campaigns: one each on the Second Five Year Plan (*Kupanga ni Kuchagua*), the 1970 National Election (*Uchaguzi ni Wako*), and the celebration of ten years of independence (*Wakati wa Furaha*).³ Although the first two programmes were on a relatively small scale, much valuable experience was gained and put into practice in the third series in the October of 1971. The principle is that study groups or organised listening groups should be centered around a weekly series of radio broadcasts. The study group-leaders will be laymen who have

undergone two day training programmes in the running of groups. Each group is provided with study materials including a textbook, study guides and group leader's manuals. The materials are such that they can be used with or without the radio programmes. Likewise the broadcasts can be used by the groups or by anyone else who is listening for enjoyment. The 1971 campaign was estimated to have had about 40,000 participants. The possibilities for this type of learning are vast.

FOLLOW-UP MATERIALS FOR NEW LITERATES

A problem in all nations where literacy is scarce and campaigns for the elimination of illiteracy are common is the shortage of materials that are necessary to keep the person who has just learned to read from lapsing into illiteracy in a short time. It is commonly said that without some reinforcement, six months will be enough to return an individual to illiteracy. Through the development of a writers' workshop the Institute has been producing short stories for adults that combine a lively style with a rather subtle educational message in *KiSwahili*. The stories revolve around a common set of characters, the idea being that once the characters are known and the settings studied, many people will be able to contribute to the series.

TRAINING OF ADULT EDUCATORS

It was realized that it would be ineffective to have university adult educators to try to reach the masses by face-to-face teaching. The limited staff at any university adult education could not begin to meet the needs of an entire population. But through a series of seminars, short courses, and a nine month Diploma Course in Adult Education, it has been possible to begin training the people who are involved in the face-to-face teaching of both workers and peasants.⁴ The Institute has conducted courses for people working in many areas of adult education such as workers' education, political education, literacy education, rural development and health.

As a further way of taking training ideas and knowledge of adult education to those who cannot take part in seminars and those who would like more information on practical administration of adult education programmes, the Institute has written a handbook.⁵ Written with local teachers in mind, the handbook discusses aspects of organising learning for adults from planning and publicity to making simple visual aids and

evaluating the results. The examples are drawn from the experience of adult educators in Tanzania.

CORRESPONDENCE EDUCATION

In 1972, the Institute will begin operating a correspondence education unit. This unit will make it possible to reach a much wider audience than has been possible before. Everyone familiar with education in Africa knows how widespread and popular correspondence education is. Most of the courses, however, are commercial and offer materials from overseas. The Tanzanian correspondence courses will be designed for training middle and lower level manpower in areas of priority as determined by the manpower planning sections of the government. The courses will be in both *KiSwahili* and English and will cover such areas as basic book-keeping, accountancy, national policies and development, teacher in-service courses and management and administration. The first year aims at a minimum of 1,500 students about 200 to 300 per subject. Experience in other countries, such as Kenya would indicate that the enrolments in such institutions grow very rapidly especially in in-service teaching courses and office courses.

THE FUTURE

The philosophy of adult education in Tanzania is, as can be seen, clearly stated and the overall principles have to a large extent been translated into structures and strategies. In many ways Tanzania has solved some of the problems facing adult educators in other countries. But we all must, lest we fall spell to the magic words, look realistically at the magnitude of the problem. Out of a population of 14 million over 10.5 million people do not participate in either adult education or primary education. Traditional agricultural extension workers are physically unable to reach all the farmers in the country, many of the rural training centres are under utilized and health educators have yet to find the most effective means of dealing with traditional beliefs. In the programme which has the most participants, the Ministry of National Education (including the Work Oriented Functional Literacy Project and Six District Literacy Campaigns), the emphasis is overwhelmingly on literacy. It will take much larger capability than exists at present to prevent many of the participants from lapsing into illiteracy. It will take still more effective political education to motivate the reorganisation of the entire rural population along the lines of Ujamaa Villages.⁶ There is, however, a

spirit of dedication and hard work and optimism that prevails in all of the development activity including adult education in Tanzania. The Ministry of Agriculture has discussed a programme that would reach over one million farmers within three years through an organised radio-study group scheme. It is difficult to see how the continuing flow of ideas and hard work combined with the well thought out philosophy can fail to strengthen socialist transformation in Tanzania.

Footnotes

1. *New Year Speech* by Julius K. Nyerere, reprinted by the Institute of Adult Education, University of Dar es Salaam, 1970.
2. Dubell, Folka. Report: *National Member Education Campaign*. A paper delivered at the Third Conference of the African Adult Education Association. April 1971. Dar es Salaam.
3. For more information see Barrett and Remtulla, *Towards Mass Education*. A paper delivered at the Third Conference of the African Adult Education Association, April 1971, Dar es Salaam.
4. For more information see Albinson and Kassam, *Training of Adult Educators in Tanzania*. A paper delivered at the Third Conference of the African Adult Education Conference, April 1971, Dar es Salaam.
5. Institute of Adult Education. *Adult Education in Tanzania-- A Handbook on Approaches, Methods and Practice*. Dar es Salaam: Tanzania Publishing House (forthcoming).
6. The movement of more than 20,000 peasants in Dodoma Region to Ujamaa Villages in August 1971 is encouraging.

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