

Strategies for U P E and a consideration of alternatives

N M Kisome, Director of Primary Education, Tanzania

INTRODUCTION

The contribution of education to a nation's economic and social development has been much discussed since the early sixties when politicians and economists began to focus their attention on education as an investment in terms of human capital. There is a shared belief that education is something which can accelerate a country's standard of living. The underlying assumption is that the education provided is functional, consequently its recipients' production outputs will be higher. The other new international educational order model assumes that a society's attitudes and values must be changed to match with the present international demands. The assumption is that the given society is living with incompatible old attitudes and values hence the necessity for change. Such a society needs education and re-education. Adult education must therefore be a continuous process for non-formal school goers. Which-ever school of thought we look at, education will remain both an individual's right and a public enterprise. As a public enterprise, all countries of the world are committed to providing more and better education for their people notwithstanding the myriad of other problems which have to be attended to.

Since the early sixties, third world countries have been making great efforts to universalize primary education but due to the different nature of problems each country faced in time and space, different strategies have been adopted in an effort to cater for basic education for their target populations.

This paper, therefore, aims at first outlining the main strategies that have been adopted by countries in implementing Universal Primary Education (UPE), then looking more closely at alternative forms of schooling that countries have already adopted for UPE or are beginning to consider seriously because of the prohibitive expense of UPE based on conventional schooling. Finally, the paper will digress and discuss the philosophy and practice of 'Ujamaa' in Tanzania in providing education at primary level as a case study.

STRATEGIES FOR UPE

The common and traditional strategy for implementation of UPE is that of the evolutionary approach. Universal Primary Education is declared and included in a given country's development plans. In most cases no major changes are made in the structure, and organisation of the education system. What is done by such a country is gradual expansion of primary schools and teacher training colleges.

In Ghana, for instance, the objective for UPE was expressed in the country's Accelerated Development Plan for Education in 1951. One of the major aims was to devise an educational pattern which would make it possible to achieve UPE as rapidly as finances and teacher training facilities allowed.

Facilities for the training of teachers were increased by the addition of ten more training colleges which doubled the size of the existing ones. According to the plan, 3,500 teachers were required; by 1958 an enrolment of 4,055 teacher trainees had been achieved. This is an example of the traditional or evolutionary approach to the implementation of UPE.

The advantage of the evolutionary approach is that it is administratively easier to implement. The approach facilitates identification of problems and the implementation schedule is as suggested in the plans. However the disadvantages outweigh the advantages. The approach leaves a large population without basic education since facilities for formal education and other essential resources are not adequate for universalization of primary education. Another serious disadvantage is the cost factor. It is extremely expensive to implement UPE through the evolutionary approach hence UPE in many countries takes ten to twenty years before it is fully achieved.

A closer look at the evolutionary approach to UPE shows that it is the central government which decides on dates for UPE even when there may be little public demand for it. Where there is popular pressure, the cost of the formal approach to UPE is usually too heavy for any third world country to bear.

In the year 1950, Egypt passed a law which decreed free education for all and made primary education compulsory. The plan was to give children aged 6-12 six years of schooling.

Due to the rapid expansion of primary school enrolment, a large number of new teachers had to be trained and an additional 20 teacher training colleges had to be built. The shortage of teachers forced the government to initiate a one year teacher training course for holders of the secondary education certificate and placed enormous financial strains on the government.

Another example of the evolutionary approach to UPE is to be seen in Nigeria. The Federal Government of Nigeria set 1980 as its target for the full achievement of Universal Primary Education. The first universal age group enrolment was scheduled for September, 1976. UPE represented an increase of 65 per cent in primary enrolment in less than ten years. To make this possible the third National Development Plan (1975-80) proposed to spend 20 per cent of its capital educational expenditure on primary education. To date Nigeria has not yet achieved its 85 per cent UPE target. It should be noted that Nigeria has more resources for education than most countries in Africa and some observers speculate that Nigeria's commitment to rapid educational expansion for UPE may not be achieved until the year 2000(A.D.).

ALTERNATIVES WHICH OTHER COUNTRIES HAVE ADOPTED

Albania

Albania began to control and shape its education after the liberation war against the Italian regime in 1940. In early 1940, illiteracy in Albania was as high as 80 per cent. It was thought that one way of wiping out illiteracy was through UPE. Albania, therefore, in 1944, declared compulsory education for all children between the ages of seven and fifteen. Literate adults were called upon to teach in the primary schools. Quick short courses provided the sole training for them. Since these teachers were members of the National Liberation Movement, they received subsistence allowances subscribed by the villages where they taught rather than receive a salary. In the villages where literate adults could not be found, itinerant teachers spent one week in such villages in rotation. To strengthen the teaching force, a three month

teacher training course was run for all UPE teachers. There was a high degree of inspection. Inspectors spent up to two-thirds of their time inspecting elementary schools where they stressed new methods of teaching, student assignments, less preparation, co-operative attitudes and evaluation of students' work.

China

China's socialist policy of universal education started in 1950. Economic setbacks were experienced because the number of children of school-age was greater than expected as was the number of teachers needed. To start with, double sessions in the primary schools were arranged together with a programme of half-work and half-study. Peasants and workers selected by their production brigades were recruited as teachers.

Another source of teachers was found among men demobilised from the army as well as serving soldiers. Youths who had been returned to the rural areas and were literate, together with those who during the Cultural Revolution in 1966 had had their education summarily terminated, were engaged as teachers. Short courses lasting anything between three months and a year were mounted for under-qualified teachers. College tutors went to specific localities and carried out short intensive courses for UPE teachers when the schools were on holiday. Experienced teachers in high schools were sometimes asked to supervise UPE teachers in primary schools in their locality. Between 1969 and 1971 mobile teams of teachers visited 91 communes and taught 10,000 teachers.

Schools also utilised the services of part-time staff who taught politics and vocational subjects; and sometimes students in higher classes taught lower classes. Work units sent personnel to schools for a few hours teaching each week and some operated exchange schemes whereby teachers and other workers changed places for a few months. Correspondence courses were also used in the training of UPE teachers.

England

In 1870, England faced a similar challenge to implement UPE, for in that year an Education Act for free and compulsory education was passed for children between three and thirteen years. In 1871 London's population was 3,265,000 and of this 681,000 were children of elementary school age but 574,000 were not in school. To provide classrooms of the standard required was not easy nor was it easy to match the pace of school building with the growing demand. School boards advised that any barn or warehouse could be used as a school. The monitorial teaching system, where bright pupils taught other pupils with occasional guidance of a trained teacher, was replaced by class instruction by a trained teacher assisted by a pupil teacher.

Singapore

Singapore faced the challenge of UPE differently. Because of the shortage of teacher training colleges, and probably seeing that to increase the number of colleges was financially unwise, Singapore abandoned in 1960 all pre-service teacher training in favour of in-service, part-time courses for unqualified teachers. Its full-time two-year pre-service courses gave way to part-time courses of three years duration in which teachers followed courses in colleges and also taught in primary schools. Three times a week the student teachers attended lectures at their colleges while on the job their teaching was supervised by the qualified primary school teachers.

The above observations indicate that each country, given its level of technology and ideological direction had to adopt its own strategy to grapple

with the programme of UPE. In every case, trained teachers were crucial to the success of UPE. Authorities like Coombs, (1969) have gone so far as to say that it is not a question of having warm bodies to maintain discipline in the classroom but of having people who are able to teach too. Professor Fafunwa (1967) has on occasions cautioned the African continent that the biggest educational problem which besets Africa is the shortage of competent teachers. Nyerere (1966) says that it is the teachers who shape the future of the nation and are more important and powerful than those people who are involved in making and passing laws.

THE NEED FOR ALTERNATIVES

From the above observations it is evident that formal educational expansion to cater for UPE is financially prohibitive and too slow a solution. There is a need for an alternative which is cheaper and will cater both for children who need basic education today and for the adults who were unable to do so yesterday. Hence the concept of UPE is no longer limited to that of instructing children in a formal classroom but includes non-formal educational activities and adult education programmes.

During the last fifteen years there has been increasing attention given to non-formal and formal adult education. This has been largely due to the recognition of the delay in witnessing the effect of formal primary education on actual development. The Director General of UNESCO in his opening address of the Adult Education Conference in Abidjan in 1974 said:

"In any case, it is not the children of today who hold the present destiny of Africa in their hands, it is the adults. So it is by establishing effective communication with the adult population, by helping them to adjust to a rapidly changing world, that an immediate impact can be made on the urgent problems of society and essential progress be brought about. Africa cannot wait a generation to mobilise its rich human resources for tasks of national development."

Attempts have been made by institutions and agencies in many countries to devise courses, delivery systems and learning opportunities for adults and out-of-school youth related directly to their own actual environment. Significant achievement has been made in spite of problems related to project management.

The Brigades of Botswana and farmers' schools and training centres in Tanzania, Kenya, Nigeria and Mauritius are some of the measures that have been taken in this direction to provide education for those outside the formal education system.

The Lushoto Integrated Development Education Project in Tanzania, child-care and nutrition centres in various countries, community schools for children and adults in Tanzania, Senegal and the Philippines, the use of TV broadcasts on a large scale for non-formal education in Ivory Coast and San-Salvador, distance teaching in Kenya and Tanzania are all pointers that demonstrate the fact that training and education can be related to real life problems and can attract and benefit people of all life styles. They illustrate how the combination of formal with the non-formal education can be one of the best ways of maximising the existing teaching and institutional resources in a given country. Such approaches make use of existing organisations and communication media, and learning is organised on a part-time basis, thus allowing the learners to remain productive members of the society while they continue their studies.

TANZANIA'S EFFORTS IN IMPLEMENTING UPE

It may be helpful to highlight some of the major socio-political developments which have occurred over the last twelve years in Tanzania which simultaneously have increased the pace towards UPE.

As far back as the country's independence in 1961, the major educational change which took place was the establishment of a single integrated system of education instead of the racial one which existed. In 1967 a policy paper on Education for Self-Reliance was promulgated which offered an interpretation of the country's philosophy of Socialism (Ujamaa) and Self-Reliance. The philosophy of Ujamaa and Self-Reliance is a clear statement of the kind of society that Tanzania is trying to build. The Arusha Declaration (1967) stated the goal and direction of development; and three principles interacted, namely: equality and respect for human dignity; sharing resources produced by co-operative efforts; and work by everyone. The focus was on the development of man. The same philosophy tried to clarify the fact that the responsibility for the development of the country rested entirely on Tanzanians themselves and this is the meaning of Self-Reliance.

At the grassroots level, villagers are taught that they must use, for their own welfare and development the skills and resources they jointly possess. The attitude that someone else must come and carry out a project before they make headway is discouraged hence external assistance in any form comes only to supplement their own efforts.

Socialism and Rural Development (1967) is another guideline geared to rural development. The guideline attempts to interpret the Ujamaa philosophy in order to help transform the rural environment where 95 per cent of the country's total population of 17 million live.

Since the early period of independence, politicians at all levels have urged the peasants to live in organised villages instead of the scattered pattern that previously existed. In 1969 a presidential directive was issued requesting all government institutions to gear their activities and decisions towards explaining and emphasising the advantages of living together. The circular further said that people would only enjoy reasonable standards of living and social benefits if they lived together.

The former Political Party--Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) issued Party Guidelines (Mwongozo) which further re-emphasised the importance of giving power to the people on issues concerning their lives and development and insisted that all economic, social and political activities should focus on man and not on things. The Decentralisation Policy of 1972 and the Village Act of 1975 were among the concrete steps taken by the government in making a reality of socialism and Self-Reliance to ensure that decision making, planning and control of development was exercised at the grassroots level. Before the decentralisation policy, villagers could only rarely make suggestions on such things as the need to expand their primary schools and had to wait for a blessing from the bureaucratic Central Government. Unnecessary control by the Central Government smothered the villagers powers to thinking, decision-making and planning of their day to day lives.

A Small Scale Industries policy paper (1972) gave practical guidelines to the people on how to establish small scale industries in the country. It argued that there are certain industries which do not require heavy capital inputs and very sophisticated technology and therefore such industries can contribute to the country's social and economic development. This policy

paper insisted that education should give emphasis to science and technology and manpower training needs. It reaffirmed the necessity for the people to make their own decisions on the kind of small scale industry they wanted, leaving the party and government to encourage, inspire, teach and provide the necessary services.

Several National Campaigns have been launched all geared at community involvement in development. The "Chakula ni Uhai" - Food is Life Campaign (1974) - was one of the largest nutrition education campaigns ever conducted. Radio broadcast lessons were used by study groups in the villages. The whole of 1976 was set aside for intensive and evaluation exercise to see whether the messages delivered through the campaign had taken permanent root. The results were quite impressive especially in that the campaign gave birth to other very practical small-scale food and nutrition projects initiated by the local people.

As mentioned earlier, the Arusha Declaration is a broad outline, and the subsequent policies such as Socialism and Rural Development, and Education for Reliance are offshoots for action that have emerged from conferences and panel discussions on Ujamaa as a social philosophy. For more than a decade, Tanzania has been aware that formal education system is ill-equipped to respond fully to the philosophy of Socialism and Self-Reliance.

A key question that has been debated fully is whether the nation must wait until the day when the whole population will have received formal schooling before it enjoys the fruits of national policy. The conclusion reached is that both children and adults should be educated simultaneously.

Adult Education, therefore, has been emphasised since 1964 because development plans cannot be successful unless the people required to implement them understand them fully. Through adult education the old reactionary negative attitudes and values are being wiped out so that the pace of development might be accelerated.

Since 1970, a distinct philosophy on adult education has been beginning to take shape. This is a consequence of the step the Party took when it went ahead and proclaimed the year 1970 as an "Adult Education Year". President Nyerere (1973) elaborated the concept of adult education with a definite touch on functional orientation when he said:

"Just as working is part of education, so is learning a necessary part of working, and learning must become an integral part of working, and people must learn as they work. It is, therefore, essential that work places become places of education as well. If we are to make real progress in adult education it is essential that we should stop trying to divide up life into two sections, one of which is for education and another, a longer one, is for work with occasional time for 'courses'. In a country dedicated to change we must accept that education and work are both living and continue from birth until we die". (Nyerere 1973)

It is beyond the scope of this paper to go into the details of how adult education is organised and managed in Tanzania. Nevertheless, it is worthwhile noting that in 1971 there were 5,184,982 illiterates and the results of the evaluation carried out in 1977 reveal that illiteracy stands at only 27%.

FORMAL PRIMARY EDUCATION

The policy-statements, guidelines and projects that Tanzania has launched are sincere efforts towards the implementation of basic education for all. Nevertheless while the adult population was being encouraged to participate in adult education there were millions of school-age children who did not have access to formal primary education.

It was stated earlier in this paper that since early years of independence, Tanzanian peasants were encouraged to live in villages. The villagisation programme intensified in 1974 by which time 80 per cent of the rural population lived in villages.

Thus the Political Party in 1974 directed the Ministry of National Education to make all necessary plans for UPE to be achieved by 1977 instead of 1989 as was earlier planned. This illustrates the socio-political approach model. The Ministry of National Education was faced with the challenge of providing classrooms, instructional materials and teachers to make formal UPE effective. With the co-operation of peasants and workers, physical expansion of primary school buildings started in 1975. The peasants and workers were requested to build classrooms and teachers quarters on a self-help basis. The regional government also gave financial and material resources to speed up the building of classrooms and teachers' houses.

Since the enrolment and attendance of pupils outstripped the construction of classrooms, a strategy of half-day sessions for primary one and two was adopted.

Retired but still competent primary school teachers were employed on a temporary basis. Students in Teachers Colleges and Secondary Schools taught some periods in the primary schools under the supervision of qualified teachers. Extension workers e.g. agricultural assistants, medical staff at the village level were requested to participate in teaching subjects related to their professions. These were some of the measures taken to alleviate the shortage of teachers in the primary schools.

In 1975, the Ministry of National Education advised the Regions to carry out a survey of children between one and twelve years so that systematic enrolment could be undertaken for the remaining 50 percent of children who were still out of school. While at independence there were 471,000 pupils in the primary schools, in 1975-1976 there were 1,874,357 and in the year 1978-1979 there were 3,414,210 children in primary school, an achievement of 92.7 per cent. Primary schools for the disabled have equally been increased and last year, 1978-1979 there were 748 disabled children in primary schools as compared to 76 in the previous year.

The challenge to the Ministry of National Education has not ended with the declaration of UPE. For UPE to be meaningful, the problem of adequate and well trained teachers has had to be re-examined. The problem of shortage of teachers has been residual in the primary schools and with the advent of UPE the problem has been aggravated. The teachers' colleges annual output has been approximately 5,000 primary school teachers. If the Ministry of National Education had relied mainly on the traditional pattern of training teachers where trainees undergo a two-year teaching course in the colleges, it would have taken eight years to get 40,000 teachers for UPE to be successful.

Another constraint which the Ministry of National Education has had to face is finance. It costs the government Tshs.30,000/= to train one primary school teacher. It is impossible therefore to afford the training of the 40,000 teachers required for UPE using the orthodox approach; no less the cost

of building new colleges for the conventional model of teacher training.

An alternative approach for training teachers has been adopted using Distance Education methods. In 1976 the first batch of 15,000 students were selected and enrolled for a three year training programme. The trainees were those who had completed primary education and had indicated that they were interested in the teaching profession. The trainees were between 17 and 28 years of age. The regions administered selection tests while interviews were carried out by local committees who were familiar with the applicants and were able to give considerable weight to suitability based on character. Two other batches of 13,500 and 18,000 trainees were enrolled into the programme in the year 1977 and 1978 respectively. Each trainee received a monthly stipend of Tshs.150/= and stayed with his parents or guardians.

The training programme utilises the following components:

(a) Correspondence education in Pedagogy, Kiswahili, Mathematics and methods of teaching.

(b) Tutorials: here the trainees meet twice or thrice a week with their village tutors (these are qualified and experienced primary school teachers who have received an initial 8 week course on distance teacher education) and carry out discussions based on their correspondence education; discuss and analyse problems related to their teaching practice and carry out primary school curriculum analysis.

(c) Radio programme: there are regular broadcasts based on the teacher education programme. Each of the 2,000 school-based training centres has a transistor radio for this purpose.

(d) Teaching practice: The trainees are required to teach 15 to 24 periods per week under the supervision of their village tutors and other qualified primary school teachers. The final strategy is the college seminar. At the end of the three years, the trainees hold a six-week seminar in the teachers college. During the six weeks, the trainees get an opportunity to revise the major topics they have learnt; they prepare instructional materials for their own class teaching. Moderation of the trainees' teaching ability is carried out during the course and at the end of the seminar the trainees sit for the final written examination set and administered by the Tanzania National Examinations Council.

There is an inbuilt evaluation system which involves the Institute of Adult Education, Teachers' Colleges and Regional and District Education Inspectorates. The evaluation system has helped to expose problems which would otherwise stifle progress of the programme. The first batch of 13,000 trainees sat for their final examinations and 97% passed.

The problem of permanent buildings for the schools is being tackled by both the government and the people while the problem of drop outs and attendance has been arrested by making UPE compulsory by law. The teachers from both programmes i.e. the distance teacher education approach and the college trained are now meeting in the primary schools. The question whether the two programmes are equally effective has been answered to some extent by researchers. Galabawa (1978) says that there is no major performance difference between the teachers from the two programmes. In terms of cost effectiveness, the distance technique is more effective since it costs the government only a third of the total cost required for conventional training. The shortage of teachers now stands at 20,000 distributed throughout the country's total of 9595 primary schools.

Since the policy of Education for Self-Reliance was issued (1967) comprehensive revision of the curricula has been made although more effort is still required. Some work has been done to revise the curricula so that they now reflect the environment with which the pupils are familiar and the practical skills, knowledge and values which are most meaningful to them. Furthermore, the aim is to root education in production so that schools contribute to self-sufficiency and become integrated with the local community. The age-old desire to integrate the school and the community is slowly changing to a reality in some regions in the country. The community school as a two way traffic, interaction and co-operation between the school and the community started as an experiment in Kwamsisi in Tanga region; then it was replicated to 35 scattered primary schools all over the country, and this year it has been adopted in two regions of Tanzania-Dodoma and Singida.

The concept of such schools is that the school acts as a centre for the community where all physical and human resources can be co-ordinated. Pupils grow and remain as an integral part of the community by having responsibility in the community and in this way pupils learn the realities of their society and become conscious of the present needs and future aspirations of their country.

The curriculum of the community schools breaks away from the traditional compartmentilised subject areas and the content and the learning experiences are arranged around the fundamental processes and problems of living. In other words the features of daily life are the focal points of the school curriculum hence education is effectively linked with life. The traditional unco-ordinated subject areas are integrated and allow flexibility and reality through the topic or module approach.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The paper has attempted to review the main strategies that have been adopted by a number of countries in implementing UPE. Some of the countries which the paper has discussed have adopted alternative approaches e.g. Albania and China in implementing UPE because of the unusually high costs of conventional schooling in effecting UPE. Management of alternative approaches to UPE is hard and painful yet liberating.

In Tanzania, the philosophy of socialism and self-reliance, and the determining of national policies and guidelines for campaigns, adult-education and villagisation have contributed significantly to the present level of attainment. An essential element also has been the development of an efficient communication system from the village level to the government.

In many Third World countries the lack of adequate resources is almost universal. However, the resources position would not be so desperate as is commonly imagined if the existing resources could be pooled and optimised. Optimising resources is therefore, absolutely essential.