

THE EMPLOYMENT CRISIS IN AFRICA  
Issues In Human Resources Development Policy

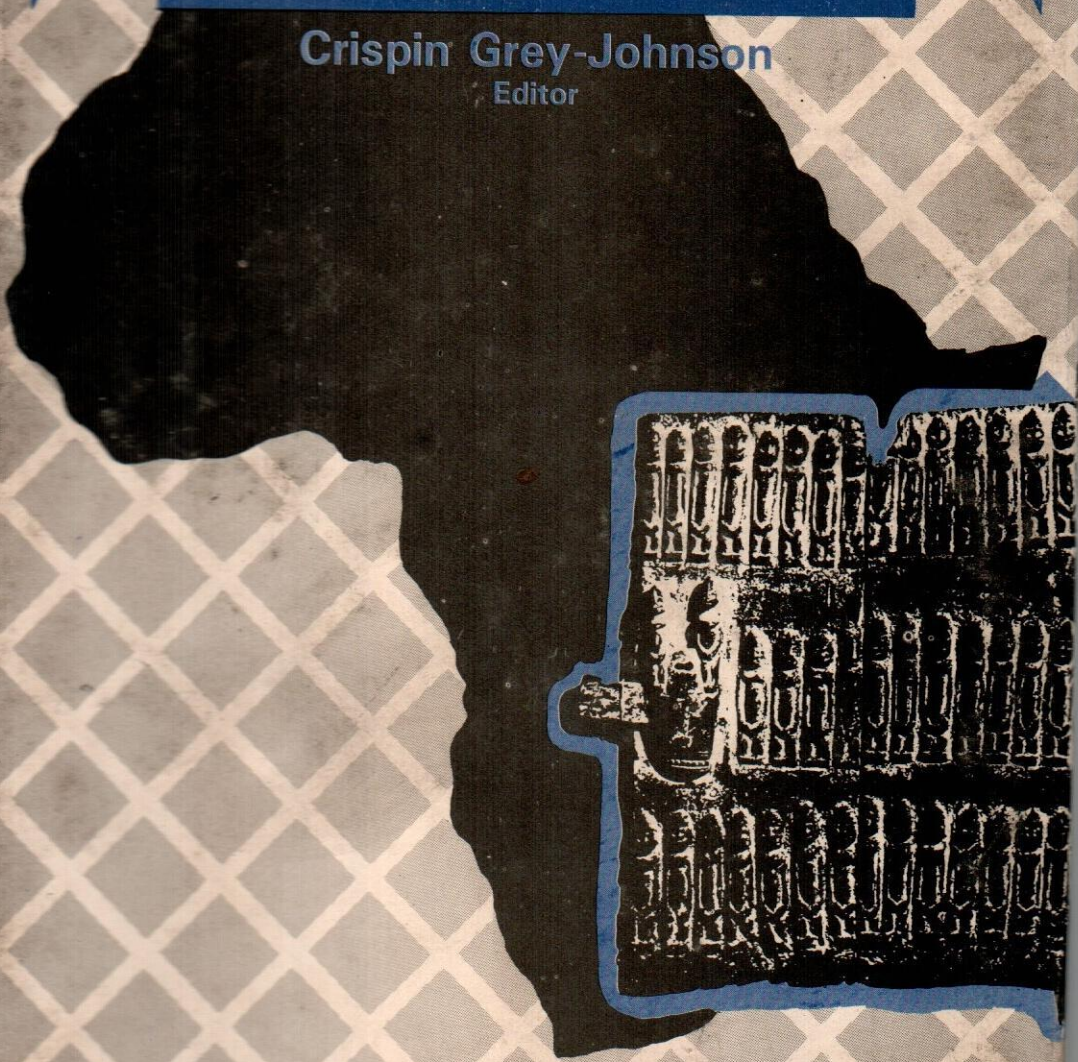
CRISPIN GREY-JOHNSON

African Association for Public Administration and Management

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Issues in Human Resources Development Policy

Crispin Grey-Johnson  
Editor



African Association for Public Administration and Management

**The Employment Crisis in Africa**  
**Issues In Human Resources Development**  
**Policy**

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African Association for Public Administration and  
Management

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## Foreword

The economic downturn in Africa during this decade has brought into sharp focus the importance of the social sector in development and particularly as it impacts on the development of human resources. Indeed, both 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) have identified human resources as one of the four areas to be concentrated on, if the objectives of recovery are to be attained. Perhaps the biggest problem facing African Governments today, is the soaring unemployment rate within their economies caused by aggregate demand deficiency, particularly in the modern formal wage sector.

Unemployment is the most overt indicator of inefficiency in the utilisation of human resources. That this problem has assumed such magnitude in African countries is an indictment on the planning and development of human resources in Africa. Yet, it has become quite apparent, that only through the development and proper utilisation of its human resources can Africa hope to attain its objectives of self-reliant and self-sustained socio-economic development. The development and proper utilisation of human resources is a top priority for recovery and development for at least five reasons:

Firstly, the areas in which activity should be intensified to stimulate growth and bring about self-sufficiency are skill-intensive, requiring large numbers of middle- and high-level scientific, technical and managerial manpower. Thousands of agriculturists, agronomists, soil-scientists, hydrologists, meteorologists, engineers and technologists in all fields of engineering, geologists, physical, biological and medical scientists, veterinarians, economic, production and industrial managers, etc., will have to be produced in the next decade to provide the base upon which a new African economy will be built. That base is at present too narrow and fragile to allow the development process to be internalised. Without a significant and rapid strengthening of that base, African Governments will find it impossible to achieve any meaningful degree of socio-economic development.

Secondly, African Governments invest billions in educating and training their nationals. They then fail to create for these skilled Africans, those conditions that would encourage them to stay on and make real contributions to development. ECA estimates that some 70 000 such

middle- and high-level Africans have either fled the continent or have chosen not to return to their countries after having acquired skills that could be put to use in the development endeavours of their countries. The direct costs of the brain drain to African countries run into millions of US dollars, representing the amounts spent in educating, training and providing social services to these nationals. The opportunity costs are even higher representing their foregone contributions to productivity. African Governments should urgently address the problem with a view to retaining within the African economy, many more of Africa's skilled manpower, while at the same time reducing their dependence on outside expertise.

Thirdly, African Governments must strive to streamline their third level education with the objective needs for self-reliant development. Programmes have to be initiated or strengthened in those critical areas of knowledge and skill which Africans must develop if they are to take control over the socio-economic development process. These areas relate to agriculture, industry, science and technology and economic management. Post-graduate and R+D programmes must be significantly expanded so as to provide the middle- and high-level manpower required in these fields, locally. This is essential for another reason: the absence or inadequacy of programmes in fields that relate to agriculture, industry, science and technology and management, is responsible for a good part of the brain drain, since many of Africa's highly skilled who work in countries of the North went to these countries in the first place to pursue their studies. To reduce the need for out-of-region education and training, African Governments must create many more opportunities for this need to be fulfilled locally. However, it would not be feasible for each African country to attempt to meet this need by itself, therefore it would be important for collective regional and subregional strategies to be evolved to undertake the necessary expansion and strengthening of programmes.

Fourthly, the public sector cannot continue as the major employer in African countries. At present it provides employment to between 40% and 50% of the wage and salaried labour force in African countries. Already, the strains on Government and the public sector in general have started showing, giving rise to the rampant retrenchments and the freezes on public sector employment as part of the structural adjustment programmes being implemented in most of Africa. Yet the rapid population growth trends in Africa foretell that the labour force will be growing at a rate that would by far surpass employment growth, given the present and projected performance of the African economy, and assuming that African countries

continue to rely on the traditional creators of employment. It is therefore most important that development planning and investment be focused on employment creation. It is also important that entrepreneurship be cultivated among Africa's young so that they grow up to be entrepreneurs in their own right, creating jobs for others.

Finally, development cannot take root among a people that lacks self-confidence and self-reliance. Colonialism did its best to erode these virtues in the African, but the 1980s have witnessed certain events which have had a negative impact on the pride and confidence of the African — famine, food aid, debt, destabilisation and the imposition by certain "development" institutions on African sovereign governments, of certain development policies that have added to the miseries of the African and further shaken his self-confidence. Human resources development systems must address this problem so that the next generation of workers and managers will be equipped with an attitude to self and nation that would promote innovation, resourcefulness and self-reliance.

These concerns formed the basis of the discussions which took place during the AAPAM Roundtable in Kampala, Uganda, in 1988. This publication is a product of that Roundtable and it is our attempt to reach those who could not be with us during those five days but for whom the messages made are equally important.

For facilitating the production of the book, we wish to thank an ardent AAPAM member: Crispin Grey-Johnson, who undertook the editing and did the job so well and so fast. The publication has also been made possible by the support of a number of organisations who contributed generously towards the holding of the Roundtable where the papers were first presented, as well as the cost of publication. They include the Ford Foundation, Friedrich Erbert-Stiftung and the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation.

Finally, the Association wishes to express its indebtedness to the Government and people of Uganda, the Pearl of Africa, for hosting the Roundtable.

**William N. Wamalwa**  
President of AAPAM

## Opening Address

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*His Excellency President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda and Chairman of the National Resistance Movement/National Resistance Council*

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Your Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen.

On behalf of the people and Government of the Republic of Uganda, and on behalf of the National Resistance Movement, I welcome you all most warmly to the Tenth Roundtable of the African Association for Public Administration and Management (AAPAM).

Mr. Chairman, when, in July this year, I was contacted by the Permanent Secretary in my office and Head of the Civil Service, who happens also to be the Chairman of the Uganda Association for Public Administration and Management — UAPAM — and informed of your desire to hold your Roundtable in this country, I readily gave my consent. I did so after a quick but thorough consideration of a number of factors.

One of them was that the only time this country hosted AAPAM was in 1967 and yet our country's officials have been attending AAPAM gatherings in other African countries where, I am informed, they have always been very warmly received, and very well looked after in the true African tradition.

The second factor was that meetings of this nature are in line with the guiding philosophy of our movement as contained in our ten-point programme. For instance, point number nine of the latter commits us to "co-operation with other African countries" in not only "defending human and democratic rights of our brothers in other parts of Africa" but also pursuing other activities that we consider to be in our interest, such as support for AAPAM and its national chapter, UAPAM. The third factor was that your wish to come to Uganda is a sign of the confidence which the outside world is continuing to show in us. The Uganda you have seen or will see during your stay is vastly different from that of 1976. As a Government and as a people, we can proudly and justifiably say that gone are the days when visitors to Uganda feared for their lives and personal property. The country has entered an era of genuine peace, democracy and human rights. Our people and our visitors can now move about unmolested and feel

genuinely free to discuss issues dear to their hearts without fear of harassment from the state machinery, and as long as they are not breaking the laws of this land.

Mr. Chairman, we thank AAPAM very much for having found us worthy of hosting this Roundtable. We sincerely hope that, at the end of your week's deliberations and after returning to your respective countries, you will look back nostalgically at your stay in this Pearl of Africa and long for the day when you can visit us again.

Mr. Chairman, I have had an opportunity to study the Aide Memoire prepared for this Roundtable. The theme you have chosen is "Human Resources Development and Employment in Africa: Policy and Management Issues". This is a crucial and pertinent topic.

It is not my intention to pre-empt the very many and brilliant ideas which, I believe, are contained in the various papers to be presented by the different experts some of whom are from Uganda, or which will be brought out by the discussants and other experts during your plenary and syndicate discussions. Nevertheless, before I leave you to go into the substance of your discussions, permit me to share with you some concerns. I am expressing these concerns in the form of eight questions whose answers you may wish to give me either in the course of this week or later — not only for my own use but also for use by other African leaders.

First, how can we modernize our economies, working methods and procedures while:

- (a) remaining simple and committed to those indigenous values which we rightly cherish so much and which are not an obstacle to progress
- (b) not leaving behind or confusing the masses whether living in villages or towns and
- (c) without sacrificing democracy and human rights

Second, how can we reward initiative and creativity while:

- (a) protecting the weak and disadvantaged members of our societies and
- (b) ensuring and promoting genuine national or organizational solidarity?

Thirdly, how can we achieve a high level of national development inspite of the fact that many of our people are illiterate and live in remote villages?

Fourth, how can we take advantage of the benefits and blessings of science and technology so that we can master our environment and, later, space?

In this connection, I would like to ask a supplementary question. What role can AAPAM play so that by the year 2000, Africans also would have overcome our multifarious problems including those related to policy formulation and implementation?

Fifth, what strategies can we adopt so that we are able to efficiently maintain the physical and other assets we already have and those we are busily trying to put up?

The sixth question has a number of supplementary questions. What can public and private organizations do, jointly or separately, to ensure that, in the interests of the national economy, there is fair treatment of different professions and professionals? Specifically, what can and should be done to ensure that employees of the same educational attainment but in different fields who enter different organizations in the same country are remunerated roughly equally — in terms of salary and monetary and non-monetary fringe benefits and incentives? Can we realistically expect people, especially the very brilliant ones, who enter certain professions and organizations to have high morale and be very productive when they are being paid so little at a time when in *the same country* their colleagues who entered other professions or organizations are receiving so much? What justification is there for a permanent secretary to have access to the country's V.I.P lounge or lounges when a professor is barred from such places? Is there not a risk of the brilliant people abandoning the professions and the organizations which seem not to treat their employees well, in favour of those that seem to pamper theirs? And what will be the consequences for the national economy?

Seventh, how can AAPAM assist African leaders in creating or maintaining conditions which can persuade our educated people to stay in their respective countries, instead of going to live and work abroad where the terms and conditions of service are much more attractive or, if they are already there, to return home?

Eighth and lastly, how can we ensure that there are in African organizations, true managerial democracy and respect for human rights? Mr. Chairman, in order not to take too much of your time, but, at the same time, facilitate the task of answering these questions, I will elaborate on, and try to suggest possible answers to three of them — the fourth, the sixth and the eighth.

Mr. Chairman, Africans cannot afford to remain scientifically and technologically backward. We must rack our brains and make whatever

sacrifices we consider democratically legitimate in order to overcome this backwardness. We must, as a continent, cease to glorify or be satisfied with material poverty. We must exploit science and technology. We must modernize and innovate while guarding those of our cultural values which we consider vital. I challenge you, African experts in public administration and management, to advise us on how best we can organize ourselves as a people so that we can walk or run only when it is necessary so that, for the rest of the time, we can also ride, drive or fly; preserve our fresh produce and consume it later, instead of being forced to consume it as soon as it has been harvested or risk seeing it go bad; cultivate our vast tracts of land with tractors rather than with mere hoes; find a cure for killer diseases like AIDS; use computers instead of doing all our work manually, etc. To accomplish all this and more, will require resources. We need money, materials, space and time. But, above all, we need people. Luckily, our numbers are considerable. What we need is total mobilization of all that are living. We must conduct sectoral and national surveys to determine exactly how many we are, who is qualified in what skill, who is just born and who is left with a few months to die; after that, we should allocate tasks, from the simplest to the most complex, sometimes to individuals but at other times to teams of individuals or larger groups; and we must carry out other necessary activities like the development and effective motivation of all in an effort to defeat backwardness and assure ourselves and our posterity of true happiness, peace and prosperity.

Mr. Chairman, during your deliberations, you will spend time discussing the problem of the brain drain. I am very pleased indeed that you chose this as one of your sub-themes for the Roundtable. The brain drain must be considered by Africa as a problem that is critical. The phenomenon is an enemy of our progress since it makes us spend huge sums of money on highly skilled manpower only to lose it to those who might not have spent even a cent on it.

Who is to blame? There are a number of parties that can be blamed. Let me mention four. First on the list are African leaders ourselves. I sincerely believe that some of us have sometimes pursued policies which our educated people justifiably find unacceptable and which drive them out of certain countries or Africa itself. In this connection I hope that in the course of your discussions, you will have the courage and honesty to tell us in greater detail where we have gone wrong and make specific recommendations as to the measures which we can adopt — and urgently too — to solve this problem.

The other party that we should blame is Africa's elite. These men and women have also let the continent down in a number of ways. For instance, many are reluctant to do with a little less comfort now, so as to have more of it in future. They are also unwilling to sacrifice their lives in the defence of their cherished principles. They forget that some people in the countries they go to, at one time in the past, sacrificed their lives so as to create the wealth and peace they go to enjoy. Furthermore, some of our educated people act selfishly when they literally run away from the political and economic problems in their countries and hope to return when circumstances have improved.

The third group of people to blame are Africa's managers. May I suggest to you, ladies and gentlemen, that some of you are responsible for driving our educated people, especially the young, away from our countries. Some of these young people, after obtaining very high qualifications, return home with very high hopes and just ambitions for themselves and Africa. They want to contribute towards overcoming Africa's underdevelopment. How are they received? In some organizations, they are received with a hostility which is so great and persistent that they become shocked and disillusioned. Every effort is made to frustrate them and to prove to them that their high qualifications are useless. They are literally harassed. So, some of them, who lack determination or who feel they have had enough struggling, simply pack their bags and go to countries where they will be welcome.

Mr. Chairman, let me now touch briefly on managerial democracy and human rights in African organizations. Some of you might wonder why I have chosen the term "Managerial Democracy" instead of "Participative Management". I prefer the former term because it is broader, less confusing and nearer to political democracy. Mr. Chairman, African leaders are sometimes accused and justifiably so, of being dictatorial and of violating human rights. But permit me to be rather provocative by asserting that some African managers are even worse dictators and that they, too, directly or indirectly violate human rights.

Indeed, how many of them have taken decisions that involve millions in money and lives without consulting their superiors, let alone colleagues and subordinates? How many manage their organizations more like high-handed tribal chiefs than modern, enlightened and democratic managers? How many dismiss employees not because these have committed genuine and serious offences but because they (the employees) have either outshone them or defeated them in a social contest or some

other contest in which the interests of the organization are not involved? How many managers have served faithfully, regimes that were brutal and murderous? How many managers have taken an unfair advantage of female employees both married and unmarried?

There is another side of managerial democracy: among us politicians, the principle of "you come and go" applies with a cruel certainty. One might be a cabinet minister or a member of a legislative body today and tomorrow, you will find him on the streets. There is no permanency of tenure. One is retained for as long as one is popular and competent. Should not the same principle be extended at least to the more senior managers? What would be wrong with subjecting them to rigorous annual or even bi-annual appraisals and demoting or dismissing those who are incompetent? Should terms and conditions of service be so protective? Is it not high time we reviewed the concept of "security of job tenure"?

Mr. Chairman, let me now conclude my remarks. I would like to thank all those Ugandan officials including members of the executive committee of the Uganda Association of Public Administration and Management for the excellent arrangements you have made so that our visitors can have a comfortable stay in our country. Once again, I thank the members of continental AAPAM and their friends who are sponsoring this conference for having honoured us by deciding to hold this conference in Uganda. I wish you all a very enjoyable stay in this country and very fruitful deliberations.

I now have the pleasure to declare this AAPAM 10th Roundtable Conference open.

## Keynote Address

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*H. J. Obbo*

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### **Importance of Human Resources**

The theme for AAPAM's Tenth Roundtable Conference, namely, "Human Resources Development and Employment in Africa: Policy and Management Issues" is a very important one. This is because, although people are a critical resource in any development process and truly the beginning and end of all human organizations, there is a tendency — especially in developing countries — to take them for granted and to assume that they can be managed anyhow and by anybody. We forget that people have to be managed far better than any other resource — whether tangible like materials, or intangible like time.

In virtually all organizations, managers talk flatteringly about the importance of human resources. This flattery attains exceptional heights on occasions such as the death of a staff member. For instance, a staff member who at the time of his death had extremely bad annual staff appraisal reports and was perhaps about to be dismissed, would nevertheless be described as having been very dedicated and well-behaved. The employer's representative would, in his funeral oration, add that the death of the officer was a great loss to the institution and that the officer would be very hard to replace. Yet, judged by their actions, many African managers do not appear to value people. If they do, it is invariably in an impersonal, superficial manner. In management practice the individual is hardly regarded as intrinsically important. Rather, he tends to be considered as only a cog in a vast machine. This is particularly so in large organizations and in urban areas where traditional African values have been somewhat eroded and individualism has gained the upper hand over communal solidarity and mutual support.

But is this tendency to take people for granted or to regard them as mere cogs in a machine realistic — especially in Africa? Do we have so many people that we can afford to manage them anyhow? Can we afford to treat our sweepers, peasants, factory workers and the work force in general as if they do not matter? Do we have so many skilled people that we should not

care if they are forced to leave in search of more enabling working environments elsewhere?

Africa's development requires that we retain and maximize the use of all the skilled people we have within the economy. African countries should therefore endeavour to create the conditions that would allow each citizen to attain his highest potential. In addition, it must be said that while developed countries can effectively manage a certain amount of unemployment, African countries cannot, since they do not have a social security system that provides unemployment benefits for the unemployed. Besides, in the face of all the work that needs to be done for Africa's socio-economic development and the dearth of skills available within the continent, we cannot afford to have unemployment, especially of skilled people.

Efficient management of human resources and their effective utilization are thus the bedrock of any society's development. Unless people are transformed into development assets — resources — and properly utilized to give value to the available physical resources, they will remain liabilities to society and clog the development process.

But first, to address human resources development and employment in Africa, one needs to address some issues in human resources planning. In personnel management, human resources planning attempts to predict the future personnel needs of an organisation — usually over a specified period of time — and to make timely provisions for meeting the need.

## **Importance of Human Resources Planning**

The importance of human resources planning can be justified on at least five points:

- (a) Highly skilled human power is often scarce;
- (b) It takes a long time to train people in certain skill areas;
- (c) There is still competition in the job market for skilled manpower;
- (d) Human resources planning helps to anticipate skilled manpower shortages and to mitigate them in good time; and
- (e) It helps to anticipate emerging skilled manpower demand.

Although human resources planning is important, it does have certain limitations:

- (a) Pushed to extremes, planning, particularly at the macro level, could interfere with individual career choices, particularly of youth;
- (b) Whether at the national or at the organisational level, planning could be both costly and time-consuming;
- (c) It could introduce rigidities and reduce an organisation's capacity to respond and adapt to change;
- (d) Planning could be rendered impossible in situations where unforeseen events — civil strife or natural disasters like Chad, Uganda, Sudan and Ethiopia — occur before or during plan implementation;
- (e) There is the issue of paucity or unreliability of data, which makes planning difficult; and
- (f) Human resources planning might not be necessary or so useful in small organisations where needs could easily be identified and responded to. But even in bigger organisations, it might not be worth the effort if the predicted supply-demand gap is likely to be minimal.

In spite of its problems, limitations and frustrations, human resources planning is a critical aspect of modern management especially for developing countries and large organisations. African countries cannot afford not to engage in it, or to do so in an unorganised, careless or amateurish manner. Attempting to avoid it is, in very many respects, comparable to avoiding budgeting in financial management. In this connection one can argue that for the very rich, one need not budget since there will be money to spend anyway, and that for those with hardly any money, budgeting is a useless exercise. One might be right. But it is readily admitted that for most organisations and countries, financial budgeting is a must. The same applies to human resources planning which would help optimise the utilisation of meagre resources.

At the national level, for example, there is need for periodic surveys to provide answers to questions like: What is the skill profile of the population? How is employment distributed among the production sectors? Are the deployment and utilisation of the different skills optimised? If not, what can be done to improve the situation? Who is unemployed, why and for how long have they been so unemployed? What can be done to ensure that the unemployed are enabled to find something productive to do? At both the national and organisational levels, there is need for a systematic and continuous monitoring of the pattern of supply and demand for skills in the labour market. Vocational and career guidance and counselling should also

be provided to students and young school leavers in order to help them make the right choices with regard to their fields of study and careers. In this way, excessive mismatches between jobs available and the skills possessed by job seekers, would be avoided.

## **The Importance of Proper Personnel Selection Methods and Procedures**

The process of filling vacancies is a long one, involving the preparation of job descriptions, job specifications, making announcements of vacancies, short listing, conducting interviews and/or examinations, making the offer and doing the placement.

The importance of personnel selection as an integral aspect of human resources development and employment is not sufficiently appreciated in Africa. Personnel selection is a critical factor in human resources development and employment especially when it involves bringing fresh entrants into service, regardless of the level at which they are being recruited. If at this stage the mistake is made of bringing in the "wrong" person in spite of any provisions for a probationary period, the possibility of resorting to measures like dismissal or even suspension after the recruit's confirmation, is very difficult indeed. Of course, separation is not impossible to effect. But it is very costly in terms of industrial relations and in money terms. It is therefore far better to invest a lot of time, energy and money in identifying the potentially wrong person and not taking him on at all, than to avoid such investment by using "easy" and "quick" methods and techniques to employ him only to have to go through the long and painful process of getting him out of the organisation soon thereafter. A second consideration is that once the "right" person has been selected, other aspects of human resources management, particularly training and motivation, are likely to become relatively easy.

## **Application of the Merit Principle**

While the merit principle<sup>1</sup> should as far as possible, be adhered to, there are cases where considerations of social justice and national unity necessitate the deliberate disregard of the principle. Such cases include the need to ensure "balance" — regional, gender or any other — in appointments. The relaxing of the merit principle can be done without

indulging in nepotism, abuse of office or other such malpractices which tend to reduce efficiency in human resources development and utilisation.

## Politicisation of Public Services

Personnel selection, especially that involving promotions at the higher levels, would be greatly facilitated in African countries if it were made clear whether the government in question requires its public service to be wholly neutral, totally politicised or somewhere in between. Each option has advantages and disadvantages. And each sovereign state has the right to go in for the option that best suits its needs, given its higher interests and the peculiarity of its circumstances.

At this stage of Africa's development, partial politicisation might be the ideal option. Certain positions could be made political while allowing the majority of the operatives to enjoy a high degree of neutrality. Politicisation in this context does not necessarily mean that incumbents of some posts should be supporters of the party in power — where parties exist — although this is a requirement in certain countries. What it means is that appointees to these positions would come along with a new leader (e.g. a minister) and vacate with him, unless the new leader finds the incumbent capable of serving under him with the same degree of efficiency and loyalty, and decides to retain him. Whatever the case, those political appointees who were originally from the public service should be allowed to return to their former junior positions if they so wish. This is practicable politically and administratively and should not be construed as punitive against the individual concerned. In politics, there are examples of very competent men who, after serving as Prime Ministers or Vice Presidents, later accepted to serve merely as Ministers. The practice is widespread in the French Public Service where competent and politically skillful civil servants serve in Ministers' "Cabinets" (*Cabinets Ministériels*) as part of a cadre of technically competent and politically committed operatives with responsibility for the co-ordination of the work of Ministries. These officials usually revert to their Civil Service jobs once the Ministers no longer want them or when the particular Ministers have lost office.

In Africa, the Nigerian Federal Government, in April 1988, politicised the post of Director-General and made Ministers Chief Executive Officers and Accounting Officers in their Ministries. The Nigerian case is too recent in administration and management practice and will need time before its full impact can be assessed effectively.

Reforms such as these are rooted in the reality of the relationship between politics and administration in African countries. They have been expanded upon by such scholars as Norton E. Long<sup>2</sup>, Harold Seidman<sup>3</sup> and the late Anthony Rweyemamu<sup>4</sup>. Not all senior managers can be expected to have the inclination to serve loyally and equally, all types of political masters regardless of the latter's philosophies and policies. Nor is it fair to expect all political leaders to be comfortable with managers who are supposedly neutral and capable of serving all regimes.

So, to minimise situations where managers feel politically victimised or politicians cry management sabotage, the critical, central and sensitive jobs in the Public Service could be made political. The rest of the jobs in the Public Service should, however, remain neutral in terms of recruitment criteria to fill them. This should ensure continuity in the service. Even with jobs which have been politicised, every effort should be made to ensure that those who are deemed politically qualified to be appointed, are technically competent.

## **Reform of Selection Methods**

There is also need, at the purely technical level, to improve on the techniques and methods used in personnel selection. Four reforms are suggested:

- (a) First, there is need to strengthen staff performance appraisal by making it more systematic, scientific, objective and open so that its results can be used in selection for promotion
- (b) Second, there is need to introduce the "group selection" method into our public services. The method consists of several techniques including a battery of psychological tests to find out things like leadership qualities and written and oral expression. There is also the individual interview on which most of our services seem to rely too excessively
- (c) Third, there should be introduced well designed and properly administered written examinations such as are used, at present, in the Uganda Commercial Bank and the recently established Nile Bank — at least for appointments at some levels

- (d) Fourth, services should explore the possibility of introducing efficiency bar examinations. The idea is to force officers to undergo written and oral examinations, say every two to three years. These can be made a part of their staff evaluation or be built into promotional interviews. Their use would encourage officers to keep abreast of developments in their areas at both the theoretical and practical levels.

The above reforms could increase the responsibilities of the appointing authorities and especially, the service commissions or their equivalents in charge of parastatals. They would also call for the strengthening of the secretariats of these commissions and, perhaps, for greater delegation of duties and authority to them as well as to bodies subordinate to the commissions operating at lower administrative units.

## **Current Issues in Employment**

The following issues in employment in Africa need to be taken into consideration in any serious attempt to combat the scourge of unemployment in the African economy today. They need to be clearly understood in an effort to see how best to respond to them:

- (a) There is currently an increasing process of urbanisation and rural/urban migration.
- (b) African economies are now becoming more industrialised.
- (c) For those employed in towns, there are fewer opportunities to tap supplementary sources of income, e.g. from agriculture.
- (d) The extended family system is showing signs of breaking down. This in turn, is leading to a greater reliance on self or on a few people rather than on the collectivity for support in times of severe economic difficulties.
- (e) The breakdown of the extended family system is threatening the efficiency and reliability of the traditional systems of social security. Consequently, African countries might have to copy Ghana's example of insuring all workers including those working on farms.
- (f) Land is becoming scarcer and in some cases, work on it has become unattractive. Consequently, finding work in industry or services has assumed greater importance.

- (g) The new value attached to work and the fear of losing it have increased the importance of workers' or professional organisations — trade and workers' unions, Law Societies, Medical Associations, etc.
- (h) The desire to find wage employment and the increasing difficulties of getting it, have led to the emergence of the "informal sector" as a major employing sector particularly in the urban areas. The sector comprises businesses like tailoring, carpentry and shoe repair — which involve between one and ten persons and are open to all. About 60% of the urban labour force in most African countries are in this sector.
- (i) Massive reduction of staff in the public sector is now widespread. In Ghana, it has already led to a reduction of some 45 000 jobs in the public service and the institution of measures to handle its social and associated consequences.<sup>5</sup>
- (j) The emergence of a situation where a distinction is being made between skills that are regarded as "marketable" and those that are not.
- (k) The difficulty of adequately motivating employees given the economic downturn and the socio-economic crisis in Africa.
- (l) The increasing brain drain which is threatening Africa with a massive loss of skilled manpower.

The above issues and problems are truly complex and most of them cannot be tackled by common sense. Nor can they be easily tackled solely by relying on imported management techniques. They require innovative management techniques which are firmly rooted in African realities as well as a lot of sound planning.

The Africa of old used to take very good care of those who were skilled in war, medicine, the manufacture of tools, leadership and in other fields. These skilled ancient Africans were respected, protected and encouraged because society valued their work and knew how much it stood to lose if it lost them. Sadly, today, modern Africa seems to have lost that sense of value for those whose expertise is vital to society's development. We tend to treat skilled people as if they were liabilities to society. Any society which humiliates, tortures, neglects or drives out of its borders its best people, is one that is preparing itself knowingly or unknowingly for defeat and ruin. For their own development, African countries must make every effort to identify their talented citizens, give them every encouragement to stay

inside or come back from where they may be and utilise their skills and aptitudes to society's advantage. Skilled people should also be given the necessary equipment to make them effective in their work and to create opportunities for innovation. They would also need to be provided with material and non-material incentives to ensure that they give of their best in the service of the country. Africa has to wake up to this naked truth or condemn itself to eternal backwardness and degeneration.

However, for this to happen, there is need for leadership and organisation. These two will ensure that all of us are properly identified, counted, classified, developed, deployed and utilised. Africa is not short of men and women to take on leadership and organisation responsibilities. Nor is she incapable of identifying and developing people to relieve those who, with time, must necessarily retire from active service.

It is recognized that AAPAM has played and is playing a part in this leadership and this organisation role. It should, and I know it will, continue to accept to play these roles for the benefit of posterity. Yes, in spite of the daunting problems that face Africa as a continent, there is no need for despair — for whatever the challenges, they should serve instead as sources of encouragement, strength and determination to succeed. We have overcome and are overcoming many of these problems. Tomorrow, rather than some distant day, we shall overcome most of the rest — thanks to the sweat, blood, sacrifices, thoughtfulness and creativity of our people and our friends outside Africa.

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## **PART II:**

# **THE EMPLOYMENT CRISIS**

## Introduction

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*Crispin Grey-Johnson*

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Under-development denotes the lack of, or inadequate capability of a society to fully meet all its material, social, economic and psychic needs. That capability may be strengthened through the development of social institutions, the building of communal wealth through appropriate economic interventions, the quest for social, political and religious equilibrium, the promotion of positive societal norms and the inculcation of positive attitudes, and the promotion of life-styles that enhance socio-political cohesion and foster endogenous socio-economic development. Wherever the bottleneck to development may be located, human resources are the only instruments that can have them removed. Skills and knowledge can be applied to manipulate other resources to produce goods, services and wealth. Social cohesion and stability depend on the attitudes of the members of a given society towards the common good. These skills, knowledge and attitudes are acquired through a process of life-long education which begins from birth and continues through one's life-time, informally, non-formally and, in Africa, for a fortunate few, formally.

When an under-developed society is confronted with a national emergency which threatens its very survival, as was the case in Africa in the decade of the 1980s, the message to that society is that its capabilities to master its surrounding environment — political, social, economic and physical — may be crumbling. Its topmost priority, once that message is well received and understood, is to strengthen its capabilities as a guarantee against annihilation. But these capabilities are not built up by new found wealth, or massive external resource flows, or vast reservoirs of natural resources, or huge public institutions and physical infrastructures *per se*, but rather by the availability within society, of people who are able to utilise them and make them more productive by producing capital and technology, exploiting, processing and utilising their natural resource base to their collective advantage, transforming their physical environment to a haven for survival and development, managing social, economic, political and cultural change so that they produce benefits rather than costs, having built-in mechanisms for ensuring a continuous growth of knowledge and

for regenerating social norms and values. Only human beings can have these capabilities. When they are sufficiently highly developed, they become "resources" — human resources; but left undeveloped, they are nothing but liabilities to a society's development prospects.

Given the unique situation of disadvantage in which Africa finds itself, the build-up of capabilities for survival and development is without doubt a most urgent priority. And because of the crisis and the subsequent adjustments being pursued within the continent and their effects on resource allocation, particularly to the social sectors including human resources development systems, alternatives must be found to ensure that the capabilities required for sustained socio-economic development are brought out among Africa's people.

It has been demonstrated on many occasions in the past, that the human resources base for Africa is far too weak to sustain socio-economic development. There are far too few experts in science and technology and even fewer researchers involved in scientific and industrial research and development. Not enough specialists exist to take on the task of mechanisation and modernisation of African agriculture; the manufacturing sector is still too dependent on non-Africans for its operation and management and for the provision to it of production inputs and spare parts. The same goes for the region's education systems which rely quite heavily on expatriate personnel and depend to a fairly large extent on outsiders for the provision of training and education to a high percentage of its middle- and high-level manpower.

African governments have, as far back as 1980, clearly articulated in the Lagos Plan of Action, their position on the need for African countries to accelerate their efforts to strengthen the human resources base so that it could support Africa's self-reliant and self-sustained development and in order for the region's human resources to function as the true "mentors" and "custodians" of socio-economic development. However, since the early 1980s, there have emerged within the continent, forces that seem to be veering the region away from progress towards attaining these objectives. The present reform and adjustment measures as well as the crisis which brought them about are responsible for the quite substantial reductions in investment in human resource development and employment-creation ventures throughout the region in the last several years.

In spite of the commitments of African Governments to employment promotion, very serious declines in the levels of employment and

productivity have been registered throughout the region, partly as a result of the crisis, the ensuing economic contraction and the recovery measures being implemented through structural adjustment programmes. Lay-offs, employment freezes and diminished levels of investment in development projects have constricted African employment markets, thereby significantly reducing the availability of employment opportunities to Africa's growing labour force, particularly the young school-leavers. Wage and salary freezes and the deep erosion of pay packages have also brought about a situation of extreme hardship to many in Africa's workforce. Many public servants have become demotivated and this has had an impact on their productivity and efficiency on the job.

One indicator of inefficiency in the utilisation of human resources is the brain drain. The crisis conditions that emerged on the continent contributed significantly to propelling the flight of skilled Africans from the region. The declines in real incomes, deteriorations in the working environment, the wide-spread shortages of working tools and equipment, the difficult social conditions such as the poor functioning of social amenities, transport systems, poor housing conditions, declining standards of education, shortages of goods and services, political instability, have all converged to aggravate the problem of the brain drain as more and more of Africa's middle- and high-level manpower flee the oppressive conditions of living prevailing.

Part II of this book provides facts and figures on what surely is an employment crisis in Africa, examines the various dimensions of the problem and proffers solutions to it.

The decade of the 1980s was also characterised by serious declines in Africa's educational expansion to the extent that if present trends continue much of the gains that had been made since independence to deepen the region's human capital stock, to eradicate illiteracy, to expand the manpower base and to democratise education, will be undone. The present policies on education in much of Africa seem to be guided by the need to reduce the public sector's financial and administrative involvement in the delivery of educational services. This, in turn, appears to be dictated by the fast growing demand for education, caused by rapid population growth and the dwindling public sector resources caused by the recession. Consequently, to rationalise the reduction of Government involvement in the education sector; arguments have been put forth to show that African education systems are too expensive or inefficient at certain levels and in certain areas

of study; African Governments will not be able to mobilise the fiscal resources required to meet the growing need for education, given the present and projected macro-economic conditions in Africa. Consequently, steps should be taken to ensure that Government resources are concentrated on those levels of education that are the most socially productive, and policies should be pursued to recover the costs of higher education — which is deemed to be too expensive and relatively unproductive, socially — and to allocate these recovered costs to the primary sector, which, according to the proponents of these views, is the most productive level of education in Africa. Also as part of the cost recovery measures, it has been recommended that a credit market for higher education be developed through a system of loans and selective scholarship schemes. Finally, the argument goes, education should be privatised and the management of public education decentralised. It is argued that if these measures are implemented by African countries, financial resources for education would be increased and would be utilised more efficiently, and access to education would be expanded and democratised in favour of the poor and disadvantaged.

It is probably on account of the implementation of these measures that the following has been recorded in African education in the 1980s: a dramatic slowdown in the expansion of education, evidenced by the declines in enrolment increases at all levels from 9,3% per annum between 1975 and 1980 to 2,9% per annum between 1980 and 1984 at the primary level; from 13,7 to 10,9% at the secondary level during the same period; and at the third level of education by 66% between 1980 and 1985; declines in the quality of instructional resources (shortages of texts, reagents, equipment and other teaching resources); unfavourable pupil/teacher ratios; deterioration of physical structures and infrastructures etc. The continuation of such trends would definitely threaten the achievements made in education in Africa between 1960 and 1983 which are a five-fold increase in gross primary enrolment ratios; the explosion of third level enrolment from 11 000 to 437 000 students; the expansion and significant build-up of knowledge; and other socio-economic, socio-cultural and socio-political gains such as the fight for sovereignty and independence and the significant improvements in health, literacy, life-expectancy and nutrition.

The new policy measures currently in force tend to view education in isolation of the prevailing social realities. Attempts to privatise education by passing on the tuition, recurrent and welfare costs of education to the user, have turned out to be unrealistic. Student unrest and other forms of

social resistance to these measures have already surfaced in some parts of Africa. The reason may be that parents are beginning to feel over-burdened by being made to build schools, subsidise salaries, meet the soaring costs of books and equipment, provide furniture etc., at a time when their real incomes are declining.

In addition, establishing a system of cost recovery through a student loan scheme amounts to the same thing: passing on the cost of education to the user, who does not have the means to meet more than his most basic subsistence needs. It is doubtful also that such schemes could work in Africa given that no university graduate is guaranteed a job and that there are hardly any restrictions on migration.

These policies will, therefore, most likely turn out to be self-defeating, in that rather than enhance the development of education, they would weaken its effectiveness, militate against the skills development objectives of the region and promote education, especially at the middle- and higher-levels for the rich — those who can pay — while reinforcing the marginalisation of the poor, who cannot.

In Part III, issues relating to education for employment, skills development and the socio-economic development of African countries in general are addressed.

These then are the concerns of this book. Jan Vandemoortele begins with a situational analysis of the employment problem. He gives an informative overview of the employment trends throughout the decade of the 1980s and identifies the important labour market adjustments which have taken place over a period of ten years. In Chapter 2, Crispin Grey-Johnson provides an analysis of the impact of the crisis, structural adjustment and policy reform measures on employment in African countries. He then examines the adequacy of present employment-generation policies of governments to address the root causes of unemployment, and ends with a set of proposals for policy reform and programme development. Jide Balogun and Gelase Mutahaba make an analysis of the causes of the brain drain and its effects on development. They highlight the socio-economic climate prevailing in the 1980s as well as the pursuit of certain employment policies and patterns of human resources utilisation and management as the main factors behind the brain drain. They end with a set of proposals as to how the brain drain could be minimised. Ali D. Yahaya then gives an example of efforts being made in Nigeria to tackle unemployment — one of the country's biggest development headaches in the 1980s. This is followed by R. Baguma's

review and analysis of policies for youth employment in Tanzania, which also looks into the reasons for the failure of these policies. The two case studies illustrate what could be done and what should not be done in African countries if unemployment should be tackled effectively.

Part III goes into the various aspects of human resources development policy in Africa. The themes picked up in this part of the book revolve around education and training for employment. Faustin Mukyanuzi begins in Chapter 6, by examining how education systems in Africa could be oriented so as to prepare students for employment in both the formal and informal sectors of the economy. In Chapter 7, Peter H. Chiwona gives an overview of initiatives being taken by African Governments to relate education more to the requirements of the job market and to self-employment in agriculture or the organised private sector. A case study on Kenya by Hassan Bagha, in Chapter 8, analyses the main constraints on effectiveness in the development and utilisation of human resources and the efforts made by the government of Kenya to have these constraints removed. Abdullahi M. Yahie then ends Part III with an analysis of human resources development policies in Somalia, giving reasons for the lack of success in the implementation of these policies.

Employment, unemployment and general labour market questions, education and training and human resources policy formulation initiatives in African countries are thus extensively covered by the various chapter authors in this book. Part IV, *The Way Forward*, draws from the analysis and recommendations made in the preceding chapters to attempt a synthesis and make proposals for practical measures to be pursued to reduce unemployment and make human resources development policies more responsive to Africa's socio-economic development needs.

## **The African Employment Crisis of the 1980s: Some Facts and Figures**

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*Jan Vandemoortele*

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### **Introduction**

Until the late 1970s, the looming employment crisis in Africa remained, to a large extent, invisible because of the relatively rapid expansion of employment opportunities in both the modern and informal sectors. But the 1980s have witnessed a sharp deterioration in the region's employment situation. Indeed, given a situation in which the labour force expands faster than the economy — as has been the case in Africa since 1980 — the employment situation must inevitably worsen. The main causes of the deterioration are sluggish economic growth; the economic austerity programmes that are being implemented to tackle the internal and external imbalances; the growing impact of the demographic tide on labour supply; and the accelerating rural exodus which is becoming overwhelming for the absorptive capacity of the urban sector of the African economies. Many countries are implementing wide-ranging adjustments in economic policies which have a direct or indirect bearing on the African labour market. It is, therefore, not surprising that labour market adjustments are increasingly coming to the fore. Indeed, the employment challenge is becoming one of the most pressing development issues in Africa. This chapter gives an overview of the recent employment trends in the region and analyses the most important labour market adjustments which have taken place in Africa since 1980.

### **Employment Trends**

It is beyond doubt that there has been a sharp deterioration in the employment situation in recent years. But hard data to illustrate the downward trend are difficult to come by. Given the scanty and notoriously unreliable information available on the subject in Africa, it is necessary to keep the analysis at an aggregated level by comparing the changes in the labour force and in real GDP. The relationship between economic growth and employment is, of course, very complex and the transmission of

economic expansion to employment growth depends on a number of structural factors such as the nature of the economy, the functioning of the labour markets, the distribution of productive assets and technological change. Employment growth is related to the growth of output through the employment elasticity of GDP. Available data from the industrial countries indicate that the employment elasticity of GDP has averaged 0,40 between 1970 and 1987. This means that a 1% increase in total value added would generate a 0,4% increase in total employment. Data from some African countries indicate that the employment elasticity of GDP oscillates at around 0,60.<sup>1</sup> This figure is very high and reflects not only the labour-intensive nature of economic activity in the region, but also the growing prevalence of underemployment, in particular in the agricultural and informal sectors.

Table 1 shows recent trends in employment in Africa, based on observed trends in the GDP and labour force and using an employment elasticity of GDP of 0,60. It appears that the problems of open and disguised unemployment have continually worsened since 1980, whereas they remained more or less constant in the 1970s. The estimated growth in total employment slowed down from 2,6% per annum in the 1970s to 0,5% in the 1980s. As a consequence, the index of estimated employment in the region decreased by 2,1% per year in the 1980s. This means that the overall employment situation has worsened by some 14% between 1980 and 1987.

**Table 1: Estimated Index of the Employment Situation in Africa between 1970 and 1987**

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>1970</i>	<i>1980</i>	<i>1985</i>	<i>1987</i>
Gross Domestic Product	100,0	152,6	159,4	162,3
Estimated Employment	100,0	129,1	132,6	134,0
Estimated Labour Force	100,0	128,7	146,8	155,1
Index (employment/labour force)	100,0	100,3	90,3	86,4

*Source:* Derived from IMF national accounts data and ILO labour force estimates, assuming an employment elasticity of GDP of 0,60.

The above review shows that the 1980s have been a time of economic decline and social regression in Africa. Let us now turn to the recent adjustments that have taken place in African labour markets. This analysis, however, is

circumscribed by the lack of adequate quantitative information: it is seldom possible to support propositions with adequate region-wide data. The coverage statistical information is at best limited to a few countries and one is very often forced to use indirect and partial indications.<sup>2</sup> But drawing on what is available, it seems that the process of adjustment consists of the following five components: (i) declining real wages; (ii) declining wage employment growth; (iii) rising unemployment; (iv) expanding labour absorption in the informal sector; and (v) improving prospects for rural employment.

### **(i) Declining Real Wages**

One of the most glaring adjustments in African labour markets has been the rapid fall of real wages. Table 2 documents real wage trends in the modern sector. Out of the eighteen countries for which comparable and recent data are available, only two have reported modest increases in real wages. The two countries are Burundi and the Seychelles. The other sixteen countries have all registered considerable losses in real earnings. The decline has been steepest in Sierra Leone, Somalia, Tanzania, Sudan and Zambia where the average wage rate has dropped by 10% or more every year since 1980. On average, real wages seem to have declined by approximately a quarter between 1980 and 1985.

The data on real minimum wages in twenty-eight countries point in the same direction. The ranking of the countries according to the average and minimum wage trends (see Tables 2 and 3 respectively) yields similar results. Burundi is among the countries that have given minimum wage earners full compensation for inflation, whereas Somalia, Tanzania and the Sudan are among the countries that have given the least compensation to minimum wage earners. On the average, the minimum wage in African countries declined also by about a quarter between 1980 and 1986.

It is important to note that real wages have fallen more rapidly than *per capita* income since 1980. This means that the wage earners have borne a considerable part of the burden of the recent economic crisis, and that their income position has worsened relative to that of other socio-economic groups. Their privileged income position of the 1960s and early 1970s has been eroded substantially; they certainly do not constitute a "labour aristocracy" any longer. On the contrary, real wage earnings have fallen to such low levels that they often need to be supplemented by other income sources to make ends meet. Hence, a growing proportion of wage earners

have become engaged in secondary jobs. There is anecdotal evidence of civil servants practising their profession for their own account or supervising a micro-business in the informal sector during normal working hours.

**Table 2: Real Wage Trends in Selected African Countries since 1980**

(1980 = 100)

<i>Country</i>	<i>Coverage</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Index</i>	<i>Annual Change</i>
1. Botswana	Public Sector	1984	85,3	-3,9%
2. Burundi	Non-Agricultural Sector	1986	111,6	+1,8%
3. Cape Verde	Public Sector	1984	71,7	-8,0%
4. Ethiopia	Civil Service	1984	84,1	-4,2%
5. Gambia	Modern Sector	1984	80,5	-5,3%
6. Kenya	Non-Agricultural Sector	1986	78,8	-3,9%
7. Malawi	Non-Agricultural Sector	1985	72,2	-6,3%
8. Mauritania	Civil Service	1984	76,4	-6,5%
9. Mauritius	Non-Agricultural Sector	1986	93,7	-1,1%
10. Senegal	Civil Service	1985	70,0	-6,9%
11. Seychelles	Non-Agricultural Sector	1985	110,6	+2,0%
12. Sierra Leone	Non-Agricultural Sector	1986	25,5	-20,6%
13. Somalia	Civil Service	1986	28,4	-18,9%
14. Sudan	Civil Service	1985	52,2	-12,2%
15. Swaziland	Non-Agricultural Sector	1985	87,2	-2,7%
16. Tanzania	Non-Agricultural Sector	1984	46,0	-14,4%
17. Zambia	Non-Agricultural Sector	1984	63,7	-10,7%
18. Zimbabwe	Non-Agricultural Sector	1984	88,9	-2,9%
Average		1985	71,2	

*Source:* Derived from the ILO Yearbook of Labour Statistics, government statistical abstracts, various JASPA and IBRD country studies.

**Table 3: Real Minimum Wages in Selected African Countries  
since 1970**

(1980 = 100)

Country	1970	1975	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986
1. Burkina Faso	79	87	100	92	105	97	92	86	89
2. Burundi			100	90	148	136	119	115	
3. Cameroon			100	97	104	107	111	102	108
4. C.A.R.	130	83	100	87	76	77	64	59	
5. Congo	135	157	100	85	76	70	67	64	61
6. Côte D'Ivoire	104	114	100	92	94	89	85	84	79
7. Ethiopia			100	94	89	89	82	73	77
8. Gabon			100	92	99	89	101	101	96
9. Gambia			100	94	98	89	73	65	
10. Ghana	455	523	100	105	86	80	80	133	150
11. Guinea	114	115	100	91	87	79	71	64	
12. Kenya	119	120	100	89	89	81	72	71	75
13. Liberia			100	93	88	85	84	85	83
14. Madagascar			100	90	81	68	68	65	64
15. Malawi	208	140	100	139	147	129	108	128	109
16. Mali	141	169	100	91	98	100	90	108	
17. Mauritania			100	84	93	92	86		
18. Mauritius			100	89	84	81	79	77	76
19. Niger			100	87	78	80	74	75	77
20. Nigeria			100	148	138	115	81	79	
21. Rwanda	106	103	100	94	83	78	74	73	
22. Senegal	99	112	100	99	91	94	84	78	74
23. Somalia	323	277	100	90	79	58	30	22	16
24. Sudan	233	137	100	80	64	49	47	45	
25. Tanzania	164	195	100	99	77	61	60	45	36
26. Togo	143	131	100	84	83	76	78	80	77
27. Zambia			100	88	93	88	81	75	
28. Zimbabwe			100	97	143	107	117	110	123
Average	137	128	100	95	96	89	83	80	82
Minimum	79	83	100	80	64	49	47	45	36
Maximum	233	195	100	148	148	136	119	128	123

(Excluding Ghana and Somalia)

Source: D. Ghai: Economic Growth, Structural Change and Labour Absorption in Africa. UNRISD Discussion Paper No. 1, Geneva, 1987. Various JASPA and IBRD country studies.

There is also evidence that the decline in real wages has been accompanied by a substantial compression in the wage structure. Lower income earners appear to have suffered less from the falling purchasing power than higher income earners. This is best illustrated by the case of Ghana. In 1985, the real salary of a permanent secretary stood at 12% of its 1977 level, whereas that of a messenger stood at 48%. The post-tax wage differential between the highest and lowest paid worker in the public sector had fallen to the level of 1,5:1 in 1985. Although Ghana may be an extreme case, it is certainly not the sole country where a compression of the wage structure has occurred in recent years. Similar trends have been reported in Gabon, Senegal, Mauritania and Kenya.

## **(ii) Declining Wage Employment Growth**

The main objective of the restrictive wage policy in most African countries has been to sustain the growth of modern sector wage employment. But the economic recession has hit so hard that wage employment growth in the modern sector has declined significantly since the early 1980s, despite the substantial drops in labour costs. Table 4 indicates that wage employment growth in a number of African countries has decreased considerably since 1980. In the fourteen countries for which data are available, the average rate of increase slowed down from 2,8% per annum in the period 1975-80 to 1,0% between 1980 and 1985. The decline was more precipitous in the industrial sector where employment growth plummeted from 2,6% to a mere 0,1% per year between the respective quinquenniums. Hence, a process of de-industrialisation appears to have started in the region.

Female wage employment seems to have increased steadily over the past few years. Table 5, which is based on a sample of nine countries, shows that the proportion of women in total wage employment has gone up from 15,8% in 1975 to 17,9% in 1980 and then to 19,1% in 1985. However, it should be noted that the relative increase was smaller in the second period (+1,2 percentage points) compared to the first (+2,1 percentage points). This suggests that women's access to wage employment, although improving, is being barred by the economic crisis of the 1980s.

The fact that modern sector wage employment growth has actually lagged behind the labour force growth in recent years implies that the relative importance of the former has gradually declined since 1980. Table 6 indicates that formal sector wage employment in thirty-four sub-Saharan

African countries — representing nearly 90% of the sub-Saharan labour force — account for only 9,4% of the labour force in 1980.<sup>3</sup> Because of the deceleration of wage employment growth over the past few years, it can be assumed that current wage employment in the region does not account for more than 8% of the total labour force.

**Table 4: Wage Employment in Selected African Countries  
1975-1985**

(’000)

Country	Total wage employment			Industrial wage employment		
	1975	1980	1985	1975	1980	1985
1. Benin	33,1	66,2	80,8	6,3	14,6	15,3
2. Botswana	57,3	83,4	117,2	17,9	27,6	31,0
3. Burundi (Capital)	28,5	38,2	44,7	6,0	10,7	14,2
4. Côte D’Ivoire	340,9	470,2	415,5	55,0	73,5	65,9
5. Gambia	18,8	29,6	24,1	8,3	9,8	5,6
6. Kenya	819,1	1 005,8	1 174,4	152,4	217,0	231,2
7. Malawi	276,8	370,4	394,6	62,8	77,4	71,1
8. Mauritius	168,6	197,1	209,5	30,9	48,4	71,9
9. Niger	20,5	26,0	22,5	12,3	17,5	12,6
10. Seychelles	13,8	17,9	18,2	3,2	4,5	3,4
11. Sierra Leone	61,3	69,9	69,4	20,1	23,9	25,8
12. Swaziland	64,4	75,1	72,8	15,8	19,1	18,0
13. Zambia	393,5	379,3	361,5	186,0	162,6	143,4
14. Zimbabwe	1 050,2	1 009,9	1 039,4	286,3	274,5	276,4
Total	3 346,8	3 839,0	4 044,6	863,3	981,1	985,8

Source: ILO Yearbooks of Labour Statistics, various government statistical abstracts, JASPA and IBRD country studies.

### (iii) Rising unemployment

Decelerating wage employment growth in the context of a rapidly expanding labour force and an accelerating rural exodus leads to the third phenomenon which is being observed in African labour markets, namely the growing extent of open unemployment, in particular in urban areas. The trends in many countries towards a growing prevalence of unemployment are undeniable.

**Table 5: Proportion of Women in Wage Employment in Selected African Countries 1975-85**

<i>Country</i>	<i>1975</i>	<i>1980</i>	<i>1985</i>
1. Botswana	18,7%	23,3%	29,1%
2. Gambia	10,3%	11,4%	14,5%
3. Kenya	15,6%	17,6%	19,7%
4. Liberia	16,5%	31,3%	N.A.
5. Malawi	10,2%	11,4%	13,2%
6. Mauritius	22,0%	26,1%	32,1%
7. Niger	N.A.	3,3%	7,1%
8. Swaziland	22,3%	25,3%	27,7%
9. Zimbabwe	N.A.	17,0%	16,6%
Weighted Average	15,8%	17,9%	19,1%

*Source:* ILO Yearbooks of Labour Statistics.

In Zimbabwe, for example, the male unemployment rate more than doubled from 4,1% to 10,7% in the period 1969-82. In urban Nigeria, the unemployment rate increased from 4% to 6% and 10% in 1976, 1980 and 1986 respectively. The urban unemployment rate in Madagascar is reported to have risen from 6% to 13% between 1975 and 1982. In urban Kenya, it increased from 11,2% to 16,2% between 1977/78 and 1986. Unemployment in Liberia rose from 12,8% to 17,9% in the period 1980-84. In Côte d'Ivoire, where modern sector wage employment dropped by 12% between 1980 and 1985 (despite a substantial decline in real wages) the rate of unemployment is estimated to have shot up from 3% to 14%. In the Seychelles, where employment virtually stagnated between 1980 and 1985, the unemployment rate increased from 5,2% to 22,5% of the total labour force. The common belief, therefore, that unemployment in the region is not a growing problem appears to be contradicted by the results of recent labour force surveys.

With the rapid growth of the labour force, the absolute number of unemployed persons in Africa is also growing extremely fast. The number of unemployed persons is currently growing by 10% or more every year in many African countries clearly indicating that the unemployment situation in the urban labour markets in Africa is indeed alarming.

**Table 6: Importance of Wage Employment in Sub-Saharan African Countries in 1980 ('000)**

<i>Country</i>	<i>Labour Force</i>	<i>Wage Employment</i>	<i>Share</i>
1. Benin	1 581	66,2	4,2%
2. Botswana	288	83,4	29,0%
3. Burkina Faso	2 963	50,0	1,7%
4. Burundi	1 974	116,0	5,9%
5. Cameroon	3 143	308,2	9,8%
6. Congo	575	115,0	20,0%
7. Côte D'Ivoire	3 119	470,2	15,1%
8. Ethiopia	15 287	362,1	2,4%
9. Gabon	448	110,1	24,6%
10. Ghana	4 073	461,0	11,3%
11. Guinea	2 285	157,5	6,9%
12. Kenya	5 996	1 005,8	16,8%
13. Lesotho	594	31,1	5,2%
14. Liberia	635	121,0	19,1%
15. Madagascar	3 552	105,5	3,0%
16. Malawi	2 316	367,5	15,9%
17. Mali	1 884	141,4	7,5%
18. Mauritania	463	29,6	6,4%
19. Mauritius	324	197,6	61,0%
20. Mozambique	5 853	500,0	8,5%
21. Niger	2 437	26,0	1,1%
22. Nigeria	27 981	2 722,1	9,7%
23. Rwanda	2 328	190,1	8,2%
24. Senegal	2 240	110,4	4,9%
25. Sierra Leone	1 184	69,6	5,9%
26. Somalia	1 581	138,8	8,8%
27. Sudan	5 365	600,0	11,2%
28. Swaziland	214	75,1	35,1%
29. Tanzania	8 174	607,7	7,4%
30. Togo	948	73,4	7,7%
31. Uganda	5 239	362,8	6,9%
32. Zaire	9 147	926,7	10,1%
33. Zambia	1 690	379,3	22,4%
34. Zimbabwe	2 555	1 009,9	39,5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>128 436</b>	<b>12 091,4</b>	<b>9,4%</b>

*Source:* Derived from ILO Yearbooks of Labour statistics, various government statistical abstracts, JASPA and IBRD country studies.

#### **(iv) Expanding Labour Absorption in the Informal Sector**

Even the casual observer can see that a considerable proportion of the urban labour force gets absorbed into the informal sector. Indeed, it is not a coincidence that the informal sector was first "discovered" in an African country.<sup>4</sup> In recent years, this sector has been playing the role of an increasingly important "urban labour sponge". Numerous attempts have been made to define and categorise informal sector activities, but none has given full satisfaction because of the very diverse and dynamic nature of the sector. Nevertheless, the two fundamental characteristics of micro-enterprises are that they are essentially family-based and operate in relatively competitive markets. The measurement of the sector's importance in terms of employment is fraught with difficulties, both conceptually and quantitatively. But evidence often indicates that half of the urban labour force or more is employed in the informal sector, accounting for between 10% and 15% of the total labour force in Africa and making the informal sector larger than the formal wage sector in terms of the number of people employed. In addition, employment in the informal sector is known to be growing at respectable rates which are generally higher than the urban labour force growth, whereas labour absorption in the formal wage sector keeps on declining. Although in the past, governments' attitudes towards the informal sector ranged from benign neglect to outright harassment, the sector is now being accepted as a lead sector for the creation of new jobs in an increasing number of countries.

#### **(v) Improving Prospects for Rural Employment**

Although the changing attitude of many governments in favour of the informal sector is a welcome development, there is a growing consensus that efforts aimed at improving the lot of the urban poor, without parallel policies focused on the rural poor, will be self-defeating and will contribute towards accelerating the rural exodus. A lasting solution to the problems of unemployment and poverty in Africa will require a radical transformation of the rural sector — from a stagnant, subsistence sector to a dynamic and highly productive one. Indeed, agriculture remains the backbone of most economies in the region.<sup>5</sup> The solution of the unemployment problem will, therefore, be deeply concerned with bringing about rural development.

Recent economic policy reforms have been relatively favourable to the rural sector, with the result that the urban bias in development strategies has been reduced in many countries. Of late, the enabling environment for agricultural development has improved markedly. Distribution channels for agricultural implements and credit have become more effective; a larger share of total investments is being allocated to the agricultural sector; domestic trade and marketing channels are being gradually liberalised; participative modes of development are being promoted; and producer incentives are becoming more attractive. Indeed, the evidence is compelling that agricultural producer prices have increased more rapidly than wages and consumer prices, and have undoubtedly helped to improve employment and earnings prospects in the rural sector. The agricultural sector alone, however, is unlikely to absorb productively all the new labour force recruits in the rural areas, particularly in land-scarce countries. In this context, rural non-farm activities will have to play a lead role in the creation of new jobs in the region. The importance of rural non-farm activities in terms of employment in Africa is extremely difficult to quantify because they are generally carried out as secondary income-generation activities. But it can safely be assumed that their importance is increasing over time due to the growing population pressure on arable lands in some African countries.

## **Conclusion**

The recent social and economic developments that have taken place in Africa have had a regressive impact on the standard of living of the population. Hard-won social gains that were achieved in the 1960s and 1970s have been seriously threatened in the 1980s and the overall employment situation has deteriorated rapidly. Open and disguised unemployment has increased by some 14% between 1980 and 1987. The economic prospects for Africa still remain bleak. Consequently, the employment situation is likely to deteriorate even further in the foreseeable future. The labour market adjustments that have taken place in the context of economic contraction and social regression have had far-reaching consequences and can be summarised in the following five points. First of all, real wages have been remarkably flexible downward and the wage earners have borne the brunt of the recent economic crisis. At the same time, a significant compression in the wage structure has been observed. Therefore, any further cuts in real wages or compressions in their structure are likely to create a serious trade-off between equity and efficiency. Second,

the growth in modern sector wage employment has substantially weakened, despite the sharp fall in the labour costs. At present, it can be estimated that the modern sector does not employ more than 8% of the regional labour force. Third, unemployment is emerging as a disquieting phenomenon in the African labour markets, in particular in the urban areas. In many countries, the number of unemployed persons is increasing by 10% or more every year. Unemployment seems most prevalent among women and male youths. It is also beginning to affect the educated, indicating that a substantial proportion of the scarce resources which are spent on human resources development is not yielding the expected social returns. Fourth, the informal sector has become one of the most important labour sponges in Africa. The sector accounts for a sixth of total employment in the region and often employs more than half of the urban labour force. However, there are signs that the sector is encountering serious difficulties in coping with the tide of rural-to-urban migration which continues unabated. Lastly, the employment prospects in rural areas have improved recently and look better than those in the urban areas. The incentives for small-scale farmers have become more attractive, and both farm and non-farm activities show signs of renewed growth.

## References

1. Based on the reports of ILO/JASPA employment missions to various African countries.
2. The information quoted in this section originates from a variety of sources — including the Yearbook of Labour Statistics of the ILO, JASPA country reports, World Bank Economic Memorandums and national labour force, employment and earnings surveys.
3. Country specific records were very uneven, ranging from less than 5% in Niger, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Benin and Senegal to more than 20% in Zambia, Gabon, Botswana, Swaziland and Zimbabwe. The proportion was exceptionally high in Mauritius — 61% — because of the importance of wage employment on sugar plantations and in export-processing zones.

4. The informal sector was first conceptualised by the ILO Employment Mission to Kenya in 1972.
5. The agricultural sector is the single most important contributor to GDP, employs about two-thirds of the regional labour force, is a major source of foreign exchange earnings, and provides raw materials for the region's largely agro-based industry.

## Policies and Programmes for Employment Creation

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*Crispin Grey-Johnson*

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### Introduction

Socio-economic development has as its ultimate objective, the improvement of the welfare of human beings. Unfortunately, development planning in Africa has tended to overlook human needs. The high rates of economic growth achieved in the 1960s and 1970s did not have a significant impact on the quality of life of the majority of the African people. Most of the indicators of human development now show a stagnating or declining trend, not least the indicators of income distribution and poverty alleviation. Open unemployment has grown from 5,3% of the labour force, affecting 12 million workers in 1980, to close to 13% of the African labour force, or some 30 million workers today. Under-employment which affected 40% of the labour force or 60 million workers in 1980, now stands at 42% or 96 million out of the continent's total labour force of 230 million workers.

The unemployment problem has been compounded by the socio-economic crisis and been exacerbated by the application of certain recovery measures such as structural adjustment programmes. In fact, structural adjustment programmes have been hostile to Africa's labour force in that they have caused a contraction of employment markets. The overall reduction of public spending and investment in development activities have depressed the aggregate labour demand, thus causing even higher levels of open unemployment on African labour markets. According to ECA estimates, these public sector spending reductions have cost the continent some 1,5 million new permanent jobs in the formal wage sector alone.<sup>1</sup> The widespread employment freezes and retrenchments have also contributed to the unemployment problem. These have been most serious in the public service, taking into account the fact that this is the largest wage-employer in most African countries.<sup>2</sup> In addition, hardly any contingency plans have been formulated to stimulate the private sector so that it could absorb identified excess labour and new entrants to the labour force. In fact, the structural adjustment programmes have negatively affected the expansion of enterprises in the private sector which have, in the past, contributed

greatly to employment creation. Cases of such contraction have been documented in countries such as Nigeria, Ghana and Zambia. All told, structural adjustment programmes are estimated to have caused the loss of some 3,6 to 4,0 million new permanent jobs on the African continent.

Three main factors appear to be at play in preventing African employment planners and policy-makers from being more pro-active in their approach to the unemployment question. Firstly, there is the myth that growth is synonymous with development. Even after empirical evidence has exposed this myth for what it is, many planners are still not completely free from the notion that economic growth always brings about socio-economic development. The evidence in Africa is that, in most cases, this has not been so. The second factor is the orientation of the functions of the relevant government institutions. For example, African Ministries of Labour have not yet departed from the custodial functions of labour administration set out for them in colonial times, and attuned their activities to the present needs of socio-economic development. The third constraint is to be found in the models and instruments used for employment planning. These models, which were evolved for use in the developed, industrialised countries of the North, can only be used for planning employment creation in the modern sector of African economies which accounts for no more than 10-15% of the entire African labour force, thus ignoring the 85-90% of Africans working outside this sector.

It can thus be seen that for the total employment potential to be activated within Africa, policies and plans must be formulated whose impact on employment creation can be felt throughout the African economy. Attitudes to development and the utilisation of human resources will have to change and a more pro-active stance should be taken on the problem of open unemployment in Africa. There are, at present, recovery policies and structural adjustment programmes in force in African countries. These policies and programmes will fashion the course of events for employment creation from now to the year 2000. It is fitting to examine how their application is currently affecting or is likely to affect employment conditions in the African economy.

## Socio-Economic Recovery, Structural Adjustment and Employment

With the growing socio-economic crisis, African governments have resorted to the major financial institutions, the World Bank and IMF, for assistance. These institutions insist on the formulation and implementation of structural adjustment and stabilisation programmes by needy African governments. The acceptance and implementation of these programmes are a pre-condition for continued access to the several lending facilities available from these institutions as well as on the international money-markets.

The programmes call for certain financial, fiscal and economic measures to be implemented by the beneficiary government. These include curbs on government spending; cost recovery and cost containment measures (especially in the social services); privatisation of public enterprises; currency adjustments and progressive removal of subsidies on consumer items. The application of these measures is supposed to increase efficiency in demand management as well as in supply-side and exchange rate adjustment. Through demand management, public sector expenditure can be contained at the same time as revenue is increased. Production and productivity can be increased through the supply-side measures, while currency devaluation will raise the domestic value of production and discourage imports, reducing, in the process, the demand for foreign exchange and thereby helping to correct the external imbalance.

The repercussions of these measures on the social sector have been grave. Millions of jobs have been lost as a result of a reduction in the level of investment and cuts in social services. The resultant rise in unemployment has increased poverty and hardship in many African households. Measures to reduce government spending include cuts in the wage bill through, *inter alia*, the reduction of public sector employment. Most governments implementing structural adjustment programmes have had to reduce public sector employment levels. Guinea laid off 30 000 workers in the public services by 1987.<sup>3</sup> Morocco's public sector employee reduction target was set at 44 000 posts, 19 000 of which were suppressed in 1984.<sup>4</sup> In Nigeria, one million workers were retrenched from industrial establishments between 1980 and 1983; then between July 1986 and July 1987, 20 000 workers were laid off in industry. Government itself retrenched 57 000 employees from the public service between January and September 1985.<sup>5</sup> In addition to the widespread lay-offs, governments also

imposed a freeze on hiring. This deprived the labour force, especially the educated new entrants, an additional one hundred thousand new jobs every year from 1984 to 1987.<sup>6</sup>

The loss of employment-generation opportunities has had a most serious impact on those seeking jobs for the first time, particularly the youths from the African primary school. Increasingly, however, graduates from higher education institutions are finding it difficult to secure jobs. The Federal Government of Nigeria acknowledged that "the unemployment of a growing number of graduates poses a serious social problem."<sup>7</sup> According to a tracer study on graduate employment in Nigeria which was conducted in 1985, only 10% of the university graduates who had completed their national service found jobs a year later. Ten years earlier, only 2% had failed in their search for jobs.<sup>8</sup>

However, the structural adjustment and stabilisation programmes notwithstanding, a number of actions have been agreed upon by African governments as a means of achieving full recovery from the socio-economic crisis by 1990. *Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery*<sup>9</sup> (APPER) and *United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development*<sup>10</sup> (UN-PAAERD) are the two regional programmes in which the measures identified for implementation in the medium-term 1986-1990 have been agreed to collectively by the African governments. These programmes accord topmost priority to the rehabilitation of the food and agriculture sector. Measures have been instituted to boost food production and to increase the resilience of the agricultural sector against drought and desertification. It is recommended that a set of incentives be provided to agricultural producers while at the same time emphasis is placed on increasing the amounts and quality of agricultural support services in other areas which inter-link with agriculture: — marketing systems, rural industries, low-cost energy systems, transport and communications. The programmes recognise that for recovery to be achieved, special action measures should be directed to the development and utilisation of human resources.

In UN-PAAERD, the requirements for recovery are quantified in dollar terms. Agricultural rehabilitation and food self-sufficiency would need total investments of US\$57,4 billion. US\$60,1 billion will be required for the development of the agricultural support sectors. Combating drought and controlling desertification will call for investment to the tune of US\$3,2 billion and the range of programmes required for developing and utilising

human resources will require US\$7,2 billion. The implementation of these programmes would have very positive effects on employment, since the total investment envisaged of US\$128,1 billion will create between 2,56 million and 3,20 million permanent jobs in the African economy and million more semi-permanent or temporary jobs in all the productive sectors. However, years after APPER and UN-PAAERD were adopted, evidence exists to show that their implementation has not had the desired effect on conditions of human well-being in general, and on alleviating the unemployment problem in particular. If anything, evidence shows that the application of structural adjustment programmes has taken prominence over the implementation of APPER and UN-PAAERD, and has worsened the situation in respect of employment, poverty and human development.<sup>11</sup>

## **A Sample of Recent Policies for Employment Creation and Skills Development**

Development plan implementation in many African countries is losing the race against development crisis management and short-term structural adjustment and stabilisation. Some development plans were suspended pending the implementation of policy reforms and structural adjustment programmes. This notwithstanding, it would be worthwhile to examine what policy provisions have been made for employment creation within the macro framework of socio-economic development planning in African countries.

According to an analysis of employment-generation prospects of Algeria<sup>12</sup> in the five years from 1985 to 1989, the Algerian government will have to contend with an annual average labour force growth of 4% — one of the highest growth rates on the continent. This would be caused by a greater participation of women in the labour force and the voluntary return of a larger number of Algerian migrants from Europe. But in numerical terms, such a rate of growth would mean the creation of one million new jobs. To meet this target fully, the trade and transport, building construction, industry and government sectors would be induced to grow at 6,3%, 6,5%, 5,3% and 5,0% respectively. At the same time, productivity growth would be stimulated through a skills upgrading programme in industry. Since previous studies had indicated that poor organisation and management of production in Algeria were a major productivity depressant, measures would be instituted in the course of the plan period to remove this constraint

on productivity increase through a programme of management reforms and training.

Ethiopia admits that

*overt urban unemployment is one of the major problems facing the country. Its adverse effects are particularly felt among secondary school-leavers. As unemployment is generally a reflection of low resource utilisation and has serious social implications, its alleviation is a major priority in the Three-Year Plan.*<sup>13</sup>

To address the problem, the Government decided to expand small-scale industries, settlement programmes and public works programmes; encourage labour-intensive technology; relate skill development programmes more to the manpower needs of the economy; and to provide vocational training and national apprenticeship programmes for the unemployed.

Cameroon equally acknowledges the emergence of unemployment as a serious social problem that ought to be addressed in the current plan period 1986-1991.<sup>14</sup> Economic growth and employment generation have been "far from meeting the needs for employment creation" of a growing labour force, in spite of the achievements of a newly-established investment code, the *Small and Medium Enterprises Assistance Fund* and the *National Rural Development Fund*. Only 40% of job-seekers could be provided with jobs in the period 1980-1986. To mitigate this situation in the current plan, special attention will be paid to the stimulation of growth of medium- and small-scale industries by increasing access to bank credit, the provision of support services and infrastructure and the granting of fiscal incentives to investors. Efforts to intensify mechanisation in the agricultural sector so as to increase productivity, will also be increased.

The Government of Botswana accords highest priority to employment creation and rural development in its current development plan (1985-1991)<sup>15</sup> because of a "big shortfall of productive work opportunities in the economy". This shortfall must be removed through the implementation of an employment-creation strategy which will focus on the provision of opportunities for the expansion of the private sector, the development of employable skills for young school-leavers and a concentration on activities that promote rather than regulate or restrict economic development. A number of such activities have already been initiated. Some of these operate under the Financial Assistance Policy

which was launched in 1987 and which provides for financial assistance to be made available for job-creation investment.

In Mali, government could place only 20 780 out of 82 200 registered job-seekers in 1986. In the same year, only 1 000 out of 5 800 graduates could find employment.<sup>16</sup> Employment creation was, therefore, identified as one of the major priorities in the current development plan (1987-1991). An employment-generation strategy was devised, which would focus on those most vulnerable to unemployment and under-employment; develop and strengthen vocational education and training; and improve the management of public enterprises in order to raise productivity.

Employment creation will be the centrepiece of development planning from now to the end of the century in Tunisia,<sup>17</sup> where unfavourable economic conditions since 1982 have considerably worsened the unemployment problem. 33% of the new additions to the labour force have remained unemployed since 1982. To induce a faster rate of absorption of labour into productive employment activities, irrigation and other rural civil works activities, fishing and small-scale enterprise activities will be intensified during the plan period. Investments in certain industries, such as textile and electro-mechanical industries will also be expanded to increase their employment-creation capacities.

The rapid growth of unemployment in Kenya has engaged the attention of government at the highest level. Several committees and commissions have sat on the unemployment issue over the years. The thrust of the employment-generation programme of the current five-year development plan has been influenced by the findings and recommendations of these committees and commissions. The present employment-generation policies and strategies aim at achieving the following:<sup>18</sup>

- (i) increasing the labour absorptive capacity of agriculture;
- (ii) expanding public works, rural industrialisation and development programmes;
- (iii) encouraging labour-intensive production processes;
- (iv) the alignment of skill development programmes with rural development needs;
- (v) the provision of infrastructure and services to encourage urban informal sector and rural entrepreneurship; and
- (vi) increasing the accessibility to loans and credit facilities of women entrepreneurs.

Unemployment in Nigeria was above 10% of the urban labour force and more than 4,5% in the rural areas in 1986. By 1987, open unemployment in Nigeria had surpassed the four million mark. Government policy on employment is attempting to arrest the trend by stimulating the growth of the private sector and encouraging self-employment. The National Directorate of Employment (NDE) has set up a *National Open Apprenticeship Programme* through which the unemployed will be trained for self-employment. Fifty million Naira have been set aside to train unemployed youth. A *Special Public Works Programme* mobilises youth for road construction, tree-planting and various maintenance work. The small-scale industries programme assists the unemployed in setting up their own businesses particularly in the rural areas. In the first year of its operation, the NDE assisted 35 138 graduates, 1 500 entrepreneurs in small-scale enterprises, 50 000 individuals in agriculture, 24 000 unemployed in its special public works programme and 92 000 youths in training and vocational skills development programmes.<sup>19</sup>

## **Shortcomings of African Employment-Generation Strategies**

From the foregoing sample of employment-generation policies in African countries, one can make a number of observations. To begin with, one cannot gainsay the fact that the problem of unemployment is pervasive in the modern African economy; most governments have admitted its existence.

Policies for arresting the growth of unemployment have been directed to the following: stimulating economic growth as a means of increasing the labour demand; transferring the pressure for employment creation from the public sector to the organised private sector, while at the same time creating opportunities for the expansion of medium- and small-scale enterprises; providing unemployment relief by creating public works employment programmes, food-for-work schemes, special rural civil works projects and so on. The ordering of these employment-generation policy priorities appear to be based on classical labour economics theory: labour is a demand derived from the demand for goods and services within the economy. If the demand for goods and services declines there will be a corresponding decline in the demand for labour. Conversely, should there be an increase in the demand for goods and services within the economy, there will be a concomitant increase in the demand for labour and,

depending on the supply situation and the characteristics of the labour market, unemployment levels should be depressed and employment increased. In other words, a healthily growing economy should, barring technology change unfavourable to labour or an unfavourable shift in the capital/labour mix in production, result in high levels of employment and increased worker productivity.

The formulation of employment generation policies for African countries on this labour theory is based on a misconception of the dynamics of African labour markets and of the African economy. First, productivity increases in the African economy can very easily be caused by capital infusion given the structure of African economies and their very heavy dependence on the importation of inputs for production. The employment effect of industrial output growth can only be marginal since industry in Africa is not so integrated with the domestic economy as to induce the type of demand in other sectors that would boost the labour demand. Studies on the employment effects of investment in the construction industry<sup>20</sup> reveal that one unit of final demand in construction can cause up to three man/years of employment: one man/year each on the job, in building materials industries and in other related industries. This multiplier effect is severely limited by the structure of industry in African economies. Linkages between industry and the natural resource base are weak, therefore demand for goods such as construction materials and equipment have to be satisfied through imports from outside the region. In many African countries, up to 90% of materials for building construction have to be imported. This means that for every unit of housing construction, Africa creates between eighteen and twenty-four man/months of employment *outside* the continent. The current extreme exposure of African economies makes it difficult for the full benefits of employment creation to be reaped from output growth. Employment creation based on the stimulation of aggregate demand has to be very carefully conceived so that it impacts on those areas of socio-economic activity that will yield maximum results and permanent employment.

In addition, the classical literature on development planning argues that successful socio-economic development can be realised only through the twin forces of substantial capital accumulation and rapid growth of the modern industrial sector. The growth of the modern industrial sector should be accompanied by substantial increases in the demand for labour which would be met from inexhaustible supplies from the rural sector where the labour force is engaged in low productive subsistence agriculture. It has

often been argued that because the marginal product of labour in the mostly family-operated rural/subsistence agriculture is so low, there is no social cost in drawing workers from rural subsistence agriculture to the urban industrial sector since there are very little, if any, opportunity costs involved. African countries should therefore pursue "development" strategies which would accelerate the growth of the modern industrial sector to generate surplus, which could then be reinvested into further growth activities in the sector. The large reservoir of "surplus" labour in the rural areas could be drawn upon to provide the labour input required for implementing this strategy of development. Through this process, African countries would be able to proceed more rapidly towards the achievement of economic self-sufficiency. In the process, more jobs would be created and productivity both in urban and rural areas would be significantly increased. Since the Industrial Revolution, this has been the case to a greater or lesser extent in the economic development of industrialised countries of Western Europe.

However, the applicability of this theory to African economies is impracticable for very simple reasons. In 1856, some 20% of French workers were engaged in manufacturing. In Germany in 1870, it was about 30%. In both countries, the labour force was growing at no more than 1% a year. Given this situation and since labour productivity in manufacturing was not increasing at a substantial rate, all that was required was an annual output growth of only 5% for France and 3,3% for Germany, in that sector in order for the manufacturing sector in these countries to absorb annual total increases of the labour force. In African countries, labour force increases are much faster than the rate in France and Germany in the mid-1800s,<sup>21</sup> while the rate of total labour force employment in the manufacturing sector in Africa can be estimated at no more than 25% of formal sector employment.<sup>22</sup> Therefore, for an industrial sector which employs, say, 5% of the total labour force to absorb 2% annual labour force increases, that sector has to grow, in terms of output, by 40% annually without any increases in labour productivity in that sector. If a percentage increase in industrial output is accompanied by less than an increase of one percent in industrial employment because of the improvement of labour productivity, the required growth for the industrial sector would be much higher so that it absorbs the additional labour force. And because capital intensive technologies and methods of production are often too prominent in investment projects in Africa, manufacturing output growth has never induced a corresponding significant growth in employment. It is, therefore,

practically impossible for the modern manufacturing sector to generate enough employment opportunities to absorb more than a tiny fraction of new additions to the labour force in African countries.

The traditional macro-economic models of employment planning and their inapplicability to African economies underscore the need for new planning approaches to be evolved within the context of the new realities of African labour markets. These approaches focus on wage and employment determination by demand and supply under the assumption of flexible wages and competitive free markets. They are well-suited to the western economies from which they originated, i.e. under the existence of competitive markets, the level of employment and the wage rate can be determined simultaneously with all other prices and factor uses in the economy manipulating forces of demand and supply. Of course, such a model has little relevance in view of the realities of most of the labour market conditions in Africa. In many countries wage rates are arbitrarily set and are largely determined by government (which is the largest employer in most African countries) and the hiring practices of multinational corporations.

Another observation on the present employment-generation policies in force in African countries is that they address mainly the formal wage sector of the economy. This sector accounts for no more than 10% of employment in the national economy. Open unemployment is prevalent in this sector which happens to be urban-based, but its capacity to expand at a rate commensurate with the growth of the labour force is extremely limited, thus making it impossible for it to accommodate the wage employment needs of a growing labour force. The educational system has also helped to saturate formal sector wage labour markets. The expectations of the educated are such as to give them a strong preference for formal sector employment. Also, past development policies neglected rural development and were oriented towards the urban economy. This has served to encourage rural-to-urban migration and to push up Africa's urban growth rate (4,9%) to about the highest in the world.<sup>23</sup>

However, because of the unfavourable performance of the African economy in recent years, formal sector employment growth has slowed down from 3,1% per annum in 1975-1980 to only 1,8% in 1980-83<sup>24</sup> and then to 0,9% between 1983 and 1987.<sup>25</sup> The prognosis for wage employment in the formal sector in the medium-term is bleak. Employment generation policies that concentrate too much on expanding formal sector wage employment

are, therefore, unrealistic at the very best. All the plans reviewed admit that the employment targets set in previous plans were not attained. This is because African planners seem to perceive employment only within the context of wage labour in the formal sector. Yet there exist tremendous opportunities for employment generation in the informal and the quasi-subsistence agricultural sectors, which are often overlooked by policy-makers and planners. The third observation on the thrust of employment-generation policies stems from this oversight.

The informal sector provides employment to up to 50% of the urban labour force in some African countries. Workers engaged within it produce a wide range of goods and services using low levels of technology and rudimentary but functional production inputs. Wage and profit levels are low within this sector, but its activities provide a source of livelihood to millions as well as valuable production inputs and services to both the formal and the subsistence/agricultural sectors. Government attitude to the informal sector is usually negative. Yet this is a sector that could significantly expand its employment-generation capacity, provide more training to the unskilled and produce more and better quality goods and services within the economy. Strategies for reducing urban unemployment should concentrate more on stimulating the growth of the informal sector in Africa.

Hardly any mention is made in most development plans of the quasi-subsistence/agricultural sector as a potential ground for employment creation in African countries. In the next twenty years<sup>26</sup>, 261,8 million Africans will be engaged in that sector, whose potential can easily take an additional thirty-five to fifty million more workers if African governments pursued policies that were conducive to such expansion. For example, the countries of Southern Africa could create between six and eight million permanent jobs in agriculture if they exploited all of the four million hectares of irrigable land available to them.<sup>27</sup> The total area of land under cultivation in Africa is at present 195 million hectares or only 26% of its potential. Slightly more than half this area, 108 million hectares, is harvested each year.<sup>28</sup> At present, the African farmer utilises only 0,55 hectares out of 1,7 hectares available to him for production.<sup>29</sup> It is conceivable, therefore, that more than three times the present workforce in agriculture in African countries could be engaged in the continent's agricultural sector. Laying emphasis on the labour absorptive capacity of the quasi-subsistence/agricultural sector would be a more realistic option than pinning one's hopes for employment generation on the already saturated and over-stretched formal/wage sector.

If employment generation efforts should succeed in Africa, there is a very real need to strengthen the institutional support for it. The ministries of labour and employment have not yet clarified their role vis-à-vis employment generation in the entire national development planning effort. These ministries are still too preoccupied with their traditional custodial functions: arbitrating labour disputes, presiding over the negotiation of contracts, enforcing labour law, operating labour exchanges and so on. A few are active in promoting worker education and training but as far as planning for the absorption of additional labour force entrants is concerned, the capability of these ministries is extremely low. The *ECA Conference of Ministers Responsible for Human Resources Planning, Development and Utilisation* observed that there was a "need for ministries of labour to be significantly strengthened so as to be equipped to take on the employment planning function and orient their labour activities towards development".<sup>30</sup> This would require not only a redefinition of their functions, but also the putting into place of a vigorous programme of staff training; a restructuring and an expansion to cover the entire economy, and the provision of resources to allow for surveys and other information-gathering activities which are necessary for employment planning to be undertaken.

Some countries have attempted to address the problem of inadequate institutional support by leaving the Ministry of Labour to continue as usual and creating a new ministry responsible for manpower and employment planning. This has been the case in Tanzania, Zimbabwe and recently in Kenya. Other countries have added the employment and manpower planning functions to those of the Ministry of Planning and have set up units, sections or departments for that purpose. In the majority of cases, these initiatives have been hampered by lack of staff, inadequate capabilities and lack of resources to operate efficiently.

## **Towards Greater Effectiveness in Employment Generation**

Unemployment is a problem that requires quick imaginative solutions because its growth can threaten the foundations of society. The current unemployment situation in Africa, which is already very bad, will definitely worsen over the years, given the rapid population and labour force growth trends and the persistently poor performance of the African economy. In the next twenty years, 280 million new jobs will have to be created to absorb

the new labour force entrants and keep unemployment at levels of today. Failure to do so can only have disastrous political, economic and social consequences. African governments cannot leave the creation of jobs to chance. It must be the result of a conscious effort by government planners and policy-makers to stimulate labour demand in those areas of socio-economic activity that are most able to provide sustainable levels of employment. In Africa, the most obvious employment creation sector is the agricultural sector. Later, proposals will be made as to how this sector could significantly increase its labour-absorptive capacity.

The urban informal sector exists and operates very efficiently in spite of government. In fact, it is only now that its contributions in providing employment and incomes and in serving as a ground for skills acquisition and development, is being recognised. Ways will have to be found to render it even more productive in its operations so that it can provide significantly greater employment opportunities to the labour force. It is also necessary to explore the possibilities of promoting a preference for self-employment as against wage employment in the formal sector. Government policies will have to become more enabling in this respect so that more of Africa's workers become transformed into entrepreneurs whose activities can provide employment to others.

Despite its relatively small size as an employing sector, the formal wage sector should also be made to grow. Merely acknowledging its limited capacity as a provider of wage employment will not wish away the preference of youth, particularly the educated, to seek employment opportunities within it. Until attitudes to employment are changed — and that will take time because educational systems responsible for creating these attitudes themselves take time to change — one can expect a greater number of youths seeking jobs in this sector.

### **Employment and Skills Development in the Agricultural Sector**

As has been shown earlier, maximising land use in the agricultural sector can provide up to three times as many jobs as currently exist in African agriculture. Such an employment capacity can absorb the entire population of Africa today, with still some 210 million jobs to spare. But to reach that full capacity, governments will have to direct greater amounts of investment towards agriculture. For example, if resources were spent in a successful campaign to eradicate Trypanosomiasis (Africa's biggest cattle killer) six to seven million square kilometres would be rendered suitable for

farming, 120 million heads of cattle would be added to the present livestock population and meat production would be increased by 1,5 million tonnes.<sup>31</sup> The implications of investments such as this are quite obvious but, more importantly, in the process of creating opportunities for large numbers of people to find gainful employment, measures of this sort have an impact on agricultural output and on overall economic growth. This effect on socio-economic development is one that any serious employment-generation strategy must seek to achieve.

However, it would be unrealistic to assume that the present skill levels in African agriculture would be able to exploit the opportunities offered by the types of employment-generation investments being proposed. Expanding the livestock population by 120 million heads of cattle would require more veterinary technicians and scientists, more animal husbandry experts and more hides and skins experts. Marketing the additional meat would require more roads, bridges, lorries and trains. These would have to be constructed or operated and maintained by technicians, engineers and craftsmen. More accountants, accounting assistants, book-keepers, secretaries and auditors would be required. To produce them means more teachers and instructors . . . and so on and so forth.

### **Activating Agriculture's Labour-Absorptive Capacity**

Mention has already been made of the tremendous employment effects of expanding areas under cultivation and of eradicating livestock diseases. Added to this, directing investments to simple rural civil works activities would have equally positive employment effects. The construction of feeder and access roads, small dams, simple irrigation systems, culverts, wells, and water storage systems would provide employment to millions of workers. The existence of these structures will make it possible for productivity to be increased and for rural under-employment to be reduced.

Increasing the efficiency of production in African agriculture requires improvements in the current methods of agricultural production. The development of simple rural industries producing a wide range of agricultural machinery, tools and equipment, would create high levels of employment in the formal sector as well as make the end user — the farmer — more productive. The provision of other support services would raise worker productivity levels to an extent that they would impact favourably on employment creation. These include the provision of seed, fertiliser and pesticides and the strengthening of training programmes through extension services.

## **Promoting the Expansion of the Informal Sector**

As has been argued above, the informal sector has great potential for easing the unemployment problem in urban labour markets. The main problem in this sector is its relatively low levels of productivity. If productivity levels were increased within this sector, it is conceivable that its employment-generation capacities could be significantly enhanced. At present, entrepreneurs within the informal sector have very limited access to government investment expansion support. Access to bank loans and credit schemes is difficult which, in turn, imposes constraints on the use of improved and more efficient technologies in this sector. Infrastructural support is also inadequate, further negatively affecting the informal sector's productivity levels. Training and apprenticeship is the usual form of entry into this sector. But because training is almost exclusively conducted on the job, it lasts much longer and is more costly to the employer, although also more effective. Governments could assist the informal sector in this area by providing basic training programmes for apprentices to reduce the burden on the employer and the time spent and expense incurred in training.

Certain administrative and legal bottlenecks which inhibit the growth of the informal sector should also be removed. It is common practice in many African cities for petty traders and street vendors to be harassed by police and thrown off the streets. This negative attitude to operators in the informal sector does not encourage a greater participation in the sector and is inconsistent with the policies of employment creation and income distribution of African governments. More positive attitudes towards the informal sector should be cultivated among Africa's policy-makers and law-enforcement agents.

## **Sustaining the Employment-Creation Momentum in the Formal Wage Sector**

Formal sector wage employment has been in a state of decline along with the general socio-economic decline in Africa. Yet, as more Africans go through the educational system, their preference for jobs in the African economy is in the formal wage sector. They want to participate either as employers in the private sector or as employees in the public and private sectors. There is already a glut in public sector employment, to the extent that hundreds of thousands of public sector employees have had to be

retrenched in recent years. Since it is not realistic to expect this situation to be reversed in the short to medium term, policy alternatives should now be found to ensure that the formal sector, notwithstanding the contraction of public sector employment, maintains its capacity to absorb more of Africa's new labour force entrants. Action should be directed towards stimulating the growth of the private sector, and more emphasis should be placed on programmes that will encourage the expansion of the formal sector entrepreneurial class.

The modern private sector is at present dominated by foreign interests. Banking, insurance, transport and communications, and even a good part of Africa's import/export trade, are controlled by western multinationals. The new spate of privatisation will open the doors even wider to let multinational interests have a greater share of Africa's private sector. Policies to indigenise this sector should be formulated and their implementation carefully monitored. Medium- and small-scale enterprises should also be given the appropriate leverage to grow, to become more resilient and better placed to contribute to solving the unemployment problem in Africa. Moves should now be made to increase the participation of indigenous African entrepreneurs in large-scale industrial and agricultural enterprises as well as in businesses in the service sectors.

### **Institutional Support for Employment-Generation and Skills Development**

The focus on employment-generation will, of necessity, demand a reorientation of the functions of the public institutions towards this goal. Since employment-creation strategies must be conceived within a macro-economic framework, the ministries of planning and finance must begin to assume a broader view of the working of the African economy and of the possibilities of stimulating the labour demand within it. Approaches to development planning will have to change along these lines as will approaches to the planning of employment generation. This is not just a question of skills; it is above all a question of attitudes. Government policy-makers and planners will have to show a fresh commitment to employment creation. This commitment should then be reflected in the way plans are conceived, implemented and monitored. This may call for the modification of existing structures or the creation of new ones.

The ministries with direct responsibility for employment — labour and planning — will have to undergo fundamental reform to be able to take on

the employment planning function with greater effectiveness. Arrangements must be made to co-ordinate employment planning within the government machinery and preferably to centralise responsibility for employment planning under one ministry. A major bottleneck inhibiting the planning of employment creation is the fragile human resources data base in African countries. There is a very real need to improve on the collection, processing and analysis of data for employment planning. It is also necessary to be clear as to the purpose of data collection in order to analyse precisely the type of data to be collected and the uses to which they will be put. This, in turn, calls for greater clarity to be given to the various labour force concepts and definitions in use in Africa, especially in view of the peculiarity of the African economy and labour markets.

Government ministries not directly responsible for employment matters must be involved in, and supportive of the employment-generation effort. Ministries of industry should ensure that investments in industry are not so capital-intensive as to defeat the objectives of employment-creation. Local government ministries should provide the backstopping required to facilitate the delivery of employment-generation programmes. Ministries of agriculture must expand their extension services and increase their provision of inputs to agricultural producers.

### **Proposals for Practical Measures**

The proposals made in the following pages are intended to be considered at the national level for their relevance to the search for solutions to the unemployment problem and for possible application in the short run.

#### *1. Recycling Excess Skilled Manpower*

African governments have publicly acknowledged that their public services have been overmanned and have taken steps to reduce public sector employment levels. This has resulted in a wave of retrenchments and the forced retirement of public servants. Most of those affected have some skills which could still be put to use in the economy. It is a tremendous waste of resources to leave these people in complete idleness and counter-productive, both socially and economically. The following measures are being proposed as a means of mitigating this undesirable situation:

- (a) Governments should launch a human resources relocation programme. Within this programme, a search should be made for areas of the economy within which each employee identified for retrenchment could be placed. This search will not be confined to the public service or to the formal wage sector only, but will be extended to the informal and quasi-subsistence agricultural sector.
- (b) Where placement can only be effected in the private sector for self-employment, appropriate support should be provided in the form of credit or grants, provision of infrastructure, training etc.
- (c) Training programmes should be mounted for those employees who could be relocated if the skills they possess could be modified and applied to similar areas of work.
- (d) Retrenched workers who could not be accommodated in wage employment or in self-employment should be assisted to form cooperatives to set up small-scale enterprises, plantations and other agricultural production schemes.

## *2. Youth Training for Self-Employment*

In the coming years, millions of young people will emerge from the school systems with very basic literacy and numeracy skills. In many African countries, these are the new labour force entrants who flock to employment markets in the few urban centres with no skills that can be readily used by employers and with no capital to start out in self-employment on their own. Yet these are potential entrepreneurs and employers in their own right, whose latent abilities could be activated through training. In order to turn them into valuable socio-economic resources, prevent them from falling into frustration or assuming negative social behaviour and get them off the streets, it is proposed that production-cum-training youth villages be created to provide training for self-employment in a co-operative-like system. This scheme should work as follows:

- (a) Government provides land, buildings and other structures and infrastructures to enable residential training to be provided to the interns.
- (b) Training is conducted for cohorts of up to 25, is cross-disciplinary and targetted to a pre-determined production activity. For example, vegetable farming is identified as an activity that holds great promise for employment expansion in region Y of country X. The youth village

admits a cohort of school-leavers from or around the region, having determined before-hand, the skill profile for an integrated vegetable production scheme. Training is designed to impart all the skills required to begin, develop and operate a successful vegetable production undertaking: carpentry, auto-mechanics, masonry, horticulture, farm management, bookkeeping, marketing, auditing etc. Training is done on the job i.e. the trainees learn mainly by starting, developing and operating a vegetable garden in the village.

- (c) When the instructors are confident that the cohort of trainees have acquired the necessary team-spirit and skills and can now strike out on their own, government provides them with inputs on a loan basis as well as the land, for them to begin the scheme.
- (d) The group is monitored for at least five years during which government provides them the necessary fiscal incentives and the appropriate market protection to ensure that the enterprise stands firmly on its feet.

### 3. *Planning Investments for Employment Generation*

Governments should ensure that every public or private sector development investment proposal contains quantifiable employment-generation targets which would make a significant contribution to the alleviation of the unemployment problem. In proposing, say, a sugar project, the total labour requirements should be specified by skill category. An attempt should also be made to determine the indirect labour demand that the project would generate elsewhere within the economy i.e. in building materials industries, transport, quarrying etc, using the logistics and procurement plans accompanying the proposal. A high employment-generation potential of the project should be a major pre-requisite for its approval for implementation.

The system may work as follows:

- (a) A team is set up in the Ministry of Planning to carry out reviews of all investment proposals on a quarterly basis.
- (b) The current quarter's batch of proposals are scrutinised for their employment effects in the economy.
- (c) If their employment-generation potentials are seen to be low, they are returned to the prospective investor with instructions to redesign the project so that it increases the labour component. If this cannot be done in clear quantifiable terms, the project is rejected.

- (d) Those projects approved for implementation are monitored closely to ensure that employment targets are attained and maintained.

#### 4. *Stimulating Informal Sector Employment Growth*

In those countries that have not already done so, studies should be conducted to identify the factors constraining productivity increases and employment expansion in the informal sector. Measures should then be embarked upon to remove them. This should be done by a new unit to be created in the Ministry of Labour, charged with the responsibility of monitoring informal sector employment. Its main functions would be to:

- (a) Identify the administrative, legal, fiscal and financial constraints that inhibit the growth of the sector;
- (b) Draw up and implement a programme of assistance for the informal sector — training, credit and loans, market protection, stronger linkages with the formal and agricultural sectors, management consultancy services etc.

#### 5. *Making Self-Employment in Agriculture more Attractive*

Production conditions for small farmers in agriculture and artisans in fishing are rather harsh. This reality has contributed greatly to the problem of rural-to-urban migration. If African agriculture is to emerge as the true motor of economic growth and the principal locus for employment creation in the African economy, greater efforts should be made to direct more development investment towards it so that it attracts and retains much more of the growing labour force. The present inadequacy of production infrastructure and the difficult conditions of rural living will only make moving over to urban centres a more attractive option for the rural labour force. African governments had agreed to allocate 20-25% of their annual budgets to the agricultural sector during the 1986-1990 recovery period. A substantial part of that allocation should go to:

- (a) Improving rural water supply for domestic consumption and for production;
- (b) Improving energy production by exploiting new and renewable sources of energy such as bio-mass and solar power;
- (c) Increasing access to more efficient production inputs such as high-yielding seeds, fertilisers, pesticides etc.;

- (d) Providing better access to markets by improving transport systems, rural road networks, storage facilities etc.;
- (e) Extending access to time- and energy-saving technologies for greater efficiency in production;
- (f) Reviewing land tenure systems with a view to ensuring that they do not deny producers opportunities to engage in agricultural activities.

#### 6. *Implementing the Employment Plan*

An employment plan conceived along the lines being proposed would require monitoring on a daily basis. At present, no such plan exists in Africa and, therefore, no mechanism is in place to execute an employment plan. Therefore, to begin attacking the problem of unemployment and skills development, an office should be created to draw up a plan for employment creation and to see to a strict adherence to it. Staff for the new office should be pooled from ministries of planning, finance, education, labour and manpower, industry, agriculture, works, health and justice. The office should be advised by a Permanent Committee on Employment, drawing its membership from trade and workers' unions, employers' associations, chambers of commerce and industry, teachers' unions, national NGOs etc. The office will prepare a quarterly report on plan implementation indicating progress achieved and identifying any difficulties being encountered. It will also identify those employers violating the provisions of the plan and recommend what sanctions should be taken against them.

#### 7. *Financing the Employment Plan*<sup>32</sup>

Resources for financing the implementation of the employment plan would have to be generated domestically. It is most important that these resources be placed in a separate fund for employment creation. From these funds, the many programmes that will be conceived in implementation of the plan, would be readily financed. Assets of the fund will be built up thus: A tax of 1% on personal income; 5% of net company profits; 3% of net profits of small-scale enterprises; 2% on international travel fares; 2% on imports of luxury consumer goods; contributions from local and foreign sources.

The fund will be administered by the Office for Employment Creation.

## Conclusion

Finding workable and permanent solutions to the growing unemployment problem in African countries should now be of central concern to Africa's policy-makers and planners. This requires that they venture into new, unconventional directions and be imaginative in their search for these solutions. Skills development programmes in support of the employment-generation initiatives that ought to be pursued, must also focus on the employment and productivity needs and potentials in African agriculture.

The urban and peri-urban labour force will have to be accommodated in the formal and informal wage sectors of the economy. Policies will have to be formulated to ensure that growth is restored in these sectors and that this growth will induce a much more significant demand for labour. Training should also be stepped up to increase productivity levels within these sectors.

Much stronger institutional support should be given to the new employment-generation and skills development efforts of African governments. This requires not only a re-orientation of functions in the key government ministries — labour and planning — but also a greater involvement of other government ministries whose activities hold a sway over the successful implementation of any employment-generation plan.

Above all, managers of the African economy must now move from thinking to action, over the unemployment problem. The proposals being made constitute the building-blocks for them to proceed with to provide employable skills and more opportunities for employment to their growing labour force.

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## The Dilemma of The Brain Drain

*M. J. Balogun and Gelase Mutahaba*

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### Introduction

In discussing the principal factors influencing the allocation of scarce manpower resources in Africa, at least three variables have been singled out for critical examination: the general social and economic climate, employment policies, and patterns in skills utilisation and management. The authors are of the view that even though the brain drain has only recently been recognised as a major problem in human resource utilisation, defective employment policies and managerial practices had, for a long time paved the way for the emergence of its causes. In fact, what we have before us is not a sudden case of brain-drain but a long-drawn process of skills "exfoliation". This chapter begins with an examination of the magnitude and causes of the problem. Next, it discusses the effects of the prevailing socio-economic climate on the brain-drain. It then focuses on employment policies as well as on a hitherto neglected factor: the prevailing patterns of human resources utilisation and management. The fourth part looks at recent developments, while the fifth proposes measures to plug the drain, recoup losses and provide an atmosphere conducive to effective human resources utilisation and development.

The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), International Labour Organisation (ILO), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and a number of other international organisations have called the attention of policy-makers to the deteriorating human resources situation in Africa and to the dangers which this poses to the continent's development. The International Conference on the Human Dimension of Africa's Economic Recovery and Development which took place in Khartoum, Sudan, between 5 and 8 March, 1988, noted the huge loss which Africa sustained as a result of the brain drain, and urged African Governments to participate fully in ECA's Return of Skills Programme for Africa.<sup>1</sup> The ILO's review of migration trends begins with an uncanny prediction of Africa's first Nobel laureate coming from the ranks of the emigrés:

*They may be potential Nobel laureates in science. They may be poverty-stricken labourers from a remote African village. They are all part of a major sociological phenomenon of the past forty years — international migration.*<sup>2</sup>

According to the ILO, 20% of the population of Côte d'Ivoire in 1984 were "foreign Africans". It would not be surprising if a sizeable proportion of Ivorians also lived outside their own borders, since a 1975 estimate showed that 2,8 million West Africans resided outside their home countries. In any case, these cross-border movements are in accordance with the spirit of ECOWAS. What is disturbing is the new pattern of migration as reflected in the relocation of Africa's highly trained and hard-to-replace professionals from Africa to other regions of the world, notably Europe, western Asia and the Gulf. Over 10 000 professionals left Sudan in 1975 (as compared to 542 in 1972) to take up appointments elsewhere. As at 1984, approximately 0,5 million highly skilled Sudanese were working outside Africa, and the ILO reckoned that if the trend continued, roughly two-thirds of Sudan's technical and professional personnel would have departed by 1985.<sup>3</sup> Egypt is another victim of a massive brain drain with between one and two million of its citizens working abroad in 1984.<sup>4</sup> In West Africa, Ghana, Sierra Leone and recently Nigeria, have lost increasing numbers of highly trained professionals to other countries. Medical doctors, teachers, university professors, airline pilots, engineers, scientists and at least one *actual* Nobel laureate, are among the class of people whose skills seem to be highly appreciated in countries other than their own.

## **Costs of the Brain Drain**

Europe and North America appear to be the principal beneficiaries of Africa's brain drain. This amounts to a "reverse transfer of technology" from Africa to the recipient countries in these regions. On the basis of its own study, UNCTAD reported that between 1960 and 1975, 27 000 highly skilled Africans migrated to the West.<sup>5</sup> By 1984, the number of west-bound emigrants had increased to 40 000. The estimate for 1987 is 70 000 which is nearly 30% of the stock of high-level manpower currently available within the continent.<sup>6</sup>

From the point of view of Africa's development interests, the most costly form of brain-drain is the gradual and systematic depletion of the stock of human resources as a result of the out-migration of skilled people. Ironically,

the beneficiaries of the outflow of skills are those who least need the skills. It has been estimated that between 1961 and 1972, the developing countries lost about US\$50 billion as a result of the brain-drain.<sup>7</sup> A 1974 study reports that the USA saved US\$883 million by employing different categories of manpower educated and trained at the expense of foreign governments. In contrast, these foreign governments lost about US\$320 million which was the amount invested in educating the new US immigrants.<sup>8</sup> An UNCTAD study, using the "imputed capital value of skills flows" approach, estimates that the value of one highly skilled migrant, aged between 25 and 35 years, would be approximately US\$184 000. Assuming that the migrants do not return to their countries of origin until after retirement, Africa would, over the next 25 to 35 years, lose US\$12,6 billion — not such a small sum in an era of economic emergency!<sup>9</sup>

The preceding computations leave out a number of other important costs — such as the costs of unimplemented or delayed projects, the importation of scarce skills and the political cost of technical assistance. Africa's drive towards modernisation and technological development can only be sustained if the appropriate skills and intellectual energies are properly harnessed. An engineering capacity is required to design and fabricate tools and equipment. Doctors and para-medical staff are needed to implement each country's health policy, while at the same time experimenting with local medicinal plants. Political thinkers and administrative experts are relevant only if they can be encouraged to be original in their thinking. The list is endless. To the extent that a country lacks the human resource it needs to overcome obstacles to development, its development projects will suffer from delays or total non-implementation. If a country is endowed with the required human resources but not with the *conditions* which would enable the resources to thrive and blossom, it will have to pay a double price — the price of producing the resources for other countries' use, and that of non-realisation of development objectives. Importation of skills is a logical response to a situation of acute shortage but this, too, has its draw-backs. To recruit from the international labour market is to be prepared to pay the "going price" for labour — and this, in hard currency. And to rely on external technical assistance is to compromise the principle of self-reliance and expose a country to the vicissitudes of the international political and economic environment.

## Causes of the Brain Drain

### (a) *The Social Climate and Motivation*

Conditions under which people live and work in Africa have deteriorated over the last two and half decades. The decline in standards of living is itself a direct outcome of economic stagnation and rapid population growth. Under normal circumstances, population growth ought to increase the stock of Africa's human resources. However, a few disturbing demographic trends belie this expectation. These include abnormal demographic tendencies as reflected in the high birth and death rates, and a population growth rate which cannot be sustained by the rate of economic growth.

**Table 1: Major Demographic Indicators, by Sub-Region  
(1980-1985)**

<i>Sub-region</i>	<i>Crude birth rate (a)</i>	<i>Crude death rate (b)</i>	<i>Percentage annual population growth</i>
North Africa	39,9	12,3	2,7
West Africa	49,2	18,3	3,1
Central Africa and Southern Africa	44,5	16,3	2,8

Note: (a) = Per 1 000 population.

Source: *Survey of Economic and Social Conditions in Africa, 1985-1986*. E/ECA/CM.13/3, United Nations, 17 February, 1987.

Health systems also cannot cope with the rapidity of population growth. Even in normal times, the health services are unable to reduce the high infant mortality rates; only 25% of the population enjoyed access to potable water in 1985 compared to about 100% in the developed countries. Per capita expenditure on health is US\$1,7 as against US\$244 in the developed countries. Health care institutions are too few to cater for the medical needs of the entire population, and the few available institutions are short of beds, diagnostic facilities, doctors and para-medical staff, drugs and essential supplies.

Food production has also not kept pace with population growth. Since the early seventies, per capita food production in Africa has averaged less than 2% in contrast to a 3% annual population growth. Average annual food production grew at the rate of 2,8% between 1980 and 1985 and at the rate of 1,9% in 1986-87. Since domestic food production lagged behind population growth, Africa had to make up the resultant deficits with commercial food imports and food aid.

**Table 2: Output Share and Growth Rate by Sub-Region,  
1986-1988\*  
(percentages)**

<i>Sub-region</i>	<i>Output share</i>		<i>Growth rate</i>	
	<i>1986</i>	<i>1986</i>	<i>1987 (a)</i>	<i>1988 (a)</i>
North Africa	44,8	0,3	1,6	3,0
Sub-Saharan Africa (b)				
of which:	57,8	0,9	0,4	2,5
Central Africa	9,8	1,4	0,1	1,6
Eastern & Southern Africa	13,2	3,2	2,8	3,6
Southern Africa	5,0	3,0	-0,4	4,2
West Africa	32,1	-0,6	0,6	2,7
Sahel countries	3,3	5,1	1,7	3,7

*Notes:* \*GDP measured at 1980 prices

(a) Preliminary estimates.

(b) Including the Sudan which forms part of ECA's North Africa sub-region.

*Source:* ECA Secretariat.

Education expansion in recent years has not kept pace with population growth and, therefore, with the demand for places at the various levels of the school system. Investments in education at all levels have, themselves, decreased. Over-crowded and dilapidated structures compete with open spaces as classrooms. In many first and second level schools (with the exception of the few schools for the children of the elite), modern audio-visual equipment and teaching aids are unheard of. The teaching of science is greatly handicapped by the shortage of staff and science

laboratories. The attitude of teachers to their jobs has also been adversely affected by the general neglect of the teaching service.

*(b) Population growth and rapid urbanisation*

The industrialisation policies of governments have particularly contributed to rapid and unplanned developments of urban communities and the neglect of rural areas. Table 5 shows that well over 25% of the population reside in urban areas. More significant, is the fact that the 5% rate of urbanisation is even higher than the rate of population growth.

**Table 3: Public Expenditure on Education in Developing Africa, 1965-1985**

	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985
Total thousands of dollars	1 737	2 377	6 904	19 076	18 600
Dollars per capita	6	7	18	41	28
Percent of national income	3,5	4,7	4,8	4,6	6,3

Source: African Development Bank, *Education Sector Policy Paper*, and ECA Secretariat.

**Table 4: School Enrolment at Various Levels of Education, 1970-1986**

Year	No. enrolled (all levels)	Percentage distribution by level		
		First	Second	Third
1970	38 721 000	86,2	12,6	1,2
1975	54 293 000	82,4	15,9	1,6
1980	79 585 000	79,8	18,5	1,7
1981	84 591 000	79,3	19,0	1,7
1982	89 525 000	78,8	19,5	1,7
1983	96 580 000	78,5	19,8	1,7
1984	104 198 000	78,2	20,1	1,7
1985	112 424 000	77,9	20,4	1,7
1986	121 306 000	77,6	20,7	1,6

Source: ECA Secretariat

**Table 5: Urban Population in Africa, 1975-1986**

Subregion	Urban population as % of total			Average annual growth rate %	
	1981	1985	1986	1975/80	1980/85
West Africa	22,7	24,7	25,4	5,8	5,5
Central Africa	27,7	31,4	33,4	5,6	5,1
Eastern & Southern Africa	34,6	36,0	37,2	5,4	5,2
Total Africa	25,5	27,8	28,2	4,9	5,2

Source: Survey of Economic and Social Conditions in Africa, *op.cit.*

The obvious consequences of rapid urbanisation in difficult socio-economic circumstances are the increasing criminal tendencies (housebreaking, arson, armed robbery, homicide etc.), political instability and civil disturbances, especially in the bigger cities of the continent. Added to these difficulties is the constantly rising cost of living in Africa for Africa's urbanites. Table 6 and 7 provide information on the consumer price index for West Africa between 1970 and 1983, and for Eastern and Southern Africa between 1970 and 1985. The Tables show that inflation is a serious problem in many countries and, probably, an intractable problem in a few others.

What is the relevance of all this to the brain drain? Where do health, education, the urban environment, inflation and social disequilibria fit in? The overall environment in which personnel management takes place is crucial for the efficient utilisation of human resources. The picture painted so far has been negative, but the aim is to highlight those issues which are extraneous to the management of human resources but which do affect performance of staff on the job. If the world outside is hostile, the internal arrangements in an organisation have to be handled very carefully in order to hold the attention of employees. To what extent then is the socio-economic atmosphere prevailing in Africa conducive to optimum utilisation of human resources? The next section deals with this question.

**Table 6: Consumer Price Index for West Africa, 1970-1983**  
(1975 = 100)

Country	1970	1973	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Benin	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Burkina Faso	—	—	117,2	141,8	153,1	176,0	196,3	216,4	238,2	—
Cape Verde	35,7	51,6	101,2	108,3	135,7	—	—	—	—	—
Gambia	60,6	72,7	117,0	131,6	143,2	151,9	162,0	172,0	190,0	211,0
Guinea	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Guinea-Bissau	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Côte d'Ivoire	69,1	76,2	112,1	142,8	161,4	188,4	215,7	234,8	252,0	266,8
Liberia	59,1	73,7	106,0	112,2	120,4	134,3	157,4	166,7	178,2	181,6
Mali	—	—	107,3	134,9	179,9	172,8	210,2	236,5	242,0	265,8
Mauritania	—	—	121,1	133,6	143,1	156,1	173,4	215,4	—	—
Niger	—	—	123,5	152,3	167,6	184,2	198,4	243,8	272,2	265,4
Nigeria	—	—	123,9	143,0	166,7	186,3	204,8	247,5	266,5	328,4
Senegal	—	—	102,7	112,5	118,3	127,7	138,9	147,0	172,5	192,7
Sierra Leone	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Togo	63,0	75,2	112,8	136,7	137,3	147,3	165,9	198,5	220,6	245,2

Source: *African Statistical Yearbook*, (Part 2, West Africa), UNECA.

**Table 7: Price Index — Eastern and Southern Africa, 1970-1985(1980 + 100)**

Country	1970	1973	1975	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985
Botswana	—	—	56,4	87,5	98,9	115,5	127,3	140,6	152,7	165,1
Djibouti	—	—	—	89,3	100,0	106,0	103,0	104,0	106,0	—
Ethiopia	40,0	42,0	48,0	95,3	100,0	105,0	111,0	112,0	121,0	144,0
Kenya	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Lesotho	—	38,0	50,0	88,3	103,0	113,0	127,0	146,0	161,0	193,0
Madagascar	41,0	49,0	64,0	85,3	103,0	131,0	172,0	205,0	226,0	249,0
Malawi	41,0	48,1	54,1	—	103,0	11,8	122,8	139,4	167,3	184,9
Mauritius	26,0	31,0	46,0	70,0	103,0	114,0	126,0	135,0	145,0	154,0
Seychelles	—	—	—	112,6	127,4	141,1	139,6	147,9	—	—
Somalia	—	—	—	136,7	217,0	313,4	384,2	524,0	1 007,4	1 476,7
Tanzania	27,0	34,0	51,0	77,0	100,0	122,0	136,0	152,0	171,0	205,0
Zambia	35,0	41,0	49,0	90,0	103,0	114,0	128,0	153,0	184,0	253,0
Zimbabwe	48,4	52,9	62,1	94,9	103,0	113,1	125,0	154,1	185,2	200,9
Swaziland	33,0	40,0	55,0	87,0	100,0	122,0	136,0	152,0	171,0	205,0Z

Source: *African Statistical Yearbook*, 1985 (Part 3, Eastern and Southern Africa) UNECA.

(c) *Employment Policies, Management Practices and the Brain Drain*

When conditions *outside* the workplace are harsh, it is the duty of policy-makers and managers to ensure that the *internal* work climate is even more congenial. This entails the formulation of human-oriented personnel policies and the adoption of supervisory and managerial styles which allow the staff to realise their maximum potential and contribute to the development of their organisations.

At least three major factors have inhibited the formulation of sound employment policies in Africa:

- (a) The assumption on the part of employers that the stock of human resources is limitless — i.e. that the employers are in a buyer's labour market;
- (b) The overriding influence of structural adjustment policies; and
- (c) The retention of hierarchical grading systems of job evaluation which place high premium on seniority rather than on performance.

As we shall discover later, there are signs that the situation is gradually changing for the better.

As has already been shown, the African economy has not expanded rapidly enough to absorb the growing number of job-seekers. African governments have, all the same, come up with a number of measures (some "artificial") to increase employment opportunities. Public works programmes have been introduced, office methods and procedures have been deliberately elongated and organisation units have been over-staffed — all in an effort to "create" employment opportunities. Since none of these measures have made even a dent in the search for permanent solutions to the unemployment problem, the impression has gained ground that the supply of labour will always continue to be in excess of demand, and has created an excuse for the casual handling of the unemployment problem. This casual attitude to unemployment should be attacked on two grounds. First, it hastily releases the employers from the obligation to encourage the creation of *productive* employment. Deploying three hands on a job that is meant for one does not solve the unemployment problem — it perpetuates and worsens it, since it overlooks the invisible but substantial costs of overstaffing. By the same token, a deliberately elongated procedure slows down an economy and creates unnecessary bottlenecks. If the employers foster an atmosphere that encourages innovativeness and creativity, they

will discover that the rank-and-file of their employees are not bereft of cost-saving, productive and employment-generating ideas.

Another danger in this assumption that there exists an abundant supply of labour lies in the probability of its falsity. Africa may not be short of engineers, but how many of them are capable of designing and supervising the production of combined harvesters, heavy-duty trucks, passenger vehicles, aircraft engines, oil tankers and common burglar alarm systems? The probability is that people with such aptitudes do exist, but an employment policy founded on the belief that there is an excess of manpower would tend not to seek out the best brains, motivate them, or provide the facilities they need to make their contribution to the continent's development efforts. In plain language, a policy which begins with the assumption that Africa is teeming with unemployed (and probably unemployable) people will not go out of its way to identify individuals with rare talents or to assist those whose skills could be honed to a sharp cutting edge. It will tend to be negative in its approach to human resource development and static in its conception of development potentialities, failing to venture beyond traditional policy areas. This, unfortunately, is the policy which occupies the high ground in human resource management in contemporary Africa. Until it is dislodged by a forward looking policy, the train of development will tend to remain in neutral (if not in reverse) gear.

It is indeed against the background of this largely negative view of the capabilities of man that the contemporary structural adjustment policies need to be considered. The picture which the advocates of structural adjustment reforms have painted of the African public service is not too different from the view of the policy-makers. Despite the oft-repeated pronouncements on the role of the public service in economic development, the policy-makers' attitude to human resources utilisation was anything but development-oriented. The image of public officials as unproductive and resource-squandering agents was engendered by the tendency towards politicising of the career service. Even when the job contents of positions had been clearly defined and the skill-requirements established, there was no guarantee that the positions would not be filled by political fiat and/or on ethnic quota basis. Otherwise straightforward administrative matters such as transfers, deployment and promotions tended to be given a political colouring. The most recent assault on professionalism is the practice of summarily retiring or dismissing public servants and replacing them with "loyal" subordinates. All these actions are likely to breed frustration among officials and undermine the corporate integrity of the public service. They

might also have constituted powerful weapons in the hands of the proponents of structural adjustment reform.

(d) *Influence of Structural Adjustment on Employment Policy*

The actions of policy-makers with regard to human resource utilisation paved the way for the now highly unpopular structural adjustment reforms. Indeed, the retrenchment of public employees did not start with the reforms. The "purge" carried out in some countries and at various times must have influenced the thinking on public sector economics. If public officials could now be separated from their positions on political (or at least, non-administrative) grounds, what is wrong with an "administrative reform" programme which seeks to promote efficient resource utilisation? The only difference is that instead of the sporadic and selective retirements, structural adjustment elevates public service retrenchments to the status of regular policy. In any case, the serious economic dilemma facing Africa in the eighties has left the various countries with little option. Moreover, the international financial institutions did not disguise their contempt for previous approaches to resource use. Whether as part of the IMF's "conditionalities" or preparatory to the World Bank's structural adjustment loans, each country was given clear signals as to what should be the future thrust of public policy. Henceforth, public expenditure was to be reduced to balance the budget. This necessarily involves a reduction in the size of the public service and the emasculation of fringe benefits for public servants. Devaluation, another major aspect of the reform, reduces local purchasing power in general, and lowers public servants' *real* income, in particular. In the meantime, shortages of various kinds inflate the prices of commodities and, in the process, impose additional hardship on those with fixed (or to be historically accurate, declining) income. The drastic budget cuts reduce the tempo of construction activities in the public sector, hamper the purchase (or even maintenance) of tools and equipment, and make it difficult for organisations to replenish their supplies and materials (fuel, lubricants, drugs, dressings, stationery etc.). Whatever the claim of structural adjustment, it has undoubtedly undermined public service morale and contributed to the rapid outflow of talent.

(e) *Hierarchical Grading Systems and Personnel Management*

It is possible that human resource management in the public sector would have withstood the combined shocks of political interference and structural adjustment if sound principles of position classification and job evaluation had been applied. To the extent that many African public services retained the largely hierarchical structures (with emphasis on officers' "status", "rank" and "seniority"), performance and *results* take a back-seat position in discussions on human resources management and utilisation. It must be pointed out that in an effort to replace the hierarchical structures with "results-oriented" ones, a few countries set up administrative reform commissions in the 1970s. Examples are the Mills-Odoi Commission (Ghana), Ndegwa Commission (Kenya), Wamalwa Commission (Swaziland) and Udoji Commission (Nigeria). However, despite the spirited efforts by the commissions to introduce fundamental changes in structure, two factors, namely, the "politics of organisational ranking" and civil service bureaucratic resistance to change, frustrated attempts at far-reaching reforms. In the case of Nigeria, it took sixteen years and the determination of a military regime to implement the "business model" of organisation recommended by the Udoji Commission. Even then, the aspects relating to proper classification and evaluation of positions have not yet been fully achieved.

The overwhelming influence of hierarchy is felt directly at the point of human resources utilisation. In fact, if anything has contributed to human resource leakages, the sometimes authoritarian and arbitrary style of supervision and management should be singled out for critical examination. It is one thing for an employee to contend with a hostile social climate and a negative employment policy, but entirely another to be harried by an unappreciating boss. It is not clear to which school of management thought African managers belong; this is the most frustrating aspect, and from the point of view of organisational cohesion, the most divisive. When he should be firm, the manager overlooks acts of indiscipline. When he should be supportive of his subordinates' efforts, he decides to pick a quarrel. There is no denying the fact that defective supervision is capable of harming Africa's economic recovery and development efforts. It is a sure recipe for the brain drain. Adebayo Adedeji makes the point in an emphatic manner:

*I have no doubt that bad supervisors are a serious liability to their organisations. Instead of mobilising the work-force behind*

*the policies of the employers, such supervisors sow the seed of discord and inflame negative emotions.*<sup>10</sup>

## **Recent Developments in Employment Policy**

There is evidence that the attitude of policy-makers to human resource management is changing. Issues affecting the work-force are being tackled with renewed vigour. Moreover, the brain-drain is now acknowledged as a problem and measures are being adopted to stem the continued outflow of human resources. It is not possible within the space available to refer to the steps being taken in all African countries to improve the employment climate. Attention will therefore focus on a few countries' experiences.

Ghana's experiment with PAMSCAD (Programme of Action to Mitigate the Social Costs of Adjustment) is now fairly well-known. It came into being after the 1985 PAMSCAD Conference in Geneva. It sought to bring to the attention of the creditor nations the social implications of structural adjustment and to enlist their support in minimising the unsalutary effects. Mention should also be made of the highly controversial Skills Mobilisation Programme which sought to attract qualified Ghanaians in overseas countries back home. The inducements include a generous relocation package, enhanced salaries and other non-monetary benefits. The main problem with the Programme is the way it singles out "expatriate Ghanaians" for privileged treatment, overlooking the claims of those who stayed at home. Unless *all* categories of personnel are motivated, the problem of the brain-drain will remain unsolved and inter-group relations could be poisoned.

In Malawi, the government sought to alleviate the conditions of public servants by allowing across-the-board increases in salary in 1986/87. Back in 1984/85, the highest paid civil servant (at the bar of the super-scale or S.1 Grade) earned K13 371. By 1986/87, the salary rose to K19 104. Similarly, the salary of the highest paid administrative or professional officer increased from K6 756 to K7 764.<sup>11</sup> Swaziland and Nigeria have gone a step further by subjecting extant grading structures to critical scrutiny, but neither has yet arrived at a final decision on the critical problems of job parities. In the case of Swaziland, salary increases were announced on 1st April 1987 pending the resolution of conflicts on a new structure.

In Nigeria, the problem was even more complex. On 4 January, 1988, two circulars were simultaneously issued by the defunct office of the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation.<sup>12</sup> The first announced a new package of fringe benefits for federal and state civil servants (see Appendix A), while the second was titled "Elongation of the Salary Grade Levels in the Public Sector". The first did not raise much dust since it addressed issues directly touching upon public servants' welfare (new and enhanced rates of leave, transport grant, transport allowance, rent supplement, disturbance allowance, motor vehicle advance or "motor vehicle refurbishing loan", kilometre allowance, meal subsidy, entertainment allowance, housing loan, redundancy benefits and foreign service allowance). It was the proposed elongation of salary grade levels that generated the most controversy. The circular stated the *raison d'être* of elongation as follows:

*The Government was influenced in taking the decision by the fact that a large number of officers have remained on one salary point for many years and the need to remove the stagnation and the attendant frustration.*<sup>13</sup>

A careful examination of the new structure reveals that rather than "remove stagnation . . . and frustration", it has opened the doors to both. In the first place, the new structure has substantially elongated public service salary scales. It would take fifteen years to reach the bar of each scale on Grade Levels 01-10, ten years for posts graded 11 to 14, and eight years for posts on Grade Levels 15 to 17. Secondly, the elongated structure made no attempt to change the 17-point scale introduced in 1972 by the Udoji Commission. What it did was to give organisations which wanted to opt out of the Udoji's Unified Grading and Salary Structure two options. These organisations either had to adjust their salary structure with the maximum of N27 000 per annum and retain the continuity of service with the entire public service (continuity of service is useful for pension and gratuity purposes) or adopt a different structure and forfeit the benefits of belonging to a unified service. In case the latter option did not prove a strong enough deterrent, the circular added that organisations contemplating breaking away would:

*also be required to make a special case to that effect in the usual manner (meaning, through the civil service) for the consideration of the Federal Military Government.*<sup>14</sup>

Suffice it to say that much as the unified grading structure conferred advantages in terms of continuity of service (advantages which are significant for pensions and gratuity purposes), its pronounced hierarchical flavour makes it an inappropriate vehicle of technological and managerial innovation. Unless the production and service-rendering sub-sectors of the public service (notably the parastatals) enjoy a high degree of autonomy (including the autonomy to reward excellence and flush out passengers), the institutions will remain unproductive and continue to lose talented professionals. There is no doubt that the government is determined to reverse the brain-drain. In October 1988, the President, General Ibrahim Babangida, set up a high-powered committee on the brain-drain with the following terms of reference:

- (a) To identify and examine the causes and effects of the brain drain on the national economy;
- (b) To identify and analyse the fields of endeavour that are so affected;
- (c) To propose and suggest to Government, immediate and practical measures to check and reverse the process;
- (d) To propose and suggest medium- and long-term solutions to the problem with a view to enhancing the growth and development of a self-reliant nation; and
- (e) To make any other recommendations as the Committee may deem fit in order to attract and retain skilled manpower to develop the national economy.

In the concluding section of this paper, an attempt is made to address the specific issues raised in the preceding terms of reference, and the general issues as they affect the developmental aspirations of all African countries.

## **From Skills Exfoliation to Skills Retention: The Way Forward**

While the signs point towards an improving employment climate, we should be cautious in any conclusions we may wish to draw on recent trends. To start with, increases in monetary rewards do not by themselves constitute a strong antidote to the brain drain. As a matter of fact, there is empirical evidence to support the proposition that if the overall environment proves satisfactory, the inclination to stay at home and contribute to the development of one's society will be stronger than external attractions. From the point of view of a practical programme of action, the environment

which needs improving includes the external social climate and the internal organisational network of relationships. We should also emphasise the fact that information on the existing stock of human resources is crucial to any effort at re-couping losses and optimising the allocation of human resources.

## Focus on National Problems

As we pointed out in an earlier part of this paper, no one expects a government to find answers to *all* social problems as a condition for the return of skilled migrants. If the reversal of the current outflow of talent is dependent on the solution of *all* socio-economic problems, then there is no hope of ever getting back the people who have left. Our argument is not that a painless and miraculous solution should be found to each nation's problems, but that everybody should be *encouraged* to find solutions to the problems. If, instead of motivating problem-solvers, a system puts obstacles in their way, those professional cadres who are impatient with the tempo of change in their societies are likely to ply their trades in more congenial environments.

How can professional talents be motivated? Money is important but it is not the sole motivator. In the circumstances of Africa where there are multiple problems crying out for solutions (e.g. planting, harvesting, storage, and marketing and rural transportation problems in the food and agriculture sector, and problems in the areas of community health and general medical care, urban traffic, police protection and crime control), professional people would have a sense of fulfilment if they are challenged to proffer solutions. This type of motivation has, at least, two advantages: it enables each country to find answers to perennial problems and to provide a setting within which its stock of manpower could thrive and grow. The problem-focused approach to resource utilisation calls attention (albeit indirectly) to the danger of attaching preferences or "priorities" to particular classes of manpower. For over a quarter of a century, the rallying cry has been "develop scientific and technical manpower". This assumes that the liberal arts sector is not only over-subscribed, but also that Africa has little need for it. In our view, the importance to attach to any category of manpower should transcend the traditional but fruitless separation of the arts from the sciences and be subjected to a "needs test". In other words, how important a skill-category is, should depend on the *problems* to be tackled. Some problems are visible — (e.g. construction and/or maintenance

of steel structures, planting and harvesting, forest conservation and afforestation, flood control and channelisation). Others are real but not easily identifiable or readily acknowledged. Examples of the latter are anti-burglary devices for electronic equipment, motor vehicles, and other classes of personal property, anti-rigging devices for local or national elections, regional economic co-operation and commodity exchange modalities, rural savings mobilisation techniques, copyright protection devices and political consensus building strategies. In any case, a problem is as broad as the mind of the person identifying it. The more careful we are in reflecting on our countries' problems, the greater the chances that our human resources will be optimally deployed and developed.

## **The Search for and Registration of Talent**

As soon as each country identifies the major socio-economic problems to be tackled, attention should turn to the categories of skills required in conquering the problems. The search for talent should involve the compilation of a skills register or the storing of pertinent human resources data on computer files. The body of data which should be regularly stored and updated includes:

- (a) The qualifications and experience of individuals under the various skill categories (plus a summary of their achievements);
- (b) The type of problems which they would tackle best;
- (c) Their own job aptitudes and preferences;
- (d) Their location (the search should cover those at home and those abroad, and make provision for communication of change of address);
- (e) Summaries of exit interviews (departing personnel should be encouraged to state reasons for wishing to take up outside appointments, contrary to popular belief, the motivation may be anything but financial); and
- (f) Any other relevant information.

The last major step in efforts to plug human resource leakage is the removal of organisational constraints on effective deployment and development of manpower. These include arbitrary political interference in professional matters, an over-bearing hierarchical order, defective grading and position classification systems and a managerial or supervisory style which stifles initiative, breeds inter-personal conflicts and blocks creativity. Finally, all

those connected with the allocation of human resources should be constantly reminded of their obligations to the developing societies of Africa. If an economy is mismanaged, there is a possibility that when a new set of planners come up with a new set of planning instruments and data, the mistakes of the past will be corrected. If a nation's human resources are badly handled, irreparable damage will probably have been done.

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## Appendix A

### Fringe Benefits for Federal and State Civil Servants in Nigeria, 1988

<b>F/Benefit</b>	<b>Amount payable</b>
<i>Redundancy benefits:</i>	
(a) Officers who have served for up to 5 years	3 weeks salary for each year of service
(b) Officers who have served for over 5 years but less than 10	5 weeks salary for each completed year of service.
<i>Shift duty allowance</i>	12,5% of the monthly salary of officer on shift duty
<i>Foreign service allowance</i>	Fixed in US dollars and increased by 10%.
<i>Warm clothing allowance</i>	Payable to officers serving abroad.
<i>Education supplement</i>	Payable to foreign service officers serving in "non-English speaking countries only".
<i>Detention allowance</i>	To be paid (at current rate) to foreign service officers for a period of 7 days. Heads of missions authorised to approve an extension not exceeding 7 days.

# Employment Creation and Skills Development: A Survey of the Nigerian Situation

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*by Ali D. Yahaya*

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## Introduction

The dominant role of the State in African's economic recovery derives primarily from the responsibility of the state in national development. The State in Africa is not merely a regulatory and mediating organ in the economy, it is an instrument for enhancing national development and hence for the promotion of the welfare and economic well-being of the people. This idea of the State as an instrument of development came strongly to influence the character of the post-colonial states in Africa. It is within this context that states in Third World countries are referred to as "developmental states".

All African states are, therefore, directly involved in the regulation, management of, and participation in the economy. Nigeria as a developmental state, for instance, addressed national development by implementing a series of five-year development plans. These plans contain the programme of government for the development of the country. A number of specific objectives are usually set, and sectoral priorities are defined in every plan. In the Fourth National Plan of 1981-85, for instance, the major objectives include a more even distribution of income among individuals and socio-economic groups, reduction in the level of unemployment and underemployment, increase in the supply of skilled manpower, and development of technology. This task of national development has inevitably brought to the state a range of problems which relate to the capacity of the state to perform effectively with the constraints of inadequate finance and human resources in the country.

The human resources of a nation, which consist of skilled men and women, young and old, who are engaged in the production of goods and services are the greatest, and indeed, the most precious assets of the nation. This point is vividly captured by Harbison (1973) who asserts that:

*Human resources, not capital, not income or material resources constitute the ultimate basis for the wealth of nations. Capital and natural resources are passive factors of production; human beings are the active agents who accumulate capital; exploit natural resources; build social, economic and political organisations; and carry forward national development.*

The effective harnessing and management of human resources thus becomes the cornerstone of national development. The conscious training and development of human resources, as a matter of deliberate policy, becomes an imperative. Human resources are the key with which to unlock the creative and problem-solving processes that move society forward towards its social and economic development goals.

Human resources can be mobilised through programmes of employment creation and skills development in Africa. These programmes are contingent on the prevailing socio-economic conditions in the continent. Post-colonial Africa has gone through great political, economic, technological and social transformations with a corresponding change in the expectations and needs of the people. These expectations have been dashed as a result of the economic crisis which engulfed the continent. The crisis led to widespread unemployment, low rates of industrial capacity utilisation, declining productivity, etc. The onus of economic recovery lies heavily on Government. This is largely because the scope of the public sector in the African economy is immense and its dominance in the economy can be said to be total. No doubt, Government in African states is the prime mover of the economy. Public servants and managers of the African economy carry the enormous responsibility of managing the economy, realigning development priorities, mobilising human resources and reducing the level of unemployment in the current struggle for economic recovery. If an optimal utilisation of human resources can be attained, then one major constraint on economic recovery would have been overcome.

## **Attacking the Unemployment Problem**

Unemployment and under-employment as acute social and economic problems, are a relatively recent phenomenon in Africa. It has been widely accepted that unemployment was really not a problem in traditional Africa. Unemployment as a problem, is a feature of the colonial and post-colonial African economy. Hitherto, the problem in Africa was the availability of

human resources to man a modernising economy. In Nigeria, for instance, and especially in the 1970s, one major constraint on development was lack of executive capacity. Thus in the 1960s and 1970s, Government made massive investments in education and training in order to close the gap between the demand for and supply of manpower. During the Third Plan period (1975-80) in Nigeria, the education sector was allocated about 3,2 billion Naira out of a total public sector planned expenditure of 26,5 billion Naira.

The result of this massive investment in education was the flooding of the labour market with a large number of school leavers at a time when the labour absorptive capacity of the economy was significantly reduced. The Nigerian Government, therefore, had to face the unemployment issue as both a social and an economic problem requiring an urgent and well-designed action plan to combat it.

Unemployment in an economy can be attacked through schemes of self or wage employment-generation. Most countries try to resolve this problem by both means. Where the problem is severe, employment opportunities can be created by Government formulating and implementing policies which are inherently job creating, or by providing facilities and opportunities for training and retraining of the economically active population.

In many countries, the solution of unemployment problems using any of these methods is entrusted to a public institution with responsibility for creating jobs, identifying vacancies and placing job-seekers. One popular job-creation strategy is the promotion of small- and medium-scale enterprises.

### **The potentials of small- and medium-scale industries**

The small- and medium-scale enterprises are particularly relevant in job-creation because of some of the attributes they are known to possess:

- (a) They are more labour-intensive and therefore capable of offering more people wage employment;
- (b) they utilise simple technology which can be operated, and maintained with available local skills;
- (c) they tend to utilise local raw materials and thereby stimulate growth of the primary goods-producing sectors; and
- (d) they spread economic benefits and opportunities more widely.

Even in industrialised societies, the contribution of small- and medium-scale enterprises to the provision of employment, goods and services is known to be considerable. It is, for instance, claimed that small- and medium-scale enterprises employ up to 60% of the total labour force in the United States.

In Africa, small- and medium-scale enterprises should be promoted for political reasons as well. By virtue of their scope and role in the economy, they are viable instruments for the attainment of Government economic growth and employment creation policy. In Nigeria, for instance, economic self-reliance which is a main development objective of the Government, is being pursued through a system involving the development of local substitutes of industrial raw materials. Small- and medium-scale enterprises are strategically located to provide this industrial input. They can easily be dispersed throughout the country and thereby contribute to the policy of balanced industrial development.

The contributions which small- and medium-scale enterprises are capable of making to national development was acknowledged in all the Nigerian National Development Plans. In the second plan, for instance, Government decided to actively promote and develop small-scale industries. Government support for small-scale industries was also influenced by its efforts to increase local ownership and participation in manufacturing. Towards this end, three Industrial Development Centres located in Zaria, Owerri and Oshogbo were assigned the following functions:

- (a) technical appraisal of application for loans;
- (b) provision of industrial extension services;
- (c) training of entrepreneurs and staff; and
- (d) applied research into industrial products, involving the design of products and management training.

In addition, each State has established an Industrial Development Centre and Small-Scale Industries Credit Scheme for the provision of technical service and to ensure that funds for projects supported by Government are properly utilised.

### **Programmes for employment creation**

The utilisation of small- and medium-scale enterprises as instruments of national development can be defined as *Permeation Strategy* distinct from

the trickle down strategy. Enterprises are spread throughout the nation with no concentration in one or only a few centres. Ownership of businesses is dispersed within the economy thus spreading employment opportunities throughout the economy. Employment becomes more easily available even to those who are unskilled. In Nigeria, action has been initiated in this regard through the Entrepreneurship Development Programme (EDP). EDP is under the Federal Ministry of Industries and the National Directorate of Employment. The Federal Ministry of Industry in collaboration with the Nigerian Bank of Commerce and Industry are promoting the EDP through an entrepreneurial development programme labelled "Working-For-Yourself". The participants include retired public officers and unemployed graduates. The specific objectives of the programme are:

- (a) to provide a systematic guide to those who wish to explore possibilities of working for themselves;
- (b) to provide motivation and confidence for participants to explore how they might work for themselves;
- (c) to help participants to activate the latent technical and business abilities they need in order to survive in business;
- (d) to assist participants identify the resources required over and above those which they already have at hand and the means of acquiring these resources; and
- (e) to help participants explore ways of using their skills and ideas to meet their needs.

Participants in the Working-For-Yourself scheme were all beginners. The EDP Working-For-Yourself model is based on the concept of four key factors necessary for starting a business. These four factors are the ingredients of success in all privately-owned businesses. They are Ideas, Motivation, Ability/Skills and Resources (physical and financial).

Another agency which has responsibility for Entrepreneurial development in Nigeria is the National Directorate of Employment (NDE). The NDE was established to combat the problem of mass unemployment in the country. It is the principal employment-generation agency in the country. The NDE has four core programmes: Skills Acquisition and Apprenticeship Programme; Small-Scale Industries and Graduate Employment Programme; Special Public Works Programme and Agricultural Programme.

The Entrepreneurship Development Programme of the NDE is implemented through the Small-Scale Industries and Graduate Employment Programme. It is designed to inspire unemployed graduates and other young entrepreneurs to establish small-scale enterprises in order to provide employment for themselves and for others. Schemes set up for the attainment of these objectives have been put in place. They are:

(a) **The EDP for National Youth Service Corps (NYSC):** The objective here is to expose university and polytechnic graduates to the option of self-employment in recognition that paid employment opportunities in the public and private sectors are limited. This scheme was started in 1987 and the Centre for Management Development coordinated and administered the programme. In 1988, however, the coordination and administration of the programme was assigned to the Administrative Staff College of Nigeria (ASCON). The College counsels participants in self-employment and assists them in matters such as the preparation of business plans. The benefits to be derived from the EDP are numerous. The EDP Participants Manual for the NYSC lists the following:

- (i) generation of substantial employment opportunities for the unemployed youth at much lower costs in terms of capital, as compared with large-scale industries;
- (ii) mobilisation of available but hitherto untapped local resources such as raw materials and skills;
- (iii) stimulation of growth of indigenous entrepreneurship;
- (iv) encouragement of dispersal of industries to the rural areas thereby helping to reduce the incidence of rural-to-urban migration with its disturbing socio-economic and political implications;
- (v) provision of effective avenues for import substitution thereby saving much needed foreign exchange; and
- (vi) development of uncomplicated technology for easy acquisition and understanding by the predominantly semi-skilled labour force in the country and thereby contributing to the growth of indigenous skilled manpower and technology.

In 1987, 29 000 Youth Corps participants were exposed to the EDP. No data are available on the numbers that have opted for self-employment.

*The Job Creation Loan Guarantee Scheme:* This was established to provide collateral for unemployed graduates and other unemployed persons who have good business ideas but no access to bank credit. A Job Creation Loan

Guarantee Fund of 55 million Naira was deposited with 20 participating banks to serve as collateral for lending to young entrepreneurs and others wishing to be self-employed, provided they are able to present good business plans to the Directorate. By the end of 1987, i.e. in the first year of the operation of the scheme, over 5 000 applications for funding were received. Loan recipients are given all opportunities to succeed. They go through an intensive training programme designed to inculcate in them a spirit of self-reliance, and to teach them the elements of running a small business. Furthermore, the NDE engaged the services of management consulting firms in each of the 21 States of the Federation. They, together with NDE officials, monitor and provide support services to the scheme. The monitoring team regularly visits the new entrepreneur to provide practical assistance and advice so as to help reduce his risk of failure.

*Mature Peoples Programme:* This is a new scheme. It is intended to extend the opportunities of self-employment to those with years of experience on the job but who have now been rendered unemployed by redundancy or early retirement policies. It is expected that as a start, this scheme will take 15 people from each of the 21 States of the Federation including the Federal Capital Territory. This means that about 330 people will benefit from the scheme. The loan amount for each project varies between 50 000 Naira and 150 000 Naira. It is envisaged that each beneficiary will employ about 25 people including graduates, for every 50 000 Naira loan received. If 330 people benefit from this scheme, 8 250 jobs will be created. The participating banks in the Job Creation Loan Guarantee Scheme and the NDE have defined the modalities for the implementation of this scheme. They have agreed as follows:

- (i) NDE would provide full guarantee to the fund;
- (ii) banks should take liens on equipment and should accept security from the entrepreneur to the tune of 50% of his loan amount;
- (iii) the period of repayment should not be more than 5 years; and
- (iv) a moratorium of not more than one year should be allowed and an interest of 2% applied on the loan.

Beneficiaries of this programme are also to be exposed to EDP training courses where retired officers from the private and public sectors engaged in successful businesses are invited to share their experiences with the trainees.

*School Leavers Programme:* This is also a new scheme designed for youths who have been trained either by the NDE or technical schools. The objective

of the scheme is to create employment among school leavers particularly the technically skilled. Loans of between 2 000 Naira and 5 000 Naira are made available to the participants in his programme. The repayment period should not exceed 5 years just as in the Matured People's Scheme. To be eligible, the applicant must have passed his School Leaving Certificate exams and should have received some training under the Youth Employment and Vocational Skills Development Programme. Participants should submit a bankable feasibility study on the proposed enterprise.

These four schemes are specifically designed for job creation. Apart from providing opportunities for self-employment, they offer employment opportunities to job-seekers. The problem of unemployment can, therefore, be tackled through specific programmes designed for that purpose.

### **Other Programmes for the Improvement of the Employment Situation**

The job creation schemes are supported by policies which aim at making the unemployed better prepared for employment. The programmes that are being implemented by the NDE for this purpose are:

(a) **National Open Apprenticeship Scheme:** This scheme is open to unemployed youths who are placed as apprentices in private enterprises and government establishments for periods of one to three years depending on their chosen trade and experience. When their apprenticeship is completed, they are accommodated in the employment market and those who show signs of an inclination for business are provided the necessary assistance through the Directorate's Small Business Loan Scheme.

The target for 1987 was to place 50 000 in training to enable them acquire skills that are marketable. But by the end of the year, the number of apprentices under this scheme had reached 70 000. Out of this number, it was envisaged that 22 000 would complete their training in 1988 and 30% of them would opt for self-employment, in which case they are provided with basic tools and working capital on a loan basis. This distribution of trainees per state is shown below:

(b) **Special Public Works Programme:** The objectives of this programme are as follows:

- (i) to identify and execute labour-intensive projects using unemployed citizens within their own local government areas;
- (ii) to engage in the construction and maintenance of public buildings, roads and undertake other public works schemes; and
- (iii) to create temporary mass employment whilst enabling the participants acquire skills.

This scheme is intended to provide temporary unemployment relief. Over 24 000 people have passed through this programme in the last year and 15% of these have been able to secure permanent employment after.

**Table 1: Nigeria National Open Apprenticeship Scheme  
Number of Trainees per State**

<i>State</i>	<i>Target</i>	<i>Actual</i>
Abuja	2 000	—
Akwa Ibom	*	*
Anambra	2 000	6 000
Bauchi	2 000	2 000
Bendel	2 000	4 000
Benue	2 000	1 500
Borno	2 000	2 000
Cross River	2 000	2 000
Congola	2 000	2 000
Imo	2 000	6 000
Kaduna	2 000	2 500
Kano	2 000	2 000
Katsina	*	*
Kwara	2 000	4 000
Lagos State	2 000	4 000
Lagos National	10 000	10 000
Ogun	2 000	2 000
Ondo	2 000	5 000
Oyo	2 000	4 000
Plateau	2 000	3 000
Rivers	2 000	3 000
Sokoto	2 000	2 000
<b>Total</b>	<b>50 000</b>	<b>70 000</b>

\*Figures for these States are included in Cross River and Kaduna States.

(c) **The Agricultural Programme:** This is the scheme which will most directly contribute to the promotion of self-employment in the rural areas. This programme is being implemented in all the States with the full involvement of the State Governments, which have made available 500 hectares of land each and have jointly borne the cost of land-clearing with the Directorate.

Each participant has been allocated 5 hectares of land and provided with agricultural inputs. A loan of 11 500 Naira is provided and this is disbursed through the banks. Each participant initially engages 3 farm hands and increases this workforce to 20 during the harvesting season.

### **Training for Management and Skills Development: Some Reflections**

The programmes designed to create jobs and to retrain people for self-employment need to be coordinated and delivered in an institution with responsibility for training. Training Programmes should be carried out in a more sustained and permanent basis. However, the enormity of the unemployment problem today has rendered formal training systems incapable of coping with the demand. There is need for them to be supplemented by non-formal training programmes.

Much of the vocational training provided in Africa is carried out in the informal sector through an apprenticeship system. Training under the apprenticeship system is conducted by master-craftsmen in a particular trade. The learning process usually begins with the youth rendering personal service to the master. After some years of loyal service, the youth gradually acquires the skills of the trade. Non-formal vocational training opportunities are available mainly in urban centres where the services of skilled workers are in greater demand.

Useful as this apprenticeship system may be, it leaves too much room for the "exploitation" of the learner by the master. This derives primarily from the nature of the training which is not systematic and structured. The relationship between the learner and the master is, therefore, not well defined. There is also no systematic means of determining the standard the trainee has achieved. His competence and ability can only be determined from his performance on the job.

Vocational training is also carried out on the job. This is a formal method of vocational training and many apprentices who undergo prescribed training on the job are required to sit for trade tests and successful apprentices are awarded trade certificates. Another formal method of vocational training is carried out in Technical Colleges which produce skilled tradesmen for the economy. In many countries, coordinating agencies are established to monitor the status of vocational training and to formulate policies on training activities.

Management training institutions on the other hand, have been established to upgrade the skills of managers by exposing them to new ideas in the field of management. They are basically structured to cater to the needs of those in service. These institutions, therefore, have a restricted mandate. The training needs of the unemployed or retired officers are not normally the responsibility of management training institutions. There is, therefore, a visible gap in this area.

The reality of the present situation has necessitated some changes in the orientation of these management training institutions. Today, management training institutions are moving in new directions by responding to the training needs of the unemployed. The retrenchment of workers and the early retirement of officers precipitated by the economic crisis have inevitably induced Governments to organise training for self-employment. Some management training institutions have assisted in this regard. The Administrative Staff College of Nigeria is deeply involved in entrepreneurial development as its contributions to training for self-employment. The NDE Entrepreneurial Development Programme, and the Federal Ministry of Industry's Working-For-Yourself Programme, are administered and delivered by the College and other training institutions. The College has now built up capacity for the delivery of training for self-employment.

It has now become necessary to chart out a new direction for the future of training, in view of the current problems posed by the unemployment question. Training should now begin to concentrate on the need to develop skills for self-employment having as target groups not only the new labour force entrants, but also those who are victims of early retirement or retrenchment policies.

Creating opportunities for self-employment will contribute to an optimal utilisation of human resources which is a necessary pre-condition for self-reliant and self-sustained national development. Human resources can

be optimally utilised if unemployment is reduced to the minimum. The more viable option for combating unemployment is to intensify training for self-employment.

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## **Policies for Unemployed Youth: The Case of Tanzania**

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*R. Baguma*

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Tanzania has, over the years, adopted a number of policies in the agricultural sector, three of which have important implications for youth employment. These are the policy of Ujamaa and self-reliance; the land ownership policy and the National Agricultural Policy of 1983.

### **Ujamaa Vijijini Policy**

The Ujamaa Vijijini policy (rural socialism) was promulgated in 1967 as an instrument to implement the broad policy of socialism and self-reliance in rural areas. The objective of the policy was to transform agriculture, using the resourcefulness and initiatives of the people and ensuring that the fruits of their labour are equitably shared. The rationale of the policy was three-fold: first, to achieve the political objectives of removing rural class stratification between the haves and the have-nots. The policy required each person to work with others, thus affording each able-bodied person an opportunity to engage in productive work. Second, by pooling their labour and other resources together, farmers would more easily be able to specialise in different aspects of production, and their collective efforts would enable them to afford advanced and modern equipment and machinery for productive purposes, thereby increasing the level of productivity and production. Third, it was felt that it would be more convenient for the government to extend its extension and related services to more organised groups, thus further enhancing the prospects of their development.

It was envisaged that well into the foreseeable future, only a few youth would, on completion of primary education, proceed to secondary schools and vocational training. Fewer still would be employed in the formal sector in low-skilled and low-paying jobs. A large number would have to return to the villages, where they would be directly absorbed in the already organised work brigades of the socialist co-operatives. For these, the problem of unemployment would not arise.

## **Land ownership Policy**

The land policy of Tanzania as stipulated in the Land Ordinance of 1964, states that land is the property of the State. This fact has been re-emphasised in the Arusha Declaration of 1967, and been further entrenched by the 1975 Ujamaa Villages Act, whereby all land within the jurisdiction of the village is registered under that village and administered by the village Government.

Given the provision of the land ownership policy, all Tanzanians have access to, and a right of use of land. In many parts of the world where land is privately owned, many people are rendered unemployed on account of their being landless. In Tanzania where this is not the case, rural unemployment cannot be caused by landlessness, because this policy guarantees that anyone wishing to do so, can engage in production in the agricultural sector if they so wish.

## **The National Agricultural Policy of 1981**

The National Agricultural Policy of 1983 was in response to the Report of the Task Force on National Agricultural Policy appointed by the Government in 1982, to study the policies in force, and advise the Government on policy changes and improvements which should be undertaken to revamp agriculture.

The Task Force in its report, most of which was adopted by the Government in 1983, made conclusions and recommendations on several policy issues covering the entire agricultural sector. Of immediate significance to employment were the following:

- (i) The Task Force observed that there had been a decline in farm/estates wage employment due mainly to two factors. One was that after the villagisation programme, some regions had discouraged labour migration from the rural areas to the estates and plantations. This had affected labour supply to sisal and coffee estates and sugar cane plantations. Second was that the wage levels and other incentive schemes for farm labourers were inadequate and, therefore, could not attract labour.
- (ii) Since the Arusha Declaration, private farmers felt insecure, given the wave of nationalisation of large commercial farms particularly those that were close to, or within villages. This lack of security over

land ownership discouraged investment and farm improvement, thus constraining the expansion of employment.

The Task Force, therefore, recommended the following:

- (a) that farm labour should be accorded a status similar to that of industrial labour and the necessary incentives should be provided to make farm work attractive;
- (b) that government should ensure that employers in agriculture observe the labour laws, such as minimum wage rates, worker welfare, etc. established for farm labour; and
- (c) that free labour migration should be allowed as is the case in other sectors.

In respect of private farms, it was recommended that each land user be assured of continued ownership of land because the contrary "undermines the security of the users and does not offer a sound basis for permanent agriculture".

## **The Education Policy**

The education policy of Tanzania has at least four functional areas as regards the issue of youth employment. These are education for self-reliance, universal primary education (UPE), the policy on vocational training and Adult Education (functional literacy).

### *Education for Self-reliance*

Education for self-reliance like the Socialism and Rural Development Policy, came in the wake of the Arusha Declaration on Socialism and Self-reliance. The main objective of the policy was to relate school education to the real world of work. Pupils were supposed to undertake practical work which generated funds, and learn relevant skills that were applicable in their rural environment.

The relationship between this policy and youth employment, can be seen at two levels. On one level, is the fact that during their schooling, the youths would have learned useful skills which could be transferred to the work-place. Education for self-reliance is thus a preparation of the young for his future work-life. On the other level, the education for self-reliance

policy was meant to prepare the youth for easy insertion in the ujamaa work brigades, once they completed their primary education.

### *Vocational Training Policy*

Until recently, vocational education was rather neglected, with only three Government technical and vocational training schools. These schools were urban-based and modern sector-oriented.

Since 1985, there has been a new and broader perception of the role and relevance of vocational training, both for the formal industrial sector, and to meet skill needs in the rural areas. Priority shifted to vocational and technical training for rural development. Policy emphasis was on providing at least one vocational training centre (VTC) for every district. Decentralisation of VTCs to the districts, it is assumed, would improve training and provide more employment opportunities to the youths in rural areas.

### *Functional Literacy Education*

Functional literacy education in Tanzania is one aspect of adult or continuing education. When Tanzania embarked on adult education vigorously from round 1969, it was with a view to wiping out illiteracy, i.e. to equip every adult person with the basic skills of reading and writing. As the anti-illiteracy war was being waged, action was taken to ensure that the literate population are more useful and productive by being given opportunities to learn new, more functional skills. The idea of functional literacy, transformed into Folk Development Colleges (FDCs) was adapted from Sweden, where similar adult education programmes had been going on for a long time.

With respect to employment generation, the FDC play a dual role. First, they provide a two-year course through which youths learn specific trades. On completion of the course, the graduates are expected to go back to their villages and assist the villagers in those areas in which they have been trained. The second, which is more in line with the original conception of folk development, is the provision of short training courses for adults in various skill areas which are in high demand in rural communities. These are more "appreciation" courses which are meant to broaden the

perspectives of the recipients and make them more receptive to innovations.

### *General Education Policy*

The general education policy of Tanzania is characterised by two extreme features, namely it is too broad at the base and too narrow towards the apex. It has been government policy that every Tanzanian should have access to education, and in fulfilment of this goal, the Government adopted and began to implement the Universal Primary Education (UPE) programme from 1975, making it obligatory for every child of school-going age to attend school. On the other hand, post-primary education, especially secondary and higher education has been geared towards meeting the skilled manpower requirements of the formal sector. But since openings in the formal sector are limited, enrolment into secondary schools and institutions of higher learning has been very limited. Thus one has, on the one hand a few trained cadres who can more easily be absorbed in the wage labour market, and on the other hand many primary school leavers who should return to the rural sector and join socialist production brigades.

### **The Human Resources Deployment Act — 1983**

The Human Resources Deployment Act — 1983, was the first systematic attempt to consolidate the various policies on employment, stating the nature of the problem, the goals to be achieved, the strategy to be adopted and the institutions and agencies responsible for implementation.

The Minister, who may make relevant regulations from time to time, is "responsible for the promotion of the full deployment of available human resources and for the establishment and development of organs devoted to that purpose and for securing the effective execution by local authorities under his guidance, control and direction, of the national policy for providing a varied, comprehensive and nationally beneficial human resources deployment scheme in their respective areas of jurisdiction."

Other important actors include the Commissioner of Labour, who is responsible for "monitoring and co-ordination of all the activities carried out by the local authorities in connection with the provision of the Act". He is also the secretary to the Human Resources Deployment Advisory

Committee, which is appointed by the Minister and advises the Ministry on all affairs connected with employment.

The Act further gives clear responsibility to the local authorities as the main implementing agencies: "Every local government authority shall be the final authority in respect of matters relating to the implementation of the national human resources deployment scheme within its area of jurisdiction."

Provisions for the implementation of the Act include the establishment and maintenance by all local authorities, of a register of all people within their jurisdiction who are capable of working; the transfer of unemployed people to their home districts to secure employment; organisation of training to provide skills to the unemployed. Further, the Act proposes a list of 29 activities in areas ranging from agriculture to commerce which the local government authorities may carry out in "furtherance of the provisions of the Act".

## **The Impact of the Policies on Youth Employment**

### *Agricultural policies*

Both the policies of socialism and rural development, and the land ownership policy, were intended to give everybody access to land, and anchor the rural people especially the youth in their rural environment. As already stated, it was hoped that by working together in socialist brigades everybody would be gainfully employed. It is now over 20 years since the Arusha Declaration, and youth unemployment is on the rise. What went wrong with the policies?

Firstly, the implementation of rural socialism through organised collective production failed to materialise to the scale anticipated. By 1972, there were only about 2 million people in registered Ujamaa villages, slightly over 10% of the rural population. However, even within those registered Ujamaa villages, collective production accounted for less than 10% of total production. Thus, the policy as a basis for generating rural employment was a non-starter.

Several reasons have been given for the failure of rural socialism:

- (a) Peasants are by nature conservative, and would always shy away from accepting changes which disrupt their normal way of life.

Socialist production calls for drastic changes and the surrendering of one's freedom to the collectivity;

- (b) the approach used to convince the people to form Ujamaa communities did not measure up to the demands of the policy. The Party and Government relied on education and appeals which, without any tangible demonstration of the superiority of socialist production over individual production, was not sufficiently convincing to the people for them to voluntarily give up the long-tested way of organising their production; and
- (c) the Party and Government had under-rated the extent to which individualist tendencies had entrenched themselves.

In the end, the policy did little if anything concrete to solve the employment problems.

Similarly, the land ownership policy overstated the real situation obtaining. While it is correct that an individual has free access to State or village administered land, there are still practical problems of implementation arising from the following factors:

- (a) while Tanzania's population density is low (35 people per sq.km), there are extreme area variations. Some parts, e.g. Kilimanjaro, Sukumaland, Bukoba, Rungwe and others, are already suffering from land shortage. In these parts, the mere statement that land belongs to the people does not change this situation;
- (b) the densely populated areas also happen to be those in which, traditionally, land belongs to the family. Government policy notwithstanding, people in these areas still respect and practise their customary land ownership patterns. While certain families may have land in excess of their immediate needs, those suffering from land shortage still have no right to the excess land. Thus, at the individual level, there is land shortage even where land is plentiful; and
- (c) a feasible alternative would be for those suffering from land shortage to migrate to places where land is still plentiful. However, moving to establish oneself elsewhere (assuming one was willing to move) requires resources, especially capital, or some form of government support. Paradoxically, those affected by land shortage happen to be those most deprived in this regard.

As a consequence of the above factors, and despite the existence of a policy that guarantees access to land to all, land shortage is still a serious constraint on rural employment, especially for the youth.

### *The National Agricultural Policy of 1983*

Consequent to the adoption of the National Agricultural Policy, there has been some changes in line with the recommendations of the Task Force which called for it. Since 1984, the Government has been encouraging private investors to go into private farming, and has even sold off some of the mismanaged State farms to private farmers. The financial institutions, particularly commercial banks have been directed to increase the volume of loans to the private sector. Also, there have been reviews of the conditions of farm labour, especially with regard to the incentive system. Restrictions on labour migration have also been lifted.

The employment impact of these changes cannot at the moment be ascertained. It is obvious that the increase in private commercial farms has created some limited employment. One handicap is that the youth, especially given their education biases, still shy away from farm employment. And, although there exists employment opportunities on the farms, especially on sisal plantations, few educated youth are willing to take them up. Thus, while the policy has eliminated restrictions, it has not succeeded in creating an environment sufficiently attractive to promote youth employment.

### *The Education Policies*

Tanzania pursues a universal primary education policy, which is supposed to give recipients both general education and specific skills that are applicable in real work situations. The impact of primary education on youth employment has, however, had adverse effects rather than achieved its original objectives. The adverse effects have been caused by the following:

#### *(a) Youth Expectations*

Education has been viewed by the recipients as a preparation for wage employment. While the Tanzanian political leadership has made attempts to relate education to the needs of rural life, in practice, youth have tended to look for employment in the formal, urban sector. However, two factors

militate against primary school leavers securing employment. First, Tanzania's formal sector is small and growing at a limited pace. While total annual primary school output is around 600 000 on average, total formal wage employment was 750 000 in 1986, and annual job openings are few and biased in favour of those who have completed at least secondary education.

Second, despite the false impression held by the youth that they can acquire wage employment on completion of primary schooling, the primary school curriculum does not provide skills that are readily applicable in the real world of work. Thus, as these youths leave school, they are somewhat unskilled and, therefore, unfit for direct employment in formal sector occupations. In other words, the education they receive divorces them from the rural setting, without preparing them adequately for urban living.

#### *(b) Parents' Expectations*

The youth's false expectations are reinforced by those of their parents. Parents have always considered provision of education to their children as an investment, which should liberate their children from the shackles of poverty which is usually associated with rural life. They thus expect their children to find wage employment in towns, so that they can look after themselves and if necessary, take care of the extended family. Upon completion of primary education, the youth are not only expected to find wage employment in urban centres, but are actually urged to do so by their parents. The result is always the same: youth trekking from the villages to towns where they can hardly find employment.

#### *(c) Rural Conditions*

The only feasible alternative to wage employment is for the youth to settle in the villages and engage in rural production activities. Efforts have been made by the Government and Party to get youths to move in that direction. But even where the youths do settle down to an active rural life, they have to contend with the fact that economic activities in the rural sector are still traditional and of low productivity. Thus, without adequate skills, those who return effectively to village living, are re-absorbed into the traditional pattern of production, and because of their low skill levels, are hardly able to make an impact on rural production. The education they are endowed with, is ineffectual in transforming their lives in their rural settings.

## *The Human Resources Deployment Act*

As stated earlier, the Human Resources Deployment Act of 1983 is the most comprehensive attempt to grapple with the problem of unemployment particularly for the youths. It has been possible to establish a few youth camps with the support of the funds from the programme, but this has been on a limited scale.

Problems in the implementation of the Human Resources Deployment Programme are both organisational and operational. While at the national level there is a National Advisory Committee, at the operational level, the programme has to be implemented by Local Government Authorities, with a representative of the Labour Commissioner as co-ordinator of the programme. This arrangement has had the following problems:

- (a) The provisions of the Act anticipated that the local authorities would be responsible to the Minister of Labour through the Commissioner of Labour. However, statutorily, the local authorities are not responsible to the Ministry of Labour and, therefore, the latter can neither supervise nor sanction them if and when they fail to implement the Ministry's directives.
- (b) Not all local authorities have representatives of the Commissioner of Labour. Even where some are to be found, there is still the problem of orientation, organisational and planning capabilities, and acceptability by the local community. The person being an "outsider" to the local authorities without any legal powers over them, can be easily resisted. Most of the labour officers at the district and regional levels are not prepared by training and experience for community mobilisation which is essential for the effectiveness of the programme.
- (c) The problem of communication is another obstacle. Some villagers interviewed in Sengerema and Kisarawe districts were unaware of the Human Resources Deployment Programme. They were not aware of the existence of any youth employment programmes. But for an ambitious programme like this to succeed, it is essential to have direct communication with the affected parties, in this case, the youth and the wider community both in urban centres and in villages.

### *Need for Policy Changes and Improvement*

The need for changes, improvement or total reformulation of the present policies arises from the recognition that in spite of all the efforts deployed to attack unemployment so far, the problem still persists. A number of options can be tried: The first is to discourage primary education so that the youth would grow up in a traditional environment respecting traditional forms of employment. The second is to reorient primary education so that youths adopt a sense of realism and respect for other forms of employment besides wage employment in the formal sector. The third is to create more employment opportunities that will be appealing to the youth.

The first option is unacceptable. The second option is ideal but can only be attempted gradually and at any rate cannot, for now, solve the problem. The third option remains the more practical, but then raises the question as to how to effect it. This leads us to the second major cause of unemployment, namely lack of wage employment opportunities within the environment from which most of the youth come.

The youths shy away from agricultural pursuits, because given their orientation and acculturation, agriculture as currently practised, is not sufficiently remunerative to attract new educated labour force entrants. It is not sufficiently remunerative because labour productivity is low and, therefore, incomes generated are low, relative to the energy and time expended in production. The risks are also high.

The efforts to transform agriculture aim at ensuring that agricultural activities are able to satisfy the basic needs of the people by guaranteeing them availability and adequacy of farm lands, adequate and realistic producer prices, market access and protection, availability of credit facilities, supply of inputs and implements, good quality extension services and access to appropriate technology. These, together, constitute a package which could go a long way to transform agriculture into a sufficiently remunerative and attractive activity of production.

### *Land supply*

As noted earlier, Tanzania's population is low, there is, therefore, statistically, enough land for everybody. However, in many parts of the country, land is scarce. The Government has been encouraging people to shift from high density to low density areas and has started two

experimental camps in Morogoro and Dar es Salaam, under the Human Resources Deployment Programme. There are problems with resettlement caused by lack of capital, poor organisation and inadequate communication.

### *Marketing*

Marketing of primary producer commodities, could be said to fall under two market structures: centrally-organised marketing and individual, unstructured marketing. Centrally-organised marketing has concerned itself with major exports and a few staples. Organised marketing has, however, had a number of problems. There is a plethora of bureaucratic agencies which cause delays in purchasing, payment for and transportation of crops. The Presidential Commission on Export Promotion stated in this regard that:

*As regards the major agricultural crops, the Government has confined their external marketing to the statutory Boards now re-established. Ideally, all marketing, internal and external, should be in the hands of the producers themselves, and ideally the co-operatives having a common interest in a particular crop should be forming a joint marketing company . . . . To the contrary, however, the findings of the commission indicate that producers have had very little say in marketing of the crops they produce.*

As for other crops, marketing is done by the producers themselves. Lack of organised marketing for some crops, particularly fruits, vegetables and other perishables, has resulted in the fluctuation of supply of such crops, and a loss of revenue to the producers. However, for some of the crops, the producers prefer negotiated prices outside the organised market as that assures them of a fairer price.

### *Pricing*

For the centrally-priced crops the general observation has been that prices have been rather too low. The same Presidential Commission on export promotion observed that:

*The Commission believes that the producer prices for almost all agricultural exports are not commensurate with current levels of inflation. This has led to substitution in labour time in favour of*

*food crop production where returns are higher. (Commission's Report, p.14.)*

Also the Task Force on National Agricultural Policy, did observe in its report that:

*In real terms . . . producer prices of food crops have declined by about 5,5% over the last decade. This decline though, is relatively less than that of export crops as a group which declined by 36,5% over the same period. As for export crops, the determination of absolute producer prices is by way of deducting from world determined f.o.b prices of marketing costs of parastatals and paying the residual to the producer. Here, increasing costs of parastatals are intended to eat into the share going to the producer. (Report of Task Force, 1982.)*

### *Extension Services*

Extension services play an important role especially if the low education level of most primary producers is taken into consideration. The Presidential Commission on Export Promotion made the following observations about the extension services:

- (a) there is no effective policy;
- (b) manpower has been misallocated;
- (c) training and retraining has been inadequate;
- (d) transport facilities have been lacking;
- (e) technical packages which are suitable for different ecological zones have not been developed for delivery to the farmer;
- (f) there is lack of extension aids;
- (g) effective linkage with research is weak; and
- (h) such extension staff as do exist are totally demoralised.

The overall general picture painted tends towards the negative. This assessment is similar to the one made about input supply, storage, transport and credit facilities.

## *Agricultural Training*

It is in agricultural training that policy reorientation should be most strongly recommended. At present, agricultural training is considered as an exclusively professional undertaking for experts in agriculture, agronomy, extension services etc. If the youth are to be encouraged to undertake agricultural pursuits, Government should reconsider the depth and spread of its agricultural training policy. The proposed policy change has two aspects:

- (a) peasant/producer education through short-term clinics and demonstrations;
- (b) systematic and well-structured long-term (one to three years) training for youths, coupled with training for each youth in one specialised trade or craft. This type of training resembles that currently provided by the FDCs.

## **Recommended Strategies and Mechanisms for Implementing Youth Employment Programmes**

### *The Human Resources Deployment Programme*

The problems that beset the implementation of the Human Resources Deployment Programme arise from the fact that responsibility for implementation of the programmes is shared by two agencies which are structurally not in direct communication. There is also no evidence to show that anything is being done to bridge the communication gap between the two agencies.

The National Advisory Committee must, therefore, be strengthened and accorded executive powers so that it becomes accountable to Parliament through the Minister. It must also have statutory powers which make its decisions mandatory in very much the same way as the parastatal Boards of Directors. Besides the Commissioner of Labour who should continue to be the programme co-ordinator and secretary to the Advisory Committee, senior representatives of the following Ministries should sit in the Advisory Committee: Ministries of Agriculture, Local Government and Co-operatives, Education, Finance and Economic Planning, and the Director of Community Development. To bridge the gap between the Local Authorities and the Advisory Committees, either the Principal Secretary in the Ministry of Local Government and Co-operatives, or the

Chairman/Secretary of the Local Authorities Service Commission should be chairman of the Advisory Committee.

At the district, township and municipality levels, there should be a planning and implementation committee for human resources deployment under the chairmanship of the Director, who shall report to the Advisory Committee through its chairman. In this way, the implementation of the programme would become the full responsibility of the local authorities. The local authority's planning and implementation committee should have the Community Development Officer as co-ordinator and secretary, and draw its membership from the departments of Agriculture, Education and Works.

### *Youth Training*

Youth training should aim at developing careers for agriculture. At present, youth career training is undertaken in the FDCs. The training is inadequate; many ex-trainees of FDCs have either left villages which initially sponsored them to seek wage employment in towns, or are doing other work quite unrelated to their training.

One of the difficulties facing FDCs in orienting their operations to community needs is the fact that FDCs' leadership is not responsible to the community in which the FDCs are situated. The staff in most of the FDCs are fulfilling a function rather than a mission. No wonder that institutions which should be expected to be self-reliant are continuously dependent on Government subvention. The present FDCs should be converted into Community Development Training Centres, under the direct responsibility of the local authorities. Initially funded by the central government through the Human Resources Deployment Programme, they should strive to be self-reliant in the long run.

**PART III:**

**HUMAN RESOURCES  
DEVELOPMENT POLICIES**

## Education For Employment: Some Perspectives

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*Faustin Mukyanuzi*

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### Introduction

The primary goal of education is to harness and develop man's talents and potentialities so that he can fulfil his moral, intellectual and material needs and contribute effectively to the general survival and development of society. Education can thus be defined as a process by which an individual acquires knowledge and skills which would enable him to appreciate and adapt to an ever-changing physical and social environment and ultimately to realise his worth. In this sense, education is a process of knowledge acquisition, which is one facet of development, while knowledge utilisation through employment, is the second facet.

There is thus a close relationship between education and employment: education responds to employment demands within an economy, by enabling learners to acquire relevant and appropriate skills and knowledge that enhance their employability. It follows then, that the more education one acquires, *ceteris paribus*, the greater the probability that one will be employed since he or she will have been more prepared for the labour market.

African countries have, since independence, invested heavily in education as a means of increasing their human capital potential — a prerequisite for taking off along the path of development. Efforts have been made to increase human capital formation, in every African country. These efforts have been complemented by measures, aimed at orienting education at all levels, to the needs and demands of society, thereby maximising employability for school graduates.

Despite these efforts, many African countries have continued to experience rising educated unemployment. Indeed, the rate at which their formal sectors have been expanding seems to have lagged behind the rate of expansion of their educational systems. Consequently, the informal sectors of these countries to a certain extent, have acted as safety nets, absorbing labour which could not be accommodated in the formal sector.

Employment prospects in Africa are indeed gloomy. Unemployment has been a real threat. The youth appear to be bearing a disproportionate part of the burden since they have at least three times as many chances of being unemployed as those over 25 years old (ILO: 1986).

If the youth unemployment problem stems from the irrelevance of formal education, then it is necessary for policy-makers to re-examine the content of formal schooling with a view to redressing imbalances between skill needs of the economy and skills being imparted in educational institutions. Obviously, unemployment represents a waste of skills and knowledge and to a certain extent, is also a waste of the national resources which have been invested in training the unemployed. The idleness and poverty engendered by unemployment may lead those affected to indulge in social ills such as drug abuse, prostitution and robbery.

We shall now examine how education systems in Africa can be improved in order to prepare more efficiently, students for employment and self-employment in both the formal and informal sectors of African economies. The following two broad questions will be addressed: What efforts have so far been made in African countries to render primary and secondary school graduates more employable; to what extent have these efforts been successful and what lessons can be derived therefrom? How should the education systems be reorganised so that they facilitate the acquisition of knowledge and competencies which can increase the employment chances of school graduates?

## **Theoretical Considerations: The Dynamics of the Relationship between Education and Employment**

Human capital theory supports the view that formal schooling stimulates employment and access to the most rewarding jobs in the formal sector. Education enhances geographic mobility and leads to more effective job-search in the labour market. Also education increases the volume of employment in the short run since it is itself a labour-intensive industry (Blaug 1980: 146). However, in the long run, education is a kind of social investment which makes individuals more productive since it provides them with manual or mechanical skills that they would otherwise not have acquired. Human capital theory also asserts that education leads to the creation of more employment and that educated people save more and consume labour-intensive goods. Theoretically, through additional savings

more investments of the type that would create more jobs, are made possible.

According to Mark Blaug, education helps to reduce birth rates since educated women tend to bear fewer children. The lower the rate of population growth, the higher the level of per capita income. Furthermore, education is also a factor in the improvement of sanitation and nutrition.

On the other hand, however, education could render people unemployable by providing them with irrelevant skills and inculcating wrong attitudes. Skill deficiencies could be corrected through vocational training. Although it has been argued that vocational training makes it easier for people to secure employment in the formal or informal sectors, there is evidence to suggest that vocationally-oriented education does not necessarily contribute to building up significantly higher employment levels. Jennings-Wray (1982: 287) has argued that the provision of vocationally-oriented curricula rooted in the practicalities of the world of work is not the panacea for unemployment problems in Third World countries. They need to be accompanied by structural changes and reforms in labour market practices, modifications in the pattern of wage rates and the introduction of specific employment-generation strategies.

Education motivates people to leave their rural communities and move into the formal sector where there are prospects for greater earnings and more opportunities for part-time wage employment during the search for full-time jobs.

Employers prefer more educated persons. Therefore, students are motivated to acquire more education in order to compete better in the job market, but since their education does not necessarily make them more productive on the job, it may have no ultimate influence on overall productivity.

The assertion, therefore, that more education acquired enables graduates to secure employment, is not necessarily correct. Indeed, as educational attainment increases towards or into the second level, so do the prospects for employment decline in what Fagerlind and Saha (1983) term the law of zero correlation of education and employment. Thus, the solution to the unemployment problem resides in other factors which are not necessarily educational.

## Perspectives on Education for Employment

The kind of education that concerns us is the one that enhances the acquisition of skills, knowledge, attitudes and experiences that can render the young more readily employable. Education for employment is education for growth and development, that is, the extent to which the acquired competencies and expertise, as a result of schooling, can best be applied by graduates to maximise their productivity in the economy.

### *The Academicist Perspective*

For the academicist, formal education should give to students a sufficiently strong, but general academic foundation, on which any subsequent training, vocational or technical could be easily built. Education is thus seen as a preparation for living and should concern itself with the transfer of learning principles for the application of knowledge as opposed to the transfer to specific skills. In this sense, education is detached from the concerns of the world of work and of the multiplicity of functions that graduates are likely to perform in society. By this view, schools are not meant to cope with the needs of the labour market.

The weakness of this argument lies in the fact that, given the manpower needs of the African economy, and the limited opportunities for training, it would be difficult for most graduates with a general academic background to be able to pursue effectively, post-school studies of a technical or scientific nature. Academic education should, therefore, be made less academic to provide room for some vocational and technical elements that would be useful for easy entry into the world of work.

### *The Vocationalist Perspective*

Human capital theory asserts that schools exist as part of a broader system of socialisation designed to develop people who are able to meet the demands that society places on its members. Education then, is an end in itself since its major objective is the immediate utility of the school product. Quality of education can only be measured by assessing how well students are prepared for the requirements of the workplace (Levin 1980: 13; Dresden 1986: 129). The vocationalist view assumes that spending on education should produce results showing an increased productivity among educated

workers. Vocational school graduates should acquire a strong work culture and be disciplined workers.

An examination of this theory, however, would show that this is not what actually obtains in real life. Phillip Foster argues that it is incorrect that children's vocational aspirations can be altered by curricular change, or that schools can exercise an influence on the vocational aspirations of students. This is so because students' attitudes are determined almost exclusively by factors outside the school (Lillis, 1983; Fagerlind and Saha, 1983: 82). Other arguments against the vocational education thesis revolve around the narrowness of programmes, their interference with the acquisition of more general cognitive skills and their failure to ensure that graduates are placed in the fields in which they were trained.

In fact, improving skills cannot *per se* resolve unemployment problems in the absence of an increase in the demand for these skills within the economy (Carnoy, 1980). In Tanzania, Psacharopolous and Mukyanuzi (1985) revealed that securing employment in the formal and informal sectors had little to do with the acquisition of vocational education and training.

Dodd (1969) argues that, vocationally-oriented syllabi which are intended to promote education for employment seek an educational solution to a problem which is fundamentally not educational. Thus, education alone can never resolve the unemployment problem because schools cannot provide jobs or make graduates want to engage in certain kinds of jobs. Unemployment is, therefore, not necessarily a function of the amount of schooling or type of schooling received by the labour force (Simmons, 1980: 158).

### *The Technicalist Perspective*

This view assumes that a sound educational system should of necessity be built on a thorough knowledge of the main branches and activities of production within an economy. Students should be trained to fit the scientific and technological environment and to acquire skills that would prepare them to take on jobs which would promote the scientific and technological development of their countries.

By this argument, school curricula are expected to provide training in socially and economically meaningful work areas and the application of scientific and technological knowledge of a subject, more so than merely demonstrating or reproducing some of its practical aspects.

Of the three perspectives, the academist, vocationalist and technicalist, the last one is the most relevant for Africa. This is so because it encourages neither theoretical learning, typical of academic education, nor vocational education for its own sake.

## **Aligning Education with Employment Needs**

The kind of education that would best promote employment in both the formal and informal sectors should be hinged on science and appropriate technology. The present academic and vocation-oriented curricula are, in our view, inadequate and ill-designed to provide any meaningful foundation on which career studies can effectively be based.

Studies on education for employment reveal that graduates who have had general primary and secondary education with a bias to science and subsequently a vocational training course become successful entrepreneurs (Hallack and Caillods 1981: 116). Arye (1976) observed also that general education above a certain threshold, permits an increase in the entrepreneur's productivity. Nihan (1978) too argues that unless entrepreneurs have a minimum level of education, the type of vocational education acquired is of little importance.

The necessity of acquiring work-oriented skills and the extent to which these can be acquired, depend on the type of production activity to be undertaken and the level of its operation. Engaging in certain self-employment activities, for example, does not necessarily require any prior training. However, most modern sector production activities do. For these, what is important is to produce graduates with a strong science-based or technical education, who can subsequently pursue courses relevant to the kind of careers they wish to pursue. Such courses might be organised in relatively short complementary units and be adapted to the participants' requirements.

In most African countries, well over 50% of secondary school graduates continue into further education or training courses. Most of the training they pursue requires no more than the most elementary knowledge of a vocational subject. Employers also do not insist that new recruits possess skills related to the jobs to be done, preferring that candidates get on-the-job training, rather than have their professional orientation distorted by what they regard as school-based "mis-training".

The responsibility of preparing students for jobs/careers should lie with vocational training institutions. Education policy should aim at promoting cultural development and individual growth. It should also aim at enabling students to comprehend, and consequently be capable of changing the existing economic and social structures in their environments, hence the underlying need for education policy to concern itself with the transfer and application of principles.

The need for developing students to be job creators rather than job seekers should dictate African educational policy. Each country should thus aim at providing an education which promotes scientific thinking and technological culture and which can enable its recipients to be adaptable to training and new job situations.

There is a need to review the curricula especially with respect to classroom interaction and evaluation techniques, so that what is imparted to students is not only scientifically and technologically relevant, but is also accomplished in a manner which essentially ensures the transfer of principles rather than facts.

Research into the priority areas of knowledge for development should be undertaken with a view to having these emphasised in school curricula.

Manpower planning institutions should devise new strategies of mobilising school graduates and orienting them towards specific skill areas so as to ease their entry into jobs in the formal sector or be assisted to undertake self-employment activities in the informal sector.

In view of the fact that present conventional schools will not be effective instruments for the provision of vocational skills, the need to increase vocational education opportunities should be assigned top priority in national training policy. Governments should formulate strategies to divert more resources from formal secondary education to vocational education.

Governments should regard it as a priority to increase employment opportunities in the formal sector and improve their informal sectors so that they become conducive for the expansion of self-employment. This calls for significant support to be accorded to these sectors by way of providing them with social services, improving rural communications and transport, diversifying production, stabilising market demand, increasing the availability of credit facilities, and so on.

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## National Initiatives to Promote Education for Employment

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### **Introduction**

According to UNESCO, the function of education in society is "to develop a person morally or mentally so that he is sensitive to individual or social choices and able to act on them; to fit him for a calling by systematic instruction; to train, to discipline or form abilities. The act or process of achieving one or more of these objectives is a first approximation of what education is about".<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, education should provide to the individual a minimum package of skills, knowledge and attitudes for a productive life in society. The minimum learning needs that education should address, include positive attitudes, basic and functional literacy, a scientific outlook and functional knowledge and skills. Thus, education is a vehicle through which people are transformed into assets or resources which are then utilised to provide goods and services for society's consumption.

The wealth of a nation is not generated solely through the exploitation of natural resources. The need for the nation to have economically productive citizens who, in the process of producing goods and services, also function as creators of employment and contributors to national development becomes an imperative necessity. Citizens who could contribute in this way to society's development must be equipped with the right skills, knowledge and attitudes, through a sound system of education which is development- and employment-oriented.

In essence, human resources are factors of development whose management and interplay with other resources (natural, material and financial), create what may be called "development resources" which can be used to enhance further growth and more equitable distribution of the benefits of such growth in society. It is through education that the attributes that transform individuals into human resources are developed. These attributes are: knowledge, skills, attitudes, abilities, creativity, initiative, management capacity and capability, individual and collective commitment to self and national development.

## Objectives of Education for Employment

There could be as many objectives of education for employment as there are nations on the African continent. Three of them, however, are paramount and cut across the spectrum of all societies. The three objectives also relate to education for self-reliance, self-actualisation, self-employment, salaried employment and for national and individual development.

The first of these objectives relates to education of the citizen. In a society where education fails to prepare individuals for this role, members often do not see why they should be involved in communal functions/duties, or produce things as individuals for society's benefit.

The second objective of education is the preparation of the worker in some useful skill. The fulfilment of this objective renders a person more employable and more productive in society.

The third objective relates to education of the human being as an individual. Here, education is a value in itself providing for the training of individuals so that they are able to make decisions and choices about self-development, career development, and the role they want to play in society. At the same time, education of the individual provides for opportunities for contacts with cultural values, ideas and life styles that are compatible with those of the society or the community in which the individual operates.

In the actual learning situation, these three objectives often overlap, and their distinction tends to be theoretical rather than real. For instance, an education system which fulfils the objective of the education of the citizen must, by the same token, attain the objective of education of the human being. It must be emphasised, however, that since the aims and processes of education are so complex no one institution, for example the school, can by itself alone prepare individuals for all these roles without the active collaboration of other institutions such as industry, the world of work, community, etc.

To fulfil these roles, education must draw its curricula from culture content in which case there is always the need to create a habitat school which is integrated with its social milieu, neighbourhood and also serves as a cultural centre for the community. Education developed in this way, plays a major role in the socialisation process and in shaping the personality, systems of values and attitudes of individuals, determines the possibilities of

communicating with other people; shapes the higher needs of the human being; and helps him/her to develop into a useful and productive citizen.

In essence, therefore, education which fulfils these three objectives is education for employment, because any individual who exhibits these outcomes of education as a citizen, a worker or a human being is better placed to enter into employment so as to function as a producer of goods and services.

The outcomes of education have a direct effect on a country's production activities. At the same time, the development of education generally, exerts a lot of influence on the social structures and the economic activities of a given country. It then becomes evident that when the economy of a country is not functioning properly and resources are not being adequately generated, education also suffers in the process.

The development of education is concerned with the build up and dissemination of modern scientific knowledge and technical skills and competence. The higher the potential for industrial and technological development of a country, the greater the need for higher educational attainment and for a higher quality of education. Often, where the quality of education is deteriorating, scientific knowledge deteriorates, and economic development stagnates as well.

Expectations of what education should do for the individual often turn out to act as a constraint on national development. Students and parents expect that through education, society should recompense them by providing them white-collar, salaried jobs or that modern education should be the gateway to affluence. Such self-centredness militates against the development of that type of communal spirit and "togetherness" which every society should nurture among its members if they should, together, search for answers to their socio-economic development problems. These expectations also shape attitudes to education and career choices in ways that produce a negative effect on development.

If education is to be used as a vehicle for preparing the young for effective contributions to socio-economic development, then educational systems should do more to make known the nature of endogenous development and to adapt and re-orient curricula to the requirements for such development, taking due account of cultural and attitudinal factors prevailing.

The importance attached to paper qualifications in getting jobs has generated too much pressure on national governments for the expansion

of formal education and has distorted the content of education by making each cycle of education concentrate virtually exclusively on the preparation of students for the next level or cycle, ignoring in the process, the skill requirements for entry into a productive working life. This is unwholesome both to the economy and to the large number of school leavers affected. Efforts to resolve this situation should place emphasis on adapting education to requirements for employment; re-orienting education to the changing socio-economic circumstances of the country; and putting more emphasis on the acquisition of skills and practical knowledge.

Since most Africans should hope to find employment in the rural areas for years to come, the African school system should, in recognition of this fact, strive to be more effective in preparing young Africans for rural employment. Curricula in rural schools should emphasise subjects such as agriculture, traditional and rural technology, crop production, food processing and storage, health science, child care, art and crafts and technical subjects. These should be taught at the first and second levels as most of those who complete at these levels go to the rural areas for employment.

The development of non-formal education should also be encouraged as a supplement or alternative to formal education so as to ensure that students who are left or dropped out of the formal system have an opportunity to develop some knowledge or skill of some use to themselves and to society. Non-formal education programmes should place heavy emphasis on functional literacy with a view to catering to those who have no chance of getting into the formal system of education and to developing in them those functional skills for a productive life within their community.

Over the years, however, a much broader view of education and employment has emerged, which situates the problem of educated unemployment in a wider framework of socio-economic development, which in turn, takes into account the challenges and endowments of present-day Africa, and the latter's quest for self-reliance and self-sufficiency.

African educationists, administrators, educators, policy-makers and politicians have expressed the need to re-orient education to the socio-economic development objectives of African countries. The problem that lingers on is one of how to make the transition from an acceptance of the need, to the formulation for implementation, of action programmes on the ground which would make the outputs of the educational system productive citizens.

## Education and Productive Work

There have been many pronouncements at both national and regional levels on what the objectives of education and productive work should be. For instance, at the regional level, the Conference of Ministers of Education stipulated in 1976 that education should not only be made responsible for passing on values and knowledge to the younger generation, but should also produce fully conscious citizens and future productive workers in a dynamic context. At the same time, countries should establish appropriate linkages between education, training and employment activities, maintain close liaison with the environment or the local community and ensure that productive, practical work is introduced in schools so that general, technical and vocational courses are provided to students at all levels.<sup>2</sup>

In a way, these are general and broad objectives of education and productive work. The major problem for many African countries has been one of translating these objectives into concrete terms i.e. translating these into school programmes and activities. Part of this problem arises from the broadness of the notion, concept and objectives of productive work in education. Are all practical activities productive? i.e. do all practical activities foster skills, attitudes and knowledge which are amenable to employment and income generation?

At the national level, the understanding of education for employment varies from country to country.<sup>3</sup> In *Congo*, it entails reducing to the minimum, intellectual and social wastage and developing initiative and creativity in the learner. In *Tanzania*, it means the promotion of co-operation, creativity and critical thinking and self-confidence; relevant knowledge related to agriculture; loyalty to state; egalitarian values; unity of manual and mental labour. In *Mali*, it seeks to ensure that young people get adjusted to their environment and in so doing check the rural exodus. In *Botswana*, it is designed to prepare young people for life in a continuously changing environment. In *Zambia*, the objective of education and productive work is to develop a healthy attitude towards manual work and practical action necessary for the transformation of the physical and social environment. In *Swaziland*, its objective is to transform the process of education by making it more closely related to the needs of the country. Three countries: *Botswana*, *Ghana* and *Mali*, take it as an offer to young people of the means of access to, and a motivation for engaging in, technical and professional fields.

In other circles, education for employment has been described as entailing the provision of a general education with an initiation to vocational activities, or a form of education which will offer the rudiments of a vocation and equip the learner with the skills and attitudes necessary to adapt to future life situations. In so doing, the learner should be able to co-ordinate his physical and mental activities and to see through the origination of an idea to its concretisation in the form of a tangible product.

For some others yet, education for employment entails the inculcation of "devotion, hard work and dedication to duty, promptness or punctuality at work, vigorousness in executing a piece of work; honesty in dealing with people, respect towards other people; self-reliance in working and solving problems; a probing, questioning and curious mind; appreciation of work as good in itself and as a means of living".<sup>4</sup>

Education for employment should be three-dimensional: economic, social and pedagogical. As regards the economic dimension, education should seek to turn schools and educational institutions, especially institutions of higher learning into units of production or units of economic activity which produce goods and services that have monetary value. In this regard, schools and institutions could, for instance, be engaged in farming and other agriculture-related activities. Higher education institutions should be encouraged to go into research and development and produce prototypes and industrial goods. In the process of producing such goods, learners would acquire such knowledge and skills which would be readily utilised in the job market.

As regards the social dimension, learners should be initiated into the dynamic forces of the environment, the society and the world of work. Many school leavers soon realise that the forces operating in the real world of work are quite different from what they may have believed while at school.

Productive activities should as far as possible help to bring to the learning environment the problems and requirements of the world of work. They should make students develop favourable attitudes towards work; become responsible citizens; develop respect towards manual work; develop a high degree of independence and a spirit of co-operation and collaboration with individuals, the community and society. This would help them to realise that they can work as individuals, as a group in co-operatives, or as members of a wider society.

From the pedagogical point of view, productive activities should help learners to turn the immediate environment into the source and the object of learning. Many schools and institutions do not make use of the environment as a source of learning from which to draw knowledge and experience. The school and the environment are seen as two different entities whereas the former should be part of the latter drawing enlightenment from it.

## **A Survey of Current Education Programmes for Employment**

In the previous section, an attempt was made to analyse the concept of education as it relates to productive work or employment. This section is concerned with describing practical manifestations of education linked with work or employment in a number of countries in Africa. Broadly, these manifestations fall into two categories, *viz*:

- (i) the integrated approach which tries to make education and productive work the one and only approach to education for employment; and
- (ii) the isolated approach by which African countries are trying step-by-step to link education and productive activities on a limited scale before implementing the programme on a nationwide basis.

What follows then, is an analysis of the examples of these two innovative approaches to educational development in relation to work and employment, within the formal education system. There are also some innovations and initiatives in non-formal education and a few examples of these are described at the end of this section.

### **(a) Integrated Approaches to Education for Employment**

Four countries appear to have taken the lead in spearheading integrated approaches to education and productive work in formal schools. The first of these is *Tanzania* which according to the Arusha Declaration of 1965 outlined the country's socialist philosophy which was to guide the development of education as articulated in Nyerere's "Education for Self-Reliance".<sup>5</sup>

Over the years, the integrated approach to education in Tanzania has developed a number of characteristics amongst which have been that:

- (i) All educational institutions have engaged in various types of activities related to self-reliance. These range from direct, productive and commercial projects to maintenance and servicing activities. Farms, poultry units and handicraft shops are found in nearly all institutions;
- (ii) Schools run shops on a co-operative basis. University students offer their services in various fields to the government and the community/society at large;
- (iii) The organisation of education and work is "partly centralised and partly decentralised", with an increasing tendency towards local control;
- (iv) Projects are financed from a variety of sources, e.g. private organisations, local communities, etc. The government provides mainly infrastructure and machinery; and
- (v) Practical work has become a regular feature of school time tables. It is also regularly assessed and the learner's attitude to work could determine the quality of his school leaving certificate.<sup>6</sup>

A second example is provided by the *Republic of Benin* which introduced in the 1975/76 academic year a new type of education which aims at turning schools into units of production, and to ensure that ". . . it is not a matter of transforming the school into a factory of real producers, but of initiating the school-going youth into production through the real practice of productive activities".<sup>7</sup>

The Beninois New School has some resemblance with the Tanzanian Education for Self-Reliance policy in that "each primary or secondary institution of higher learning must attain the equivalent of at least 20% of its operating budget . . . either through food products, in its industrial production, or in animal husbandry".

The four guiding principles can be summarised as follows:

- (i) The New School should be a motivator of political, social and economic development;
- (ii) In all forms of education, theory has to be well blended with practice;
- (iii) A school is one and the same thing as a unit of production; and
- (iv) The learner should not leave school without some usable skill.

Strategies for implementation of these principles range from general popularisation, establishment of production units to decentralisation of the administration of schools.

A third example relates to the *People's Republic of Congo* where "Ecole du Peuple" (the People's School) is set on an education-cum-work structure and begins with two major stages:

- (i) An awakening of the child's intellect and other potentials, and
- (ii) Fixation by consolidating the education given early in life.

These two are followed by two other cycles, *viz*:

- (i) the working-learning cycle, and
- (ii) The higher work-learning cycle.

In going through this type of education, the pupil is geared towards making him a worker and a producer of goods and services at all levels of society.

A fourth example of integration of education with work is to be found in the *Republic of Guinea* (Conakry) which is geared towards "removing the neo-colonial method of superficial, theoretical and abstract training which did not facilitate practical activity or more practical instruction to meet the needs of the country's economic and social progress into a form of education which should ensure the acquisition of useful skills and attitudes as well as training which would lead to practical activity and future socio-professional integration of the learner".<sup>8</sup>

### **(b) Isolated Innovations in Education**

Almost every country in Africa has taken some initiative or introduced some innovations into its education system with emphasis on productive activities. Indeed, every country in Africa appears to have some form of education-for-work project going on at whatever scale it may be. Some of the projects are at an initial stage, while others are at a more advanced stage.

Examples of such pilot projects exist all over Africa in countries such as Ghana, Cameroon, Zambia, Liberia, Uganda, Lesotho, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria and Sierra Leone. These projects may have been initiated by government, voluntary agencies or individuals, but they have one thing in common: the development of productive citizens.

In *Ghana*, education-for-work aims at predisposing the learners to different types of vocations such as typing, woodwork, farming, agriculture, carpentry, mechanics, fishing, masonry, textiles, etc.

In *Zambia*, education-for-work involves the integration of academic and practical skills throughout the nine years of basic education and the three years of senior secondary education by paying equal attention to liberal education as well as pre-technical, commercial and agricultural studies.

*Cameroon* endeavours to make education-for-work curricula as flexible as possible so as to permit the use of indigenous items and materials particularly in arts and crafts by the school.

In *Liberia*, efforts are being made to integrate education with productive work in community (rural) schools through the introduction of agriculture, home economics and manual arts so that pupils value agricultural and practical activities as a means of social and economic development.

*Uganda's* best-known example of linking education with productive work is that of the Namutamba Project. This is a project based at the Namutamba Teachers' College. It is designed as an educational programme integrated with the needs of the environment. Agriculture, based on the use of local seeds, animals and vegetables, is the major focus. At the same time, the teaching of science and social studies has been reshaped to ensure that the knowledge gained in the classroom is put into immediate use in the immediate environment. The health, agricultural, food and other social problems of the environment form the bases of the curriculum in various school subjects, and school learning and teaching attempt to make the learner a problem-solver.

The Namutamba pilot project has been based in a teachers' college to ensure the production of teachers who will completely internalise its philosophic content and methods. It is expected that these teachers will help propagate education-for-productive-work in the schools by their actions and personal life styles.<sup>9</sup>

In *Lesotho*, education-for-work is designed to expand technical, commercial and vocational education for adult and non-formal education and for a new and more relevant curriculum in secondary schools. Provision is also made for the training of secondary level teachers in practical subjects.

In other countries such as Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire and Sierra Leone, initiatives have been taken to link education with productive work with

emphasis on arts and crafts, technical and vocational subjects. In the case of the Bunumbu project in Sierra Leone, emphasis is on four structured training courses involving pre-service, in-service, curriculum workshops and community education.

### **(c) Some Non-Formal Education Programmes for Employment**

There are many successful non-formal education programmes in operation in African countries. Examples are the Literacy Campaign Programme in Ethiopia and Tanzania; the Ujamaa Settlement Programme in Tanzania; the Village Polytechnics in Kenya; the Malawi Young Pioneers' Movement; the Botswana Brigades and the Animation Rurale Programme in Senegal.

#### *(i) Basic and General Education*

Non-Formal Education Programmes for basic and general education are of a multi-purpose nature and involve a variety of activities. Some of these programmes are literacy campaigns and programmes such as those in Ethiopia, Tanzania, Malawi, Burkina Faso and Mauritania; school equivalency programmes conducted through correspondence education e.g. Malawi, Kenya and Nigeria; and distance teaching e.g. Lesotho. Then there are the youth clubs and centres such as those in Nigeria, Botswana, Ghana and Benin; sports, recreational and cultural programmes undertaken in all African countries and guidance and counselling activities for special groups such as delinquents, prostitutes, juvenile offenders and the handicapped. A number of African countries provide activities for these special groups. Then there are multi-purpose training activities for girls and women in almost every African country. In fact, the role of women in development has risen to great prominence and hence the need to provide special training for the female folk.

#### *(ii) Leadership and Civil Services*

Many countries have national youth service programmes for spearheading national development. Examples of national service programmes can be found in Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Ghana, Nigeria, Egypt, Libya and Tanzania. Then there are the brigade programmes such as the Ghana and Botswana Brigades; the pioneers and corps programmes such as the Malawi Young Pioneers and Mali's Mouvement des Pionniers; and the community

development services programmes undertaken in Uganda, Tanzania, Senegal, Benin and Burkina Faso.

### *(iii) Artisanal and Vocational Training*

Many non-formal education programmes prepare both the youth and adults for various trades and vocations. Almost every African country has some rural training schemes, projects or activities undertaken at rural training centres, for example, Burkina Faso's Centres for Rural Education; Ghana's National Women's Vocational Training Centre; Senegal's Rural Training Centres; Zambia's Youth Self-Help Projects and Lesotho's Self-Reliance Projects.

There are also many apprenticeship schemes in Nigeria, Swaziland, Kenya, Malawi, Zambia and Ghana. Other artisanal and vocational programmes are undertaken by village polytechnics, the best-known example being Kenya.

### *(iv) Farming and Agricultural Training*

Many programmes are carried out under the banner of farming and agricultural training. For example, young farmers' clubs in Nigeria, Kenya, Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal; the land settlement schemes for youths in Uganda, Malawi and Ethiopia; co-operatives in Kenya, Tanzania and Senegal. Farm learning centres, schools, colleges and institutes which are in every African country, place great emphasis on farming and agricultural techniques, marketing and improved productivity.

## **Policy Issues Related to Education for Employment**

In the development and implementation of national education policies, emphasis should be placed on the integration of all forms of education and the delivery modes into a more unified view of learning which recognises the linkages between learning and human action and aspiration. Such integration raises the individual's consciousness and influences his/her learning ability thereby stimulating a desire to acquire more knowledge or improve upon one's skill. For society, integration raises the ability to provide for more services and also raises the demand for more complex skills necessary beyond individual needs.

Since education cuts across a wide spectrum of society — children, youths and adults — it is important to take into account certain factors and define policies before designing education for employment programmes, *viz:-*

- (i) Identify the needs of learners to come up with an occupational classification of needs and then categorise clients according to their common learning needs so as to develop entrepreneurial or work-oriented programmes designed to make school leavers self-employed;
- (ii) Identify knowledge, skills, attitudes and capabilities amenable to self-employment so that educational activities can be geared towards the achievement of these;
- (iii) Through a well-orchestrated educational/vocational guidance and counselling services programme, convince and motivate learners to internalise the worthiness of the envisaged work-oriented programmes and thus decide on their future careers and occupations. Unless governments take guidance and counselling services as important components of educational programmes, through which occupational information and employment opportunities are made available and known to students, productive activities introduced in education will continue to be marginalised;
- (iv) The government and education sector should de-emphasise the tendency to over-stress the formal wage employment sector which has little or no regard for self-employment and related income generation activities, and which perpetuates the quest for paper qualifications; and
- (v) Provision should be made for incentives, rewards and credit facilities for school leavers who, upon acquiring entrepreneurial knowledge and skills on leaving school, want to engage in self-employment activities. In this regard, government, in collaboration with industry, can institutionalise "start-up" programmes for school leavers who want to go into self-employment ventures irrespective of their locality.

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# Human Resources Development in Kenya

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*Hassan Bagha*

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## Introduction

In economic terms, human resources development could be described as the accumulation of human capital and its effective investment in the development of an economy. Human resources are developed in several ways. The most obvious is by formal education, beginning with primary education, continuing with various forms of secondary education and then higher education which is dispensed through the university, technical colleges and other tertiary level institutions. Second, human resources are also developed "on the job" through systematic or informal training programmes in employing establishments. A third process is self-development as individuals seek to acquire greater knowledge, skills and capacities on their own initiative, by taking formal or correspondence courses or learning through informal contacts. Motivation for self-development is directly related to the societal values and to incentives for training and for entering one occupation as opposed to another, as well as for learning new skills. Two other processes of developing human resources are: improving the health of the working population through better medical and public health programmes; and continuously improving nutrition, which increases the working capacity of people over their working life. Improvements in health and in nutrition are related. Like formal education, they may be both a cause of economic growth and a result of it.

In Kenya, development of human resources is a central objective in the fight against poverty, disease and ignorance. It entails increasing the knowledge, skills and productive capacities of all people in the society. The main constraints on effectiveness in the development and utilization of human resources in Kenya could be listed as follows: a rapidly growing population; underemployment and unemployment in both the modern and the traditional sectors of the economy; skill shortages and the process of developing high-level manpower to overcome them; organizational weaknesses in institutional development; and, provision of financial and other incentives in order to channel critically needed manpower into productive activities.

## **The Economy**

Kenya's rate of economic growth has fluctuated since independence, but has been impressive overall. During the sixties and the seventies the economy grew at an average rate of over 6% per year. However, due mainly to unfavourable external economic conditions, the growth rates in the first-half of the eighties have been considerably below the average of 6.3% per year projected in the current plan. In 1986 this projection was revised downwards to 5.9% annually. Actual real growth rates have fallen below the population growth rate for the second time during the plan period and have resulted in a decline in the Gross Domestic Product per capita. This economic performance has to be seen against the background of the economic crisis and its impact on developing countries.

Agriculture is still the mainstay of the country's economy. Although only about 20% of the total land area is arable, agricultural production contributes about 30% to GDP, employs about 75% of the labour force, generates more than 60% of commodity exports and provides most of the raw materials for production in agro-based industries. The sector is vital in providing food, incomes and employment. Kenya is also one of the more industrialized countries in Africa. The manufacturing sector's contribution to GDP has grown from 8% in 1963 to 13.3% in 1985 in constant price terms. The service and infrastructural sectors as well as the tourism and transportation sectors have shown better than average growth rates with financial and business services being the most vigorous.

The economic outlook over the next decade for Kenya, like other African countries, is difficult to project. Much will depend on the world economy, the opening up of the Preferential Trade Area (PTA) for East and Southern Africa and other markets, the stability of the prices for coffee and tea, climatic conditions, and a range of macro-economic policies. The corner-stone of the development strategy is economic growth targeted at 5.9% per annum in the Sessional Paper No. 1 of 1986, entitled, "Economic Management for Renewed Growth". This will hopefully be achieved through an increase in agricultural productivity, a dynamized informal sector, a restructured modern industrial sector and improved rural-urban balance.

## **Population**

The demographic trend in Kenya has been that of continuous growth both in size and rates. The magnitude of Kenya's human resources problem is

best appreciated when one examines its demographic dimensions. The 1979 census reported a total population of 15.3 million and estimated a population doubling period of 18 years compared to that of 24 years for Africa. Available estimates indicate that the population was already 22.6 million in 1988.

The crude birth rate has been high, increasing from 50 per thousand in 1948 to 52 per thousand in 1979. From the 1948 estimate of 184 deaths per thousand live births, infant mortality rate has also declined steadily, reaching an estimated level of 104 per thousand live births by 1979. The increase in life expectancy to 52 years is impressive and compares favourably with fifty years for Africa. Total fertility has also increased from the level of 6.7 in 1948 to about 8.0 children per woman by 1979. However, from the 1984 Kenya Contraceptive Prevalence Survey, there are indications that fertility rates may be declining, having reached a level of 7.7 children per woman by 1984.

Despite its projected decrease, the population growth rate still remains high. The rapid growth in population has an immediate impact on the size and quality of human resources development efforts. At present, 52% of Kenya's population fall within the age brackets 0-14 years and 65 years and above, which is regarded as a dependent population, diverting much of the country's resources to consumption and leaving less for savings and investment. In addition, and as illustrated in Table 1 below, the number of females in reproductive ages (15-49 years) is expected to increase from 3.5 million in 1980 to approximately 6 million in 1993, implying that births are bound to remain high. Given the age structure of the population, this has severe implications for the economy's ability to generate employment and to meet basic needs. The current rate of population growth at 3.8% implies that the potential labour force is likely to increase from 8.8 million in 1988 to 14.5 million by the year 2000.

## **Development of Human Resources: Highlights**

### *(a) Education*

Human resources are fundamentally developed through education and training, whether formal, non-formal or informal. Recognizing its important role in human resources development and its responsibility for the development of the economy as a whole, the Government has made deliberate efforts to expand education and training facilities to meet the

objectives set in the Sessional Paper No. 12 of 1965. Relevant basic education is viewed as a right of every Kenyan child, while tertiary education is targeted to the national demand for skilled manpower. Recently, Kenya restructured its education system from the former seven years of primary education, six of secondary and three of university (7-6-3 system) to the new eight years of primary education, four of secondary and four of university (8-4-4 system).

**Table 1**  
**Projected Population by Selected Groups (Kenya) ('000s)**

Functional age groups	Base	Population	
	Year	Projections	
	1980	1989	1993
Total population	16 667	23 513	27 214
Children (0-14)	8 579	11 832	13 412
Productive age (15-59)	7,495	10 879	12 878
Old age (60+)	593	802	925
Female reproductive age (15-49)	3 466	5 018	5 934
Dependency ratios	1,22:1	1,16:1	1,11:1
Pre-school age (0-5)	4 140	5 523	6 240
Primary school age (6-13)	4 035	5 707	6 478
Secondary school age (14-17)	1 475	2 251	2 635
Potential labour force	6 371	9 139	10 577

*Note:* (i) It is assumed that mortality will decline from a crude rate of 13 per thousand in 1980 to about 9 per thousand by the year 2000; total fertility rate is expected to decline from 7,9 in 1980 to 5,6 in the year 2000.

(iii) Potential labour force is computed as a proportion of the age group 15-64 years on the basis of observed participation rates.

Apart from the difference in duration of the cycle, the other important differences are the inclusion of pre-vocational and technical sub-sections at the various levels of education, and changes in the curriculum to impart useful skills. Under formal education, the most notable change has been the quantitative increase in educational facilities. First, the pre-primary school facilities expanded considerably from just a few in 1963 to about

12 000 schools, staffed by about 600 000 teachers in 1987. Enrolment in primary schools increased from under one million in 1963 to over five million in 1987. Similarly, secondary school enrolment increased over ten-fold, from 35 921 to 500 000 between 1963 and 1987. As of the 1988/1989 academic year, Kenya has four national universities with a total enrolment of 26 000 students.

For primary school leavers, training opportunities are available in some 500 youth polytechnics, 12 technical training institutes, the national youth service and several private and NGO-supported institutions. Post-secondary school leavers who do not secure places at the universities enter the teacher training colleges, the three national polytechnics and the eighteen Harambee Institutes of Technology.

The programme for expansion and improvement of the quality of education ultimately depends on the availability of teachers in terms of numbers and levels of training. In 1987, 30% of primary and 40% of secondary school teachers were untrained. At the university level almost 40% of the teaching and research positions had not been "Kenyanised" as at July 1987. To address these problems, Government plans to build additional capacity of 4 080 places in training colleges to increase output of primary teachers by 2 000 per annum beginning in 1993. These measures added to others such as double-intakes and in-service training, should reduce the untrained proportion of teachers. With expanded university opportunities, it is expected that families will meet the cost of teaching in the form of cost-sharing. Lastly, increasing opportunities will be allowed for the acquisition of university level training through adult and distance education. Private universities are also encouraged, provided they meet the standards in terms of syllabi, quality of teaching and laboratory and library facilities set by the Commission for Higher Education, established in 1985. Already some fourteen small private institutions have been set up which offer university level education.

### *(b) Training*

Training programmes to develop the country's human resources, to improve productivity of the labour force, and to enhance individual opportunities are offered by a complex network of institutions, ranging from public sector programmes to voluntary organizations. Nearly 2 000 institutions with an annual training capacity of 80 000 trainees are run directly by the public sector to improve the internal efficiency of its service

by training public servants, teachers, extension workers and field technicians. Other institutional facilities owned by private organizations serve citizens by imparting commercial, industrial and agricultural skills.

Apart from the training programmes carried out locally in the above institutions, there has been a high and rising number of Kenyans who have gone overseas for education and specialized training, reflecting both the value of such training and the limited capacities for specialization in the local institutions. Overseas training is however, often regarded as complementary due to lack of facilities locally in the appropriate skills and disciplines and also as a means of transfer of technology and know-how from industrialized countries. Of the estimated 12 000 students training abroad in various disciplines, nearly 60% of them are in North America and about 24% in India. Almost 90% are studying privately while only 10% have received government scholarships.

Following the recommendations of the Ndegwa Review Commission in 1971, and after the initial phase of "Kenyanization" of the public service, heavy stress was placed on transforming the public service from an organization for mere administration to a leading agent of development. Subsequently, the findings of both the Waruhiu Salary Review Committee of 1980 and the report of the working party on Government expenditures shifted the training emphasis to two major areas: planning and co-ordination in order to avoid duplication and under-utilization of training facilities; and a more efficient utilization of the expensive facilities already installed. Government policy regarding future public sector pre-service training is to match it with the demands of the economy as well as to make the beneficiaries pay for the cost of their training. The private sector is being encouraged to be more involved in meeting its own staff training needs and to reduce its dependence on the public sector for the supply of personnel who have been trained at great cost to the public budget.

Private sector enterprises and the parastatals take virtually all of their skilled manpower from government-owned formal training institutions and depend largely on formal sector training institutions for the supply of their skilled manpower. This places more strains on Government to meet the needs of an expanding private sector budget, and also encourages the belief on the part of trainees that their training automatically qualifies them for a job in state-owned enterprises or large-scale modern enterprises in the private sector. Formal training processes should therefore strive to develop

among trainees a preference for self-employment, or entry into the informal sector.

## Employment

As indicated earlier, by the year 2000 the population of Kenya will reach 35 million and the labour force would have increased significantly. At present, formal sector wage employment, which has risen at an average rate of 3,7% per annum since 1963, represents about 15% of the labour force. However, the pattern of modern sector employment provides limited scope for future employment expansion.

The major causes of unemployment and underemployment in Kenya are the fast labour force growth; the inability of the economy to grow at a rate high enough to generate employment and absorb the new labour force entrants; low investments and restricted market demand; job preferences of school leavers; seasonality of certain jobs; skill imbalances; inappropriate technology in use as a result of past import-substitution industrialization policies; and problems associated with delays in project implementation in the various sectors. Tables 2 and 3 provide information on employment trends in industry and the public sector respectively.

While the rate of economic growth is partly affected by external factors beyond the control of government, such as world recession and inflation or the contraction of external investable resources, employment expansion depends largely on internal factors, such as the adoption of policies and supporting programmes which provide incentives for increased investments in the economy. These include appropriate fiscal and monetary policies, the development of capital markets through appropriate interest rate policies, the proper functioning of the marketing and pricing systems, and the development and expansion of the domestic and external markets for Kenyan products. Notwithstanding this, a great potential for income and employment generation opportunities remains untapped in the agricultural and informal sectors.

The scope of employment expansion in the informal sector is wide. According to various studies, the sector employs from 40% to 60% of the urban wage labour force and provides between a quarter and a third of total urban income. However, despite the potential of the informal sector, some constraints, such as inadequate finance and physical facilities, inadequate skills and technical know-how, and low productivity, hinder its further

development and expansion. Measures are therefore necessary if informal sector activities are to be promoted, for example: credit to help purchase equipment, premises and raw materials. In addition, assistance needs to be provided to graduates of youth polytechnics and other technical training institutions so that they can be self-employed in this sector.

**Table 2**  
**Wage Employment by Industry (Kenya)**

	1971	1981	1987*
Agriculture & Forestry	211 131 (31)	235 531 (23)	257 000 (20)
Mining & Quarrying	2 976 (0)	2 137 (0)	4 400 (0)
Manufacturing	92 803 (14)	146 338 (14)	168 600 (13)
Electricity & Water	5 157 (1)	10 189 (1)	19 200 (2)
Construction	34 806 (5)	61 360 (6)	58 100 (5)
Wholesale & Retail Trade	46 674 (7)	72 602 (7)	99 400 (8)
Transport & Communications	45 582 (7)	55 349 (5)	58 100 (5)
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate & Business Services	240 599	39 522 (4)	57 500 (5)
Community, Social & Personnel Services		401 281 (39)	540 900 (43)
<b>Total</b>	<b>679 727</b>	<b>1 024 309</b>	<b>1 262 700</b>

\* Provisional

\* Source: Statistical abstract (CBS)

**Table 3**  
**Employment in the Public sector (Kenya) ('000)**

	1971	1981	1983	1985	Annual % change
Total wage employment	691	1 024	1 093	11 174	3,9
Total public sector	276	484	527	574	4,4
(% share of total)	(38)	(47)	(48)	(49)	
Central government	129	214	226	252	5,2
(% share of total)	(3)	(4)	(4)	(4)	
Parastatal and government companies	115	230	256	277	3,8
(%share of total)	(17)	(22)	(23)	(24)	

## **Managing Human Resources Development and Employment: Critical Issues**

### *(a) Population*

The population question has received Government attention since 1967 when the national family planning programme was officially launched, making Kenya the first country in sub-Saharan Africa to adopt an official policy on population. In addition, the Government established a National Council for Population and Development in 1982 which was charged with the responsibility of implementing government policies and programmes on population and family planning.

### *(b) Education and Manpower Training*

Various factors together highlight the fact that the education and training sector will be under pressure to expand even faster in the coming years. These include: the national commitment to education for all Kenyan children; the need for high level manpower; the high social demand for education, arising from the high private socio-economic benefits associated with it, and the high rate of population growth. It is projected that enrolments at the primary education level will exceed 6 million by 1993; secondary enrolments will be over 700 000 while enrolments in technical institutions will reach 23 000 by 1993. Similarly, tertiary education is expected to grow by at least 4% per annum. These developments will lead

to a heavy demand for employment opportunities and create new problems in human resources development, the solution of which requires the formulation of new strategies. Of particular concern is the rapid expansion of secondary education which has been growing faster than wage employment. The difference between the two has been nearly 6,5%. By 1988, over 60% of secondary education places were in Harambee and private schools. Yet the opportunity index had not increased beyond 30%.

The issue of the cost of education for human development and the required resources has been a difficult problem for the government to handle. Although the cost of education is borne by both the public and private sectors, the share of public expenditure on education has now become a matter of major concern. In the financial year 1987/1988, nearly 37% of the public sector recurrent budget was taken up by education alone, compared to 15% in the 1960s and 30% in 1980.

If the budgetary allocations for training activities of the youth polytechnics, the national youth service, directorate of industrial training, and the directorate of personnel management are taken into account, then this proportion goes beyond 40%. As far as private spending on education is concerned, it is estimated that this contributes 25%, 70% and 50% of the total expenditures on primary, secondary and higher education respectively. This implies that, overall, both public and private sector allocations to education range between 10% and 15% of the GDP. If this increasing claim on national resources by the education system is allowed to continue, it will seriously reduce the resources required to meet the growth targets set out in Sessional Paper No.1 of 1986. In this context, therefore, the Government is moving towards a cost-sharing system for education through which both public and private expenditures are rationalized throughout the education system.

The Kenyan education and training system has been the subject of more than ten reviews by special commissions and working parties over the last twenty-five years. These reviews include the Ominde Commission of 1964, the Wanjigi Commission of 1981 and the 1988 Presidential Working Party on Education and Training for the Next Decade and Beyond. The findings and recommendations of the latter will, by and large, determine the philosophy and scope of education and training programmes up to the year 2000.

### (c) *Employment*

Although unemployment is a growing phenomenon, the main problem affecting Kenya's human resources is one of underemployment. However, capital is also underutilized, implying that the problem can be attributed to other factors such as management inadequacies, cultural and attitudinal problems and institutional arrangements. Unemployment and underemployment co-exist with critical shortages of skilled manpower, seasonal shortages of unskilled labour and underutilization of capital.

The Government has taken several actions to address the unemployment problem. First, was the National Assembly's *Report of the Select Committee on Unemployment* of 1970. In response to concerns raised by the Select Committee, the Government invited the ILO, in collaboration with UNDP, to carry out a study of the employment situation in Kenya.

Based on the ILO report, the Government published Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1973 on *Employment*. These documents defined the national strategy for attacking unemployment. This strategy was reviewed by the Presidential Committee on Unemployment of 1983. Again, in response to the recommendations of the latter committee, Sessional Paper No. 2 of 1985 on unemployment was published. Drawing from essential elements of Sessional Paper No. 2 of 1985 on unemployment, the Government put the employment problem in its long-term perspective, but also brought into sharper focus its relationship with economic development and human resources in general during the preparation of Sessional Paper No. 2 (1986).

Most of the constraints on the development of human resources are related to management and financial and fiscal policy deficiencies. The interdependence of human resource development and employment factors calls for a systematic approach to the search for solutions to the unemployment problem. Past attempts to tackle unemployment have been wanting in this respect, and have not been well co-ordinated or related to specific areas of concern. These include the "Kenyanization" programme, the manpower needs of the public sector and the various salary reviews. Several manpower surveys since independence have investigated the stock and deployment of high- and middle-level manpower, as well as the demand for and supply of skilled citizens. In 1986, the Government launched the fifth nationwide manpower survey in preparation for the 1989-1993 National Development Plan. The survey results will provide the information required to draw up policy on human resources development and utilization for all sectors of the Kenyan economy.

The absence of a comprehensive manpower development and utilization plan stems from the fact that manpower issues have been handled by different government agencies such as the Ministries of Planning and Labour (for employment policy in general) and the Directorate of Personnel Management for civil service employment. To remove this problem of poor co-ordination, the Government has now created a Ministry of Manpower Development and Employment.

## **Conclusion**

The challenge facing the country in the years ahead is to sustain the fast rate of growth within the economy and, at the same time, increase employment opportunities and provide incomes to all. The emerging resource constraints on achieving this goal demand that Government explore new and innovative ways of mobilizing and utilizing such resources as scarce skills and managerial talents.

Budgetary constraints slow down the rate at which the government sector can provide and extend services to the people. The allocation of public expenditure to the various sectors would therefore have to be made, bearing in mind the need not to unduly deprive the people of essential services. Foreign exchange constraints are a serious impediment to development so long as Kenya remains dependent on outside markets for the provision of a good part of the goods and services it needs. Unless the country becomes more self-reliant, both in production and in the provision of its own resources, there can be no guarantee that it can achieve rates of economic growth that would favour human resources development and employment creation.

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## Problems of Human Resources in Somalia

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*Abdullahi M. Yahie*

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### Introduction

The past two decades witnessed changes in Somalia's strategies of economic growth. During this period, development economists, while admitting the failure of past development strategies, were in search of possible alternative solutions to the acute socio-economic problems confronting Third World countries. Contrary to the available empirical evidence, economic planners were made to believe that economic growth would engender social development, and that such growth automatically generates employment. This view was based on the assumption that there existed surplus labour which could be readily and easily mobilised for economic growth. Somalia's planners and policy-makers were led to adopt a development strategy that emphasises the stimulation of growth of the modern industrial sector, which was seen to be a lead sector in creating the potential to absorb surplus labour in the rural and predominantly agro-pastoralist sector, where the marginal product of labour is assumed to be very low.

In his article "The Search for Development Economics", Bruton (1974) eloquently argues that the most frequently noted failures besides actual design and implementation of policies were the "inadequate growth of employment opportunities and the apparent increase in inequality combined with little, if any, reduction in the percentage of the population classified as living with poverty". He continued to emphasise that "Neither objective employment nor poverty elimination can be achieved simply by increasing the rate of growth of measured GDP". There is the need to "find ways to design a development process that includes all variables as part of the process itself rather than the problem to be solved by high growth rates".<sup>1</sup>

Somalia, among other less developed countries, seems to have fallen into what may be called the growth rate trap. Since the inception of the first five-year plan in 1963, the expectation was — and still remains — that adequate employment will be generated by simply implementing the development programme in the different plans. For instance, in all these plans, unemployment was not considered to be so serious as to necessitate

any special measures. In the formulation of the plans themselves, there was a built-in assumption that unemployment would be eliminated with the implementation of the plans. The plans were designed to "raise the standard of living and the level of social welfare of the Somali people" by increasing the Gross National Product.

This chapter examines the renewed interest in the search for effective employment and human resource development policies and strategies in Somalia; the shortcomings of public policies; possible measures to be taken to arrest the brain drain; and the search for lasting solutions to the unemployment problem.

## **Human Resources Management Policies**

Human resources are among the critical resources of a nation. Without them, any development endeavour is virtually predestined to failure. These critical resources which are developed at considerable financial and social costs, are underutilised in Somalia. One major constraint on the effective management and utilisation of human resources in Somalia is the lack of proper links and information exchange between the various social and economic sectors. As a result, human resource planning is *ad-hoc* and done in isolation.

The inefficient educational system, the under-utilisation of educational infrastructure, and the irrelevant course content in schools are factors which inhibit effective human resources development. With the current high rate of population growth, and the increasing rate of female participation in the labour force, annual new entrants into the labour force should rise in the years ahead. This increase could be offset somehow if there were significant increases in educational enrolment and retention rates. Evidence during the past few years, however, points to the contrary, as enrolment increases in primary schools have declined.

The labour absorptive capacity of the agriculture and nomadic sectors is becoming limited with the slowing down of output growth in these sectors. As more Somalis enter these sectors, there has been an increase in under-employment among the rural and nomadic population. The related rise in rural to urban migration has increased urban unemployment as well. Though reliable unemployment statistics do not exist, there is evidence that unemployment is severe, and despite the efforts being exerted by the government, that it is increasing.

Serious mismatches exist in the labour market. For example, shortages of labour exist side-by-side with excess labour. Regional differences in labour supply and labour demand also create distortions in labour utilisation. For example, the expansion of education, coupled with the employment guarantees, have created excess labour in the government and public sectors. Employment guarantees for secondary school leavers have been lifted since 1983, yet more and more of them enter the labour market in search of jobs that are becoming increasingly difficult to find.

Another problem of human resources utilisation and productivity in Somalia is the low level of wages and salaries prevailing and the fact that with the high rate of inflation, the purchasing power of those with fixed incomes has dropped dramatically. For those having very low incomes the situation is even more serious. In August, 1988, the government addressed this problem by increasing government salaries by 100%.

Until recently, there was a complete absence of an efficient institutional mechanism for human resources development in the country. However, the Somali Government has since taken the initiative of establishing, for the first time, a Human Resources Development Department within the Ministry of National Planning. This is the Ministry responsible for the preparation of national development plans and for the coordination of sectoral plans. The Human Resources Development Department was established to serve as a focal point for all human resources activities in the country. It should also develop a comprehensive educational and manpower planning strategy in line with the overall development process, and establish a manpower information system to improve on the exchange of information among the different agencies dealing with human resources and employment issues. Recent government intervention in this area is meant to strengthen human resources development, and it is hoped that a comprehensive action-oriented human resources development strategy will evolve over the next few years. A policy framework for according priority to the development of the social sectors and employment-generation programmes has thus been established with the creation of the Human Resources Development Department.

## **Employment Situation in Somalia**

An attempt to present a comprehensive picture of the employment situation in Somalia is made difficult by the lack of reliable employment and

unemployment data. This has led to differences in the analysis and interpretation of the unemployment problem and has, consequently, rendered national efforts to attack it more difficult. A unique feature of the Somali society is that a large segment of the population is nomadic and outside the reach of the social services. The self-employed population in rural and nomadic activities constitutes over 85% of the total labour force. In all, the labour force in Somalia is distributed among the economic sectors thus: the formal sector (public and private) which employs 7,3% of the total labour force; the informal sector which employs less than 5,4%; and the agro-pastoral or traditional sector which absorbs the remaining 87% of the work force.

*(a) Modern versus traditional sector*

The dominant role played by the traditional sector as a source of employment is demonstrated by its ability to absorb close to 90% of the labour force in the market. This employment pattern seems to be supported by the results of other studies i.e. that a large majority of the labour force in Somalia will remain within the traditional sector in the coming years. Within the small modern sector, private employment constitutes 43%; while public and co-operative employment constitute 34% respectively.

Despite the traditional sector's large contribution to the economy, government policies do not appear to have succeeded in tapping the growth potential of this sector. According to an ILO Jobs and Skills Programme for Africa (JASPA) report, "The urban and export-oriented development strategies that appear to characterise major government investment programmes continue to deprive the traditional sector of a proportionately greater share of the national wealth it generates for the development of its productive forces and the improvement of the quality of life in rural areas".<sup>2</sup> As a result, "the country is experiencing an apparent loss of opportunity for improved outputs in rural production as well as relative decline in the quality of rural life and an accelerated rate of rural emigration particularly among the younger and educated members of the population".<sup>3</sup> Agreeing with this observation, a government report concludes that "the continuation of this trend will, undoubtedly, have a long-term negative impact on the Somali economy".

Meanwhile, with the continuing neglect of the traditional sector, the better-skilled young people from the rural areas are being attracted in greater numbers to the urban areas which offer a better package of

amenities compared to the harsh living conditions of the nomadic rural areas.

In order to accommodate this fast-growing urban labour force, the Somali government has pursued policies aimed at rapidly enlarging the modern sector at the expense of the traditional sector which, in reality, also produces goods and services of social and economic value to the nation.

*(b) The Urban Informal Sector*

The urban informal sector is for the most part, composed of the urban working poor in family-owned establishments, own-account workers mostly in the service sector (hawkers, shoe-shining boys, street vendors, etc.); manual workers employed in small production and service enterprises which operate with little capital and low levels of technology.

The rapid increases in educational output in recent years, combined with the contraction of the formal wage labour market, only means that more and more of Somalia's young, new labour force entrants, will be participating in informal sector activities. A JASPA mission to Somalia in 1977 predicted that "the four-fold increase in enrolment over a period of five years as a twin result of the envisaged phenomenal increase in the school output and maintenance of a constant progression rate between primary and secondary levels of education would lead to over-production of secondary school leavers from 1982-83 onwards" (JASPA 1977).

Out of the total school output of 52 306 during the period in question, the public sector absorbed less than 4% or 1 853 while *approximately 77% remained unemployed*. Therefore, given the failure of the formal sector to absorb the bulk of these high school graduates, one can assume that a large percentage of those who chose to remain in the urban areas would resort to searching for employment in the informal sector.

However, rather than encourage the growth of the informal sector as an employment provider, Government policies had a considerable negative impact on it, by virtue of the many restrictions imposed on the type of activities it could undertake, on location of enterprises, on trade in certain commodities without licence, municipal taxes, etc. These problems are compounded by the absence of an effective government machinery to support the development of the sector.

### *(c) Rural Employment Potential and Policy*

As already mentioned, Somalia's agro-pastoral sector supports over 80% of the population. It also contributes 40% of GDP and 90% of the export earning of the country. While the sector is unquestionably the dominant source of employment, the public investments into this sector are far from adequate. In the last plan of 1982-86, while the contribution of this sector to GDP was well over 50%, the share of public investment was only 35%. The level of investment is clearly inadequate to stimulate the type of activities that would promote greater employment.

The government has, however, introduced the following specific employment promotion schemes for rural youth: (1) Somali Revolutionary Youth camps which were established in the early 1970s to provide job training and develop basic skills; (2) A "gulwada programme" (Victory Pioneers) for the unemployed who could receive training in security, health and sanitation work; (3) an Agriculture Crash Programme introduced in late 1970s to engage youth in farming activities; (4) an employment guarantee scheme for all secondary school graduates which was introduced in 1971/72. The programme was, however, suspended in 1983 in the face of the worsening economic and financial situation. A major factor contributing to the failure of the employment guarantee scheme was the existence of a clear mismatch between the skills and knowledge of high school graduates and the actual demands of employers. Also, it was creating a situation of permanent under-utilisation of manpower which has been acknowledged by Government as being "particularly wasteful of the nation's resources".

In general, employment promotion programmes and policies have proved to be ineffective. First, the programmes were politically motivated and costly, and the government budgetary position could not permit their continuity. Second, and more important, young job-seekers were reluctant to take jobs anywhere other than in the capital city. Third, in spite of government's commitment to employment generation, its pre-occupation with the implementation of unsuccessful structural adjustment programmes which are almost exclusively concerned with fiscal and financial balances, to the detriment of social and economic development, did not leave much room for unemployment to feature in any prominent manner, in government's policy priorities.

## **Brain Drain**

In Somalia, one serious constraint on human resources development and utilisation is the continuous outflow of technically qualified manpower. Many Somali university graduates who have pursued further studies abroad, have, on their return, found themselves unable to accept the prevailing working conditions. Most of these graduates have looked to other employment markets particularly in the nearby middle eastern countries, for better working conditions. The brain drain has, consequently, been heavy as a result of the inability of the public sector to retain within the economy a pool of scarce resources. In terms of economic costs the country is the net loser.

Although in its development plans the government has underscored the importance of human resources development and utilisation, there is no formal policy framework for tackling the growing brain drain problem. There are numerous internal factors which play a decisive role in exacerbating the brain drain in Somalia:

### **1 Institutional and Structural Factors**

The main institutional factor responsible for the persistence of the problem is the inability of the system to place scarce resources where they can produce most efficiently. Unintended misallocations create gaps which are difficult to fill, and service may be rendered less efficiently. The educational system of the country has to be blamed for contributing significantly to the flight of human capital. For one thing the educational system is inappropriate vis-a-vis the development needs of the country. It tends to turn out a great number of graduates whose skills cannot be utilised optimally. This results in either under-employment or open unemployment for some highly educated young people. Even if the skills were appropriate, they cannot in many instances be absorbed into the labour market because of the slow rate of economic growth of the country.

### **2. Motivational factors**

Professionals usually aspire to play a role in the development of their countries and would, therefore, like to be "actors" rather than "spectators". This is largely denied them mainly due to the inability of the politicians to recognise the worth of indigenous professionals with high-level skills and the tendency to prefer expatriates to nationals, even when the latter are

equally or better qualified than the expatriates. This generally frustrates the qualified nationals and as a result they leave the country at the earliest opportunity or move to other sectors and professions within the country.

A recent USAID study<sup>4</sup> on training of Somalis abroad observes that for "every three people with Bachelors degree sent, the country gained one person with a Masters degree . . . two people were completely lost to the country". Experience has shown that the one trained professional gained might even be lost too, due to the inefficient placement and human resources management practices employed by government institutions.

## **The Impact of the Gulf Migration**

Although numerous studies argue that out-migration reduces the surplus labour in the market at least in the short run, losing the skilled and the most educated will mean less investment and, in consequence, lower production per capita. Because of the high salaries prevailing in the Gulf countries, skilled Somali nationals are among those attracted to the employment markets of those countries. Such shifts might constitute a major income increase for many low income families in Somalia and at the same time represent a good source of foreign exchange earnings for the country.

## **The Return of Talent Programme in Somalia**

The number of Somali professionals working abroad is estimated at 15 000-20 000. Recently, the International Organisation of Migration (IOM) approached the Somali government in an attempt to assist the country repatriate qualified nationals residing in the EEC member countries and who are willing to return to Somalia. Returnees are offered a package of incentives which includes return ticket, salary supplements during the initial six months after returning to Somalia, and other forms of professional support. Out of the total of 58 professionals who returned under this programme in 1987 and 1988, 35 (or 60,3%) were attracted to the public sector while the remaining 23 (or 39,7%) preferred to join the private sector. Medical specialists and engineers constitute 43.1% and 15,5% respectively, while economists, geologists, lawyers and agronomists combined constitute 20,8% of the returnees.

## Conclusion

The generation of employment opportunities depends upon the availability of resources for investment, and also the type of technology used for production. Efforts should therefore be made to increase the efficiency of production, giving priority to sectors with great potentials for employment creation. The agriculture, livestock and fisheries sectors, which still remain the backbone of the economy, should therefore be given more emphasis in a way that would cause increased employment and income-generation opportunities. Though considerable developmental resources are channelled to the agricultural sector, performance has been less than desirable. In addition to improving productivity, efficiency and output, efforts should be made to mobilise the resources that are idle or are not fully utilised to improve productivity and employment generation in this sector.

Although changes in participation in economic activity influence the labour supply, the continuing high rates of population growth increases the number of new entrants into the labour force. Population growth, therefore, has an influence over the number of new entrants into the labour force, and calls for instituting suitable measures to alleviate its impact. Problems that are common to all African labour markets, such as educated unemployment, excess labour in some occupations or branches of economic activities, and shortage of labour, call for a re-orientation of education and training policies to meet the real needs of the economy as well as a set of economic policies that will absorb, in a productive way, those seeking jobs in the employment market.

One of the most difficult problems facing planners in Somalia is how to absorb the many graduates emerging from the secondary school. With the lifting of employment guarantees, their employment prospects in the public service have been significantly reduced. Therefore, a set of measures has to be devised to engage them productively. Government support for the establishment of self-employment programmes in the informal sector would be a most practical option. Also educationists, government and private sector operators would have to come together to look for solutions to the problem of educated unemployment and the issues of training to render those affected employable.

The re-orientation of the educational system towards development needs and improving the quality of education will have considerable potential for employment generation.

Finally, as there is a large exodus of skilled manpower mainly to the Gulf countries, the government has to take steps to address the problem of brain drain and come up with appropriate policies and measures to retain these qualified people within the national economy.

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## **Part IV:**

# **The Way Forward**

# The Way Forward

*Crispin Grey-Johnson*

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Africa's problem of under-development boils down to its problem of inadequately developed and utilised human resources. African Governments will have to make more purposeful moves to strengthen the planning, development and utilisation of the continent's human resources in the decade of the 1990s, if Africa's development in the 21st century is to be assured.

To begin with, human resources development systems in Africa must urgently address the twin challenge of broadening and deepening the human resources base and charting out strategies for doing so with cost-effectiveness and locally. Policy-makers must dedicate themselves anew to the merits of human resources planning and translate this dedication into appropriate policy responses, adequate resource support for the human resources planning function and a full integration of human resources planning into national socio-economic development planning efforts by linking the objectives of human resources planning to those of overall national development plans.

The human resources planning function must also set its own priorities, based on a strong grasp of the present and future situation regarding manpower demand and supply and their implications for the development prospects of their countries. They may wish first to grapple with problems such as the flight of skills from their economies in order to determine the factors that cause this situation and with a view to arresting any further deteriorations. Many African public services have acknowledged a certain amount of redundancy among their staff and have proceeded with programmes of retrenchment. Human resources planning systems could intervene to assist in working out a programme of redeployment, retraining or recycling so that the skills being done away with are not left idle, but are made to contribute to the recovery effort and to the generation of incomes for the many affected households.

Human resources planning should also have as a priority, strategies for increasing the productivity of the worker, not only in the formal sector of the economy but also in the informal sector and especially in the agricultural sector. In the formal sector, interventions are called for to upgrade the skills of middle- and high-level managers so that development resources and

processes are managed with greater efficiency. Technical and scientific workers should be trained to handle production resources with greater care so as to maximise the efficiency of these resources and contribute more to the production of goods and the provision of services. Public sector managers ought to be made more development-conscious so that they are more effective as facilitators rather than obstacles in the development process.

Informal sector workers can serve as most effective agents in the provision of goods and services to the agricultural sector. Human resources planning systems should, therefore, define a role for them in the transformation of African agriculture. Workers in this sector could be brought in to provide some of the inputs required for this purpose i.e. tools, implements and equipment, as well as services required for the many civil and engineering works projects that would need to be implemented in support of the development of agriculture.

The supply of skilled manpower to agriculture is of fundamental importance for Africa's human resources planning systems, given that the transformation of African agriculture must, of necessity, be skills-induced. The neglect of this sector shown by human resources planning systems is, in part, responsible for the disastrous performance of African agriculture. This sector, more than any other, requires an infusion of skilled manpower to bring the weight of modern techniques to bear on the productivity of African agriculture and to prepare the groundwork for innovations to take root and have an effect on production. Apart from upgrading skills among the direct producers, a long-term plan is required to provide the skilled manpower necessary to give effective scientific and technological backing to the efforts of producers: agronomists, soil scientists, veterinarians, hydrologists, meteorologists, rural technologists, community change agents etc. They will all have to be produced in sufficient numbers to support self-sustainment in agricultural growth and ensure that all the efforts to transform agriculture, if successful, do not fade away.

The onus for the acquisition and development of skills in Africa is on the region's human resources development systems. Education, training and staff development systems like all other agents in the society and the African economy will have to change in response to the priorities dictated by the economic crisis. That reforms must be made in Africa's human resources development systems is a point that is not in dispute. Rather, the

divergence of opinion is centred more on the question as to what directions these reforms should take and for what purpose.

Education for development demands of African Governments four things: (i) increased investments; (ii) the search for relevance to needs; (iii) the rapid multiplication of skills; and (iv) a change of attitudes to society.

The medium-term development needs in Africa require that significant investments be made at all levels of education. The need for increasing agricultural productivity calls for the expansion of basic education and literacy training to improve the farmer's functional literacy and numeracy skills and to step-up the fight against illiteracy and ignorance. The expansion of primary education is also required to speed up the attainment of, at least, these objectives. Third-level education must also be strengthened to enable it respond to the region's middle- and high-level manpower needs in agriculture, industry, mining, science and technology, transport and communications, banking, management and the education sector itself. For third level education to effectively respond to these needs, it should have the requisite support at the second level of education which prepares students for the higher education sector.

The answer, therefore, to the problem of the crisis does not lie in starving the education sector of resources. Such a policy would obviously be counter-productive since it would result in stunting the growth of the very resources that should bring about recovery and development. Rather, African Governments should explore the possibilities of activating new sources of revenue generation for the education sector, such as unleashing the income-generation potentials which educational institutions may have; sealing off the many sources of foreign exchange leakage in the education sector; strengthening internal capabilities so that a larger measure of self-reliance in education is attained; improving educational management capabilities so as to optimise the utilisation of resources, space and time.

The challenge of development dictates that knowledge be expanded fast to enable a larger proportion of Africans to have the capability to regain control over their environment. This would cost more, not less, money. It is true that Governments would not be able to mobilise all the amounts required especially if they were to rely on the traditional sources. Therefore, they must explore new sources of revenue generation such as levying an education tax on business enterprises; reducing their reliance on expensive expatriate personnel in favour of less expensive indigenous ones; increasing self-reliance in the production of textbooks and teaching aids and

equipment so as to reduce the demands on foreign exchange resources for imports and at the same time stimulate income generation locally. Educational institutions could themselves be encouraged to be semi-self-financing by engaging in farm and industrial production and service-rendering activities, from which profits could be ploughed back into the development of programmes, structures and infrastructures.

The search for relevance is another challenge to education in Africa. Perhaps the charge that African education is too expensive could be justified against the large number of youth who go through parts of, or the entire educational hierarchy only to discover when they leave school to enter the world of work that they do not possess the skills and knowledge required by employers. African education systems and curricula have not adequately responded to needs for the development of agriculture, industry, science and technology, etc. Liberal education is what prevails, having changed little from colonial times. Yet society and its needs have changed, placing much less of a premium on a man with qualifications in the liberal arts, in favour of qualified people with scientific and technical skills. Vigorous efforts must, therefore, be made to develop curricula and align them with Africa's objective needs for socio-economic and technological transformation. In the process, it may be necessary to do away with the concern for — if not the obsession with — the need to maintain "international" equivalency and recognition. Curricula change must be guided only by the need for the African to acquire only the knowledge and learn only those skills that would serve him and his society.

The third challenge to education in Africa is the search for appropriate and workable strategies for multiplying skills for recovery and development. How can the millions of peasant producers and pastoralists be made literate so that they become more productive workers? How can the thousands of rural change agents be produced to help rural communities solve their problems of malnutrition, high morbidity, high infant mortality, endemic diseases etc? How can the practice of traditional medicine be integrated with modern health care services? How fast can the water resources and desertification control experts be produced to arrest the spread of deserts, reverse the degradation of the African environment and preserve Africa's forests? How soon can the veterinary technicians be formed to begin attacking the many diseases that plague Africa's livestock resources? These are a few of the questions which educational systems in Africa must address if they seriously intend to contribute to the continent's socio-economic development.

When it comes to questions of middle- and high-level manpower development, African Governments must review present strategies of producing them. They would have to consider whether it is more viable or even more desirable for each country to attempt to provide all the higher education facilities required to produce its middle- and high-level manpower, or whether the burden for doing so would be considerably eased if the task were shared among groups of countries on a sub-regional or regional basis. They would have to review policies that promote among African students, a preference for degrees and diplomas acquired outside Africa, the consequent heavy outflow of students, particularly to countries of the North and the implications of this for relevance in the application of skills acquired externally to the solution of problems which are probably unique to Africa. Governments of the region would, therefore, have to search for ways of expanding educational opportunities at the middle- and higher-levels to accommodate most of those who would otherwise turn elsewhere to look for those opportunities. They should also look for collective approaches to strategies for increasing post-graduate educational opportunities within the continent, particularly in the sciences, agriculture, medicine, engineering and technology, in order to obviate the need for increasing numbers of Africans to migrate — in some cases, permanently — in search of these opportunities.

The final challenge to African education is the development of positive attitudes towards the common good. The economic decline has been accompanied by a moral decline and a certain amount of disarray in the African's value systems, particularly in the urban areas. Mismanagement and misapplication of public resources have been rampant in many African countries. Robberies, theft, vandalism, assault, drug abuse, alcoholism, prostitution etc have seen a dramatic increase in many African cities. Such social disequilibria cannot support development, and those communities that are victims of these negative social developments would only be able to internalise the development process with the greatest difficulty. Education systems must begin now to inculcate into Africa's young, a respect for the rights and property of individuals, the adoption of constructive rather than destructive behaviour, and a love of self, community and nation. In addition, the spirit of self-reliance must be cultivated among Africa's young to reduce the pervasive feeling of helplessness in the search for solutions to problems of day-to-day living. The new generation of Africans must be made to feel confident in themselves, to know that they are capable of surviving even without the

help of others and thus be equipped with the moral and psychological fortitude necessary for any man to take the first step towards doing those things required for his self-upliftment. In this way, the excessive dependence on "other" — community, government, outsiders — for food, jobs, incomes, skills, materials, money, will be reduced and Africans will be armed with the confidence they must have to be able to provide jobs and incomes for themselves, produce what they need for their own survival and growth and turn inwards for their self-reliant and self-sustained development.

There is an urgent need to realign present capabilities with the emerging problems confronting the African economy and with the imperative to evolve new capabilities to manage development. Training and staff development systems have a major role to play in this. They should formulate special tailor-made programmes to correct the skills imbalances in agriculture, industry and management. They should also undertake detailed and realistic training needs assessments in order to ascertain not only what training should focus on, but also to work out programmes, schedules and the provision of training resources.

African Governments must make an effort to pursue investment strategies that would have as a central objective, the generation of employment for a growing labour force. Policies aimed at reducing public sector employment also have to be reviewed. This is so because the public sector in most African countries is the major provider of employment, incomes and livelihood to the wage labour force. It, therefore, fulfils a social need, without which many households would suffer and social and political tensions would mount.

The growing problem of educated unemployment also requires serious and immediate attention for it represents a big waste of human and financial resources. Those affected represent huge amounts in public investments. Their not being utilised at all amounts to a loss of these public investments. Furthermore, it is important for this large group of young men and women not to be provoked into destabilising society by being left in idleness, frustration and bitterness. Strategies must, therefore, be conceived to utilise them in productive economic activities.

African Governments should very seriously consider measures to arrest and if possible reverse the brain drain because a heavy outflow of highly skilled men and women from the continent would deprive Africa of a good proportion of those very resources it requires to promote socio-economic

development. The causes of the brain drain must, therefore, be unravelled with a view to instituting the appropriate measures to remove them.

The management of the workforce should also be looked into. Efforts must be made to adopt supervisory and personnel management practices that would motivate the worker and bring about greater efficiency and increased output. Factors such as nepotism, tribalism, religious biases etc should be identified in the management of the workforce and rooted out.

Support should be provided to enhance the productivity of workers in agriculture. Fiscal incentives to these workers should be increased in the form of an expansion of public services such as health, education, transportation etc. Government interventions in controlling prices at realistic levels, providing social amenities such as potable water, sanitation facilities etc, strengthening production infrastructures such as irrigation, extension services, marketing facilities etc, are all important to make the farmer more productive, because the healthier he is, the higher his level of education, and the more support he receives for production, the more he can increase his output.

The informal sector should be recognised for the many services it renders to the growth of the African economy: the provision of incomes, training, and millions of jobs to workers who would otherwise remain jobless and unskilled, and the production of many intermediate and final products. Government policy towards the informal sector should now be less negative and should seek to define a clearer role for this sector to play in the development process. These policies should aim at strengthening the informal sector by assisting in improving the quality of the goods it produces and the services it provides, by increasing its absorptive capacity and by making it able to attain higher levels of productivity.

At the regional level, African Governments should explore the possibilities of formalising co-operation in the use of high-level manpower by promoting the exchange of experts to fill vacancies in the public and private sectors of their economies. This would ease the problem of university graduate unemployment within the region and would also have a most favourable effect on the brain drain by decreasing the possibilities of outmigration of the highly skilled.

The implementation of programmes to better plan, develop and utilise human resources requires tremendous support from a wide range of Government institutions. Apart from those ministries with a direct responsibility for human resources planning, development and utilisation

such as education, manpower, labour and planning, much support is required from other ministries such as health, local government, industry, etc. The priority for these support ministries is to orient their activities so that they enhance the national effort to develop and better utilise human resources. Thus, ministries of industry should pay greater attention to solving problems of worker productivity in industrial establishments, promote training and monitor in-plant working conditions. Health ministries will be required to monitor primary health, maternal and child health and nutrition programmes more intensively. Ministries of agriculture must strengthen extension and other production support to the farmer.

The institutional requirements for improving human resources development would require that attention be focused on the creation of some government mechanism to co-ordinate the many contributions from diverse quarters, to education and training. Offers of training fellowships should be scrutinised for their relevance to national needs and priorities. Non-formal education and training programmes, particularly those being offered by NGOs and other aid agencies should fit the training priorities of governments. This requires constant monitoring of the various interventions and an interface between all the line ministries concerned. A government institution should be set up for this purpose.

## **Conclusion**

One of the lessons to be learnt from the socio-economic crisis in Africa is that the relative neglect of the region's human resources has, over time, led to the weakening of human capabilities, to the point that those capabilities could no more regulate or adapt to changes in the social, economic and physical environment. The results have been catastrophic: famine, starvation, malnutrition, increased poverty, destitution and, for many, death.

Of urgent and fundamental importance to Africa's long-term development is the need to formulate and implement policies which would ensure that the crumbling of human capabilities will never more be allowed to make Africans so vulnerable. Therefore, development endeavours should be more human-focused and aimed at developing and nurturing the African's abilities and capabilities so that they stand him in good stead to cope with negative developments in his environment. To this end, there is an urgent need to formulate those policies required to strengthen and expand the

skills base upon which self-sustained development would be built. It is equally important that attitudes that conduce to resourcefulness, determination, pride and self-confidence be nurtured among Africans and that opportunities are provided for the African to show his ingenuity and inventiveness to substantially increase his productivity as an economic entity in society.

Strategies for achieving these objectives of development must be well thought out and be well targeted to the attainment of set goals. Therefore, a lot of planning must go to the development and utilisation of Africa's human resources. Government should, therefore, renew their commitment to the planning of human resources in Africa by providing the appropriate policy, resource and institutional support to the human resources planning function within the public sector.

Above all, African Governments must be convinced now more than ever before that only man can spearhead development and social transformation. Given the internal and external constraints on Africa's development, only the genius of the African people can unshackle this continent and initiate the process of its development. Government development strategies should, therefore, make human resources the pivot of development. A human-focused development strategy followed with dedication and commitment will strengthen capabilities, build skills, inculcate positive development attitudes and pull up the African from under-development and perpetual misery.

# ANNEXES

## ANNEX I

### **Main Conclusions and Recommendations of the Tenth AAPAM Roundtable**

A number of observations were made by the Roundtable with regard to (a) resources; (b) policy objectives; (c) definition of human resources; (d) planning; and (e) training.

In the first place, it was thought necessary to bear in mind the parameters, forms and contents of programmes of human resources development. Questions readily suggested themselves: Training for what? Human resources planning for what? In the absence of precise goals it would be difficult to see how those activities could be meaningfully tackled. The problems to be tackled should be carefully identified and articulated.

Furthermore, questions of resources allocation and control were considered vital to any human resources programme. It was noted that African countries do not have control over their economies, and this largely accounts for the ineffectiveness of their plans whether at macro-level or in specific sectors such as human resources development.

It was felt also that human resources development should not be defined narrowly to refer only to skilled and educated manpower but should be interpreted broadly to include those who really produce Africa's wealth (especially the majority of Africa's producers in the rural areas). Planning was a weak process in Africa, and consideration needed to be given to new planning techniques and methodologies, improvement in data collection, hiring and training of planners and their optimal utilisation.

The proper management of human resources was deemed paramount. The present approach of leaving personnel to their own devices was decried. There was need for a "results-oriented" approach that mobilises individual talent and develops human potential. In addition, the following specific comments and recommendations were put forward:

- (i) It is not clear to what extent the existing human resources programmes actually develop the work-force, if by "development" we mean enhancement of individual potentials and capabilities for the overall benefit of each country;

- (ii) There is a pressing need for human resources policies which address the issues of capacity-building, skills development and utilisation, the proper application of the merit principle in recruitment and promotions, incentives and motivation, grading, position classification and salary structures, as well as the issue of tenure in the higher civil service;
- (iii) The process of human resources planning tends to be weak largely as a result of the overlap and duplication of efforts among diverse agencies, and shortage of planning data; these and other constraints should be identified and eliminated;
- (iv) Efficient management of human resources in the public sector tends to be undermined by "leakages" and wasteful allocation. In particular, there is need to eliminate the dangers of wrong deployments, politically-motivated postings, poor supervision and management practices, lack of incentives, encouragement of mediocrity and disregard or erosion of rules and procedures.

Regarding employment and overall human resources utilisation, the Roundtable noted that land in African economies is not utilised to its full productive capacity, particularly as a result of land-tenure systems and inadequate institutional support to increase the productive capacity of the land. If the productive capacity of land increased, more people could be employed in agriculture and mining.

It was recommended that:

- (a) Land ownership policies in African societies be reviewed to ensure that land is utilised in a manner that promotes employment generation;
- (b) Adequate policies, relating to the importation of technology and skills be developed to ensure the creation of employment opportunities and curb employment decline and retrenchments;
- (c) Adequate government intervention, programmes and strategies to increase the skills base for those to be employed in the agricultural sector be institutionalised so that this sector becomes more productive and labour- absorbing.

It was recognised that the informal sector is a potential source of employment creation. However, it was noted that the major problem in trying to improve the productivity of this sector and its ability to increase employment opportunities lay in the difficulty of planning and controlling

the sector to ensure that it conforms to governments' aspirations of generating employment.

It was recommended that:

- (a) Policies to enhance the productive capacity of the informal sector be developed which would also increase employment opportunities. This could be achieved through the creation of a special fund;
- (b) Village youth training centres (or rural vocational training centres) be established which would help in improving attitudes among the youth in favour of self-employment and, at the same time, develop small-scale entrepreneurial and managerial skills;
- (c) Policies aimed at enhancing the growth and productivity of the informal sector should take particular cognisance of the needs of women who play a major role in the sector; and
- (e) Strategies be developed to promote the growth of the informal sector in the rural areas, and the infrastructure be improved to promote self-employment and support the "back-to-the-land" policies of governments.

The Roundtable further observed that African governments need to develop strategies to deal with international organisations, as the policies and decisions of these organisations have negatively affected national policies on employment creation. The actions of multinationals also need a closer scrutiny as these multinationals may, as they often do, organise their activities in a way that proves inimical to employment and growth.

Above all, there is a need to look into the services sector such as banking, tourism, etc. as this sector also has the potential for increasing employment opportunities in African countries. One possible strategy would be the indigenisation of the sector so that it could be made to respond to the employment creation needs of the African people.

The Roundtable agreed that education is a right and should reflect the social and economic foundations of society. There should be a relationship between education and employment. Education was the foundation of the individual's contribution to society and the development process. The development of skills was said to be the primary goal of educational programmes. There was, therefore, a need for emphasis to be placed on the development of educational skills and capabilities of individuals and not the mere acquisition of certificates or paper qualifications. Only in this way can

we expect to expand and maintain opportunities for employment and self-employment. Other views expressed stressed that:

- (i) since educational development on the continent is colonial in origin and content, there is need to incorporate training-of-trainers programmes aimed at orienting all educational and training activities to the needs of society;
- (ii) in view of the fact that investments in education sometimes outstrip those in the other sectors of the economy, conscious efforts should be made by African governments to ensure that education serves the interests of the people; and
- (iii) there is need to introduce career counselling at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education.

The Roundtable dwelt at length on the concept of the brain drain and its causes. Each speaker came up with a different definition of "brain drain". Although there was no consensus on the real meaning of the concept, it was agreed the following types of movement of manpower were to be regarded as constituting the brain drain:

- (i) Highly skilled manpower moving from one public organisation to private organisations within the same country;
- (ii) Movement of highly skilled manpower from one African country to another;
- (iii) Movement of highly skilled manpower from any African country to a country outside Africa; and
- (iv) Migrant labour like the one in Southern Africa to the Republic of South Africa and to the Bantustans.

There were arguments against (i) and (ii). On (i), it was argued that there was no brain drain as long as there was no net loss to the continental economy as a whole. Such movement, it was suggested, should be regarded as "brain circulation" within an economy.

On (ii), it was argued that African countries must assist each other in terms of manpower — as they differed in the degree of economic and human resources development.

There was a fair degree of consensus on the concept of brain drain when it came to highly skilled manpower moving from developing countries to developed countries.

The view was expressed that the historical and fundamental causes of the brain drain were:

- (i) uneven development among African countries;
- (ii) the political, social and economic climate;
- (iii) poor remuneration resulting from sluggish economic performance;
- (iv) defective and wasteful human resource allocation policies; and
- (v) demotivating managerial practices.

Some speakers understood the importance of establishing an African Manpower Data Bank so that Africa would know the position of its manpower. The AAPAM Secretariat was requested to seek donor support to set up such a Data Bank. At present there was no inventory of highly skilled African manpower. Such an inventory would serve as a control mechanism in the movement of manpower.

It was suggested that a study be carried out on migrant labour as a form of brain drain to establish its impact on the countries affected.

The importance of managing human resources development was unanimously underscored by participants. It was emphasised that the importance of manpower management should be linked with the present economic crisis. The shortage of skilled manpower was pointed out as one of the factors that led to the crisis. It was observed that as a continent, Africa had not seriously addressed the problem of human resources development in order to devise strategies that would solve the problem once and for all.

Management development institutions in Africa had not taken the initiative of studying the problem of mismanagement in the public sector. This kind of study was recommended because it would suggest possible solutions. It was also observed that political interference in the management of institutions was one of the causes of inertia on the part of chief executive officers of public institutions. It was recommended that managers of these institutions be given enough autonomy to make sound decisions which would lead to better performance.

The importance of in-service training programmes was also underlined by a number of speakers, but it was observed that such programmes were poorly run because of the shortage of competent training officers and lack of materials and aids. On-the-job training was equally emphasised.

It was observed that training might have beneficial results if there were good trainers who were effectively utilised, and provided those trained would be put to good use. It was recommended that every African country endeavours to train and effectively utilise its skilled manpower and that once manpower was trained, efforts should be made to retain and sustain it.

It was also emphasised that any meaningful training must be preceded by a thorough training needs assessment carried out by a professional body. Failure to do so would result in waste of scarce resources.

The importance of introducing modern management techniques in public institutions was discussed. Although these techniques were open to question for their relevance to African environments (on account of their having originated from a highly industrialised setting), their adoption was recommended because they are suited to the solution of problems of technological development.

On the problems of employment it was recommended that countries should endeavour to expand the informal and agricultural sectors in order to create more job opportunities for skilled manpower. The job-creation capacity of the public sector had greatly declined because of the present economic crisis.

Turning to the general issues raised by the country case studies, the Roundtable observed the following:

- (i) there is a general tendency to regard university degrees as superior to vocational and technical skills training. This discourages school leavers from enrolling in technical or vocational institutions which provide better scope for self-employment;
- (ii) the political dimension of employment and human resources development was not highlighted, especially issues such as war, civil strife etc. and their effects on the human resources situation;
- (iii) a distinction must be made between education, training and human resources development. The latter looks at all issues related to the performance of organisations; and
- (iv) the role of attitudes must be examined in regard to job creation. School leavers have a tendency to regard certain types of jobs as inappropriate for them.

It was observed that if the services sector (such as Kenya's) seemed to be contributing quite significantly to the generation of employment, it was

because of its unique character in the African economy and of the fact that it enjoyed a special status in the economy that made it relatively independent of government. However, fears were expressed that it was this very special status of the services sector within the African economy that would eventually constrict its employment-generation capacities.

Turning to the brain drain question, participants wondered whether the high propensity for overseas studies — as in the case of Kenya — or the uncertain socio-economic circumstances prevailing in some African countries — as in that of Liberia — were not major factors compounding the problem of emigration of skills. In the absence of hard evidence to support or disprove these points, it was decided that these questions merited further study.

The "district-focus" strategy for development which was being followed in Kenya was seen to provide opportunities for improving the management of human resources and for providing greater support to the "juwa kali" workers in the informal sector. It was recommended that this strategy should be built upon as a potential means of involving the people in the development process and providing the requisite support to the informal sector.

It was observed also that African governments had in the past tended to pursue "mass education" policies without putting in place "mass employment" programmes in time to absorb the products of these education policies.

## **ANNEX II**

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Unemployment, underemployment and overall poor utilization of human resources are now among the biggest development challenges facing African countries. The economic recession and the application of structural adjustment programmes have, undoubtedly, further compounded these problems, but faulty human resources development and utilization policies have played their part in making the search for solutions more difficult.

This book examines the magnitude of the unemployment problem in the African economy as well as the prospects for the future of Africa's growing labour force. It also identifies the constraints on employment expansion and proposes how they could be removed. It then goes on to situate the problem of unemployment within the broader context of human resources development policy, identifying lapses, imbalances and defects, and recommending corrective measures.

The issues addressed include the brain drain, youth unemployment, educated unemployment, performance and problems of the informal sector, the employment - creation potentials of the agricultural sector, education and training, personnel management, and the constraints of rapid population growth.

These are issues that should be of interest to students of development, African policy makers, planners, intellectuals and Africa's development partners in the international community.

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