

DO SCHOOLS HAVE RESPONSIBILITIES FOR RURAL TRANSFORMATION IN AFRICA: SPECIAL REFERENCE TO TANZANIAN SCHOOLS

Yosiah. D.M. Bwatwa⁺

Tanzanian primary schools and secondary schools have been charged with the responsibilities of providing a formal education to all citizens of the nation. These institutions are referred to as adult education centres, they are paid for by all of the people and belong to all of the people. These adult education centres exist in every community of the country.

The Tanzanian government realized fast enough that adult education is a major catalyst in the process of rural transformation, a function that must be performed by many:

"The characteristic feature of adult education is that various organizations participate. Among them are Government departments, TANU, Umoja wa Wanawake wa Tanganyika, the cooperative movement and the churches. Part of the work to be done is the co-ordination and encouragement of existing activities and another part is the promotion of new activities".¹

Having identified this need and involvement of many institutions through adult education to fight illiteracy, which is a scourge undermining the development of Tanzanians as well as the majority of Africans, the main organizing responsibility was placed in adult education centres in communities throughout the country.

"The general principle is to place the main organising responsibility on the primary education. The school will then become a community educational centre, at which the provision of primary education is only one function. A school so conceived will increasingly become a local point for the total educational needs of the community, rather than serving as a somewhat detached institution for the education of children. The general responsibility for adult education activities of the centre will rest with the headmaster. It will be the duty of the headmaster to ascertain community needs to identify suitable instructors and to arrange classes. Each headmaster would have at his disposal a small grant for equipment and materials".²

Primary schools and secondary schools in Tanzania as well as in Africa have a unique combination of facilities needed in rural transformation

⁺Senior Lecturer, Department of Education, University of Dar es Salaam.

by the learning situations:... classrooms, assembly halls, shops, domestic science facilities, playing fields and science laboratories. These community centres always have the best pool of trained educational leadership in community... administrators, teachers, supervisors, students, counsellors and many specialists in athletics, music, drama, speech, fine arts and many other fields; who can fully transform the rural areas of Eastern Africa.

Rural transformation is possible only after people have been mobilized and illiteracy wiped out, so that those persons can adequately participate in the developments. In Tanzania the adult education centres and the political mobilization of people by various institutions have accelerated the rural transformation. From 1971 - 75, 5,184,982 illiterates had been mobilized and registered and by 1975, 1,909,011 had become literate.³

African countries have long known that illiteracy is the principal enemy of progress and most governments have accepted public responsibility for universal literacy. However, governments have not gone far enough to enlist more use of the press in a massive joint effort with schools to overcome illiteracy and transform the African rural areas. For Africa, the figures are even more grim: 73.7% of African adults cannot read. For women the figure is higher...87.7%. Most of these illiterates both men and women are found in the rural areas. Any kind of rural transformation will tackle illiteracy first. Total illiteracy in Africa is estimated to be 143 million persons.⁴ Thus, the actual number of illiterates in Africa and world-wide has continued to rise, mostly in rural areas. M. Neff Smart stated that:

"Most of the people live in mud and thatched huts and survive by tenant farming, herding, fishing, by poorly paid manual labour, or are on relief or charity in city ghettos. The fact of their illiteracy cripples them physically and mentally, it cancels out nearly all their opportunities for self-training and it disqualifies them for participating in democratic government of the national level. Illiteracy is both an enigma and an embarrassment. It is normally thought of as a skill, like walking or talking skills that everyone needs to function as a human being. They are taught and learnt within the family and community as a matter of course. Illiteracy is an embarrassment because for centuries it has needlessly blocked human progress".⁵

Women are afflicted by illiteracy and ignorance to a higher degree than men, and this is a true feature of the rural areas where transformation is at

low level. It is in the rural areas too where few schools or community centres exist which could enable the transformation of the rural areas. Thus while the percentage of illiteracy among the whole population is the principal index of the level of education in a country, the relationship between the figures for each sex becomes an index of the inequality of opportunities offered to men and women. (See table 1).

TABLE 1. ILLITERACY RATES (PERCENTAGES) AMONG MEN AND WOMEN DURING THE PERIOD 1960-1971.⁶

Country	Year	Illiteracy Rates (Percentages)	
		Men	Women.
Algeria	1966	70.1	92.0
Libya	1964	62.5	95.0
Malawi	1966	66.0	87.7
Mali	1960-61	96.0	99.5
Sierra Leone	1963	90.4	96.1
Somalia	1964	85.0	95.0
Sudan	1970-71	72.4	82.0
Swaziland	1966	68.7	72.5
Tunisia	1966	53.6	82.4
*Tanzania	*1976-77	34.0	44.0

(*Tentative figures).

If the schools in Eastern Africa as well as Africa accept the responsibility of mobilization of persons and providing adult education programmes, the rural transformation would have a working base. These institutions could also play a role in family planning - by providing services and education in enabling them to establish sound homes and develop good family relationships; as well as families without malnutrition. In any community, however, the task of transformation should not be left to schools alone. Various other institutions should be involved. For example, the Tanzanian efforts for rural transformation could be further researched and experimented. The responsibility of rural transformation by educating and re-educating the hundred million adults who have reached the voting age should be shared by institutions having the common interest in rural transformation. Assisting in the rural transformation should be organizations, labour and industry, churches,

colleges and universities, libraries, voluntary and trade associations, farm organizations and youth organizations and many others. The responsibility and function of schools and other institutions in Eastern Africa, should be starting the cooperative process by which all institutions concerned with adult education will work together to provide educational opportunities or awareness, political awareness and transform the rural areas.

When institutions as indicated above co-operate in the process of rural transformation then it could be assumed that the notion of young people flowing to towns and cities in Africa may be transformed into staying and participating in the rural developments. President Nyerere stated:

"The pursuit of 'white collar' jobs today still leads many young people from the rural areas to flock to towns like Arusha, Iringa, Tanga and Dar es Salaam. They are attracted mainly by the possibility of finding salaried jobs which they believe must be plentiful there and also by the greater varieties of material goods, comforts, and entertainment that are always associated with the life of the well-to-do and the educated".⁷

Perhaps the role of schools in Africa in the rural transformation will have to deal with value judgements. Young adults in Africa still recognize academic achievements as most valuable in life - worth the best sacrifice for life. Manual work, which is plentiful in the rural areas, is despised as work for the illiterates and school dropouts. As long as such attitudes and values continue to be accepted by African nations, it will be hard to accomplish the process of rural transformation.

Mbilinyi, M.J. in her doctorate thesis, "The Decision to Educate in Rural Tanzania (1972)" argues very well that rural transformation, must therefore, involve equal opportunities or access to schools, for both boys and girls which is the major problem in rural Tanzania. In other words, Dr. (Mrs) Mbilinyi sees rural transformation to be of social and economic importance and which requires change for development in rural areas. She added:

"...It is economic and social conditions that require changing first and not peasant attitude".⁸

In another publication, Attitudes, Expectations and Decision to Educate in Rural Tanzania (Mbilinyi, M.J. 1973); the author argues that the main issues in transforming rural areas as depicted in Education for Self-Reliance, include the need to create relevant primary and secondary education, change

teacher-student-parental expectations, combine mental and manual work, foster cooperative modes of work, learning, attitudes of self-confidence and creativity in students (Chapters 1 and 2).⁹

Sifuna, D.N. in his book, Vocational Education in Schools, (1976) argues on the same line as Dr. (Mrs) Mbilinyi; that the main problems in transforming rural areas are the inherited educational system which was stratified on racial and religious lines; This inculcated economic values of education, and 'education' as a means or process of giving away manual (agricultural) work.

These social or economic factors are more than true in East Africa and in Africa. That sincere attempts must be done to transform our rural areas. Some countries using various institutions have pledged to transform the rural areas. Tanzania has done so in a national policy and modifications have been instituted for implementation. Sifuna stated:

"Only a minority of teachers involved the local elders and officials in discussion at the outset and integrated the effort of the school with that of the community".¹⁰

Sifuna continued;

"Total transformation of rural society requires 'total change in society through educational, socio-economic and political agencies and not the school alone'".¹¹

It is not the contention of the author and this paper that rural transformation is the sole function of schools. However, rural transformation is a package of many more programmes in which institutions need to cooperate to achieve the total transformed rural areas in Africa. The Commonwealth Conference Report of 1970 stated:

"The effect of education in these areas is generally to produce changes in attitude. Education itself cannot give rise to the economic activity necessary if the changes in attitude are to bring discernible returns in development terms. If they are to yield the best results, therefore, adult education programmes of this nature should be part of a package of rural development activities designed to change not only the attitudes of rural people but also the material environment in which they live".¹²

WHAT HAVE THE SCHOOLS IN EASTERN AFRICA DONE TO MEET THIS CHALLENGE OF RURAL TRANSFORMATION?

There is not enough documented evidence of the performance of schools or national governments in the context of adult education as a means of rural transformation. However, the determination, and now the Tanzanian national policy of making all primary schools, secondary schools, Colleges of National Education as centres of adult education in the country, have indicated a break through the complex of rural transformation.

During the period of 1971-1975 these institutions were used as adult education centres through Tanzania, and the breakthrough efforts are shown in table 2.

TABLE 2. PERIOD AND ENROLLMENT OF ILLITERATES IN TANZANIA¹³

Year	Enrollment
1971	908,351
1972	1,508,204
1973	2,989,910
1974	3,303,103
1975	5,184,982

As shown in table 2, a total of 5,184,982 were registered and these individuals used primary, secondary and colleges as adult education centres. However, it is true that there are many other centres besides schools, such as CCM offices, health centres, community halls, individuals' houses, under trees as well as factories; as an official of the Ministry of National Education (Directorate of Adult Education) stated in an interview with the author:

"It is true that most of the registered illiterates used the prescribed centres in Tanzania as it is indicated in the 2nd five year development plan. But, since the adult education centres so described in the plan are not found all over the country other sources and any viable facilities were and are still being used in the process of rural transformation. These other centres can be anywhere from ten cell leader's house to a classroom. So the adult education centres in Tanzania have been all those prescribed in the plan and all those agreed upon by the adult learners and their teachers".¹⁴

All the prescribed adult education centres as well as other centres as indicated above contributed to the tentative national adult education examinations as shown in table 3.

TABLE 3. FIGURES OF NEWLY LITERATE ADULTS IN TANZANIA THROUGH VARIOUS ADULT EDUCATION CENTRES.^{15a}

Literate levels in Tanzania	Males	Females	Total
3	548,287	578,906	1,127,193
4	<u>405,457</u>	<u>376,361</u>	<u>781,818</u>
Total of successful literates	953,744	955,267	1,909,011

Therefore, the tentative results indicate the estimated illiteracy rate by 1976 to be:

Males	Females	Total
34%	44%	39%

most of this in the rural areas.^{15b}

The schools' responsibility for rural transformation in the adult education centres in Tanzania varied in nature. The programmes ranged from literacy classes for illiterates to literates' agricultural demonstration classes. These adult education centres were also used in providing other programmes, for example - the centres facilities were used for film shows, cultural performances and shows, public meetings, political education forum and in some areas the centres became dispensaries. These programmes are in scope and nature contributing to the rural transformation.

The Tanzanian expenditures by the government on adult education in Tanzania in the period of 1969-1974 was very small. A problem that is more than true in all African governments. (See table 4) A rural transformation will be hard to be achieved on meagre allocation of funds.

TABLE 4. EXPENDITURES BY THE GOVERNMENT ON ADULT
EDUCATION IN TANZANIA 1969-1974.¹⁶

Year	Estimates	Approved Estimates	Actual Expenditure
1969/70	-	-	2,457,495
1970/71	9,960,500/=	-	7,828,908
1971/72	-	11,071,800/=	11,009,001
1972/73	18,732,700/=	7,258,200/=	-
1973/74	20,185,400/=	-	-

Rural transformation could be achieved through strong driving forces like a ministry of adult education. In Tanzania and in all African countries such driving force is not available. The report of UNESCO educational survey mission to Guyana observed of adult education:

"... that there is no central driving force, no organising or integrating authority to co-ordinate the diffuse activities or the many organisations which are interested in this important sphere of social development. The state aims cannot be realised if more concerted efforts, direction and leadership are not forthcoming. 17

That this failure to provide a co-ordinating structure is often wasteful of the slender resources available, is commented on in another UNESCO report from Nepal:... responsibility for adult education in Nepal extends among several Ministries... Inquiries and observation indicate that this lack of co-ordination, and at times co-operation, has led to ineconomies, unnecessary competition, and perhaps less growth than otherwise could have been expected".¹⁸

In the author's research in Tanzania on the current structure of adult education in Tanzania needing additional personnel such as a Minister of Adult Education; ninety per cent of the response indicated that the Ministry of Adult Education was needed.

Coles writing on creating a separate Ministry of Adult Education stated:

"The continuing education of adults is of such vital importance to developing countries that it is essential it should have equal status with other aspects of the

national life. It is, because the significance of adult education had not always been fully grasped, nor seen in its totality, that it has tended to become a foster child with no definite abode to be farmed out to whoever seems able to accept responsibility for it. This unsatisfactory situation can best be remedied by creating a separate Ministry to take charge of adult education... The removal of adult education from the control of the Ministry of Education would reduce the tension which exists when the two are together. So long as adult education is seen as a direct competitor for funds from school education within the same Ministry, it is almost inevitable, for political reasons, that adult education will get less than its fair share... Further more a separate Ministry would help to create a career structure in adult education and make it easier to attract and keep good people in this branch of education".19

If the needs of all the people especially in the rural areas for adult education are to be met, a vast expansion of adult education in schools auspices is required to enable a complete rural transformation in Africa.

It is the function or responsibility of adult education to inspire both a desire for a change and an understanding that change is possible. If rural transformation is to be achieved by the majority of the rural Africans then poverty, sickness and illiteracy must go. President Nyerere speaking on Adult Education and Development stated:

"Men living in poverty or sickness or under tyranny or exploitation must be enabled to recognize both that the life they lead is miserable, and that they can change it by their own action, either individually or in cooperation with others .20

IMPLICATIONS FOR ADULT EDUCATION IN RURAL TRANSFORMATION

Social and economic changes of modern life from scientific and technological advance require new knowledge, skills, awareness, understandings and attitudes. These changes are so fast and complex that the individual adult needs help in making the necessary adjustment. Adult Education seems to be the answer especially in the rural areas in developing countries. Adult education programmes are one of the modern social inventions and innovations designed to offer this needed rural transformation.

SUMMARY

There is a direct relationship between education and development. It is also said that education is related to the amount and quality of farm production,

as well as very closely related to skilled, technical and managerial occupations. Education and adult education serve as foundations for scientific and professional advancement and very highly correlated with consumer retail sales of magazines, newspaper circulation and with political mobilization and activities. These facts have strong significance implications for adult education in the process of rural transformation.

The major obstacle in rural transformation in Africa is illiteracy, which can be eliminated through effective and continuous evaluation of adult education programmes. Although there has been a gradual decline in the number of illiterates in the world, there are many who are returning into the stagnance of illiteracy. In Tanzania only, by 1976-77, there are well over 4 million persons who are illiterates and there are over 70% illiterates in the African continent. It is those in rural areas who are illiterates and have the greatest incidence of poverty, disease and ignorance that need adult education programmes fast.

Illiteracy reduces national wealth, results in social and cultural lag, weakens national security, encourages exploitation of one person by another, slows technological progress, lowers farm production, slows economic growth, endangers our democracies, breeds suspicion and tensions, and retards international understanding and cooperation.

Therefore, adult illiteracy is a problem of great national concern, urgency and magnitude. It is a real challenge to all persons concerned with adult education in Africa for rural transformation.

To enable national governments in Africa to be seriously and politically involved in the rural transformation the following areas should be researched into, whose data could be offered for implementations.

Reflection on Rural Transformation

1. We must help the general public, as well as many professional educators, to understand and accept the idea of providing education for all who want it, not just for children, youth and "other people".
2. We must help them see that education is a life-long process and that it is a responsibility of the public schools.

SCHOOLS:

3. The schools must point out to every citizen that it is his/her duty

to continue his/her education and the schools must furnish the leadership to help them do so.

4. The schools have the trained personnel to teach and administer adult education and a wide variety of educational programmes; and schools possess the buildings, workshops, libraries, laboratories, assembly halls (auditoriums) and instructional materials necessary for rural transformation.
5. Teaching adults by using school facilities is not only urgently needed but is in the peoples' interest. This would ensure and give us both a greater return on our financial investment and a greater security of our future.

CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT

6. Advisory lay citizens committees can help the professional adult educator learn of developments in the community which have implications for adult education.

ADEQUATE FINANCING - A MUST

7. Schools cannot depend upon fees to provide the complete financial support needed for adequate community programmes of adult education in rural transformation.
8. Local and National governments and other institutions must grant all resources available or potentially available for adult education programmes to achieve rural transformation.
9. The financial resources local, national and international should be channelled through one strong institution - the Ministry of Adult Education.
10. The expenditure of public funds for the education of adults is not only justified, it is essential to any country's national well-being especially for adults as President Nyerere stated:

"We must educate the adults of Tanzania. We cannot wait until our educated children are grown up before we get economic and social development. The aims of the adult education in Tanzania are to provide knowledge and skills that will improve productivity and standards of living; to provide further education for primary - school leavers and eradicate illiteracy; and last but not least, to foster a better understanding of the country's policy of socialism and self-reliance".¹²

PROFESSIONALISM

11. Professional preparation programmes on the graduate level for all school administrators should include course work which will provide a basic organization and administration of adult schools and the methods of adult education.
12. The full-time professional adult educator should have a complete preparation in all the above, plus the dynamics of community organization and human behaviour.
13. Lay leaders can be effective as teachers of adults if the tools and methodology of teaching adults are offered in a proper manner through seminars, workshops or in-service training programmes.

ROLE OF MINISTRY OF ADULT EDUCATION

14. The Ministry of Adult Education should make available to all schools and communities involved in adult education; the kinds of specialized resources required to build and extend adult education as a community service in rural transformation.
15. The Ministry should coordinate all adult education services in the country,
 - involve the citizens in planning and
 - stimulate adult education activities
 - develop curriculum policy
 - encourage and institute pilot projects
 - help develop financial support
 - stimulate the raising of professional standards
 - suggest necessary legislation

*The Ministry of Adult Education would be the strongest force in rural transformation in terms of fighting illiteracy.

REFERENCES

1. Tanzania Second Five-Year Plan for Economic and Social Development. 1st July 1969 - 30th June, 1974, Vol. 1 p. 157.
2. Ibid., p. 157.
3. Bwatwa, Y.M. "Decision Making Machinery of Adult Education in Tanzania". UNESCO Publication, Hamburg 1977.

4. Bwatwa, Y.M. "A Study of a Program of Adult Education For the National Programme Charged with the Reduction of Illiteracy in Tanzania". Unpublished Dissertation, August 1975. Ball State University, Indiana, U.S.A., pp. 41-42.
5. Smart, M.N. "Literacy Via the Press", Africa, an International Business, Economic and Political Monthly Magazine, No. 30 (February, 1974), p. 17.
6. United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, "Out of School Education for Women in African Countries", Convergence, Vol. VI, Nos. 3 and 4 (1973), 10.
7. Nyerere, J.K. Socialism and Rural Development Government Printers, Dar es Salaam, 1967, p. 11.
8. Mbilinyi, M.J. (Mrs) "The Decision to Educate in Rural Tanzania", Unpublished doctorate thesis, University of Dar es Salaam, 1972, p. 702.
9. Mbilinyi, M.J. (Mrs) Attitudes, Expectations and Decision to Educate in Rural Tanzania, University of Dar es Salaam, 1973.
10. Sifuna, D.N. Vocational Education in Schools: A Historical Survey of Kenya and Tanzania, East African Literature Bureau, Nairobi, 1976, p. 153.
11. Op. cit. p. 170.
12. Commonwealth Secretariat; Education in Rural Areas, Report of the Commonwealth Conference on Education in Rural Areas; held at the University of Ghana, Legon, Accra, Ghana 23rd March to 2nd April, 1970, pp. 14-15.
13. Op. cit.
14. Interview with an Official of the Directorate of Adult Education, Ministry of National Education, Dar es Salaam, June 1977.
- 15a. Mbakile, E.P.R. "The National Literacy Campaign: A Summary of Results of the Nation-Wide Literacy Tests, Mwanza, (February 1976), pp. 34-35.
- 15b. Ibid.
16. Source: Annual Report of the Adult Education Directorate, Ministry of National Education, Dar es Salaam, 1971.
17. Germanacos, H. Wander and Congreve, G.S. Report on the UNESCO Educational Survey Mission to British Guyana (UNESCO, 1963), p. 71.
18. Wood, H.B. and Knall, B., Educational Planning in Nepal and Its Economic Implications (UNESCO, 1962), p. 63.
19. Coles, E.T. Adult Education in Developing Nations (London: Pergamon Press, 1969), pp. 76-77.
20. Op. cit.