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# Youth Unemployment: An Analysis of the Problem and Possible Solutions in Tanzania, Kenya, and Botswana

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YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT:

AN ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEM AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

IN TANZANIA, KENYA, AND BOTSWANA

A Master's Thesis Completed by

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## INTRODUCTION

In the summer of 1988 I was involved in two studies that gave me a great deal of exposure to the problem of youth unemployment in Tanzania. That exposure resulted in my current interest in exploring the extent of the problem in other African countries, the various strategies that have been used to address the problem, and their impact or lack of impact, on youth unemployment.

In this paper I will give both a description and my analysis of the problem of youth unemployment as it effects three African countries--Tanzania, Botswana and Kenya. I will also attempt to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of some strategies used to fight the problem in those countries. I will then give my personal views on strategies that I consider to have the most potential in combating the problem.

The three countries--Tanzania, Kenya, and Botswana--have been chosen for three reasons:

- 1.) Tanzania has been used because of my knowledge of the problem there as a native and as a development worker. In addition, the two studies I mentioned earlier allowed me to make personal observations and obtain first hand information on the problem.

- 2.) Botswana and Kenya were chosen because of the availability of the relevant information on those countries through the five college libraries, and,

- 3.) Most strategies adopted to fight youth unemployment in these countries are either identical or very similar.

It is my hope that my analysis of the problem is accurate enough, and the solutions suggested realistic enough to be of practical value to the three countries analyzed in this paper--and hopefully beyond the three countries to other Third World countries with similar conditions. However, information used in this paper is more heavily drawn from the Tanzanian situation than from Kenya and Botswana. This is because I knew more about the Tanzanian situation than the other two countries through personal experience. There is also more published literature on the Tanzanian situation primarily due to the international interest on Tanzania's post-independence political and educational "experiments." The bias is also due to the fact that when I go back to Tanzania I hope to work in the field of youth development, and I wanted this paper to be a practical product that I can use in my work. The analysis of situations in Kenya and Botswana is therefore used in this paper to provide a clearer understanding of the Tanzanian situation and will, therefore, not be as detailed.

## METHODOLOGY

This paper draws a lot of data from the two studies that I conducted in Tanzania during the summer of 1988. I will therefore give a brief description of the studies.

1.) The first study was commissioned by OXFAM America and had the following terms of reference:

- i.) To provide OXFAM AMERICA with an analysis of the socio-political-economic analysis of Tanzania.
- ii.) To review the effectiveness of OXFAM America's work in Tanzania, and,
- iii.) To provide OXFAM America with suggestions on strategy and tactics for doing development work in Tanzania based on the country analysis and OXFAM America's philosophy of empowerment.

2.) The second study was commissioned by Peace Corps Washington and had the following terms of reference:

- i.) To study Youth Employment/Vocational Training in Tanzania and provide a demographic profile of youth, particularly in rural areas.
- ii.) To examine the extent to which the needs of both youth and the labor market are being met by current and planned efforts in Vocational Education.

iii.) To produce practical recommendations to be used by Peace Corps Tanzania in determining whether or not Peace Corps should, and has the capacity to, contribute towards various youth employment programs.

The Peace Corps Youth Employment study yielded information that is more directly relevant to the topic discussed in this paper. During that study, information and data was collected through the following means:

- a.) Literature review. This involved materials made available by the Ministry of Community Development, Culture, Youth and Sports (CDCYS). It also involved literature searches at the Tanzania National Library and the International Labor Organization (ILO) Resource Center in Dar-es-Salaam.
- b.) Interviews with officials from the Ministry of CDCYS--mainly the Ministry's Principal Secretary and the Director of Youth.
- c.) Interviews with Officials from the Ministry of Labor and Manpower--the Director of the National Vocational Training Colleges and an ILO employment creation expert.
- d.) Interviews with government Youth Development Officers in selected regions and districts that I visited for the study.
- e.) Interviews with teachers and students of various primary and secondary schools.

f.) Interviews with Peace Corps Volunteers and staff.

g.) Interviews with the leaders and members of youth groups in selected sites. Information on the functioning and activities of the groups was obtained through touring the groups' work and residential sites, and taking part in some of their activities.

None of the interviews were structured. They were conducted in the form of open dialogue aimed at facilitating the exchange of ideas, views, and opinions on all issues related to youth development and employment and the roles that the interviewees played or thought they should play.

At the district and youth groups level, however, I asked some specific questions (still informally and in no specific order) for the purpose of gathering the following specific information and data:

- Profile of youth activities and support structures in the districts.
- History of youth groups or programs--when and how they were formed and important changes they experienced.
- Nature of membership--ages, gender, and level of education.
- Activities of the groups or programs.
- Analysis of progress or lack of it since inception.
- Major problems and plans to solve them.
- Projects ownership and leadership.
- Organizational structures and relationship with local and village governments.



-Future plans and expectations.

-Contact with donor agencies and opinions on how such agencies and government institutions are, or are not, supporting the youth.

On the other hand, the Oxfam America Study offered me an excellent opportunity to examine the field of development work in Tanzania, both at a macro level where numerous NGOs--both local and foreign--are involved, and at a micro level where some NGOs support projects in villages and urban areas. Inevitably, such development work affects youth development. A great deal of information gathered during this study is therefore also very relevant to the theme of this paper. The information for the Oxfam Study was gathered in the same manner as described above in the Peace Corps Study--literature reviews and informal interviews with officials (Government and NGO) and the subjects of development programs in rural and urban areas.

This paper utilizes some information from the two studies and some from a literature review encompassing both general information on youth unemployment and specific information on the three countries of Kenya, Botswana and Tanzania.

## BACKGROUND ON YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT:

According to the International Labor Organization, 45% of the population in Africa is under 15 years of age and needs care. Of the working population, more than 45% are affected by unemployment and under-employment. According to projections made by the UN Economic Commission for Africa, only half of the people joining the work force between now and the year 2000 will find employment. Most of those new entrants into the work force are youth who either have just completed primary school, or have no education at all. (Crowder 1984:16)

### Tanzania:

Youth between the ages of 15 and 29 make up 25% of Tanzania's population of 24 million, and 42% of the 12 million labor force. Like the general public, the majority of youth (80%) reside in the rural areas and are engaged primarily in agricultural production. The trend, however, is changing very quickly. The current annual rate of growth of urban population, estimated to be 8.3% (national population growth rate is 2.8%), has caused the decline of the rural population from 94.3% in 1967 to the current 80%, with the migrant population composed primarily of the youth sector. (Wangwe 1988).

Each year 0.7 million youth complete their compulsory 7 year primary education. Only 4% of them get the opportunity to go on to secondary school. The rest enter the labor market aspiring for wage employment that would guarantee an improved standard of living. However, the wage

employment sector can currently support only 7% of the total labor force. Most significantly, this sector does not hold much promise for the youth who are disadvantaged by their lack of competitive skills and late entry into the sector. (ILO 1986, Wangwe 1988).

Self employment within either the agricultural or informal sectors would therefore be the logical alternative to the unemployed youth. However, this path has many obstacles for them because here too they are late entrants who lack skills, experience, tools and capital. In sum, therefore, they lack the opportunity to develop their self-employment potential to a level that matches their aspirations for an "improved" standard of living.

**Kenya:**

Kenya, with a population of 22 million, has a similar situation to Tanzania, with some minor variations. Kenya's population growth, estimated to be 4.1% per year, is among the highest in the world. In the decade between 1969-79, Kenya's urban population grew by more than 60%. Currently 14% of Kenya's population is estimated to be living in urban centers. (Country Profile: Kenya 1988:5).

Unlike Tanzania, Kenya does not have a universal primary education policy. Still, more than 0.5 million youth complete their primary education each year. Kenya's secondary school system is better developed than that of Tanzania and has the capacity to enroll 26% of the primary school leavers. (Court 1979, Hinzen 1982, Country Profile: Kenya 1988).

Kenya's productive work force is estimated to be 7.2 million, 18% of whom are engaged as wage employees (compared to Tanzania's 7%). Fifty

percent of wage employment is provided by Government or Government-controlled institutions. It is estimated that Kenya's workforce will grow to reach 14 million by the end of this century. Fifty percent of that force will be made up of youth between 15 and 19 currently completing their primary and secondary education, as well as those who will never receive schooling. Most of the youth aspire for wage employment in the modern sector. But while the number of the unemployed will have doubled by the end of the century, the wage employment sector is expected to expand by only 30% (Country Profile: Kenya 1988:13.)

Just as is the case in Tanzania, youth who choose to pursue self-employment opportunities in the informal sector are faced with barriers created by poor of lack of skills, lack of patronage, inexperience as late entrants into the sector, lack of capital and credit facilities and a harsh economic environment that particularly affects the very poor most of whom live in the rural areas. Landlessness is another problem that affects the poor in Kenya, especially the youth. A large part of northern Kenya is semi-arid. The fertile land in Eastern and Southern Kenya was, during the colonial days, carved into large plantations which were given to European settlers. After independence most of the plantations were bought by rich Kenyans. Therefore, there is very little fertile land left to be divided among the rest of the population. The population growth rate of 4.1% means that more than 900,000 children, mostly landless, are added to the Kenyan society each year.

## Botswana:

Botswana is one of the least densely populated countries in the world with only 1.6 people per square kilometer. Botswana has a small population of about 1.2 million people in a land that is more than 220,000 square miles. The World Bank has rated Botswana as the best economic performer in Africa during the 70's and 80's. Its Gross National Product in 1987 was US\$1,228 per head, compared to Kenya's \$318, and Tanzania's US\$204. (Picard 1987, Country Profile: Botswana 1988).

Despite its economic and demographic advantages, Botswana is faced with an unemployment problem of similar proportions to that of Kenya and Tanzania. A look beyond the surface data reveals that Botswana's relatively small population gives some false impressions for the following reasons. First, Botswana's population growth, estimated at 4% a year, is among the world's highest, like that of Kenya. The population is expected to triple just after the turn of the century. Also, the size of the country is misleading. A large part of the country is arid, which has resulted into an extremely skewed population distribution. A small eighty mile wide eastern strip contains over 80% of the total population. (Picard 1987).

Twenty percent of Botswana's population lives in urban centers. More than fifty percent of the population is fifteen years or under. Formal employment provides opportunities for only 20% of the population aged 15 or over. While the formal sector is currently able to create 7,500 new jobs each year, it is estimated that youth, three times that number, most of them primary school leavers, join the market each year. The informal sector takes an additional 5000.

The Government has adopted some strategies for expanding available opportunities in the rural informal sector but these have not been able to solve the unemployment problem. As a result, most of the unemployed, who are mostly youth, have gravitated towards towns hoping to find better employment opportunities. In the past decade, most urban centers have experience annual population growth rates exceeding 12%. Some older school leavers join another sizeable group of rural migrants who go to South Africa to work in the mines.

## POLITICAL-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND:

At the time of their independence, Kenya, Botswana, and Tanzania inherited patterns of economic growth which had no reference to equity criteria. Economic disparities were exacerbated by ethnic and cultural factors which bred a pattern of inequality between different regions, between men and women, and between urban and rural areas.

In making economic policies to improve living standards in the countries, popular aspirations and demands made it necessary for the governments to make commitments to bring about egalitarian redistribution. Kenya and Tanzania opted for different interpretations of equality and hence the means necessary to redress the problem. Tanzania's new political ideology argued that inequalities bring alienation of the masses. Minimization of inequalities and the development of mass consciousness were seen to be necessary prerequisites to productive activity and economic growth. By contrast, Kenya's ideology assumes that inequalities are an inevitable and necessary accompaniment to rapid economic growth. Kenya's approach to equality is based on the creation of equal opportunities so that individuals can compete equally for rewards. Unlike the Tanzanian approach, equitable distribution of rewards is not a stated objective.

Following a growth model, Botswana, at independence, declared a policy called "Mining for Rural Development." This policy involved a conscious decision to postpone rural development activities so that the government could build-up an internal source of income by developing the mining

industry. It was hoped that in time the Government would use revenues from the mining industry to develop the rest of the country. Beyond that strategy, the government encouraged self-help efforts in the rural areas and counted on foreign donors to fund project of their choosing.



## EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

### Status of NFE Programs:

Political and government leaders in many Third World countries have over the past three decades shown great support and admiration for nonformal education (NFE) programs by their public statements. The programs have been praised for offering the possibility to governments to reach and provide "appropriate" education for all their citizens and thus for making the concept of "education as a human right" as reality. The education is termed "appropriate" because it is supposed to be relevant to the individual's environment, allowing for self-development and immediate wage employment or self-employment within the local community.

Reality, however, shows that the same officials consider NFE programs to be of lesser importance in society than formal education. The governments they lead have clearly indicated by their actions the view that proper education is the domain of formal education systems, with NFE providing a fall back system. NFE is good enough for the masses that the governments cannot afford to educate "properly" through the formal system. The masses do not include the officials' children.

Such attitudes have been partly responsible for creating inconsistencies and contradictions between the rhetoric and the practice in education delivery. In the three countries studied in this paper, there is evidence that such contradictions have been responsible for rendering most NFE programs ineffectual through improper or incomplete implementation of the programs.

## Education Policies in Botswana, Tanzania, and Kenya:

The stated objectives of educational policies of Botswana, Tanzania, and Kenya exhibit more similarities than differences despite the differing ideological choices these countries have made in their political systems.

In Botswana, the objectives of education as outlined by the National Commission on Education are:

- 1.) To increase educational opportunities and reduce inequalities in educational opportunities.
- 2.) To contribute to the balanced economic development of Botswana-- satisfy all manpower needs, especially in rural development and employment generation.
- 3.) To promote personal qualities--respect for national ideals, self-reliance, concern for others and individual talents.
- 4.) To extend the role of schools and colleges in the local community and vice-versa.

Furthermore,

The Government of Botswana attaches highest priority within education to the primary education sector. First in the interest of equality of opportunity and of developing the potential of all children...For half of the children, completing standard VII primary education will be terminal. [The curriculum must therefore] emphasize the acquisition of basic knowledge and skills needed in a rapidly changing society and economy. (Parker, 1982:131).

The Tanzanian Education system is an extension of the country's political system. Tanzania's political direction was radically re-oriented in 1967 by the Arusha Declaration, and the TANU Mwongozo guidelines, two political manifestos which sought to establish Tanzania firmly on the path to socialism and self-reliance. The educational planners, on the other hand, received their guidelines in 1969 with the publication of Julius Nyerere's Education for Self-Reliance, a document that has been treated as the blueprint for educational planning. It calls for imaginative development, experimentation and expansion in education.

Tanzania's educational reforms have henceforth had the stated objective of reducing social inequality by broadening the base of education provision and removing ascriptive barriers to access. This has led to Universal Primary Education. The political content of the curriculum has been increased to promote in the students political and social consciousness, respect for all human, manual work and self-reliance. Another goal has been to provide functional education so that recipients can achieve practical skills or knowledge that help them develop as individuals and thereby become employable and productive members of society. Towards this end, education programs were expected to be participatory, utilizing relevant nonformal education methodologies when appropriate. Education for self-reliance also aimed at making the country self-reliance in manpower needs within twenty years of independence.

The educational policies of Kenya, like those of Tanzania and Botswana, state the objectives of equitable distribution of schools, expansion of the

school system to benefit more Kenyan children, providing a relaxant educational content and the satisfaction of manpower needs.

In the next section, I will discuss how the policies spelled out in those countries have not always been reflected in their current methods of providing education. The gap between the rhetoric of policy and actual practice has meant that some problems the should have been addressed by the education systems have received insufficient or no attention. The extent of the problem of youth unemployment in all three countries clearly indicates that the objective of providing education that offers appropriate skills that school leavers can use to obtain wage or self-employment has not been achieved.

#### Primary Education Reforms in Botswana and Kenya:

Although educational policy makers in all three countries have engaged in tremendous amounts of dialogue on the need for educational reform to make their educational systems more relevant to the post-independence realities, the actual implementation of reforms has not been as extensive. Of the three countries, Tanzania made the most extensive attempts at implementing reforms which affected all levels of education from primary to secondary education and adult literacy campaigns.

In Kenya and Botswana, educational reforms did not include primary education. Although attempts have been made to introduce agriculture as a

subject, most schools have not taken the subject seriously. As such, primary education still maintains the major function of preparing students for entry into secondary schools. Fifty percent of those who complete primary school in Botswana make it to secondary school. In Kenya, the percentage is 26, as compared to Tanzania's 4%. In Botswana the policy objectives I outlined earlier declare the need for primary education curriculum to "emphasize the acquisition of basic knowledge and skills needed in a rapidly changing society and economy." However, most writers agree that attempts to introduce and maintain curricula that would make this objective a reality have been haphazard, involving only a few schools and not enough to affect an overall reform process. (Van Rosenberg, 1984, Parker, 1982.) The situation is very similar in Kenya where no nationwide efforts have been made to reform primary school education despite policy rhetoric calling for reforms which would make education offered at all levels more relevant to Kenyan development needs and the needs of the students. (Ghai, 1979.)

In both countries, innovative reform efforts have been attempted at the post primary education level, with varying degrees of success and obstacles. Such efforts which include the Youth Brigades movement in Botswana and the Village Polytechnics in Kenya have evolved into separate skills-oriented educational systems which have struggled to survive alongside the better-funded formal schools which are still affiliated to the British Cambridge University Education System. We shall examine these parallel systems, which Court (1979) calls "shadow systems," in the next section. First let us look at the situation in Tanzania's primary schools.

### Tanzania: Education for Self-Reliance in Primary School:

Tanzania's policy of "Education for Self-Reliance" (ESR) aims at making all levels of education terminal. ESR at the primary school level is expected to provide youth with relevant skills required to be gainfully engaged in production within their environments, and thus contribute to the rapid development of their communities. For the majority of primary school leavers, the relevant skills have to include agricultural production. When it was introduced twenty years ago, ESR was seen as a fore planning strategy that would safeguard Tanzania against the twin problems of unemployment/underemployment and rural to urban migration. But with the deterioration of the economy over the past two decades, the problem has gotten worse. Twenty years of ESR which have also included the development of elaborate post-primary technical and vocational training systems have shown that Tanzania needs to find new strategies or improve on existing strategies for combating youth unemployment and rural exodus.

Although some genuine efforts have been taken to make the contents of subjects taught in classrooms as relevant to Tanzanian conditions as possible, the delivery methodologies remain as traditional as ever. Classroom rote learning for passing examinations within very authoritarian classrooms remains the principal methodology preferred by teachers. Indeed manual work in school farms is a favorite means of punishing misbehaving students. This is a big contradiction since the concept of Education for Self-Reliance calls for instilling values in students to love manual labor so that they are encouraged to go back to their rural villages to become self-employed farmers practicing efficient farming methods learned in school.

A study conducted by Ruth Besha, a Tanzanian educationist, in Rufiji district showed that the policy of education for self reliance achieved little success in primary school, beyond providing a relatively cheap avenue for mass education through Universal Primary education (UPE.) The UPE declaration by the politicians forced the educational planners to find innovative ways of utilizing the same scarce resources to provide formal education to all school age children. This meant having double shifts in schools, crash programs for teacher training, and utilization of locally available teaching aids. The results have been evaluated by many educationists to be a mediocre seven years of education offered by mediocre teachers who could not put into practice any of the envisaged NFE teaching methodologies because their classes were too big and they themselves were poorly trained.

Besha further observes that the attempt to implement education for self-reliance has contributed little to developing among students a collective sense of social obligation, attachment to cooperative forms of action or even political consciousness and commitment, which are the bases of Tanzania's intended response to the problem of inequality. The two main pillars of this effort are agricultural work and political education. The study further shows that:

...school agricultural work is viewed by students mainly as a way of making money and reducing the cost to the government, of education--which is certainly a part, albeit a subsidiary one of the intention--and by parents as a waste of time. Few new skills are imparted by teachers untrained in agricultural matters and there is little connection between these activities and the future capacity of students for contributing to new modes of production integrated into their rural setting. (Court 1979:45).

The failure of ESR to provide primary school leavers with the skills and attitudes to be productive farmers--a cornerstone of ESR--means that ESR at this level has failed in one of its most basic purposes.

Before the mid-seventies the Tanzanian Government took the stand that unemployment was not a problem in the country, since there was abundant land available to any citizen who was willing to work on the land. Rural development policies were and still are based on the concept of self-reliance, encouraging and expecting all individuals to engage in communal or individual agricultural production. As a nationwide phenomenon, this strategy became less and less realistic as the returns from agricultural work became less and less attractive because of a combination of reasons including: low yields per acreage due to lack of timely availability of farm inputs and implements promised by the government, low prices offered by government for farm products, and lack of irrigation technology which leaves the farmers at the mercy of unreliable weather.

While such conditions affect and discourage most farmers, they have a particularly strong impact on youths' attitudes towards rural life. During their seven years of primary education, the youth's awareness of rural poverty and a harsh economic environment is raised. A desire to change that environment is cultivated, and ESR preaches better agricultural skills and production as the ultimate solution. However, the schools provide inadequate skills, and the environment does not allow for the better farming practices.

Against this environment which is not conducive to agricultural production, the youth are taught in school that one of the reasons their parents' agricultural output is low is their failure to use appropriate



farming systems which involve the use of fertilizers, pesticides, and farm implements among other requirements. All of these items require some capital investment which the youth do not have. For most of them, therefore, engaging in agriculture would also mean accepting the poor economic conditions they will be doomed to experience as a result of inevitable low production due to the traditional farming methods they will be forced to practice. As mentioned earlier, a large percentage of the youth, reject this scenario and migrate to the towns in search of an elusive better life.

To be fair to the educational planners, the failures of ESR at the primary school level described above must be looked at in the context of an overall national plan that went beyond primary education. Since independence, Tanzania has spent an average of 25% of its national budget on education. Fifty percent of this has been spent on primary education, 25% on secondary education, 15% on higher education and 10% on adult education. A commitment was made here to make basic education as accessible as possible to every citizen, a goal that has almost been achieved. More than 95% of school-aged children are today enrolled in schools. Also, Tanzania launched the first phase of a National Literacy Campaign in 1971 when the illiteracy rate was estimated to be 67%. Today the rate is less than 10%, a very commendable achievement even if the quality of the education provided has been questioned.

Given the meager resources at her disposal, Tanzania had to make a decision between consolidating existing facilities to make them better or expanding them to reach more students. The policy-makers and politicians hoped to do both. In reality, while the expansion goal was reached, the

attempts at consolidation were less than effective mainly because the meager resources made the two goals almost mutually exclusive. The following problems illustrate this point. The curriculum inherited from the colonial days was thrown out because of the realization that it encouraged elitist white collar employee attitudes, which contradicted the ideals of a new nation trying to cultivate an egalitarian society based on self-reliance endeavors (mostly agriculture in the rural areas.) But teaching skills and cultivating attitudes that would support such ideals requires sufficient well-trained teachers who can encourage creative thinking, low student-teacher ratios to allow for hands on experiential learning, out of class preparation by teachers and the community to determine local needs within the environment, sufficient teaching supplies and innovative teaching aids. In most of the schools I visited in Tanzania, most of the above were lacking. The situation is characterized by classrooms that have up to 100 students in some cases, within schools that were designed to accommodate less than half the students they have today. Teacher training has not kept up with student enrollment. Some schools have had to develop systems whereby better students are utilized to teach their peers. In most schools basic teaching materials like exercise books, textbooks, and chalk are in short supply.

With the massive increase of the primary school leavers which after the introduction of UPE averaged 0.7 million each year, the Government finally acknowledged that there was an unemployment problem in the country. The youth were not behaving themselves as ESR had hoped they would! During the seventies the Government established and expanded on several post primary skills training institutions which we shall examine in the next section.

## Post-Primary Vocational Training

### Kenya:

In Kenya the Village Polytechnics (VPTs) were established through community self-help initiatives. Seeing the potential for a program that would reduce the pressure on the Government in its secondary school expansion program, the Government started promoting the polytechnics and encouraging their establishment nationwide. Cash grants were given to help run them. But at the same time there existed community-run formal secondary schools, and evidence shows that the Government spent more money supporting these schools which were fewer in number and benefited fewer students than the Village Polytechnics. At the same time, VPTs were being hailed by the Government as being innovative, low-cost training centers with the potential of benefiting most rural Kenyan youth because they aimed at:

...giving primary school leavers [locally relevant] skills, understanding and values which will make them able to look for money-making opportunities where they live and to contribute to rural development by building up the economic strength of their own community. (Court and Ghai, p.222.).

Apart from the rhetoric, it is obvious that the government did not place a great value on the VPTs as they existed then. But the rhetoric got numerous donor agencies interested, which has in turn forced the Government to re-evaluate its attitude.

The Government's response was a major effort to regularize and "upgrade the standard" of some VPT's using foreign aid money and personnel. The upgrading involved building expensive workshops and providing materials not

locally available. VPTs that reached this level were more acceptable to the Government, which in turn committed itself to maintaining them.

The proliferation of VPTs built through self-help efforts in Kenya illustrates that communities were at one time excited by the new innovative approach to education and bought into the promise that it brought-- provision of relevant skills that would make the youth employable or self-employed in rural areas. The excitement died when this did not become a reality and their children remained unemployed because the planning of the VPTs neglected to take into consideration other inputs that have to be in place before self-employment can become a reality.

The government, which could have used its resources and educational planners to strengthen VPTs and make them achieve their goal, did not do enough. Overall, the scenario is one where the Government propagates the value of an NFE program which has the potential to affect and benefit the 74% of primary school leavers who cannot go to secondary school, while in reality it spends less than 2% of its education budget on all non-formal education programs including VPTs (Court and Ghai, 1974.).

Botswana:

Different approaches have been utilized in Botswana to make the education provided through the formal schools more relevant. Takuobang observes that:

The introduction of agriculture as a subject in the schools and teacher training institutions has provided yet one more step in the right direction. An early introduction of young children to agriculture and their environment will create the correct attitude in the future farmers of this

country. It is important that future generations should not aspire for white collar jobs alone but be aware that farming can also be an occupation that can bring a rewarding livelihood. (Crowder 1984:143).

Takuobang's enthusiasm is not reflected in the way most primary and secondary schools have approached the teaching of the subject which in secondary schools is an elective limited mostly to theoretical teaching. (Lipton 1978:82).

Another innovation hailed by Takuobang is the 4B youth movement which was a Young Farmers Club started in 1968 on the model of the American 4H movement. The 4Bs stand for Boitshwaro (good behavior), Boikanyo (trustworthiness), Bonatla (industriousness), and Botswana. The movement has a membership of more than 20,000 throughout the country, mostly school children. Again there is no evidence that this social movement has had any impact in transferring skills and attitudes to make the youth opt for agricultural work after their schooling. One program, however, that did make an impact while it lasted was the Youth Brigade Movement which was started in the early 60's and died in the early 80's.

The origin of the Youth Brigade movement can be traced to 1963, three years before Botswana's independence when its founder Patrick Van Rensburg launched a new self-reliance secondary school called the Swaneng Hill school. Van Rensburg (1984:13) mentions that the only objective he had as a founder of the school was to create "a model of a system of secondary education for all--a system accessible to everyone and offering an appropriate education that would enable everyone to be productive." Most of the school was built by the students who also cooked for themselves.

The first Brigade was launched two years later to offer out-of-school youth training in building, provided they would work in construction during training to earn money which would defray the costs of the training. The program involved four days a week in production and a day in theory of building, English, mathematics and development studies. Within a few years, several Brigades were established throughout the country specializing in a variety of activities including leatherwork, brickmaking, pottery, brewing, building, carpentry, tie-dye, and gardening.

In 1969, the Government established a National Brigades Coordinating Committee (NBCC). Brigades were then receiving support from foreign agencies and from the Government and were being run by independent Boards of Trustees with representation from government and local government, from community organizations, parents and managers. In the mid-seventies, lower level employees and trainees were added to the boards. The Brigades academic and technical courses involved a bridging course for the primary school leavers (12-16 year olds), than a two to three year course with release from work for academic and trade theory lessons one day a week. Some students received advanced courses which involved six months of intensive study alternated with six months of applying the lessons over two years.

In the seventies, the Brigades' work was being hailed all over the country. The Brigades were building for themselves and the public and winning tenders to build for government and local government. They were making furniture for schools on contract, wiring houses for electricity, repairing vehicles and engines for boreholes, printing stationary,

designing and producing clothing and leather goods. They were also producing poultry, beef, and other animal and agricultural products.

In 1978, this production in just the Serowe brigades was valued at roughly US\$1 million, which was able to cover 75% of the Brigade costs including materials, production costs, education, training and administration. Ten percent of the costs were covered through government subsidies of teaching and training and food grants. Grants from donor and volunteer agencies covered another 7% of the costs leaving a shortfall of seven and a half percent. (Van Rensberg, 19884). These were impressive achievements by any standards.

It is important to notice that although the Government was praising the Brigades for their work which was having a big impact on rural youth, their support of the movement was limited to establishing and supporting large central administration hierarchical structures. The Government was providing the Brigades with an annual subsidy of Pula 250 per trainee, as compared to Pula 1500 per secondary school student and Pula 3,500 per trade school trainee. Furthermore, despite the rhetoric that praised Brigades for pursuing commendable alternative solutions to the problem of primary school leavers engagement, the government refused to recognize and support activities in the Brigades that did not lead directly to paid employment. These included activities in textiles, training, agriculture and the bridging course that was meant to give the very young primary school leaver time to grow and get ready for hard work in the Brigades.

The Brigades collapsed in 1983, and critics have blamed the Government for allowing them to collapse by not supporting them. (Beraho-Beri 1983, Crowder 1984). For some bureaucrats the concept of an entity where workers

and trainees had as much say in decision making as the managers and teachers was fertile ground for breeding communism. (This in a land where 5% of the population owns 50% of the wealth.) But perhaps the main reason for inaction was the fact that Botswana's revenues from mineral exploitation were increasing at a phenomenal rate and there was a growing belief that the country could solve its social problems within the framework of the formal system. Massive funds were pumped into formal schooling and the Ministry seemed to take the view that alternatives like Brigades were unnecessary and Botswana no longer needed them to cope with the school leaver problem. As we saw earlier, the school leaver problem is still very much a big problem in Botswana today.

#### Tanzania:

In Tanzania, where only 4% of the 0.7 million youth who complete primary schools each year get a chance to go on to secondary school several systems of post-primary skills training exist. They include:

a.) Post Primary Technical Centers (329 exist in the country) run by the Ministry of Education.

b.) National Vocational Schools run by the Ministry of Labor and manpower development (each of the 32 districts has one.)

c.) Folk Development Colleges run by the Ministry of Education. Each district has one.



- d.) Training for Rural Development Colleges and Community Development Colleges--10 colleges run by the Department of Community Development.
- e.) Youth Economic Groups Program run by the Department of Youth.
- f.) Youth Camps for Production and Training--4 camps run by the Youth Wing of CCM, the ruling Party.
- g.) Jobs and skills training program by ILO.
- h.) Nguvukazi Program by the Ministry of Labor and Manpower.
- i.) National Service Camps, providing military, academic, and skills training.

These institutions are in addition to the formal training institutions-- Technical Secondary Schools, Technical Colleges for technicians, and para-professional training institutions covering a variety of skills including agriculture, livestock, commerce, health, etc....We shall see in the next section that these institutions have contributed very little to solving the problem of youth unemployment.

## THE FAILURE OF POLICY OBJECTIVES AND EDUCATIONAL REFORMS:

The magnitude of youth unemployment today in the countries we looked at clearly indicates that the strategies adopted to handle the problem are not working. It is also true that governments in these countries have finally come to acknowledge the existence of the problem even though workable solutions have continued to be elusive.

There are many reasons why the chosen strategies did not provide the solutions which were expected of them. It is my opinion that the strategies failed not because they were totally wrong but mainly because of weak, improper, or incomplete implementation. In the next section of this paper, I will examine some of the contributing factors to the failures and discuss my own view on how the situation can be improved.

The failure of the strategies can be attributed to the following:

- 1.) Lack of skills and resources to implement and manage the various programs.
- 2.) Lack of commitment on the part of some bureaucrats entrusted with the task of implementation.
- 3.) Improper interpretation of policies and hence improper implementation by some overzealous bureaucrats,
- 4.) Rejection of the policies by the general society because of observable contradictions exemplified by the lack of equity in

reward distribution systems that tend to favor the privileged few who go through the formal schools and skills training institutions.

5.) Unrealistic political goals by governments, aiming to provide quick cheap solutions to the big problem without providing even the minimum necessary resources.

6.) Class contradictions that work to categorize certain programs as being inferior and related to the underprivileged members of society.

7.) The false but popular belief by policy makers that lack of proper education and the right skills is the main obstacle between youth and wage unemployment or self-employment.

These issues will be discussed in my proposal for a three dimensional approach to attacking youth unemployment in the next section. The views presented in this discussion are focused on finding general comprehensive solutions based on an analysis of the specific problems observed.

### THREE STAGES OF THE PROPOSED SOLUTION:

#### 1.) Primary School Reforms: Their Necessity and How to Make them

##### Effective:

Tanzania made the right move to introduce educational reforms beginning at the primary level. Given the fact that the majority of children will never go beyond primary schooling, Education for Self-Reliance offered a unique opportunity to make that phase of learning as meaningful and useful as possible to the individual and to society. Tanzania failed to achieve its goal because of improper implementation of ESR. Nevertheless, Tanzania and indeed other countries that never attempted primary education reforms today have an opportunity to learn from the failures and plan primary school education that is as relevant and meaningful as ESR intended it to be.

For ESR to work we need to start with the right teachers. Such teachers should be trained in NFE methodologies that encourage problem solving learning. This requires a significant shift from the current preferred rote learning method for passing examinations meant to select candidates for the next level of schooling. Meaningful and relevant education has to have a healthy balance between general academic learning and practical hands on learning of one or two specific skills. The teachers need to be trained in the making and production of cheap teaching aids using materials available in the environment.

For practical hands on NFE instruction to happen the ratio of teacher to students needs to be smaller so that the teacher has a chance to pay attention to each student. The current situation in Tanzania where one classroom can have up to 100 students makes rote learning the most logical choice.

One major criticism of the Tanzania's education system is the relation between students and teachers which is characterized by authoritarianism on the part of teachers (Court 1979). The emphasis on traditional discipline and respect for the teacher has made most teachers believe that they are all-knowing beings who deserve total obedience from their students. Such attitudes have worked to suppress the creative initiatives in students who become afraid to venture into areas which have not been approved by the teacher. Such attitudes cannot develop the problem solving abilities of students who will be expected to go into their communities and find solutions to problems existing within their environments.

Given the failure of experimental school farms which, as we saw before, have been used by some teachers to punish students, it would make more sense to provide a linkage between the school and the community by letting students practice the skills they learn in school on their own family farms. The teachers who must have sufficient agricultural training if they are to be credible agricultural instructors can make periodic inspection of the students' work, thus providing extension services to the community in general.

As Van Rensberg and colleagues found out when recruiting students for the Brigades, age plays an important role in determining what the student does after completing primary school. In their case they were forced to

introduce an intermediate preparatory training program for students who completed primary school at age 13. They found that students had to be above 15 years of age to have the right combination of mental and manual capacity required to be involved in a study-production program. Raising the school-going age is therefore advisable. For governments that can afford it, however, extending primary school years from the current 7 to 8 years to 10 to 11 years would provide a better educational base for the students. Such a system is currently being used in the State of Zanzibar, Tanzania. Botswana is currently making preparations to implement a similar system as well.

Finally, politicians need to realize that statistics that show impressive school attendance and literacy rates are meaningless unless they are supported by programs that allow the school graduates to utilize their newly acquired knowledge and skills in a productive way. Most governments are already spending a large proportion of their national resources on education but that gross amount is still very little compared to the task at hand. It would make sense, therefore, for those governments to consolidate the gains they have made rather than continue expansion in an effort to improve the statistical outlook. For some countries like Tanzania, the solution may mean taking bold moves to cut down the number and size of schools in order to improve the quality of the remaining ones!

## 2. Post Primary Skills Training:

As we have seen, the largest pool of unemployed is composed of primary school leavers. In Tanzania, 0.7 million primary school leavers join the labor market each year. In Kenya, the number is 0.5 million, while in

Botswana it is 21,000. This provides the most logical starting point for any program that is designed to address the problem of youth unemployment. In all three countries such programs have been categorized as "Adult Nonformal Education Programs." They have been hailed in all three countries and beyond as being the appropriate vehicles for providing knowledge and skills appropriate to the local environments. As we saw earlier, however, the praise is not accompanied by proportional support from the governments. During the seventies, the Government of Botswana spent an average of Pula 3,500 yearly for each technical college trainee, but spent a mere 7% of that amount on the Brigades trainees. Kenya, on the other hand, spent a tiny 2% of the total education budget on all its NFE programs. In Tanzania the percentage was much better, at 10%. But this amount which has the potential to benefit 90% of the primary school leavers must be compared to the 40% of the budget spent on secondary and higher education which benefits only 4% of primary school leavers at the secondary level and the 0.02% fortunate students who manage to go on to institutes of higher learning.

What needs to happen at this level, therefore, is a commitment by governments that is reflected by adequate funding that allows the relevant institutions to function alongside the traditional formal institutions without appearing to be second rate, cheap, alternatives meant for the children of the less fortunate members of society. The experiences of the Brigade in Botswana and the Village Polytechnics in Kenya has shown that the institutions usually lacked trained instructors and basic facilities required for skill training. There is also an obvious lack of appreciation for the roles those institutions are playing in satisfying the manpower

needs of their countries. As one writer observed on the plight of Brigade graduates:

People trained in the Brigades are taught supervision and have proved this since [some] of them are now holding senior posts in Government and parastatal bodies...The Government is enjoying the services of completers from Brigades, who are doing valuable jobs, but they are paid the wages of those people who have never been trained. (Ikaneng: 1983:19.)

Supporting these sentiments, one Brigade graduate concluded that:

Unless the present system of education (where people are separated according to paper criteria) is changed, and the Government changes its attitude towards giving proper financial support to Brigades, the future for any Brigades trainee will remain bleak, and, as a result, they will continue to be targets or victims of exploitation and frustration. (Makwati 1983:31.)

Good instructors and sufficient funding are not the only prerequisites for making the NFE institutions respectable educational and skills training alternatives. Also required is proper planning that is based on an analysis of the environment determining the appropriate skills that should be taught in the institutions depending on the community needs at various times. In addition to the technical vocational skill, training in these institutions should focus on the type of skills required to plan, establish, and manage projects. This type of training is necessary if the goal of making the youth self employed is to be achieved. In Tanzania, Folk Development Colleges provide such training. The training, however, is not based on local environmental conditions and needs, it is based on a national centralized curriculum. The examples used in such training therefore are most often not relevant to the learners' local situations.



In Kenya and Botswana, Government assistance to the local NFE institutions has usually been accompanied by attempts to take control away from the local communities and regulate the institutions so that they resemble the formal institutions that Governments prefer. In this respect, NGOs which have normally supported NFE efforts have nevertheless played a big role in helping Governments formalize NFE institutions by funding the Government efforts to expand and centralize a few model institutions. These institutions which then receive most of the attention and funding from NGOs and the Government usually lose their local identity and control. They become very expensive to run and have to rely on perpetual external funding. It also becomes difficult for the youth in the immediate communities to be admitted into these Institutions because of competition from children of the elite from all over the country. While it is not entirely wrong to plan on improving the existing post primary skills training centers, it would make more sense to spread the improvements evenly to cover as many institutions in as many local communities as possible rather than developing a few super-sophisticated centers. But, politically, one large Institution is more visible than a hundred small centers located in 100 villages. Governments and funders love visibility. Ravenhill observes:

The desire of donors to have identifiable monuments to their beneficence has led to the creation of numerous cathedrals in the sand...Inflexibility of foreign donors who give little attention to recurrent and maintenance costs results in many projects rapidly falling. (Ravenhill 1986: 31).

A good example of such a monument is to be found in the Kilosa district in Tanzania where the Irish Government is currently constructing a

vocational skills center for primary school leavers to be equipped with sophisticated tools at the cost of US\$4 million. Rural development proponents of smaller centers which can survive on local resources have urged that instead of building this superstructure which will enroll 200 students annually, that the money would have been more wisely spent if it had been used to build 50 village level institutions which would have had the potential to training 5000 students annually. (Daily News: August 24, 1988: 5.)

The last hurdle that post primary training institutions have to overcome is that of society's acceptance and approval. This will only happen when the institutions prove that they can serve the purpose for which they were established. Currently society can clearly see that graduates of such institutions do not get nearly the same rewards for their efforts as those who manage to go through the formal education and training system. They can also see the lack of seriousness with which their governments treat these institutions which results in their failure to produce the readily employable youth that society was promised.

Skills training, however, is only one variable in a multi-dimensional problem. Another important variable involves creating the conditions which make employment and especially self-employment a possibility. This is the third level of my proposal, which I will discuss using specific examples from my experiences with youth groups in Tanzania.

## Developing Conditions Which Make Self-Employment Possible

### The Limitations of Skills Training as a Strategy for Solving Unemployment:

While it is true that most unemployed youth in East and Central Africa have received no vocational training, it is also true that unemployment among post primary vocational school leavers is increasing rapidly. Leonor (1985:42) reported that "Despite the talk of vast shortages of craftsmen....despite expert advice and costly instruction, vocational school leavers have had difficulty in finding suitable jobs." Those youth normally become part of the larger group of school leavers drifting into towns in search of elusive jobs, and thus indicating that either something is not happening right at both the post primary vocational school stage or at the transition stage, between vocational school and the real world.

In Tanzania, for example, Education for Self Reliance is a philosophy that was intended to prepare not only the hands but also the minds of school children, for socialism and work in the villages. Other avenues for such preparation include the National Service, Folk Development Colleges, Post Primary Technical Centers, Ministry of Labor Vocational schools, and the Ministry of Education technical schools. Although no systematic studies have been conducted on the unemployment and migration rates of youth from these institutions, observations made during other studies suggest high rates of both. (Leonor, 1985: 265).

The Ministry of Labor and Manpower (MOLM) gives two reasons for the high rates of unemployment and rural to urban migration: (MOLM 1984:37)

- 1.) Education for Self Reliance has not made its intended impact in two ways:

a.) The skills imparted in schools have not been adequately oriented towards self-employment for the school leaver.

b.) Even when they have the skills, most school leavers do not have the financial capacity to stand on their own right from the scratch and there is no established framework to assist them in acquiring the requisites to be self-reliant, e.g. work tools and finance.

2.) Hostile living conditions due to poverty in the rural areas, and expectations of a better life by the school leavers and their relatives makes the ESR advocacy for rural life, a grim futility, with youth continuing to search for better prospects in the urban center.

Although these observations are specific to Tanzania, they are very similar to the situation in Botswana and Kenya. (Van Rensberg 1984, Crowder 1984.) To deal with the second reason stated above, governments need to have development plans that are more integrated and that pay more attention to rural development. That topic is beyond the scope of this paper which is mainly concerned with the first reason of skills development and creating the conditions that make self-employment possible.

### Youth Groups Organized for Production:

In Botswana, the Boiteko cooperative groups were an off-shoot of the Brigade movement, which attempted to group together graduates of the Brigades and provide them with an avenue through which to use their newly acquired skills for self employment. Only a few became financially successful.

In Tanzania, the Ministry of Community Development, Culture, Youth and Sports (MOCDCYS) is responsible for youth development among other responsibilities. In 1979 the Ministry launched a program called Youth Economic Groups Program (YEGS) aimed at providing opportunities for primary and secondary school leavers to become self employed through income generating activities. The YEGs program has been very successful in mobilizing youth to engage in economic activities. MOCDCYS claims that 500 groups with membership ranging from 20 to 100 exist in the country, but there is evidence that a big percent of the groups are now defunct. Among the active groups the crop-out rates of members is very high. In the groups I visited in six regions of the country the percentage of founder members ranged between 10-30%.

Despite these shortfalls, the number of active groups in existence today is impressively high considering the fact that only a few have been able to succeed financially. I believe that groups like Botswana' Boiteko and Tanzania's YEGs can provide the key to solving youth unemployment and rural exodus. There is need, therefore, to examine the factors that influence the success of youth groups for the purpose of finding solutions to the obstacles. Skills, capital and working tools availability, institutional

support are some of the important factors affecting the growth and success of youth groups.

The Missing Skills:

A.) Project Planning:

The biggest skill area that I found to be lacking or weak in most groups did not involve actual technical skills but rather the concept of project planning. Such training can be offered through existing centers like the Brigades, the Village Polytechnics or the Folk Development Colleges, or preferably through short seminars conducted on site. Most groups would benefit from going through exercises of needs assessment, project identification, project planning and implementation, market analysis, marketing skills, bookkeeping, accountancy, and cooperatives education.

B.) Leadership:

Most groups I visited cited incidences of bad past leadership as being partly responsible for their lack of progress. The Boiteko were also characterized by either lack of leadership or leadership struggles. Training in this area should not only be directed to the group leaders but to all group members so that they understand the roles and limitations of their leaders. This would safeguard groups from autocratic tendencies and

laissez-faire attitudes of some leaders. This should also make clear the relationship between group leadership, group projects and village governments. In some of the villages I visited, the village leaders who were meant to be advisors and patrons of youth groups ended up usurping the leadership and decision making roles, and in some cases, transferring the ownership of the youth projects to the village governments, presumably in the interest of the youth. Such actions naturally ended up destroying the groups.

#### C.) Non-Traditional Skills:

Groups need to venture beyond the traditional carpentry, sewing, masonry, and agriculture skills. Other skills could include: pottery, handicrafts, flower and pot plants gardens for large urban groups. The key here is the ability to study the environment and the community to determine potential needs and markets. The groups also need to be trained to run several projects at the same time. In one village in Kilimanjaro Region, I was told of one group that had to disband because their only project--a piggery--came to an end when an epidemic killed all their pigs.

#### Initial Capital and Working Tools:

As mentioned earlier, the solution to youth unemployment goes beyond skill acquisition as evidenced by the current unemployment among you who have graduated from various vocational centers. One of the largest obstacles facing most of the groups I saw was the lack of sufficient

capital to start-up economically viable projects. The groups lacked sufficient tools, working space, and funds to buy initial raw materials. The groups' continued existence and perseverance against such difficult odds is a tribute to the youth's determination, but the obstacles explain why the casualty rate I explained earlier--drop out rate among members and groups disintegration--is so high.

#### The Self Reliance Concept and its Limitations:

The spirit of self-reliance was very apparent in most of the groups I saw, but the limitations on how much they could do was also obvious. One group, for example, had a ten acre farm. Until 1983 this was their only project because they tilled the land manually and it took all their time and energy. Because they could not afford any fertilizers and pesticides their crop yield was very low--enough to feed them but not enough to sell and raise funds to buy implements, or start new projects. In 1983 a Peace Corps Fisheries volunteer assisted them in seeking funds from the U.S. Ambassador, to buy oxen (maksai) and ploughs. This freed them from the marginally productive manual labor and their progress has been phenomenal since. I also saw examples of groups that had many members who met regularly but could productively engage only a few of them at a time, because of lack of working tools. The Mfaranyaki carpentry group in Songea town is a good example. The thirty members of this group own three planes, three saws and two work-benches. Last year they contributed 200 shillings each to buy an extra plane which was selling at 7500 shillings, but as they were still working to raise the difference required the price went up to



10,000 shillings, now they have to wait longer to add another tool to their workshop. Similar problems are being faced by the Ilklorit carpentry group in Arusha Region, and the Bangalala blacksmithery group in Kilimanjaro Region which has two sets of smelting equipment, enough to keep only four of the 20 members occupied at a time.

Because of such limitations, the production capacity of these groups is too low to facilitate any meaningful economic growth. The best that such groups can hope for is to survive, while the aspirations of the youth are focused on improving their standard of living and escaping from the poverty that surrounds them. When the groups cease to show the promise of an escape route, some members drop out or the whole group dies, making the hazardous route to the towns, a more attractive alternative.

There is a clear need for policies, strategies and tactics that encourage and nurture the youth's self reliance efforts. It is important to realize that a little injection of capital from the outside usually creates the difference between a group that can barely survive and one that has a chance of economic growth. The prices of imported tools and machinery and of raw materials that are in high demand are normally too high for the youth who rely on their own resources. It is also necessary to understand that farming, which is a difficult manual task, can only be attractive to the youth if they have access to modern technology that allows for bigger farms and better yields which allow the youth to achieve more than their survival.

## Institutional Support

The government departments responsible for youth development should also be actively involved in representing the youth's interests and advocating for them at other government bureaucracies. In Tanzania, the youth need definite assistance in the following:

a.) One area should be to fight for them to get preferential treatment and accessibility to loans from:

- Cooperative and Rural Development Bank
- National Bank of Commerce
- Small Industries Development Organization
- Presidential Trust Fund for Self-Reliance
- Nguvu-Kazi Fund.
- ILO Fund, etc.

b.) Another area that youth can benefit from is creating an understanding of the fragile nature of youth groups to the Duty and Income Tax departments so that they not only get concessions, but they get some duty and sales tax waived on raw materials, tools and machinery they buy, at least when they are just starting a project. This was an area of great complaint by most of the youth.

c.) The long and cumbersome process of registration for cooperatives, obtaining trading licenses, and soliciting contracts

and marketing outlets are areas that the youth officers can help with by following up with the National trade union--Washirika, Regional Trading Companies, Registrar of Companies and District Local Governments.

d.) In some villages, the youth were struggling with the village government to be allocated land to farm, without success. The youth officers could be of great help to the youth in those areas, being high government representatives. They should also encourage village governments which are able to give some funding to the groups, as well as working space and tools.

e.) On the important aspect of training, the youth officers should identify and liaise with all the training facilities in their vicinities to make them accessible to the youth groups members, on a regular basis, so that training becomes an on-going process.

f.) All the groups that I saw were either involved in some kind of building or they had plans to build in the near future. All of them, also, agreed that building materials were too expensive for them. The youth officers can help them in two ways:

i.) Request for a waiver of duty and sales tax on building materials through the relevant offices.

ii.) At the national level, a permanent linkage between the Building Research Unit (BRU) and the Youth Economic Groups Program should be created. BRU is a government unit within the Ministry of Lands Natural Resources and Tourism which specializes in developing and publicizing cheaper ways of building modern houses, including making ones own roofing materials that are as strong as commercially manufactured ones, but costing only a fraction of the price.

g.) Perhaps the most crucial area that the Ministry of Community Development Culture, Youth and Sports should concentrate on is mobilizing resources--soft loans and grants, for the development of youth groups. To make whatever funds become available beneficial to as many people as possible, it would be advisable to set up a revolving fund that would loan out small amounts of cash, or is used to buy tools, machinery and raw materials at a very small interest rate for groups that have demonstrated seriousness and commitment through organizing themselves and carrying out economic activities that would benefit from the injection of capital. To make the fund more accessible to groups it should be established in each Region.

The Ministry and Regional Officials can start such a fund by soliciting contributions from government institutions (e.g. Nguvu-Kazi Fund), parastatal institutions, industries, private companies, religious institutions, and charitable organizations. Such a fund

already exists in Kilimanjaro, Shinyanga, and Tabora Regions where it was set up by OXFAM U.K. Using this example, the Ministry should approach other donors to set up similar funds in other Regions.

#### The Future of Youth Economic Groups:

Youth organized through ventures that can make them self-reliant offer a great opportunity for developing countries to alleviate the problem of youth unemployment. Unfortunately, no government in Africa has taken that strategy seriously. Both the Boiteko and the YEGS initiatives that we looked at earlier have always been regarded as experimental programs, to be discarded at the first sign of problems. Today there is only a handful of Boiteko in Botswana but even at its height in the mid-seventies there were no more than 20 Boitekos in the country. The YEGS program as we saw had at one time a maximum of 500 groups involving not more than 50,000 youth in its entire existence. In a country that has youth unemployment growing at the rate of 0.7 million annually, a program that size cannot expect to make any significant impact.

## CONCLUSIONS:

In most African countries, there seems to be more efforts directed towards education and skills development than on employment creation, a situation that has resulted from the assumption that youth unemployment is a direct result of lack of appropriate skills. When the Lesotho Minister for Education gave a talk in the Fall of 1988 at the Center for International Education, for example, he lamented that his country had a youth unemployment problem because they had not taken the task of vocational skills training seriously. He mentioned that his country had a plan to introduce skills training into primary education. I mentioned to him that his country would benefit from learning why such a strategy was not very successful in Tanzania. In Tanzania, according to the National Director of Vocational Training, who I interviewed, the country is far from producing excess technicians and artisans in the skill areas taught in the Ministry of Labor's nationwide Vocational Training Centers and other training institutions. As I mentioned earlier, this view is challenged by some surveys which show that the present unemployed and underemployed youth include many who have acquired skills at various training centers. There is a clear need, therefore, for making sure that efforts aimed at addressing youth unemployment go beyond skills training to actual creation of self-employment opportunities, and also a national placement service that helps to identify wage employment opportunities for the new graduates.

In my opinion, it would make more sense to divert some of the money poured into skills training programs and use it to provide the resources

that are requisites for the youth who complete the training to be gainfully employed. This means opting for smaller but more efficient programs that can more effectively provide the transition from skills training to actual employment.

In this paper, I am advocating for combining three levels of approach to solving the problem of unemployment among the youth. The first level involves revolutionizing primary education to make it more practical and relevant to the needs of the youth and their communities. The second level involves strengthening NFE skills training programs at the post primary level, by providing them with the necessary resources required to make them effective, respectable and ultimately acceptable to the public which currently views them as second rate education systems meant for the less fortunate members of society. The third level involves creating the conditions that would allow youth to be self-employed.

This analysis has been presented before. Van Rensberg (1981:2) observed that:

Since President Nyerere's famous 1967 speech on Education for Self-reliance," it has been axiomatic that education in the Third World must be related more closely to the needs of workers and farmers, and that this can only be done by combating elitism, increasing community participation and linking learning with productive work....There has been no shortage of declarations by governments, teaching bodies, educational planners and international organizations on the re-orientation of education but there has been little fundamental change.

This does not indicate that the battle has been lost. As the problem of idle youth becomes larger, so does the search for solutions. The opportunity exists, therefore, for demonstrating to the bureaucrats who unfortunately have been socialized in the old hierarchical systems, the

logic and necessity of bringing radical changes which do more than call for the need to link school and community, but actually create the conditions that make such linkages possible. This cuts through the very roots of class domination whereby the dominant class represented by the government bureaucrats will have to stop paying lip service in support of programs that benefit the children of the poor majority, while in reality they are doing everything to perpetuate the supremacy of the systems that mostly benefit the children of the elite--including their own.

#### A Topic For Further Discussion:

One important issue that this paper has not attempted to deal with is gender analysis. Since independence the Government and political parties have instituted many policies that have aimed at enhancing the status of women in the society; In the field of education such policies have helped to increase the attendance of women in schools and various institutions. In primary school for example, 51% of the children are girls. At the University, enrollment has increased ten-fold. Laws and policies, however, cannot change deep ingrained tradition and cultural values which have most of the time militated against the advancement of women. At the vocational school and youth group level there is a need to change attitudes that have encouraged women to be involved in a few so-called "home-making" skills which include cooking, sewing, gardening, and home economics. There is also a need to look at obstacles which specifically would prevent women from engaging in income generation activities. This topic requires a separate, more comprehensive analysis.



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