

UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA (URT)

POVERTY REDUCTION AND EDUCATION

A Draft Contribution to the TAS Document

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Current political and economic reforms have implications on the role of education in the reform process on the one hand and on the manner in which the education sector is to be developed. These changes call for liberalism, competitiveness, efficiency, sustainability etc, to be realized through a process steered by a predominantly private sector led-economy, under a government whose major functions are the maintenance of law and order and creation of enabling environment. For the education sector, the response was the formulation of several education policies, including the **Education and Training Policy**, whose implementation triggered the introduction of Education Sector Development Programme (Ed-SDP).

Studies have shown that there are high returns to various forms of human capital accumulation: basic education, research, training, learning-by-doing and capacity building. Empirical evidence, however, suggests that education by itself does not guarantee successful development (e.g. Soviet Union, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Kerala and West Bengal). It has been suggested that who gets education matters a great deal. Unequal distribution of education tends to have a negative impact on per capita income in most countries. In addition, the impact of education on growth is greatly influenced by the economic policy environment. The Economic policies that suppress market forces tend to reduce the impact of human capital on economic growth. Reforms of trade, investment and labour policies can increase returns from education.

In general, the importance of quality as well as quantity of education is emphasized. The quality of education includes relevance of the curriculum, the nature of adult learning and the impact of learning.

2.0 THE STATUS OF EDUCATION

2.1 Education for meeting manpower requirements

In the early years following Independence, the main thrust of educational policy was geared to training Tanzanians to replace expatriates in managerial, technical and professional roles. The long-term perspective in the First Five Plan (1964-69) was to achieve substantial self-sufficiency in that regard by 1980. Given the scarcity of resources, it was intended to do this by setting the targets for the output of the secondary and tertiary levels of the education to meet the demand projected by the manpower planners. Although this implied some restraint, nevertheless the growth rates set for secondary and tertiary education were quite high, because of the low initial base. To date a substantial amount of foreign technical assistance coexists with the growing problem of the unemployed graduates.

2.2 Pre-school education is narrow

At the pre-school level, hardly 10% of the population have access, although in principle some facilities have been formalised and integrated in the formal school system. Non-government and government pre-schools constitute 68% and 32% respectively.

2.3 Expansion of primary education was rapid then stagnated

There are 11,290 primary schools (1998 data), out of which 99.8% are government and only 0.2% are non-government. Around 4 million pupils are enrolled in government primary schools. By 1998, Net Enrolment Ratio and Gross Enrolment Ratio were 55% and 77.9% respectively, with a teacher pupil ratio of 1:35. Repetition, especially in lower classes, is high (19%), while the drop out rate is 6%. The problem of substantial drop-outs is raising concern. This problem is most notable from the 5th and 6th year of schooling. At the primary level the gender balance is even. Teaching is mainly organised in a single session and schools are co-educational. The physical facilities vary enormously, but many buildings are in poor shape, with furnishing and teaching material supply woefully inadequate. The long period of decline in the enrolment rate in primary schools has been checked. The Gross Enrolment Ratio increased slightly from 77.6% in 1995 to 77.9% in 1997/98.

2.4 Expansion of secondary education has been slow only picking up in the last decade

Secondary school enrolments expanded at a much slower pace. This was due to deliberate rationing of secondary schooling as part of government efforts to provide universal literacy and co-ordinate outputs from the educational system with the nation's manpower requirements. Between 1971 and 1981, enrolments in secondary schools nearly all of which were operated by the government, grew by only about 24,000 students, and the enrolment rate remained stationary at about 4 percent of children in the relevant age-range. The decision made as early as the mid-1960's to restrain secondary and higher education to levels required to supply the needs identified in manpower plans meant that the number of places offered in public secondary schools was much lower than in neighbouring countries. It was at this level that unsatisfied demand for education appeared. In 1996 there was a decisive shift in policy. Government accepted that the non-government sector had a more important role to play in the secondary education sector. By 1998 private secondary schools constituted 47% (369 schools) with an enrolment of 109 thousand students taught by 5075 teachers (a teacher student ratio of 1:21.5). Within the private sector, a bi-modal distribution is emerging. Most private schools have less qualified teachers than the government schools with about 5% degree holders, 55% diploma holders and 40% with qualifications below a diploma. However, the seminaries and a small minority of elite schools have staff with qualifications that match or exceed those of the government schools.

2.5 Tertiary and higher education

Tanzania has a narrow tertiary and higher education when compared to other countries in the regional. Yet the problem of the unemployed graduates is growing reflecting a kind of mismatch between education and labour market requirements.

Technical education is not provided privately. There are three public institutions with a total student population of 1,797 taught by 257 tutors (a staff student ratio of 1:7). Out of the 257 tutors, 23.4% had postgraduate qualifications, 25.6% a Bachelor's Degree and 51% a diploma. Entry is highly competitive, with most entrants scoring Division I or II with a strong maths and natural science background. The sub-sector gets about 1.6% of the sectoral budget. At the higher education level, enrolment in public university colleges is 10,653 with 1141 lecturers (i.e. a staff-student ratio of 1:9) (1998 data). Financial resources allocated constitute 19% of the education sector budget. Despite the allocation of almost one fifth of the education budget to the universities (more than twice the allocation to government secondary education, with less than tenth the number of students), the perception in the universities is that they suffer from chronic under-funding.

2.6 Expenditure on education

Average expenditure on education as a percentage of GDP is approximately 3.0%, while public expenditure on education as a percentage of government expenditure averages 24.4%. Out of this, 68% is allocated to the primary level. The relative emphasis on the primary sector is in line with the conventional development thinking of the last two decades (e.g. of the World Bank) that the highest returns to investments in education are reaped at the primary level. However, it should be noted that the concept of basic education is changing with changing demands of technology suggesting that secondary and higher education will increasingly be necessary if the society has to cope with increasing challenges of competitiveness. In this regard, the very low transition rate from primary to secondary education raises concern. Expansion of secondary education would be consistent with increasing demands for competitiveness and hence for a more educated society in general.

2.7 Overcentralisation

Currently the Ministry of Education headquarters plans and controls activities not only at the regional and district levels but also at the level of the school, in terms of human, physical and financial resource allocation. Over-centralisation limits local initiative and undermines the independence and self-confidence of educational institutions. An action plan for transferring responsibility to local school committees has been prepared. The Local Government Reform Act of 1998 specifically refers to this change. A pilot project for decentralisation through a Block Grant system covers 35 Local Authorities. In principle, less developed regions/districts have been accorded preference in being considered for opening new secondary schools, or receiving assistance to do so.

2.8 Quality of education

Many parents and employers are disenchanted with the products of the education system, as manifested by low numeracy and writing skills, especially at primary levels. Poor performance in examinations is one indicator of the low quality of education.

Despite an elaborate inspectorate system at regional and district levels, the system has developed some weaknesses in enforcing quality indicators, such as:

- Staff-student ratios are skewed in favour of urban areas;
- Classrooms size and whole physical infrastructure differ;
- Availability of teaching materials differ in quantity and quality;
- Teacher absenteeism is widely reported at primary level.

Measures to improve the quality of education are still largely at the planning stage. A strategy has been adopted to co-ordinate resource centres and to implement action plans for the reform of technical and higher education. It is intended that minimum teacher qualifications should be raised (especially at the primary education level).

3.0 POLICIES, PRIORITIES AND STRATEGIES

3.1 Policy pronouncements to date

Documents articulating shifting approaches include the 1994 Social Sector Strategy (SSS) and the 1995 Social Sector Review (SSR). The 1995 CCM Election Manifesto and the 1995 Presidential Speech both emphasised social services expansion and quality improvement, CCM (1995:33 and 1995:28).

Characteristics of the new policy focus include:

- concentrating scarce public funds on core activities of government;
- striking a more productive balance between personnel and other inputs within the social sectors;
- decentralising authority to the local level;
- relaxing constraints on private sector participation in provision of social services
- promoting improved standards, and
- shifting control over resource allocation closer to the household and promoting household investment in human capital.

The Education and Training Policy, The Technical Education Policy and The National Science and The Technology Policy specify the major thrusts of the education system in the reform process. The thrust being partnership, cooperation, widening fiscal support, decentralization, quality and equity, holistic and integrative approaches, enhanced access, improved relevance, better coordination, gender balance, economies of scale, improved funding, consideration for under privileged groups, and greater emphasis on the development of science and technology.

3.2 Vision 2025

Vision 2025 provides the following guidelines to education development.

(i) *Need to increase productivity and competitiveness*

The economy will have been transformed from a low productivity agricultural economy to a semi-industrialized one led by modernized and highly productive agricultural activities which are effectively integrated and buttressed by supportive industrial and service activities in the rural and urban areas. A solid foundation for a competitive and dynamic economy with high productivity will have been laid.

(ii) *Attaining high levels of education at all levels*

Tanzania should be a nation with high level of education at all levels; a nation which produces the quantity and quality of educated people sufficiently equipped with the requisite knowledge to solve the society's problems, meet the challenges of development and attain competitiveness at regional and global levels. An important element of a high quality livelihood is attainment of universal primary education, the eradication of illiteracy and the attainment of a level of tertiary education and training that is commensurate with a critical mass of high quality human resources required to effectively respond and master the development challenges at all levels.

(iii) *Need for continuous education and transformation of attitudes*

- High priority must be given to education and continuous learning. Equally, the effective transformation of the mindset and culture to promote attitudes of self development, community development, confidence and commitment to face development challenges and exploit every opportunity for the improvement of the quality of livelihood is of prime importance.
- A progressive and development oriented culture needs to be evolved to link the people's way of life to the attainment of the goals of the development vision with particular regard to cultivating and nurturing a culture of entrepreneurship and self-development through creative and innovative hard work, responsibility, discipline, respect for life, education, saving and investment and fostering self confidence and self esteem among individuals.
- The society should be encouraged to learn continuously in order to upgrade and improve its capacity to respond to threats and to exploit every opportunity for its own betterment and for the improvement of its quality of life.
- Education should be treated as a strategic agent for mindset transformation and for the creation of a well educated nation, sufficiently equipped with the knowledge needed to competently and competitively solve the development challenges which face the nation. In this light, the education system should be restructured and

transformed qualitatively with a focus on promoting creativity and problem solving.

(iv) Science and Technology education

The education system must instill a science and technology culture from its lowest levels, giving a high standard of education to all children between the ages of 6 to 15. Basic sciences and mathematics must be accorded signal importance in keeping with the demands of the modern technological age. Science and technology education and awareness of its applications for promoting and enhancing productivity should permeate the whole society through continuous learning and publicity campaigns.

3.3 Priority areas and programmes

- *The main challenges*

The challenges of developing the education sector are particularly great. First, in order to develop the education sector there is need for a fundamental change in the whole approach to education sector development. Second, strategic thinking and planning must give high priority to the perspectives of teaching and learning processes. The planning process must be two-way not top-down. Third, there is need for wider involvement and active participation of institutions/actors in development of education methodology in the education sector planning process. In particular, capacity building will be needed in the currently “support institutions” so that they are recognized as key professional institutions fully involved in education sector planning.

- *Decentralization*

The **devolution of power** to plan and manage from the centre to the lower administrative levels (the district, the ward, the village, and the school) will involve a fundamental change in the allocation of responsibility and in administrative practice. Decentralisation in education requires the strengthening of weak local government institutions, human resource development and clarification of the relationships between different levels of government (district, region and centre). Effective decentralization of education management will require that the system of local government is effective in representing the needs of local population and sensitive to the requirements for effective schooling. An important role could be played by parents' committees, but many issues will need to be resolved, such as how these should be constituted, what their powers should be, and who they should be answerable to. Decentralisation demands development of management skills by head teachers, parents' committees and local government officials and representatives.

- *Streamlining the system and its structures*

The first phase (1999-2004) shall concentrate on establishing and streamlining the whole system and its structures for effective and efficient management and monitoring of the programme reforms and targeted developments in the education sector. It will put

emphasis on specific strategic interventions for basic education in order to bring about desired changes.

- *Enhancing the capacity of central ministries*

A priority area will be to strengthen the capacity of central ministries for policy formulation, strategic thinking and interventions, including better interfacing among Ministries of Education, Finance, Planning, Central/Local Government and other stakeholders. The outcome will be a clear formulation of feasible strategic priorities. Strategic thinking and planning must give high priority to the perspectives of teaching and learning processes. The planning process must be two-way not top-down. Building capacity in educational planning at various levels of the sector needs to be integrated to capacity building in monitoring and evaluation at these levels based on the principles of participatory monitoring.

- *Quality improvement*

Priority will be to assure growing and equitable access to high quality primary education and adult literacy through facilities expansion, efficiency gains and quality improvement measures, accompanied with efficient supply and use of resources. Teacher education is key to quality of education. Teacher education reforms are meant to provide opportunities for better pre-service and INSET training of teachers, especially upgrading the academic content and professional skills, improve teachers' mastery of language, providing more opportunities for teacher mentoring, and having in place a professional body that shall be responsible for setting professional standards and enforcing professional ethics.

- *Enhancing equal opportunity to access education*

Priority will be accorded to the removal of gender regional, geographical and social inequities in the provision of education will be central policy objective.

- *Promoting effective public-private partnerships*

Priority will be for the government to create an enabling environment for effective public-private partnerships in education, especially for secondary and post-secondary/higher education provision while not abdicating its obligation in the partnership formula.

- *Formalization of pre-primary level*

At pre-primary level, the aim is to formalize that level of education so the government will issue national curriculum guidelines, train quality teachers, advise on language and methods of instruction, and provide complementary inputs and resources.

- *Improving access to primary education*

At primary School level, the reform is targeted at the many eligible children who were not going to school at all, enrolling late, or dropping out of school.

- *Reviving Adult Education*

In adult education, the reforms are directed at improving the rate of adult literacy through functional literacy programmes, expanding vocational training, and providing education and work opportunities for youth and adults. The reforms are also meant to provide training opportunities for out of school children, and especially girls and complementary basic education through the COBET, ICBE and Youth Education programme.

- *Expanding Secondary education*

Secondary education reforms are essentially those of expanding enrolment by increasing the transition rate from 15 percent to 20 percent by the Year 2004, enhancing access by quintiles, improving quality and relevance by re-organizing curriculum, providing requisite teaching/learning materials and equipment, and addressing the language problem.

- *Enhancing efficiency and effectiveness of tertiary and higher education*

The tertiary and higher education, reforms are directed at rationalization of institutions of tertiary and higher learning in order to enhance efficiency and effectiveness. Similarly, the thrust is on making better use of spatially dispersed programmes, increasing the participation through redressing gender imbalance, reducing the high unit cost through institutional transformation, diversifying the means of funding, and improving the general quality of outputs by improving inputs and processes.

- *Enhance capacity of support institutions.*

Capacity building will be needed in the currently “support institutions” so that they are recognized as key professional institutions fully involved in education sector planning. For the support institutions (TIE, NECTA, TLS, IAE, TSC, and the Inspectorate), the major reforms shall include personnel audit, capacity building, human resource development, and provision of requisite support facilities and equipment.

Finally, as a cautionary observation, there is need for better recognition and appreciation of the tension between quantity and quality of education. Often it is difficult to achieve both under conditions of limited resources. Appropriate choices need to be made.