# Capacity Plunder in the Educational Reform Process in the Regional Africa: The Need for Intercession in Curriculum[1]


## Abstract

*Unwittingly and through habit, African countries have recruited curriculum developers from practicing classroom teachers and handed out to them the immense task of curriculum design process. Unfortunately, there is so little questioning about the individual capabilities of such curriculum developers. There is almost no institution including universities in the Africa region which offer systematic training programmes for curriculum developers. Professionals development courses in curriculum design process is just a night mare even when funding is available. In the year 2008/9 for example, TIE spent almost a year searching for training institutions for her local staff including negotiations with a University in Egypt but without success.*

*Establishment of the proposed Centre for Excellence in Curriculum and Training (ACECT) is believed to provide a sustainable solution to the creation of competent personnel in the area of curriculum design process, which forms the heart of education.*


## Introduction

This paper tracks the various forces behind curriculum reforms in the times of little or no capacity among the decision makers in the area. The concepts education reform and curriculum reform are used interchangeably to mean the same thing and care has been taken not to map the types of and meaning of school curricula.

An account of capacity gap in issues requiring informed mind in curriculum is made using different analogies, but in snapshots. Reforms in Tanzania are a subject which is adequately discussed to unveil the complexities involved in curriculum decision-making, planning and implementation. At the end, the paper calls for capacity building using joint efforts by different parties, local and international.

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**The Genius Curriculum Developers and Philosophers**

There were no systematically trained curriculum experts during the medieval period (5th to 15th century) education, whose curriculum aimed at developing language skills through oral drilling and writing in Roman and Latin. Curriculum was designed using natural human reasoning (the philosophy and science of Aristotle) and schooling aimed at integrating both the natural wisdom of Greece and Rome (pioneers of civilization) and the religious wisdom of Christianity. The period between the 15th – 18th centuries, witnessed various curricula and formal studying of grammar, arithmetic and geometry; marked by a series of education movements and reforms (Reformation, Renaissance and Humanist). Among the criticisms was a rejection to fundamentalism in catholic teaching, malpractices and corruption in the society (Italy, Germany, France and England). Curriculum was purveyed through community-organized schools, using learner-based instruction. The first school subject included poetry, history, rhetoric and moral philosophy and physical education. Curriculum goals aimed at preparing students to improve the human society, therefore learning focused on the development of intellectual and moral attitudes, citizenship, social leadership and the political life of the community. Education campaigned for relevant curriculum and the integration of humanism and religious studies.

Robert Owen (1771-1858), a presumed nonprofessional, established the first nursery school (for age 1 to 6) in 1816 at New Lanark in Scotland, basing on free and unstructured play curriculum. This free day care service for the children of cotton mill workers helped the parents and older siblings to work in the cotton mills. The ensuing Owen's insight of a community school was ahead of the writings on curriculum theory and practice by Franklin Bobbitt (1918; 1928) and Ralph W. Tyler (1949), which had a greater impact on the future of school curriculum.

The New Lanark of Scotland model school resembles the practice by rural extended families during farming seasons. Elderly mothers were used as day caretakers for children from the extended family. The curriculum consisted of plays, songs, creative art and stories, using a combination of peer coaching, and learner-centered teaching. Unfortunately, little was done to preserve this African model of schooling and curriculum before it was wiped out by the coming of "bush schools and/or kindergartens" in the pre-independence era Tanzania. The world over, we are achingly struggling to revive the indigenous structures and curriculum to balance with the

formal content, especially during the early years of learning.

**The Materialization of Formal Debates on Curriculum**

A move to re-conceptualize curriculum began in the 19th century (USA, Europe and Asia), shifting from the product model to the process model of curriculum, which was influenced by educational movements. Among them are the progression, humanist, scientific enquiry and the education afterthoughts of the World War II. A series of curriculum experimentation were trendy around the world, triggered also by the industrial revolution and achievements in science and technology, especially the Sputnik event. Research and development in education and the joint effort of the world institutions, UN organizations and the emergence of professional associations, promoted the curriculum design based on research and empirical validation of content variables and relationships. The years between 1920s and 1930s marked a shift from "armchair speculations" about curriculum to a systematic study on curriculum theory and practice, giving birth to learning objectives in instruction (Tyler 1941, Taba 1962). Despite this shift, the lack of synergy between transforming economies, the labour market demands and school curriculum continued to drive the curriculum reform process worldwide (Corporation of Curriculum Research 1985), but without matching efforts to the creation of the requisite human resource competent enough to handle the reforms.

**The Exclusion of Curriculum Developers from the ISCO-88 and University Programmes**

Curriculum Development does not form one of the 10 groups of ISCO-88 professional occupations. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Standard_Classification_of_Occupations). However, teaching professionals are defined; details of, which are not of interest to this paper (see Major Group 2 of the ISCO-88).

Experience does not show any systematic training in curriculum apart from a two-unit (90hrs) course on curriculum development (theories and models). Presumably, this is the level of exposure to curriculum, received by the majority of those serving in the curriculum development ministries and/or institutions as chief executives, curriculum developers and improvisers or quality assurance agents to educational materials.

The contention that curriculum reform cannot cope with the speed of the changing socio-economic world provokes for the need for a holistic and systematic development of training programmes to resolve the overarching gap between school curricula in general and society. Mishaps related to this gap are cited in this paper to reinforce the war against ignorance in the curriculum field.

**Capacity Plunder: Sample Case Studies in Curriculum**

The organization of schooling has in most times matched with curriculum, although the way we understand and theorize the latter has changed over time. The author slots out of the dispute as to the meaning[2] of curriculum, but acknowledges to the debated issues of relevance to the capacity plunder subject from a few curriculum cases.

The USA politicization of curriculum **(**Worthen and Sanders 1987:164*)* matches with the UK's power-coercive and/or normative-re-educative strategies in the 1970s under the then British Prime Minister, James Callaghan. In 1976, he trumpeted a "*great political debate*" toward bridging the gap between vocational and technical education to the needs of economic sectors, a concern which evolved into the 1980s. Different machinery reassessed the curriculum from different perspectives and the exercise ended into conflicting outcomes. Report by HM Inspectorate, where the DES was preparing the school curriculum, the now defunct School Council[3] observed that:

*Despite DES and HMI representation on the Council no connection existed between the two publications ... was not a version of the national framework for the curriculum*.

Curriculum petulance in the USA and UK had far-reaching confusion in most of the African region countries, which were used as guinea pigs. Unfinished and untested curriculum packages were exported to Africa, impinging on localisation efforts due to insufficient or absence of informed curriculum experts to question them. And more

[2] Re-conceptualization of curriculum began in the 1930s in the USA, Europe, Asia and Africa. The forces were educational progression movement, humanist inquiry, emergency of scientific field of curriculum inquiry and post World War II curriculum experimentations. The spark of industrial revolution, the Sputnik event, … emergency of professional associations, research and development in education accelerated the debate toward the use of empirical validation of curriculum variables and relationships. Anchored to the debates were, Pestallozi, Dewey, Kuhn, among other philosophers, educational committees and commissions.

[3] Interestingly, the practical Curriculum (School Council 1981) was not in fact the School Council's version of the national framework for the curriculum; rather it was 'an incitement to critical self-evaluation' by schools. It provided no prescription for the substantive curriculum … (McCormick and James 1988:58).

interestingly, curriculum in the region became alien copy-cuts from abroad, or a neighbouring African country before independent nationalistic educators started questioning the purpose of education in the 1970s, as was the case in Finland.

The move from comprehensive school curriculum in the 1970s to school based curriculum in the 1990s by the Finish, allowed differences in the value systems among the decision makers. This "gentleman" approach is a threat to finding a common platform and political consensus about centrality of aims in educational programmes in Finland. Teachers regard comprehensive education system as undervalued while the schools scrabble to respond to students' special needs using inclusion-decentralization approach. Discontented with some of the reforms, there is new demand by the left-wingers to reform assessment and evaluation systems in the pretext that the educational policy tends to embrace more of the traditional values. Examples cited in this complaint is the policy's accentuation of core competencies and defining standard of good proficiency levels in core subjects in an environment of heterogeneous schools, students and subjects.

**Economic Slump and Skill Shortage Influenced Decision on Curriculum**

Decisions about curriculum are at times rushed by crises in the economic sector. The economic slumps during the 1970s and 1980s shocked many countries around the world including the UK, Asia, Mediterranean, Europe and Africa alike. The Western nations were, however, comparatively most affected in the escalating unemployment. Confronted by a betrayal to their belief that their curricula systems produced well-rounded graduates in the different fields, these nations took time before they resolved why industrial employers were rejecting the same graduates. A new crisis, namely, "skill-shortage" crippled most of the university graduates. Employees shifted from using certificate grades in recruitment and were looking for capabilities beyond curriculum objectives and a list of subjects defined in the higher education certificates. This crisis spread almost the world over, as revealed by different UNESCO-supported studies between the 1970s and 1980s.

Testimonies from the foregone discussions have shed some light about the world paradox on curriculum at a time when most of the elitist group in Africa region were against the leadership for their failure to hold a tight professional grip on education and curriculum. Experience from the exporters of education to Africa hangs on a similar

weighing scale.

**The Shifts from Pre-Colonial to Colonial Education**

The worldwide praxis for translating educational goals into reality[4] is the curriculum, although educators say little about the relationship between curriculum and development. This gap is exacerbated by the situation where there is no capacity to establish a clear education policy to guide curriculum framework as was the case in the pre-colonial education system. The underdeveloped majority of ethnic groups, diversities in cultural and traditional practices in education; the lack of policy and deliberate efforts to value, record and develop the local forms of educational system; knowledge sources and the teaching learning processes became a handicap.

Curriculum developers find it difficult to design flexible inclusive curriculum, responsive to the multivariable economic and cultural ventures among our local ethnic minorities, using centralised educational systems, which have prevailed over time. The absence of formally trained experts, did not, however diminish the success in the traditional curriculum practice. The curriculum in this era managed largely to link the available human energies and holistic societal development through interactive platforms by community elders (hands on talking to Nellie observation, songs, stories and rituals). Curriculum (read more about community schools in general and Malangali School in Iringa and Kwamsisi Community School Project in Tanga in Ishumi 1974) sought to inculcate among the youth social norms, skills needed for survival in the immediate environment and prepare each person for future role in the society

The foreigners' impregnation to Tanzania saw a loss to cultural and social cohesion, factors which formed the essential components of the local curriculum. The new learning and social culture came with the new formal curriculum, behind which was a pre-meditated economic mission and religion/catechism. The missionary curriculum developers, including nuns and priests, among other religious based leadership, led the educational system. School curriculum derailed self-confidence, self-identity and unity among the local community until the mid-1970s when Tanzania started looking back into the education potholes, including the gross underdevelopment and regional disparity in education provision and socio-economic development.

[4] Education is associated with better health, a longer life, successful parenting and civic participation. Fair and inclusive education is one of the most powerful levers available to make the society more equitable.

Practices from the 1930 to 1960s education reforms were non-formal, historical and transitional, with little or no political and/or professional powers to create a firm education philosophy for the future of the nation. The vulnerable population from disadvantaged backgrounds, children with disability and girls became highly excluded from the colonial system of education (Impact of Colonial Reforms.doc). These issues attest the capability of curriculum developers as well as those who are in decision-making positions about education.

**Post Independence 1961 Education Sector Reforms**

Reform models that guided curriculum in this era fall in four main groups: radical-revolutionary; realistic revolutionary; ad-hoc and evolutionary. There was no critical analysis of the past educational practices, in line with national future goals at independence, but embrace national identity, cultural and linguistic unity. These changes reflect world wide education movements (see classical education era in Britain - http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&docId=65997195) under the Roman Empire[5]. Specifically, the reforms in classical education depreciated local languages and culture, while excluding the minority local children from education. Tanzania's concern to reform education after independence was not an exception to the rest of Africa (Nyerere 1968:267[6]):

*We have not until now (1970s) questioned the basic system of education, which we took over at the time of Independence. ... Except in terms of obtaining teachers, engineers, administrators, etc., individually and collectively, we have in practice thought of education as training for the skills required in earning high salaries in the modern sector of our economy*.

The first comprehensive broad-based curriculum was put in place, with use of Kiswahili as a national language and the language of instruction in primary education, reverting from the use of the English language. Reforms to the education system inherent before independence (4-4-2-2-) began to evolve toward 7-4-2-3 as 1967 approached. The 7 years of primary education aimed at "making the education cycle complete," i.e. enabling the majority (85%) of the graduates to begin a successful self-reliant life in the rural economy.

[5] Clarke, M. L. (1959), *Classical Education in Britain, 1500-1900*.Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[6] Nyerere, J.K. (1968). 'The Arusha Declaration": *Freedom and Socialism*. Dar es Salaam: Oxford University

The Education for Self-reliance (ESR) philosophy in 1967 marked the first major education reform in Tanzania (synonymous to Gandhi's approach to education) and a move away from the enslaving elitist and discriminatory formal education breeding among the students a contempt for manual work.

The aftermath of the 1967 education philosophy witnessed major reforms in curriculum toward rural life, engaging teachers and students in productive activities. The school assessment introduced a tool for shaping students' behaviour (*character assessment*) is seven areas: diligence; valuing work; caring for property; sociability; obedience; honesty and cleanliness. Ordinary level candidates had to pass both the academic and character assessment (good/very good using a percentile scale >40.00).

Nyerere also championed adult education, life-long learning and learning for liberation as post 1967 education reforms. The reforms aimed at helping people to engage in functional literacy and innumeracy as a preparation toward self-help scheme among the community. This scheme had two functions:

*To inspire both a desire for change and an understanding that change is possible and to help people make their own decisions, and implement those decisions for themselves (*Nyerere 1978: 29, 30).

The ESR philosophy used education as a tool for liberating the society, focusing on the development of productive skills and knowledge required for survival in Tanzanian. In the 1980s, there emerged hot debates regarding the value of the ESR philosophy, following criticisms from the university academics, educators, schools as well as the society.

… *That agriculture in Tanzania has not been a profitable occupation and that it has not improved rural life and thus to the young people, it is a flight from poverty to anticipated wealth in towns (Ishumi 1974*[7] *and 1984).*

The criticism by Ishumi, an eminent professor in education presents one of the several such contentions between the curriculum philosophy, educators and community expectations.

**Curriculum Reforms During the Post-1970s – 1980s Period and the World Bank**

[7] i) Ishumi, A. G. (1974), "Community Education and Development: A Study in the Problems of Harnessing Community Education and Development Efforts Among Rural and Peri-urban Communities in Tanzania". A Ph.D. thesis, University of Dar es Salaam.ii) Ishumi, A. G. M. (1984). The Urban Jobless in Eastern Africa. Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies.

**Influence**

The post 1970s curriculum reforms witnessed three different approaches: realistic revolutionary, ad-hoc and evolutionary approaches. Nigeria, Zambia and Botswana embraced the first approach and the reforms addressed the gap that existed (relevance, limited awareness, national philosophy). Similarly, Kenya, Ghana, Sierra Leone and Zimbabwe (unlike Tanzania) did not break completely with the colonial curriculum. A re-alignment of some aspects of the Cambridge curriculum was experienced in Zimbabwe.

The ad-hoc approach to curriculum reform embraced by Tanzania in the mid-1970s – 1980s lacked in-depth analysis of the country's contexts, policies and needs. Partly, the country suffered from experimentation of educational projects and/or programmes copied from Britain, therefore becoming a guineapig to the metropolitan educational movements such as introduction of modern mathematics and the Nuffield (Curriculum Experimentation in Africa.doc and http://www.kcl.ac.uk/depsta/iss/archives/collect/1nu3050.html).

In the same period (1970s), Tanzania experienced the influence of economic superpowers (The World Bank) in education, which resulted into the "diversification of secondary education". "*Agriculture, Business Studies, Home Economics and Technical Education*" formed a new stream of secondary education subjects, with a view to accelerate the creation of middle level skilled labour. This reform was accompanied by established "Post-Primary Technical Education" wing in primary schools with a similar spirit. However, the two moves produced un-recognized qualifications in the employment sector, with the exception of the Business Studies stream.

**In-Depth Inquiry in Education in 1982 and Reforms in the 1990s**

The 1967 Education for Self-reliance philosophy did not augur well with educational expectations of the majority of Tanzanians; for tilling the land was perceived as a job for the poor. Tanzania planned to liberalize its economy, beginning in the 1980s amid an economic crisis. This situation prompted the re-thinking of the role of the education and curriculum in the preparation of the right knowledge and skills for the liberation of the young generation and national economic development. In 1982, the government

launched a Presidential Commission in Education (Makweta[8] Commission). The Terms of Reference (ToRs) for the Commission were among others, to investigate the education system and come up with recommendations regarding the curriculum and subject structures, assessment criteria, required and curriculum reforms. This team of highly educated professors focused on the links between the curriculum and the national development agenda as well as the worldwide educational movement, including the quality of current pedagogy in achieving educational objectives; and the best ways in which educational achievement and performance could be measured.

A year after conducting an in-depth analysis of the educational system and consultation with internal and external stakeholders (system, structures, resources, examination, links, curriculum, subjects and pedagogy), the Commission produced two volumes of report which presumably were to be used in the reform processes. The findings of the Commission were backed by similar enquiries in education reform conducted in 1984 by the Tanzania Institute of Education (TIE). The outcome of these two forces was a revision of the primary school curriculum in 1992, which re-addressed the four main weaknesses inherent in the curriculum. One of them was the high number of subjects and loaded content followed by a dearth of physical and human resource to implement the curriculum. The gap between career aspirations and the curriculum and the lack of ICT formed the last two concerns by the Commission. (URT 1982: pp: 187 - 200).

The Commission[9] pointed out the *serious financial constraints and a dearth of professionally competent curriculum developers at* TIE. The Ministry cautioned to refrain from engagement *in curriculum/syllabus revision without involving the legally mandated institute* and remain with the powers to ratify the curriculum ((URT 1982:181-186). The Commission proposed a roadmap for curriculum reform with capacity of teachers as conditional (URT 1982:200-223).

**The Birth of Education and Training Policy 1995**

The establishment of the first Tanzania's Education Training Policy (1995) was a

[8] The United Republic of Tanzania (1982), "Tanzania Education System 1981 – 2000": A Report of the recommendations of the Presidential Commission, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Jackson M. Makweta was by then the Hon. Minister for Education and the chair of the 13 people team.

[9] The Commission used participatory enquiry into the education surveying the whole country involving a broad spectrum of experts from universities, employers, the public, government officers, teachers and employees in the different sectors.

recommendation by the 1982 Presidential Commission in Education. Specifically, the ETP 1995 raised a concern on the following educational gaps, calling for an urgent need for reform. A shift from the alien academic curriculum toward one which prepares the students for everyday life, was proposed (URT 1995:12-52). As a result, primary education curriculum included two years of pre-primary education and was enriched by mainstreaming crosscutting issues in the different subjects and introduction of new subjects (Life Skills, French and Arabic language). However, TIE had no subject expert in the Arabic language.

Science and Technology including the teaching of life skills became part of school subjects. The latter fell into five (5) broad categories of skill development. These include the *environmental, personal health, job creation, social or community and family education* (URT 1995:54). The Education and Training Policy (1995) also steered the initiative to move away from the government monopoly in the provision of teacher education, liberalized the establishment, ownership and administration of the teacher colleges. The policy also marked the beginning of a realistic revolutionary approach to the curriculum reform. Through systematic study of the pre-1990s education system and curriculum, the policy identified the inadequacies and addressed the lack of relevance, limited access and poor preparation of the school children for life during and after school; especially in undertaking self and direct employment in the formal/informal sector.

*Secondary education curriculum is mostly subject centered; does not respond easily to the demands of the changing socio-economy. There were ad-hoc-frequent additions of new content to the already overloaded curriculum in the midst of not meeting the learning needs of students, their career choices, and capability for employment in the formal or informal sector* (URT 1995:56).

There was a pervasive impact of the 1995 ETP into sector reforms including the birth of the Educational Sector Development Programme (1997); the Sector-wide Approach to Education Development (1997 – 2009); the 1997 curriculum reform and the Education Master Plan (EMP) in 1999 (*http://www.moe.go.tz/pdf/SEMP%202001%202005%20verII.pdf*).

The EMP has tow major impacts. The first one influenced the directions of curriculum reform and emphasis on molding the learner by**:**

- *broadening the scope of ideas, concepts and skills;*

- *inculcating self-confidence, science and technology, occupational skills; and*
- *further, developing the appreciation of national unity … culture and work ethos;*

The second impact was the organization of the curriculum and its response economy:

- *content irrelevant to the current demands was removed;*
- *the poor delivery system was strengthened ;*
- *abstract aspects were contextualized to local environment;*
- *the crowded subjects were reduced i.e. O–level curriculum has 39 subjects with students taking up to 13 subjects; and*
- *at A level, the 23 subject combinations some with less than 20 pupils were re-adjusted.*

Thereafter the Tanzania Vision 2025 was established (URT 2000). Behind these movements were findings from research and development within and outside Tanzania, whose cumulative impact gave birth to the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PR-SP 2000/01 – 02/03), The Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP; 2000 – 2006), Secondary Education Master Plan (SEMP: - 2000) and Secondary Education Development Programme (SEDP: 2004 – 2009). The above policies and programmes formed the major force to the revision of primary education curriculum (2000) and secondary education curriculum (O-level – 2004/5; and A-level – 2008/9). In 2006, the government rejected some of the reform decisions and made minor revision of some subjects (Physics/Chemistry and General Studies) in the curriculum.

The emerging challenge to TIE was the capacity of curriculum developers to cope with the quickly introduced reforms and the translation of the newly developed policy indicators (Poverty Reduction, Environment, Gender, HIV, and AIDS: *http://www.policyproject.com/pubs/other/Tanzania_National_Policy_on_HIV-AIDS.pdf).* including the mainstreaming of the crosscutting issues in the school curriculum. These threats, including the design of competence based curriculum as a way of implementing the government urge to prepare students for work upon graduation, called for a more comprehensive training of curriculum developers. The curriculum reforms under PEDP (2000[10]) and SEDP (2005[11]), therefore, posed a serious threat to the capacity of TIE.

[10] URT (2000) Primary Education Development Programme. Dar es Salaam: Ministry of Education and Culture *http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/AFRICAEXT/TANZANIAEXTN/0* . The picture above presents pupils at Benjamin Mkapa Primary School in Chamwino Village (a disadvantaged area).



A translation of the national programme objectives to various subjects at the same time incorporating regional and international commitments in the curriculum calls for high professional competence in the institutes/ministries responsible for curriculum development.

**Common Curriculum Changes in the Post 2000 Education and Capacity Challenges**

The 2000+ reforms in Tanzania, the move to curriculum harmonization in the East African Community countries; SADC and AU are rather a complex undertaking . Designing contextualized competence based curriculum at the same time maintaining a harmony to the common areas of curriculum demanded by the regional movements in curriculum and education is a tricky, but challenging area, which might have skipped the sight of the majority vote holders and decision makers in the education platform. The African regional curriculum institutions must, therefore arrest this gap, through curriculum forum such as the one held in Zambia (June 2009) should make this appeal part of the future deliberations. This gap also translates to building teachers' capacity so that they effectively develop among students the generic competences namely: critical and creative thinking; communication; innumeracy; technological literacy; personal and social values and skills; and aesthetic qualities and ideas (see *http://www.tanzania.go.tz/pdf and http://www.moe.go.tz/moec_programmes.html*). The ensuing question is, "to what extent has the capacity of the existing curriculum development institutes been sharpened for the smooth implementation of national reforms in education and curriculum?"

[11] URT (2004) Secondary Education Development Programme. Dar es Salaam: Ministry of Education and Culture.

### The Quiz to Translate Policy and Structural Reforms by the Curriculum Developer

Tanzania has undertaken various social, political and economic reforms, all of which call for planning on the part of Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT) to create awareness among the different stakeholders[12]. Establishing a series of policies, structures and sector reforms without educating the society which is the consumers and the implementer of the reforms is a serious omission by the government. While the process of curriculum development is, expected to be amenable to the various sectoral reforms (health, agriculture, industry, human rights, financial, and infrastructure), there has not been a national coordination of the sectoral stakeholders in the curriculum process. The resulting weakness is the lack of synchronized conceptualization of the role of curriculum into the broad socio-economic reforms and national development. This gap has resulted in many instances, pointing an accusing finger to the institutes of curriculum development by the public especially when there is a sense of dissatisfaction with the curriculum outputs.

## The Policy Contexts of the Problem

The Education and Training Policy (1995) in Tanzania has for the past fifteen years set legal framework in different areas, levels, forms of provision and institutional roles. This section provides a matrix summary of the gaps in the appropriate in the policy statements (July 2009) pertaining to education and training as seen in Table 1.0 below.

**Table 1.0 Education and Training Policy (1995) Implementation Gaps: 1995 - 2009**

| Area | Policy Statement | Implementation Status | Reasons |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1. Access and Equity in Education** | The government shall promote access to education to disadvantaged social and cultural groups | Hunters, islands, street children and mentally challenged are excluded | The lack of flexible inclusive curriculum /appropriate human resource capacity |

[12] Reforms such as NSGPR; Tanzania Development Vision 2025; Public Service Reform Programme (PSRP); Local Government Reform Programme (LGRP); and the Education Sector Development Programme (ESDP) are examples of the various multi-sector reforms.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | The school curricula shall be reviewed … to encourage participation and achievement of girls in science and mathematics subjects | Not implemented | The lack of human resource capacity in Tanzania Institute of Education |
| | Government shall evolve a machinery to identify and develop gifted and talented children | Not implemented | Lack of appropriate identification models and teacher capacity |
| **2. Management and Administration** | Education ministries to devolve powers to lower organs and communities | In progress, but with shortfalls | Lack of institutional and human capacity |
| | Boards and Committees of education … shall be responsible for effective operation of schools | In progress but with shortfalls | Incompetent human capacity at school Board/Committee levels to plan …. |
| | The Regional and District Education Officers shall have overall responsibility over implementation of education and training policies in their areas of jurisdiction | In progress but with shortfalls | Lack of human capacity and appropriate models to synchronize administrative functions with LGA |
| **3. Formal Education and Training** | Every secondary school shall have a library … and well trained and competent library personnel | Not implemented, but exists a school library resource centre regulation 2002 | The lack of training programmes for school librarians at TIE and/or university level |
| | Tanzania Institute of Education (TIE) shall establish facilities and programmes for training and further professional development of teachers and tutors | Not implemented | The lack of institutional structures and human resource capacity |
| | In-service training and retraining shall be compulsory in order to ensure teacher quality and professionalism | Not Implemented | The lack of adequate institutional and human resource capacity |
| **4. School Curricula, Examinations and Certification** | The teaching of Kiswahili, English and other foreign languages shall be promoted in the whole system | Partially implemented | The lack of adequate and competent human resource and institutional policy to promote Kiswahili |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | The government shall establish, maintain and resource a National Documentation and Dissemination Centre for Education | Started implementation but the idea has been left floating | The lack of institutional arrangement and human capacity |
| **5. Vocational Education and Training** | Traditional expertise, experts and the apprenticeship system shall be recognized and promoted as a component of the vocational education and training system | Not implemented | Lack of institutional arrangements and human resource capacity |
| | Occupational curricula for all educational and vocational training courses shall be designed and developed by VETA in collaboration with Tanzania Institute of Education | Not implemented | Lack of institutional arrangements and human resource capacity |
| **6. Non-Formal Education and Training** | National development plans, programmes and projects shall ensure that viable cultural norms and values are maintained, promoted and sustained | Not implemented | Lack of institutional arrangements and human resource capacity |

Table 1.0 is a testimony of good political intentions that have remained blue prints for past 15 years for reasons of the lack of institutional arrangements, inadequately competent human resource capacity and absence of appropriate training curricula or models. The highlighted statements set example of activities, which match with the UNESCO biannual policy plans, which can form part of the proposed activity plan to be undertaken by the Africa Centre for Excellence in Curriculum and Training (ACECT) under the UNESCO - TIE bilateral arrangements, a point which form the core argument of this paper..

In Tanzania, the 2000/04/05 reforms sparked a significant public anger picking on the weaknesses that:

*The government did not consult the stakeholders during the current education reforms and so there is a gross confusion and misunderstanding about the curriculum reforms. The Tanzania Institute of Education cannot lead educational reforms alone without public participation in the process (IR TME/WEC February 2006). Education is a public property and no single institution or ministry can decide to reform the educational system without the consent of the society/public who are the stakeholders (Hon. Minister, MoEVT; February 2006).*

This quiz calls for capacity building in curriculum beyond the curriculum developers,

by including a large spectrum of stakeholders from different sectors. The above statement, which resembles closely the reaction by the current President of Tanzania, Hon. Jakaya M. Kikwete to the reforms, represents the typical first reaction responses from the majority of the Tanzanian public between 2004/05/06[13]. Teachers were the most embittered as they thought they were excluded from the whole process of reform.

The serious lack of adequate preparation before the curriculum reform process reached implementation level caused unexpected havoc in the eyes of professional curriculum developers, decision makers and educationists who participated in the process. Among such concerns was a serious lack of preparation of physical and human resources to match with the demands for the reforms in education. Books for the revised curriculum for example, were very scarce at the time of implementation, while the teachers remained in the dark as regards the changes in the curriculum. Should the governments engage in hurried educational reforms while there are local technical advisors in the broad field areas? Should we compromise quality with quantity, where there are opportunities to balance both? This paper presumes that top officials in the government might have considered the broad issues raised in this discussion if their understanding of curriculum reform was informed by appropriate education and training background.

**Reforms in Policy Framework[14] and Education Response**

The Education Ministry has since independence been responsible for culture, sports and higher education, until in the 1990s when sports and the latter shifted to two different ministries. In January 2006, the same Ministry was given a responsibility for Basic Education and Vocational Training, and two years later (January 2008), higher education was again reverted to the Ministry (dissolving the Ministry of Science Technology and Higher Education). These shifts brought in the new ministry new departments and leadership and affected the education officers as well as curriculum developers' capacity to form a health merge of the systems, structures, capacity and curriculum.

[13] The author conducted a quick survey of public opinion on the 2004 curriculum changes in Tanzania, focusing on teachers, education officers, ministry officials, politicians and employers. A random probability sampling technique was used to reach as many people as possible through events such as seminars/workshops and conferences where high number of target groups had gathered between November 2005 and March 2006.

[14] Macro-economic policy reforms include enhanced role of the private sector in education, decentralization and devolution, sector-wide innovations, entrepreneurship in education and new careers opportunities and innovation in learning and employment.

It is worth mentioning that one of the roles of a curriculum is to translate the relevant national policies into classroom teaching and learning. Implicitly, we need to ensure that there is a capacity to develop the various indicators for the relevant policies and match them with the educational objectives and content in the different subjects before the teachers are oriented in planning lessons and assessment schemes relevant to the policy's objectives matched to different target learners. This is an enormous task, which, in most cases incapable personnel have been asked to execute with little resource support.

Clearly then, curriculum in the African region has not received the respect and investment it deserves in form of capacity development. The impact of this valley is enormous. The Africa region relapsed into diversity in the educational systems and linkages; poor quality curriculum content; pedagogy and copy-cuts of alien educational support materials, questioning the qualification and graduate capability produced at various levels of education across the region. A few great people and institutions did not close their eyes to this plunder, hence the emergence of the first intercession in curriculum.

**The Emergence of Curriculum Capacity Building Pioneers**

Initiatives for training curriculum developers in Africa were conceived in the early 1960s. This was a response to the increased need for systematic curriculum and strengthening of international cooperation in the field of curriculum. In 1972, there was an international seminar for advanced training in curriculum development and innovation held in Grenna Sweden and attended by twenty country participants from all parts of the world. This event was a cornerstone to the foundation of the International Curriculum Organization (ICO), involving institutions from forty countries. A decade later, ICO stimulated the establishment of more than fifty curriculum development centers in Africa, Asia and Latin America. These centers and similar institutions were in charge of curriculum reform and quality control of education.

**Training Needs Assessment for Curriculum and Outcome**

To strengthen the capacity of the curriculum institutions, training needs survey for Africa was conducted in six centers. The findings revealed that, out of the present 150 curriculum developers, about 75 persons did not have any systematic initial training in the theory and practice of curriculum development. The affirmation of the findings of the "needs assessment" survey in Africa was a consultative correspondence between the curriculum development centers and the International Institute of Education Planning (IIEP) in Paris. Some of the countries involved in the dialogue included Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Tanzania and Zambia. The success of these initiatives was the 1975 four-week advanced training in systematic curriculum development and evaluation for curriculum specialists from the ten African countries.

**Collaboration of Agents: a Success to Networked Training in Africa**

The 1975 seminar held at the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA) resulted into its brand name "the GIMPA seminar". This noble event, a collaborative effort of six different trainers led by IIEP and ICO, is also a mother to the African Curriculum Organization[15] (ACO). The birth of ACO marked the beginning of a series of professional capacity building courses to African curriculum development centers under the support of IIEP, DSE, UNESCO, GTZ and agencies in the Federal Republic of Germany in collaboration with some African ministries and institutes of education/curriculum development centers. These courses invited participants from over 20 African national curriculum centers. Since ACO's inception in 1976 until 1984, its major activities have been intensive short-term and long-term training, study tours and publications.

**Table No. 1: Training Workshops in the Curriculum Field by Place and Year**.

| Training Course Content | Place | Year |
|---|---|---|
| Techniques of data collection in educational research and curriculum development | Ibadan | September 1976 |

[15] ACO was also the result of recommendation of 15 African Ministers for Education attending the Lagos Conference in 1976. ACO's needs-based training programme proposal spanned for 10 years, targeting 500 members from 20 national curriculum development centers, who needed professional training.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Techniques of curriculum development | Dar es Salaam | November/December 1977 |
| Curriculum material production | Banjul, Gambia | July/August 1978 |
| Curriculum for early childhood education | Nairobi | July/August, 1979 |
| Environmental education in the school curriculum | Lusaka | November/December, 1979 |
| Curriculum for teacher education | Lusaka | November/December, 1980 |
| Curriculum for primary science | Maseru: | September 1981 |
| Book production techniques | Ibadan | March 1983 |
| Book production techniques | Domasi | April 1984 |

Other curriculum related capacity building event include also the Mauritius conference between African and West German scholars (1980), the training of librarians and documentalists and the Sierra Leone seminar and study tour on curriculum development for basic education and the implementation of needs oriented curriculum (1978).

**The Impact of Financial Constraints on Sustainability of ACO Initiatives**

ACO's proposed training programme operated for only 5 years from 1979 before financial resources impinged on the initiatives in 1984, benefiting only a few countries and curriculum developers. Today, the majority of the beneficiaries are no longer with the respective centers due to retirement, death and change of occupation. In the Tanzania Institute of Education (TIE) for example, there are currently only 2 curriculum developers who benefited from the ACO capacity building initiatives, out of the existing 65 employees in the area. Those recruited between 1984 and 2009 had undergone little or no training at all in the area of curriculum and there was no effort to cascade the courses through in-house peer training.

**The Demise of ACO at the Age of Curriculum Challenges in Africa**

The curriculum development capacity building initiatives ceased at a time when Africa

was facing critical reforms in education following socio-economic - political changes in the 1980s – 1990s. Evidence of various reports "Commissions in Education" in the different regional countries raised serious concerns on curriculum relevance, academic content, the gap between school and the world of work, and lack of cross-cutting/current issues in curriculum, including gender, environment, human rights, HIV/AIDS, ICT, family life and life skills. The externally-led and funded curriculum reforms took place between the 1990s and 2008. It is sad to note that there has been little effort by internal forces and development partners in building the capacity of the personnel and the institutions involved in curriculum reforms. This serious omission comes in the midst of challenging curriculum initiatives and changes worldwide and calls for an immediate intervention.

**Emerging Issues at Local and Global Levels**

Curriculum reforms have continued to take place informed by unclear national/regional standards and competent curriculum development experts. The continued practice to recruit curriculum developers from practicing classroom teacher s by the regional African countries has perpetuated the weakening of institutions of curriculum development/education. Efforts to institute in-house training courses for the curriculum developers recruited between 1986 and 2008 have not borne fruits. This gap has frustrated the majority of the new recruits in curriculum development institutions in the region as they found themselves fumbling with the challenging tasks of curriculum development, reforms and writing of syllabus.

The founding members of ACO are difficult to trace, but some funding agents exist and there is abundant evidence of their good work[16] (UNESCO, IIEP, DTE and DSE). Those who participated during the late 1980s, such as USAID and the funding of Botswana Curriculum and Evaluation, are also traceable.

There is a worldwide pressure to implement global/international declarations, while regional countries scramble to use the curriculum to implement several local policies such as poverty reduction, HIV/AIDS, entrepreneurship, environmental issues, gender, globalization and ICT. There is, however, little evidence whether regional nations have

[16] DSE used to offer scholarships for ACO member institution s to attend up to one – year programme in curriculum development (Sierra Leone), Masters course in educational evaluation (Nigeria), one year post-graduate basic training course in systematic curriculum development for specialist (funded by GTZ).

created the capacity to read, analyze, interpret, develop and or reform appropriate curriculum content for implementing the over-challenging global, regional and local commitments. Table number 1 above (pp. 16-17) is a testimony of failure in these areas on the part of Tanzania, a situation most likely embraced by the majority of countries in the regional Africa.

AU is engaging in "Unified States of Africa", and free movement of labour and common curriculum standards. The question is, what is the available capacity at ground to champion the AU initiatives? What made the African leaders and ACO pioneers to abandon pursuing an agenda for Africa Centre for Capacity Building in Curriculum. The UNESCO-BEAP is mostly likely to face a similar capacity constraints unless immediate measures are in lace to create the necessary human resource support.

The majority of university courses in curriculum are still purely academic, reproducing theoretical models on curriculum development. Move has been little, if any, to institute a course on techniques of curriculum development, implementation and evaluation. Courses focusing on developing candidates' awareness of the relationship between education and social change and the basic hands-on techniques on curriculum development are hard to find.

Much has changed in curriculum theoretical approaches and practices across nations. Benchmarking opportunities are least if any, and educators, professional bodies and universities have closed their eyes on building the capacities on curriculum development and reform in the region.

**The Current Movements and Re-thinking in Curriculum**

This paper calls for concerted efforts between local, regional and international agents to re-think building the capacity of curriculum developers and institutions. This call is timely in the wake of global move toward inclusive curriculum (under UNESCO initiative), the regional AU/SADC harmonization of curriculum and the concern of creating global harmony and integration as defined in the different international declarations and goals.

There is, therefore, an urgent need for intercession in curriculum by building regional capacity for effective implementation of a formal, non-formal and informal curriculum. We need professional personnel that can translate the different policies, goals, objectives and expectations into school contexts, and graduates capable of serving the ever-changing demands for socio-economic and political development in different nations. Curriculum harmonization, competence based curriculum and inclusive curriculum are likely to remain a dream unless there is a critical mass of professional curriculum development experts furnished with the right knowledge and skills to put the initiatives into practice.

The reiterated weaknesses are not only a threat to the ongoing processes to harmonize curriculum across the AU, the SADC and EAC, but jeopardize efforts for free labour movements in the different countries. Embracing curriculum harmonization among the regional countries without taking stock of the capacity at ground, will result into a wider gap in common understanding about the jig between quality curriculum, schooling and quality education which will put nations into chaos and waste of educational funds (Mosha 2006).

The challenge to harmonize curriculum is faced with a critical shortage of human resource capacity especially in striking a balance between the global issues (MDGs, EFA) and regional challenges (free movement of labour) and emerging philosophy on curriculum (inclusiveness, competence based, learner-centered pedagogy, enhanced success in learning and the development of ICT based pedagogy, content and teacher development programmes). It is most unlikely that the current human resource capacity in African ministries of education and curriculum development institutions can cope with the emerging curriculum challenges if we are to prepare an AU pool of competent graduates responsive to the future demands of the socio-economic and political development in Africa. The programme-driven African educational systems, with little use of research based curriculum development, exacerbates this problem[17]. The rift has widened in the collapse of ACO capacity building initiative among curriculum development centers in Africa. This collapse is untimely as the African regional countries in the coming of the 21st Century are now engaged in rampant

[17] The only comprehensive research based inquiry into education in Tanzania is the 1982 Presidential Commission into Education led by Hon. Makweta, Minister for Education by then and a team of 10 highly educated professionals.

reforms .

Bearing in mind that curriculum reform is an ongoing process, indispensable to unfolding educational paradigms, capacity building should not be a single-short-time intervention. It should be a dynamic process of empowering the actors in education and the supporting structures and institutions to enable them cope effectively with the future demands in curriculum development. This drive should specifically sharpen curriculum developers' skills for effective response to challenges engulfing the curriculum, social improvements, scientific and technological organization, and the concerns to improve the quality of education and clarity of educational purpose. Behind these forces are the change in the structure and conception of education stages adopted by Spain in the 1990s, which led to profound revision of curriculum contents. The secondary education experimental reforms in the 1980s, for example, led to ambitious curriculum reform in the 1990s, based on constructivist educational psychology approaches. These changes are, however, not well articulated by the majority of educational practitioners[18].

**Competing with Emerging Approaches to Educational Planning**

Specific to the African region, the adoption of sector-wide approaches to planning, the educational sector development programmes and performance assessment has posed some challenge.

In order for the education sector to function properly and responsibly, it should provide answers to the following basic questions:

*What is the student, graduate profile to achieve as the leaner moves from one grade-level to another and from one sub-sector to another?*
*What type of knowledge, skills, attitudes, values is the learner expected to develop as he/she progresses through the educational system?*
*What profile of teachers is required for this?*
*What should be the curriculum content and how should it be defined?*
*What job profiles and what citizen profiles do the countries in Africa want to achieve through education?*
*What is the profile of the Africa child?*

[18] Shortage of competent workers is a crisis heightening in most institutions of curriculum development as they face digital age where many events have changed and shaped new world views and work ethics (Braslavsky and Werthein 2004).

Curriculum is the tool that a society may use to achieve the required learner's profiles. The affirmation for African vision, a United Africa and putting the African child at the centre of curriculum development, needs a platform for knowledge creation, sharing, transfer and networking.

**African Led Initiative and Rationale for the** ACECT

The educational sector worldwide continues to change in the struggle to provide answers to the questions raised above. Curriculum is the tool that a society may use to achieve the required learner's profiles. A coordinated approach to curriculum development in African countries is crucial and urgent since there is a fragmented approach to curriculum development and low capacity for curriculum development at national levels, besides implementation and assessment. This gap is research-based and is responsible to the ineffective implementation of the Brussels Declaration (2000) and the Maputo Declaration of 2005/6. Recent efforts to revitalize and strengthen inter-African cooperation will not be sustainable if the capacity issue is not re-dressed.

The African countries have their particularities. However, effective implementation of the 2nd Education Decade for Africa calls for a coordinated approach to curriculum development; research and material development and implementation and capacity building through training. Articulating visions, developing common approaches to curriculum development and a unified approach to curriculum development, experience sharing, inter-African cooperation, regional platform for debates and capacity building through training, networking, and knowledge transfers is crucial.

The MDGs, EFA and lifelong learning and the African Union's vision of teaching history and civic education to the African child is hard to achieve if the national curricula remain fragmented and the capacity of curriculum development, research and training of implementer institutions are not strengthened.

**The Intercession and Provisional Training Areas in Curriculum**

This proposal is set to raise concern of the different stakeholders in building capacity in

curriculum development. The various professional development models agree, however, that the starting point should be on needs assessment from the African regional contexts. Currently, the common areas for training in curriculum include the following general but provisional course content areas. The proposed training is based on about 20 different countries' needs, arrived at through face-to-face discussion and email correspondence.

**Table No. 2: Proposed Areas for Capacity Building in Curriculum**

- Approaches to curriculum development process
- Issues in curriculum implementation
- Systematic approach to curriculum reform
- Theory and practice in curriculum development
- Curriculum and educational personnel
- Curriculum research and evaluation
- Production and evaluation of curriculum materials
- Design and development of inclusive curriculum
- Developing ICT-based curriculum
- Main streaming cross-cutting issues and/or entrepreneurship in education
- Developing competence based and learner-centered curriculum

**Current Opportunities and Way Forward**

ESACO has formed a 15-member-country with a 5-member-bureau which oversees the implementation of organizational activities, though inactively, including Botswana, Lesotho, Rwanda, Tanzania and Zambia. UNESCO has formed a Community of Practice (CoP) and BEAP initiative. The later has since 2007 been launched in Gambia, Seychelles, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Tanzania and initiatives are on the way to launch it in , all African countries in the next two years. The two activities have networked interactions among more than 20 African countries focusing on curriculum issues and capacity building.

Currently, a forum on curriculum and book writing involving 22 African countries took

place in in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania[19]. In his opening remark, the Hon. Minister for Education and Vocational Training in Tanzania affirmed the government's mission to transform TIE into a centre for excellence in curriculum and training in Africa. This spirit is in tandem with the AU initiative which evolves into engaging African education officials and Ministers into a forum on education and curriculum on a continuous basis . The move is also synonymous to that of the Commonwealth of African Countries. These are a few examples of the opportunities that have already created a common agenda toward creating a better-informed population of education and curriculum issues in Africa. Mapping, documenting and mobilizing reachable agents and initiatives in capacity building in curriculum and education in general can create a profound building block for the proposal to establish a centre for excellence in curriculum in Africa.

**Expected UNESCO Response**

This proposal calls for a dialogue between the UNESCO IBE and the Tanzania Institute of Education under the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training to engage into the creation of ACECT in Africa. As a renowned pioneer in financing curriculum reform studies since 1970, and a champion to BEAP initiatives and curriculum dialogue in Africa and Latin American countries, UNESCO is in a position to champion the capacity building agenda. Through mobilization of her own resources and those of other interested stakeholders and development partners, UNESCO can to begin the process of redressing the capacity building of curriculum developers and institutions in Africa. This was evident in the April 2009 BEAP Conference in Bagamoyo Tanzania, whose deliverables included a development of BEAP roadmap by 9 African country participants (Kenya, Uganda, Seychelles, Gambia, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Tanzania, Mauritius and Côte d'Ivoire) in April 2009. This was followed by a proposal for a training programme using the UNESCO curriculum resource pack.

**The Successes of the April BEAP Conference**

The roadmap to transforming TIE into African Centre for Excellence in Curriculum and Training (ACECT) is a realization by UNESCO in partnership with the Institute by funding the first of such training which took place between 25th July to 5th August 2009

[19] AU Conference, 24th to 27th March 2009 was the first one on curriculum, education and training and book writing to be undertaken by the AU. The conference took place at Tulip Hotel, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

drawing 50 participants from 9 countries including Seychelles, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Zambia, Djibouti, Ethiopia and the host Tanzania. The UNESCO curriculum resource pack was revised and adopted by a team of pan-African specialist through IBE networked online technical support. This platform enriched the generic pack taking into account regional needs. The third spill-over effect was for each of the 9 participants to mount in-country training programmes under UNESCO support between November to December 2009 followed by a fourth training of a group of 9 African Francophone countries using a French version of the UNESCO curriculum training material. A successful translation was of the English version was done under IBE-TIE partnership between November and December 2009 and the training is envisages to take place in Tanzania Institute of Education between February and March 2010 followed by a launching of BEAP in Comoro and Mauritius. A platform for regional online discussion in curriculum issues is in the offing following UNESCO's support of 15 computers and the Institute's contribution of setting up a computer laboratory for the purpose. There is, however, a need to recruit more competent personnel on contract terms to support this initiatives.

The series of the afore-cited milestones is a testimony that UNESCO and TIE are in the right road-map toward a phase approach to the establishment of the proposed centre for excellence in curriculum and training. A business plan to effect this initiative is in the offing while efforts to mobilize resources both human and physical to house and run the programmes continue.

The success of the April BEAP conference should awaken the African Regional countries, Ministries of Education and Institutes of curriculum development to be proactive in networking in the curriculum development activities. UNESCO has shown the way, and therefore, let all African countries and IBE experts lead the way by creating a cost effective field oriented regional centre with international and pan-Africa expertise on curriculum development. The centre through collaborative nets will also bring together the international and comparative dimension to knowledge creation and production, capacity development and policy dialogue in Africa, serving as a tripartite synergy of the three IBE curriculum development pillars. TIE is therefore requesting for technical support from IBE to transform it into adding value to UNESCO's educational commitment encompassing governance, management, institutional linkages, resources, partnerships and visibility with the view for supporting processes of curriculum change

and development within the BEAP framework.

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