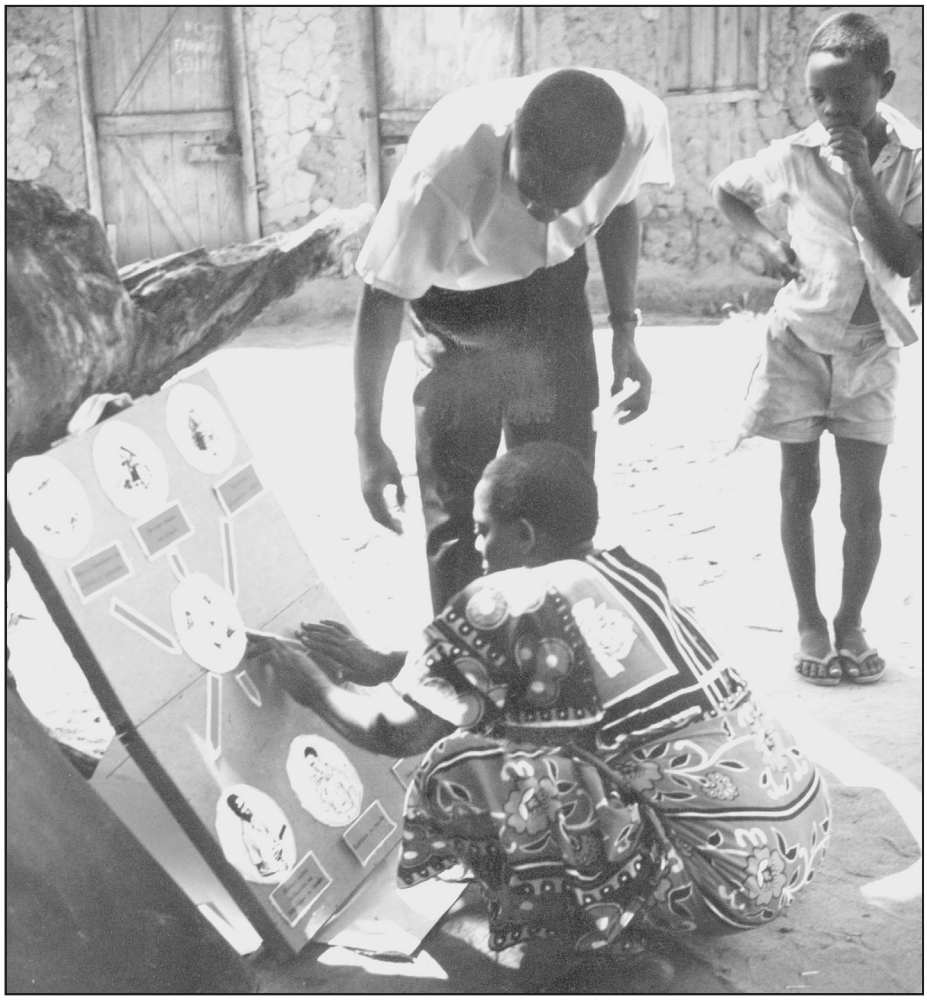
New Education Division Documents No. 11

Folk Development Education and Democracy in a Development Perspective

Personal accounts and reflections

By Folke Albinson, Johan Norbeck and Rolf Sundén



Sida

SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AGENCY

Department for Democracy and Social Development, DESO
Education Division

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Foreword

Sweden has a long tradition and experience of popular adult education which has played an important role in the transition from the traditional, predominantly agricultural Sweden to the modern society of today. This vast experience could also be of interest for many developing countries today, where popular adult education has a role to play to develop the potential of many human beings and institutions.

Adult education has also been, and still is, a prioritised area for Swedish support to the education sector in developing countries. Sida has given support to adult education projects in various countries for a number of years. During the the last few decades such projects have engaged a number of Swedish adult education experts in various positions for longer or for shorter periods of time.

Three of them have written accounts of their experiences and observations from their years in service in various countries within the framework of Swedish development cooperation, from projects that have been supported. The contributions from these three authors, Folke Albinson, Johan Norbeck and Rolf Sundén, were published in Swedish under the title "Folkbildning som bistånd" in 2000 by the Centre for Adult Educators at the Linköping University in Sweden. The lessons learned and the experiences from a variety of settings, are, however, of interest also to the broader adult education community in the world, and therefore Sida has decided to translate it into English and publish it in the New Education Division Series as a contribution to the international debate on adult education, especially in the context of developing countries.

We would like to extend our thanks to the authors for the efforts they have made when contracted in the context of Swedish international development cooperation, and for their engagement that did not end with their assignments but have been sustained over time as demonstrated by their contributions in this publication. Promotion of democracy and the role of adult education in that perspective is one of the main themes in their accounts. However, they reflect not only on the potential of adult education but also on the problems and difficulties they have encountered and the lessons that can be learned from them.

The views in the articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of Sida.

Stockholm in May 2002

Ewa Werner-Dahlin
Head of Education Division

Executive Summary

Building democracy

In the Introduction we point out that democracy is very much emphasized these days in the world of international development co-operation. Adult education is not. We deplore the fact that few people see the relationship between the two. Furthermore, when democratic development is supported by donor countries, the emphasis is on democratic infrastructure, while little is done to increase the possibilities of ordinary citizens to become well-informed and active in the process of building democracy at the local level. No real democracy can be established without democratic citizens.

Folk Development Education

We emphasize the role of Folk Development Education in this context. This Nordic form of adult education has shown its strength as a powerful tool for building democracy for more than one hundred years. We contend that it has been an open forum for true dialogue and that it has stimulated the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes in a way that has enabled ordinary citizens to take an active part in political reforms. We go on to describe how our own development co-operation work has had Folk Development Education as its basic source of inspiration and we draw a very personal picture of what it stands for.

Five cases of development co-operation

In five chapters five individual cases are presented from our long experience of work as adult educators in foreign countries: Zambia, Portugal, Ethiopia and Tanzania. We show how we co-operated with our counterparts, how we used the folk development education tools in practice, and how we tried to practise what we preached. Our cases not only describe how we worked in order to facilitate the development of democracy at a local level. They also deal with our views on how to conduct development co-operation and how we tried to implement them in practice.

One feature of the five cases is our critical reflection on our particular projects and on our own thinking and behaviour at the time. On the basis of this we draw conclusions, both general and specific, often in the form of direct and indirect advice to planners of development co-operation projects and future field workers in similar situations.

Joint comments

The book ends with a special chapter, Joint comments. There we discuss the problems brought up in our five cases and generalise our thinking on adult education and development co-operation for democracy.

Firstly, we take up what we consider to be *Important responsibilities in adult education development co-operation*: working with the underprivileged where the democratic process has already started; literacy work; training of leaders; deliberate democratisation.

Secondly, we discuss *Some conditions for successful adult education support*: pay attention to the dialogue; acceptance and support for the project; relationships between theory/ideology and practice; preparatory training and back-up.

The Authors

Introduction

We are among the adult educators who, for a few years around 1970, participated in the major adult education project in Tanzania. At that time, a great deal of the original popular movement spirit could still be seen in Swedish international development cooperation. A contribution of an adult education character gave further emphasis to this profile. However, the Tanzanian project was not a Swedish idea. It originated in a request from Julius Nyerere, Tanzania's president at that time, who came into contact with Swedish adult education during a visit to Sweden. Now that his people had gained political independence, he wanted to see a trend towards greater self-reliance and democracy. He regarded adult education as one of the most important ways of achieving this.

As aid workers we could hardly have been given a more favourable start. Our work had high priority in the country we came to. The president himself was one of the best interpreters of the meaning of adult education that we had ever met. He elaborated his thoughts on the subject in his speeches and books – now classics in international adult education literature. This experience gave us lifelong inspiration. We could describe ourselves as long distance commuters in our work with development cooperation and adult education: our periods at home were succeeded by periods in distant countries, mostly in Africa.

It was not only in Tanzania that adult education was of topical importance 30 years ago. It was in fashion in many places in the world of development cooperation. It was regarded as an important instrument to achieve a better and richer life. Not least, it would give people the opportunity to live their everyday lives in a better way – with better food, better health, better housing. Social development would be based on the participation of the citizens themselves. It was also through this that we felt that adult education could be given an important role for democratic development. The democracy aspect was obvious, but was not mentioned to any great extent.

The love affair was short-lived, in Tanzania as well. Not many years were to pass before the budget for the project started to be tightened up. The economic crisis led to other priorities from the mid 1970s. SIDA followed suit. The project was put on ice in the very middle of the building-up phase. However, traces of the project can still be found, not only in Tanzania but also in other African countries for which the project developed more or less into a model.

Today the entire world of international development cooperation talks about democracy. Adult education is hardly ever mentioned. Few people seem to see the relationship between the two. Support for democracy is mostly provided in order to strengthen the democratic infrastructure in the partner countries. This is important, but the work often comes to a standstill at this very point: rules and regulations for conducting elections, legislation on human rights and privileges, the court and police system, taxation and audit agencies, and so on. Little attention is given to the problem of making it possible for the citizens to create their own picture of society and to become engaged in developing it. For us in particular, it is this that is the core of democracy. It is not enough that everybody is entitled to vote for a number of alternatives. What is important is participating in the design and formulation of the alternatives. Without informed and active citizens there is a great risk that democracy will be nothing more than an empty shell – without visions and weak civil support. Without democrats there is no democracy.

For us it is important to recall the role of the kind of adult education that we call ”folk development education”. In the Nordic countries it has served as a source of democratic strength for more than 100 years.

Folk development education is profoundly democratic in its outlook on man and society, in its theory and its practice. Its emphasis is on human development rather than formal qualifications. It was initiated and run by popular movements, private organisations or groups of citizens. It is outside, and independent of, the formal education system.

Folk development education has had the character of an open meeting place for dialogues between different approaches and attitudes. This has enabled it to stimulate knowledge, skills and attitudes that have been important tools in the exercise of civil rights and obligations and hence, also, in political reforms. Hitherto, this experience has only been tested on a modest scale in programmes of development cooperation.

It is not only the donors who make demands for democratic development. These demands also come from within the countries themselves. Far too many people have considered themselves to be the victims of ruthless rampages of power-crazy autocrats for far too long. The need of people to have power over their lives and existence is growing stronger. For these people democracy offers the opportunity to gain this power. Therefore it may now be easier to use adult education as a means to achieve democratic development than it was one or two decades ago.

What concrete contributions can Swedish adult education make in this important work? The accounts that we provide below are an attempt to shed light on this question. A decisive factor for our involvement in this field of work was the foothold we had in Swedish folk development education, primarily the Swedish folk high school, before we started. In the beginning we did not understand the importance of this starting point. We believed that our approaches and methods were naturally of equal value to our new colleagues as they were to us. We soon realised that this was far from always the case. However, for us they were important and they have continued to be so. The contours of our approach to adult education can be described in the following way:

- To us folk development education is a way of approaching people, knowledge and learning. Its foundation is respect for the intrinsic value of each human being. No one may be treated as a tool for others. All people shall be free in the sense that they shall be able to resist domination and oppression, shall dare to formulate and stand for their own opinions and values. They shall have the possibility, throughout their lives, to develop new sides of themselves, seek meaning and consummation, and be a resource for others to an ever increasing extent.
- The view of knowledge in folk development education is characterised by openness, breadth and tolerance. It seeks clarity, insight and context – knowledge that extends the limits of experience and actions, stimulates creativity, and provides the tools for taking action in the prevailing reality.
- The learning process connected to this approach, promotes one’s own search for knowledge and serious, critical listening. This means learning in cooperation with others, learning in which all parties give and take regardless of authority, status and age.
- For us this kind of education is a democratic process, based on solidarity between people. It promotes equality and counteracts hierarchical structures at all levels. It adopts a definite standpoint in favour of those who are excluded, who are disadvantaged.

This we had in common. If our accounts give another impression, this is due to other circumstances, mainly to the fact that we have drawn our examples from different political, cultural, social and economic contexts. We have done this since we want to show subtle differences in the conditions for education in development cooperation. Our work, for example, in the military dictatorship in Ethiopia could hardly be done in the same way as in Portugal shortly after the fall of the Salazar regime. The conditions were far too different. The fact that our experiences are taken from different points in time is also of significance since, among other things, it reflects the shift in Swedish development cooperation policy. It is also obvious that differences in our concrete duties as well as in our personal dispositions and our somewhat different professional backgrounds have also had an effect on our work.

We also had a great deal of curiosity and respect for the foreign environments and cultures we encountered. Would it be possible to forge the ideas we took with us with the knowledge that already existed in the countries? Would we be able to create something better together with our new colleagues? This is what our accounts take up. From an internal perspective, they describe the problems and potential in the meetings with colleagues, institutions and experience in different environments. Perhaps they can be of use to the many people that we hope will undertake this important work in the future. We also hope that they pass on the meaningfulness that we experienced in our work.

In our accounts we describe the progress made in the different projects and how we, and our partners in cooperation, chose to act in different situations. Sometimes we stop and make a critical analysis of a certain course of events. Then we often add some more, generally applicable, reflections. Partly as a way of supplementing these reflections, we have added a chapter, ”Joint Comments”, after our case studies. This chapter contains points of view of a more overall character on development cooperation through folk development education.

Cooperative Education in Zambia

by Folke Albinson

From the beginning of 1980 I was attached for a period of three years to the new national school for cooperative education, Cooperative College (CC), which was situated on the outskirts of Lusaka. My assignment during the development of the College phase was twofold: to act as adviser and counterpart to the Zambian principal in matters concerning school management, and to lead the educational development work at CC. The school was included in the Swedish programme of support which had been given to the Zambian farmers' cooperative movement since the beginning of the 1970s. The main aim of the programme was to contribute to developing the organisation into a strong interest organisation, owned and run on democratic principles, for small farmers in Zambia.

I would first like to give a few examples of how we worked, with this purpose in mind, on shaping the new training programme. The examples illustrate how I made use, in various ways, of my previous experience of educational development and administration of adult education. In the final part of this chapter I will give a picture of the forces which, in parallel, drove the cooperative movement in the diametrically opposite direction. I do this with the aid of the history of the cooperative movement in Zambia. It illustrates, in an almost over-explicit way, some of the demands made by external forces, most often the state, on popular movements in Africa and Asia. This is not an edifying story, but is possibly instructive for those interested in the conditions of democracy and the potential of adult education.

The new school

The school had been built at the request of Zambia and had been financed within the framework of the joint support provided by the Swedish cooperative movement and SIDA for the cooperative movement in Zambia. However, training for cooperative activities was not new in Zambia. It had started as early as in the 1950s. For a long time it took place on a modest scale, under difficult conditions and without access to permanent premises. With support from the Swedish Cooperative Centre (SCC) and SIDA and with the participation of Swedish co-operators and adult educationists, the training had been expanded in the 1970s. With the aid of a model from Tanzania, where cooperation with the Swedish cooperative movement had started earlier, so-called Cooperative Wings had been formed in several provinces, and a cooperative centre had started to arrange courses centrally and produce study materials in temporary premises. A good foundation was thus being laid for the future, but the need of a permanent centre for the management and coordination of cooperative education had grown. The new school was therefore much longed-for as a stabilising and life-giving force for cooperative education, as well as for the entire cooperative movement. In consideration of the climate and its intended function, the school was a congenial creation, built with local materials. It was officially opened by President Kaunda in October 1979.

From the popular movement perspective it was of course disturbing that the school was formally a state-owned institution. But there were few protests in the Zambian cooperative movement. The state had always had a free hand in the cooperative field, so this was not new. Moreover the movement was financially unsound and lacked the necessary resources to run the school itself. Neither did the state, of course.

This made the Swedish support particularly welcome and contributed to the effect that we were given relatively free hands in the design of the new training programme.

The CC's role was to lead and coordinate centrally all the training of cooperative leaders, employees and members at all levels. Today, when almost everything connected with education and training is neglected in the Zambian cooperative movement, it can be difficult to imagine the rapid developments that took place during the first few years. In 1982 the total number of participants amounted to some 56,000. This figure includes all participants: those on one-year residential courses to those in study circles. The CC's capacity was 90 residential places. These were used for three parallel series of courses, conferences and seminars with a throughput of 1,000 to 1,500 participants each year. In addition to this the school was also responsible for correspondence courses, the production of a cooperative information programme, which was broadcast on the radio once a week, and for the management, coordination and production of study materials for the local study circles. In each of the nine provinces there was a group of cooperative study instructors whose work we supported through the production of study materials, participation in their courses and annual conferences at the school.

Other important development components included the building up of three basic resources for training. One was the library. We imagined the library as a future base for cooperative ideas and knowledge, not only for Zambia but also for some neighbouring countries with which we had started to exchange experience. The objective was to increase the stock of books by some 1,000 volumes per year with the aid of donors and aid agencies. In this we were successful for the first few years. The second basic resource was the printing function. This resource made the school self-sufficient in the production of study materials, correspondence courses, periodicals etc, and it also generated income through external orders. The third resource was a farm of a few hectares which enabled us to benefit from the fertile Zambian soil. The farm consisted of a kitchen garden for the cultivation of fruit and vegetables for the school kitchen, and an experimental area for educational purposes.

It would perhaps have been possible to achieve the rapid results with the aid of a model based on authoritative commands. This would have been well in line with the administrative tradition whose foundation was laid during the colonial era and which was now being fostered in the state post-colonial administration, with its authoritarian and hierarchic structure, decisions taken behind closed doors, and dictates from above. But then we would have created a school that was scarcely representative of the popular movement that we imagined that the Zambian cooperative movement was or at least should have been. And for my part this tradition was nothing for me. We therefore proceeded in another way.

Planning from the top-down, or vice-versa

Traditionally planning should take place from the top down, from the centre out to the people on the periphery. I, of course, wanted to do the reverse. Therefore, in the beginning I spent most of my time visiting some provinces – Central Province around the "Copperbelt", Eastern Province around Chipata and Southern Province around Choma. It started with some unexpected lessons on the very first day when travelling in the car together with a civil servant from the Ministry of Agriculture. He was a talkative man with political ambitions and he entertained me with drastic episodes

from that arena. I was given glimpses into a world which, according to him, was mainly populated by corrupt idlers and liars who were doing their best to line their own pockets at the expense of others. This was in glaring contrast to my previous conceptions of African politicians as idealistic, clean-living men for whom the code of leadership made the smallest brood of chicks in the backyard a suspicious source of unlawful extra income. This is how I had experienced Tanzania in the beginning of the 1970s. According to my informant, the cooperative leaders in Zambia were scarcely better than the political leaders. In any case it was easy to count the genuine cooperative workers. And the members knew nothing about the cooperative movement. He claimed that many believed that the unions were owned by their chairmen. The members regarded themselves as a type of employee.

The dark picture of the country's leadership that my informant gave me assumed a somewhat different light when I heard later that he was intending to stand as a candidate in the forthcoming Parliamentary elections. He needed a dark background in order to stand out as the knight in shining armour for the people in his constituency.

The car journey had provided good entertainment, but it also gave me a great deal to think about. This was also the case in my further trips around the country. Every new meeting gave additional nuances to my picture of reality, perhaps not so much the political picture as the cooperative. The latter proved to be really variegated. I met leaders and study organisers who were probably far superior to any Swedish cooperative worker where knowledge of cooperative ideology and strategy was concerned – insights that they had acquired at such well-known cooperative institutes as Loughborough in England and Cody in Canada. Other leaders talked about the cooperative activities as if they were military commanders. They were of the opinion that with clearer directives, sharper commands and better order in the ranks, all problems would soon be overcome.

Whenever I could, I asked about the group it was most important to arrange training for. Most felt that it was the leaders who needed training most. There was a clear distrust of the leaders. The answers given by the leaders themselves were mixed, apart from those who were in the highest positions. They all wanted to participate in training themselves, but not at CC but in Europe or the USA.

It was with the picture of a cooperative reality with a number of deficiencies that I then started the everyday work at the school. There it was now a case of finding, together with my new colleagues and other members of staff, the right priorities, content and structure for the training programmes. I could still hear the worries that had so often been expressed about the leaders. The members' accounts of how they felt so exposed and vulnerable to the whims of the leaders and the state, reminded me of an old expression: *what you do not understand you cannot control*. If the training of members should ever be of any use, it had to be here. I was convinced of this. But how should it be done? And what should we do in other matters?

Fortunately I had some wise people to discuss with – Edmond Mughandila, a veteran of the cooperative movement and friend of Sweden, Dux Halubobya, the driving force in the savings bank movement, Vincent Lubazi, the prospective principal, and Henry Blid, my predecessor, who had pieced together the difficult puzzle of building the school and arranging the first courses etc. We wanted the school's programmes to be shaped and given integrity by a circle of Zambian cooperative workers who combined first-rate knowledge of cooperative reality with confidence in the potential of the training. We decided to adopt a *two-stage strategy*.

The first stage was to invite some thirty handpicked cooperative workers to CC for a few intensive days in order to confront them with vital questions for our planning, for example current training needs in different parts of the country, priorities in the short and long term, realistic objectives for the next few years, improving access to training particularly for women, possibilities of cooperating with other organisations, and so on.

The interest and commitment shown by the participants at the workshop, and the resultant impulses and ideas, had the effect that we felt we had a sound foundation for the next stage in the planning process. This was to draw up a document containing proposals for guidelines for cooperative training in Zambia 1981-1985 and to present this document for discussion and approval at the third national cooperative conference in August 1980. This work mostly proceeded very smoothly – despite the large number of people involved – not least due to the fact that we had a highly capable person, Stephen Muyaka, who took care of most of the writing. He had recently been employed by the school after four years' studies at the cooperative department at the university in Marburg. The discussions at the conference in August were more or less a formality. No serious objections were raised despite the fact that we had included many questionable components in the plans, for example peripatetic short courses, distance teaching and study circle studies. We breathed out. We had been given the mandate we felt we needed in order to start work on the implementation of the plan, the second stage in our strategy.

Working environment and management

In parallel with the work on the training programme, we had started to tackle miscellaneous internal administration matters that were necessary to solve in order to make life at the school proceed well. These matters covered everything from management styles to shift-work routines in the school kitchen. Zambian public administration tradition prescribes an authoritarian structure. In this structure the manager lays down how things shall be, everyone remains at their post, and questions are a sign of insubordination. The cooperative ideology wanted something else: cooperation based on equality and co-determination.

In other words the question was whether the school should practise what it preached, or whether we, somnambulistically, should allow the old, common gulf between ideology and reality to grow wider. The problem was that only a few persons close to me considered the question to be particularly important. Many years' service in the Zambian public administration had made a lasting impression. But not on everyone. Some were delighted to come to grips with the issue, for example Makungu who had legal training. He had considerable experience of rebel activities. As a student leader and strike activist during his student years at the university he had been sentenced to prison and expelled from further studies at the university. But he had also shown evidence of acumen and purposefulness. Thanks to these qualities he had succeeded in winning over university leadership in his cause to resume his studies. He then completed his law studies and graduated from the university.

Initially, the most important aspect was to make the questions visible and distinct in order to discuss them and arrive at a decision. Fortunately the ground had already been prepared for this. During our work on the training plan we had created forms for discussions and consultations in important questions in all areas – one for the

small management group, one for the teaching staff of some 15 persons, and finally one for all members of staff. These provided "platforms" where arguments could be tested against each other, for example on the division of responsibilities, access to information, co-determination for course participants and so on.

A great deal of time was spent on the issue of building in assurances that CC would continue as a living cooperative school. The future would show that our concern was well-founded. It was not just the Swedes who were temporary presences in the life of the school. Many Zambians would also prove to be mobile. The most competent were soon promoted to higher positions, foreign scholarships made the teaching staff transitory, death at a young age took others.

It was also a case of creating interest and pleasure in the work of the staff. We could not do much about the pay structure. But we could, if we wished, give everyone the opportunity to influence their working situation and feel they were making a contribution to the life and work of the school in general. The basic idea was that it should be possible to make working days at the school more meaningful.

One of the most important results we achieved was in the case of *staff management*. We subsequently agreed that everyone in a management position should make use of the following rules of thumb when dealing with tricky issues:

1. Formulate and present the issue/problem to the staff concerned.
2. Initiate discussions on how the issue/problem should be handled
3. Present conceivable alternative solutions and try to reach agreement on one alternative.
4. Decide when, where, how and by whom the work should be done.
5. Keep an eye on implementation and, if it does not work, start again.

Conflicts among the staff had started to surface at an early stage. These were due to misunderstandings about their own duties and the duties of other members of staff. The total number of employees was about 100 and it proved to be the case that most of them had very vague ideas of what was expected of them, few had experience of working in such a large and complicated organisation as the school, and many had little experience of the duties they had been recruited to perform. One important decision to create a good working climate was that individual *job descriptions* should be drawn up for all members of staff. We were anxious that everyone should participate in the work that concerned themselves. It took time to introduce and discuss the organisation of the work. And then even more time to implement it. But in any case in a short-term perspective we were able to enjoy a better working climate.

However, daily life at the school obviously did not want to conform willingly to our decisions, which had been made in more or less democratic forms. One afternoon, in the middle of all the planning and just a few days before the start of term, almost all the staff suddenly and apparently without reason disappeared from the school. The gatekeeper and a cleaner were the only people I saw. All work came to a standstill. I was assailed by a feeling of unreality and dizziness. It felt rather like losing my foothold on an icy street. I got the explanation from our old cook, "Papa", who I found sitting on a bench in the shade. He had returned to his home country in a somewhat alcoholised condition after working for 25 years in a restaurant kitchen in South Africa. He had to take every opportunity to rest his tired body. This was the reason why he was still at the school and could reveal to me where the others were. They had left to attend the funeral of a relative of one of the employees.

”But why everyone?”, I asked. ”The dead person was not even employed at the school, he was just a relative of someone here.”

”You don’t understand,” said Papa. ”Everyone here knew the dead person and the funeral is the last chance to show respect for the dead person. This is extremely important. The spirit of the dead person is now observing who is there and showing how deeply they feel their loss. This is the last thing the spirit notes before he takes his place among all the other spirits in the space around us and runs our lives.”

I understood from the ghost of a smile on Papa’s lips that he himself had some doubts that everything actually functioned in this way. But most people clearly had no doubts. They saw continuous proof of the spirits’ terrible and apparently arbitrary acts behind many events that happened at the school – the accountant’s unexpected death from poisoning after a visit to his wife’s home village, the sudden death of a little boy in the arms of one of the gatekeepers, the continual recurrent thefts of tomatoes from the foreman’s fine garden, the terrible attacks of stomach cramp among the kitchen staff, and so on. The few possibilities open to us to influence the working situation at the school carried little weight against forces of that type.

The teachers’ role

It proved to be equally necessary to discuss the relationship between the school’s ideology and aims on the one hand and its ways of working on the other in relation to both the content and methods used in the teaching. Most teachers regarded the two aspects as completely separate subject areas. In certain lessons a teacher went into depth in the one, in other lessons into the other. Ideology was ideology and practical training was practical training. They were of the opinion that linking the two together would only create confusion.

It was very much a question of the teachers’ attitudes towards their work. From their first class in primary school to their last year at university they had been shaped in an authoritarian type of sorting system, whose basic principle was obedience. The role of the teacher was that of the autocratic executor. The lesson for life was: Repeat and obey what the teacher says. If you succeed in doing this, you will be rewarded with a good certificate which will be your ticket to the next level in the hierarchy. If you fail, it is your own fault.

The system, like the view of mankind it is based on, is known all over the world. It is what Freire called ”the banking system”. The capital – knowledge – is possessed by the teacher and he lays down the conditions under which the students can acquire it. The student comes to the class as an empty vessel and is unable to contribute anything. The everyday reality that the student comes from is as uninteresting within the walls of the school as the student himself. This is perhaps most serious from the democratic perspective in which so much is based on using knowledge as a means to understand, analyse and to be able to intervene in the very world one lives in.

Naturally, a teacher’s role based on the ”banking system” has no place in the cooperative context. But the teachers were there and this was the professional role that, with few exceptions, they brought with them. The situation was not improved by the fact that most of them had little experience of how cooperative activities were actually run in practice. The grains of cooperative wisdom taken from the world of books that they spread in the classrooms could not always conceal the shortcomings in their knowledge

of cooperative reality. The course participants were often very perceptive in this respect.

It was necessary to stir things up – to create a radical change in attitudes to the role of teachers and students in the teaching situation. The point of departure was originally a theoretical, academic approach to different cooperative issues, but this was changed. The point of departure became the course participant and the local situation in his/her cooperative society or union. We could not have succeeded in changing this basic attitude without external assistance. I contacted the Ugandan educationist and cooperative worker, Charles Kabuga, whom I had known earlier and who was working in the International Cooperative Alliance's regional office in Tanzania. He gained the full attention of the teachers on his very first visit to us when, with the aid of practical African examples, he brought to life the relationships between ideologies, views on mankind and teaching methods. He succeeded in placing the local cooperative worker in the local village cooperative society in the centre of the educational thinking which now started to pervade CC.

Eventually we felt that we were mature enough to draw up the first draft *syllabuses* for the training. We had three levels to plan for: local, regional and national. There were also three main target groups: members, employees and leaders/functionaries. The scope of the programme was impressive – from peripatetic one-day courses to meet the needs of local societies to a one-year management course at CC. One central theme of all the programmes was to shed light on how cooperative ideology and business activities could be combined in cooperative practice, that they are two sides of the same coin. Practical cases, role play and other methods that had the aim of activating participants proved to be the best instruments to give prominence to the complicated process that this can be in practical activities. We had great benefit of material produced by the international project led by Lennart Skaaret, MATCOM – Material and Techniques for Cooperative Management Training.

The first attempt – which took us ten working days at a residential centre to complete – was followed by others for revising and supplementing the syllabuses. The range of courses offered can be seen in an appendix to this chapter.

The results of the work on pedagogical change eventually also started to be discerned in the teaching. Everyday realities of cooperative life started to replace bookish discourse as the focal point of the teaching. The reports and accounts of the course participants on the state of affairs in their home societies became a type of source material for the teaching. The teachers also started to ask questions, not merely to answer them. They were anxious, in a different way than before, to keep up-to-date with the cooperative reality, even at local society level.

One day we understood that one of the consequences of the new role for teachers – if it was to become something more than a passing internal fancy – were radical changes in *the teachers' duties*. This led eventually to something we called "the fourth formula". It was given this name since the working time of the teachers over the year would be broken down into four different duties which would take approximately equal parts of their time:

- Teaching at CC
- Production of syllabuses and study materials
- Coordination of individual courses
- Field work (studies, evaluations, data collection, participation in local courses, course follow-ups etc)

It took some time before we fully understood how radical the new formula really was. When it functioned best – which was not always the case – it provided a real shot in the arm. The teachers started to see their offices as stuffy and dusty. The reality outside their offices had more to offer them. Despite the hardships, fieldwork gave most. The lessons the teachers learnt in their fieldwork made it possible for them to shed light on different issues in a more comprehensive and frank way in their teaching. But even here there were naturally pitfalls along the way. We were surprised, for example, that the person who had advocated fieldwork most enthusiastically had so little to report on the cooperative reality in the area he had visited when he returned to CC. Inquiries showed that he had used the time to campaign for his own candidature in the imminent general election.

We tested a further way of holding the door open to reality outside the walls of the school, or rather letting reality come inside the walls. This was done by using approximately one third of the school's capacity for arrangements made by external course arrangers. Through our proximity to Lusaka, the capital city of Zambia, we had a certain demand from other authorities and organisations for residential capacity for short courses and conferences. We had several good reasons to welcome arrangements of this type: partly they generated badly needed income for the school and partly they brought with them new ideas and encounters in our daily work. This was well needed as an aid to maintain the dream of CC as a living school. The classrooms should be continuously filled and enriched with new knowledge, there should be people to talk to in the corridors, and there should be books in the library to obtain new ideas and inspiration from.

Training of members

The group that is the core of any popular movement – the members – were a group that was neglected in cooperative training. This had always been the case. However, they had not been entirely forgotten. As early as in the 1950s some short courses had been arranged with the needs of the local societies in mind. The selected participants were usually the director, chairman and secretary, sometimes represented in one and the same person. The common members were seldom there, least of all women since the courses were residential courses. The men were not happy about sending their women away to spend the night outside the walls of their homes.

The system hardly made any contribution to making the members better equipped to exercise democratic control of their own elite. Usually, in each society, there was only one member who could write and count. This person thus became the society's functionary with access to all documents, accounts and bank accounts. The other members were unable to check the transactions. Instead of being under the watchful eye of the members, the functionaries could take advantage of the situation for private, manipulative purposes, which happened far too often, according to my informants.

A vigorous effort to break the tradition of residential courses was made in the 1970s with the aid of peripatetic one-day courses. They were implemented by small teams of cooperative trainers, so-called Cooperative Wings, under the leadership and inspiration of a few Swedish cooperative workers. The new feature was that the courses were held at the societies' own premises. In other words, the training was taken to the members and not the reverse, as had previously been the case. This was

an important strategic change. Unfortunately the Wings' reach was limited. They were not in all provinces and, even in the provinces where they were established, there could be long periods between the occasions a team visited a society. And sometimes the visit had no real effect or impact on the work of the society.

In other words, there were urgent and extensive training needs that formed the basis of the high priority that we gave to member training in our new long-term plan. But how should this good idea be put into practice? We obviously needed to look for other methods than those that had been tried previously. It was decided to take a closer look at experience gained of the study group campaigns in Tanzania during the 1970s which some of us had been involved in. The method was based on combining study circle meetings with specially produced radio programmes, illustrated textbooks and voluntary leaders. The largest campaign, on the theme of preventing common diseases, had attracted some two million participants, almost one million more than estimated. Perhaps something of the same type would function in Zambia?

The positive experience of the method in Tanzania – confirmed among other things by a study visit there made by some of our teachers – had the result that we wanted to test the method as a pilot project in one of the provinces. The leaders in Central Province rose to the bait and, on the basis of discussions with them, we worked out a project proposal for 1982. The project had the good fortune to have, for the very outset, energetic and enthusiastic leadership for the idea in the form of Jörgen Baltzer and Elizabeth Simonda. They gave the preparations a flying start with management training, the production of study manuals and illustrated textbooks in two local languages, and an extensive distribution of materials.

In the middle of 1982 the preparations were complete and, in August, 330 study groups started holding their meetings in Central Province, once a week for a period of ten weeks. The aim was to raise awareness, to start up discussions on common concerns, to discuss the possibility of finding solutions to shared problems through cooperation, and so on. Each meeting started by listening to a newly produced radio programme of a motivating character, which sometimes included answers to listeners' questions. Thereafter the group proceeded as a normal study group and went through the text and pictures of the day's section in the textbook. Illustrations were important in view of the fact that a great number of participants were illiterate.

The evaluation was encouraging. Some 5,000 persons, mainly between the ages of 20 to 44 years, had participated. The proportion of women among the participants was as high as 25%. Knowledge about cooperation had improved, as had interest in forming and participating in activities of this type. Naturally, the long-term effects could not be assessed, but there was a great deal that indicated that we had found a way of vitalising our work at the local level.

On the basis of the experience gained, a series of programmes, with illustrated material in seven local languages, were implemented between 1983 and 1985. Statistically the activities were similar during the three years as can be seen from the following rounded-off average annual figures below:

Number of study groups	approx	1,700/year
Number of participants	”	35,000/year
Percentage men/women	”	70/30%
Percentage members/ non-members	”	50/50%
Percentage illiterates	”	35%
Cost	approx	SEK 40/year and participant

The evaluations, which were made by consultants from the International Extension College, Cambridge, were positive. Interest in and knowledge of cooperative activities had increased, as had the number of members. New societies had been formed and – most important of all in view of the future for member training we hoped for – a relatively efficient organisation had been created for cooperative studies and information work at the local level.

Despite the promising results, the programme was not continued. The successes of the campaign in terms of increased interest and better knowledge of the cooperative movement contributed in a somewhat unexpected way to this. A large number of participants were, in fact, disappointed when, as a result of their greater knowledge, they realised how badly run their societies often were. Their disappointment was even greater when they saw how difficult it was to make an improvement. Dissatisfaction, essentially a healthy sign, created doubt and suspicion about the campaign in leadership circles.

Another contributory cause was that there was a greater focus in the cooperative movement on operational activities at national and regional level at the expense of the work at local society level. The background to this was that the Zambian government transferred increasingly greater responsibilities for grain handling to the cooperative unions, which then consumed an increasing proportion of the allocations from both the state and donors. This trend was reinforced in following years. I will return to this in the next section.

In other words, the promising venture for the extension and intensification of training programmes and information activities for members was suppressed. Other activities were considered more important. The consequence was that the popular movement base, which we believed we had found an excellent means to strengthen, was increasingly undermined. The reduced programme that focused on courses on society and credit issues for members and local officials, which CC introduced to replace the study group campaign, was not sufficient as a counterweight. When looking more closely at the conditions dictated by the outside world for Zambian cooperation, the question is whether even the very best training programmes had been capable of turning it into a full-blooded popular movement. The delicate cooperative plant had been subjected to a severe climate over the years. This is the theme of the next section.

The farmers' cooperative movement

The movement started least of all as a common interest among small farmers in the rural areas of Zambia. Instead it was well-to-do white farmers on the Copperbelt and along the line of rail from the Copperbelt to Lusaka who started the first cooperative societies in 1914. They saw advantages in having a common organisation to market their products and to buy seed and fertilisers. The colonial regime in Northern Rhodesia, as the country was called at that time, supported the undertaking but neither the regime nor the farmers had any interest in involving Africans. The expansion of the copper industry was far more important and it was there, in the mines, that the African labour force was needed. The farmers themselves preferred to take care of the growing need for food.

The next step was taken by the Colonial Office in London, after the Second World War. There was a growing sense of dissatisfaction at the Colonial Office with

the economic balance sheet of the territories south of the Sahara and the question was how the "natives" could be used to achieve an improvement. It was considered that, in Northern Rhodesia, there was a great potential in the cultivation of the vast uncultivated areas which covered almost the entire surface of the territory. It was here the African rural population lived and tried to make a living on small plots of land on a self-subsistence basis. It now became a case of tempting them to clear more land and to cultivate crops, not only for the needs of their families but also for sale at distant markets. The real point was that they should enter the money market. In addition to contributing to the production of food for the urban areas and to increasing the demand for consumer goods, it was intended that the African rural population should gradually be registered as tax payers and thereby contribute to a gradual increase in the tax revenues of the colonial administration.

The strategy selected for this project was pressure on the small farmers to form cooperative societies that would purchase and market the crops the farmers in a certain area wished to sell. The bait was that the state guaranteed fixed prices for everyone – even for farmers living in the most remote villages – and there would be a special bonus for the members at the end of each growing season. The bonus payment was the high point of the year in the cooperative societies. Since it was a benefit guaranteed by the state, it conveyed more of a feeling of being employed by the government than of being a member of a voluntary organisation.

From the very outset, the state administration took a firm grip on the planned activity by issuing a special ordinance in 1947. This stipulated the conditions that had to be fulfilled for a society to be formed or – whenever necessary – to be dissolved. The individual member could be fined or expelled in cases of inadequate observance of the rules for clearing and cultivating land. The responsibility for inspection was placed in the hands of a registrar who had at his disposal a newly established cooperative department in the Ministry of Agriculture. The direct contacts with the farmers would be the responsibility of a number of field assistants. These assistants also became important tools in the process of intensifying social control in the villages. At the same time as they were empowered to inculcate the importance of obeying state decrees, they also provided information about conditions in remote parts of the territory.

If the Zambian farmer had been regarded by those in power as an instrument for colonial exploitation in the reforms of 1947 and 1948, in the next reform he was turned into a pawn in the service of building the nation. This occurred in the famous Chifubu Declaration of January 1965, the year after independence. It was in Chifubu that President Kaunda enthusiastically launched a nation-wide campaign for the establishment of producer cooperatives. They were intended to be the cornerstones in the successful development of rural areas, based on large-scale cultivation of maize. This would not only lead to higher economic yields but would also contribute to social, political and cultural development in the country. The model used for the purpose was the Eastern European cooperative model in which everything, from ownership and use to marketing, took place in collective, large-scale and highly mechanised forms. It is true that collective forms of cooperation were foreign to the Zambian cultural climate, but they were in line with the new regime's socialist ambitions and they had been recommended by FAO experts in rural development. Soon tractor companies were queuing up to obtain a share of Zambia's substantial revenues from copper as well as of the generous development cooperation funds provided by countries in the communist eastern bloc.

There was great enthusiasm among the farmers. During the first five months of 1965, no less than 2,000 societies applied for registration, which can be compared with the total number for 1964, when five societies had applied. The bait was substantial. As soon as a society had registered – it was sufficient to have ten members and that all the members had paid the membership fee of one pound – it obtained access to state loans of between 5,000 and 10,000 pounds for purchases of seed and fertilisers and investments in tractors, machines and tools. There was no time to make an investigation of the societies' credit ratings. According to René Dumont, such generosity had never been shown before to any farmer in any part of the world.

To enable the planned large-scale grain production programme to make headway, large areas of untilled land had to be cleared. For this purpose a grant of 15 pounds per acre was paid for clearing land. However, this generally had another effect. The members soon discovered that they earned more by clearing land than cultivating it. No crop could provide a yield worth 15 pounds from the same area. Therefore, after clearing one acre of land, many continued to clear another acre instead of starting to grow crops on the first acre. The most ingenious solution of all was to hire another person to do the work. It was easy to find someone in the villages who was prepared to do the entire job for five pounds. The member could then amuse himself by doing something else with ten pounds in his pocket.

At the beginning of the 1970s, it was clear to everyone that restarting the cooperative movement had been an expensive and frustrating failure for all parties concerned. The anticipated large maize harvests had failed to materialise. The cooperatives, as a form of work, had not functioned properly and the enormous debt burden that they had accumulated over the years had the effect that most of the ventures ended in bankruptcy. By this time, the key workers at the tractor stations, the motor mechanics – often trained by Swedish and Dutch peace corps volunteers – had already left their machines to rust or to be hidden by the luxuriant bush vegetation. They were now to be found working for the car dealers and garages in the towns where their technical skills made them into coveted and well-paid workers.

The planning had been based on the naive assumption that the traditional village was a sort of natural cooperative unit which could be transformed overnight into a modern, collective production unit, merely by adding modern farming technology. The people were at a loss when tractors, ploughs, disc harrows and combine harvesters were delivered to the remote villages where the only farming tool hitherto had been the hoe. Instruction books were of little use since few were able to read. The generous credits were perceived by many as personal gifts from President Kaunda himself as an expression of gratitude for their participation in the struggle for national independence. In addition the loans were often delayed and not disbursed until the end of the growing season. This made it natural to use them for private consumption rather than for purchases of seeds and fertilisers.

Widespread illiteracy, together with the lack of information campaigns, had the effect that the better educated were able to line their pockets at the expense of the others. Instead of promoting cooperation and loyalty in a cooperative spirit, cheating and corruption became widespread in the wake of the project. The failure brought cooperation into disrepute, both as a concept and a reality. However, Kaunda and others in the leadership did not lose their belief in the idea itself. Where they were concerned, there was something wrong with the methods, not with the idea.

There were a number of Swedes who participated in the efforts to change the direction of the cooperative movement away from the collectivist approach. One of the first was Gunnar Olund. For a few years from 1968 onwards he led a group of experts that had been given the task of evaluating the financial yields of the agricultural collectives. The final report recommended radical measures: the large areas of collectively tilled land should be divided up into individual units, the collectives should be dissolved and replaced by individual membership, the granting of credits and provision of other forms of service by the government should be preceded by examinations of the financial soundness of the societies.

The recommendations constituted the main features of the reforms implemented during the next few years. In 1970 the first cooperative conference held under democratic forms adopted guidelines for the development of a cooperative movement that was based on family farming. The societies, which were proposed to be of a multipurpose character, would be responsible for the purchase and sales of the members' products, and provide services in the form of seeds, fertilisers, and consumer goods for the households etc. The sullied reputation of cooperation would be rehabilitated by intensive information and study programmes at all levels. The government should not impose any restrictions on the possibilities available to the members to run their societies. At last the small farmers were to be given the opportunity to experience the cooperative movement as their own movement. The crowning glory would be for the movement to have its own mouthpiece at the national level. This occurred in 1973 with the establishment of the Zambia Cooperative Federation (ZCF).

Where the government was concerned, things were seen in a different perspective. Primarily it was a case of preventing future derailments and disasters. It had had enough of these. The means used for this purpose was further regulation and control – not extending the possibilities available to members to reach their own decisions about their societies.

The foundation of the government's policy was laid in the review of the ordinance of 1948, which led to the adoption of new cooperative legislation in 1972. This supplied the government with a free hand to do more or less what it wanted with the cooperative movement once and for all. In addition to the right to approve and dissolve societies, the ministry could dismiss leaders of societies and appoint special administrators instead who would take over the responsibility for making all the decisions for the societies. Civil servants at the ministry could inspect societies whenever they found reason to do so and, by issuing regulations and directions, they could curtail the decision-making powers of the societies' boards.

The government also restricted the freedom of action of the societies in other ways. One was the government's control of exchange rates and grain prices. Another, possibly even more serious, was the establishment of a parastatal organisation, the National Agricultural Marketing Board (Namboard). This was given the monopoly to purchase maize and cotton, the predominant crops. It was also given the monopoly to distribute seeds, fertilisers and other important necessities for farmers. Namboard rapidly extended into a bureaucratic dinosaur, with a thousand depots spread all over the country. By ending up in the claws of this cumbersome monopoly, the societies lost the power to exercise control of their own over the administration of purchases and services on behalf of their members.

Despite great hopes and efforts, not even this model provided the anticipated results. It is true that the number of registered societies had risen to approximately

800 in 1980 and the number of members to over 100,000. But agricultural production had not made any headway, deliveries of goods to the new multipurpose societies did not function well, there was still scope for cheating and corruption and this scope was exploited in the same way as before. The results of the farmer's work remained fenced in by state monopolies and conditions that maintained his level of frustration at a high level and his production at a low level.

The intensified study and information activities, which had the aim of increasing the capacity of the members and the societies, were counteracted by the experience of the members and societies of being at the mercy of conditions over which they had no control. The new model was in danger of becoming bogged down since both societies and members had been turned into passive objects in a bureaucratic structure. Government directives had suffocated the democratic process that cooperative workers had aimed at in the conference in 1970.

The highest political leadership was absorbed with other worries. The serious state of the government's finances was the greatest worry. Revenues were in danger since both the price of copper and the demand for copper were constantly falling. The expenditure side showed a diametrically opposite picture. The age of extravagance was definitely past. Now it was a case of thrift and the giant Namboard corporation was a natural target of demands for austerity. An increasing number of voices were being heard that advocated that activities in the provinces should be transferred to the cooperative unions. They were already in place and should be cheaper to operate compared to Namboard. The farmers could be motivated since they would exercise greater control over the handling of their products. However, there was a problem to be solved before the idea could be transformed into reality – no cooperative unions had been established in most provinces. Under existing legislation, unions could only be approved by existing primary societies in the province.

Before a special directive to solve this troublesome problem was issued, it was felt necessary to inform the parties concerned about what was brewing. The events that occurred at the meeting called at the ministry for the purpose, proved to be significant for the government's attitude towards the cooperative movement in the future. At the meeting, the head of the cooperative department, Edmol P Mughandila, felt called upon to point out, by virtue of his official position and his conviction, that directives of this type would be in conflict with both cooperative legislation and ideology. He was then requested by the chairman to leave the meeting. Since no more objections to the proposed directives were raised, the ministry considered that it had the support of the cooperative movement for the directives in question, which were then issued. Mughandila himself was forced to retire after 28 years in the service of the cooperative movement. The reason given was that he had become an obstacle to economic growth in the country.

Thus, the beginning of the 1980s saw the start of a period during which the cooperative movement gradually assumed responsibility for the execution of government assignments. The democratic decision-making process took second place to the demands for rapid decisions and for action to execute orders. As the organisations responsible for operations, ZCF and the provincial unions grew in importance. The primary societies ended up in obscurity.

In 1989, another step was taken which further undermined confidence in the capacity of the cooperative movement and its position as an independent organisation that stood firmly on its own feet. On this occasion Namboard was completely dissolved and all its responsibilities were transferred in one sweep to ZCF and the

cooperative unions – responsibilities far in excess of their capacity. Large quantities of maize, the staple food, was not collected and rotted at the farms and depots in remote areas. This was particularly serious during the severe droughts at the beginning of the 1990s. External disaster relief became necessary to avoid the threat of starvation.

In the parliamentary elections of 1991, the first elections after the re-introduction of the multi-party system, the victorious party was the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD), led by the proud leader of the miners' union, Chiluba. The change of regime had turbulent consequences for the cooperative movement, but in a different way than before. Faced with demands from the International Monetary Fund, the political leadership of the country initiated a comprehensive liberalisation process. Subsidies, price controls, customs barriers and other components, which had been the price the government had paid for the services it had extorted from the cooperative movement, were quickly abolished. After all the years of sheltered activities, the movement was poorly equipped to meet the hard conditions on the free market, with exposure to competition and larger capital costs. It had a lack of capital, large debts, low creditworthiness and had demonstrated obvious inefficiencies in its way of discharging the duties imposed upon it by the state. Not least, the number of employees had become unreasonably large.

The political safety net was also pulled away. The Chiluba regime cast the cooperative movement out into the political wilderness. The MMD's party manifesto declared that, in the future, the cooperative movement should run itself, without any state involvement. This was a completely new approach. Kaunda had always done the reverse. In the 1980s his concern for the movement was so great that he gave the movement the status of a mass organisation and compulsorily affiliated it, in the same way as other organisations, to the UNIP party, which was in sole control of the country. Under the new regime, the cooperative ministry disappeared from the government apparatus and all that remained was a handful of civil servants in a small department.

During recent years the debt burden has increased, in all directions and at all levels. In 1995 the cooperative bank ran out of money and this made it impossible for the societies to live on credits any longer. Where the bank was concerned, all it could do was close. Most of the unions, like the central organisation itself, have either already been liquidated or are being investigated. The entire organisation is disintegrating, dejection is widespread, leaders and employees moving to other sectors.

The question now is what the Zambian farmer will decide to do in the new and unusual situation – without a safety net and left to rely on his own efforts. It is important to remember that cooperation for the common good has always started like this and has then, in many countries, grown in strength, eventually into powerful and genuine popular movements. There are those who see indications that this may happen in Zambia. Our education and training programmes have hopefully contributed to preparing the ground. They have made many conversant with both cooperative ideas and practice. Local groups, usually women, have been motivated to work in cooperative forms, often with good results. Experience of this type has been gained in many places – as well as extensive experience of how cooperative work shall not be run in practice. And Zambia's land area, almost as large as Sweden and Norway combined – is covered by fertile land with the potential to feed the entire continent of Africa.

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Appendix

Course Plans 1982

Local courses

Members and Non-Members Course
Women Cooperative Leadership Course
Society Board Members Course
Market Supervisory Course 1
Market Supervisory Course 2

Provincial courses

Union Board Members Seminar
Basic Production Unit Supervisory Course
Society Management Introduction Course
Shop Management Course
Hammer Mill Management Course

National courses

General courses
Staff Introduction Course
Society Management Course 2
Certificate Course
Society Management Course 3
Cooperative Basics

Management
General Management
Personnel Management
Financial Management
Farm Management
Marketing Management

Credit and Savings Courses
Management of Agricultural Credit

Other Courses
Accounting and Auditing Courses
Board Member Seminar
Production Unit Supervisory Course
Adult Education Course
Book-keeping

Study Circles in Portugal

by Johan Norbeck

Background

After the "Revolution of the Carnations" in Portugal in 1974, the new left-wing rulers considered that education for the people was something important and necessary. It could be shown that the dictatorship under Salazar and his successors had grossly neglected education for the masses. The Republic prior to 1926 had introduced legislation in respect of six-year compulsory school. The Salazar regime first reduced the compulsory schooling from six to four years and later, for a period of time, to just three years, while retaining at the same time a large category of teachers for the compulsory school who only had four years' schooling themselves, plus a short supplementary period of teacher training. Salazar and his political sympathisers often made public pronouncements that clearly demonstrated that they considered it meaningless, or even dangerous, to provide educational programmes for people from the lower classes. It would be a waste of resources since these people were incapable of using additional knowledge for anything useful, either for themselves or the country. "I would contend that, despite their low level of education, the Portuguese already know far too much," wrote a politician, Alfredo Pimenta, in an article in 1932. Even in the 1950s, the level of illiteracy in Portugal was in the region of forty per cent. Later, due to international relations, the Salazar regime felt forced to extend basic education and reduce the large numbers of illiterates, but these were half-hearted reforms and had no great effect before the fall of the dictatorship.

After 1974, the new regime quickly wanted to show that they were working for the broad mass of the people and therefore supported, for example, the brigades of left-wing activists that marched off to the most underdeveloped villages in the north of Portugal to make the people living there literate. However, the work of these very brigades was a complete failure since the people in the villages were not motivated at all to learn to read and write. They relied on the village priest for information about important news from the outside world, or to write necessary letters. The activists were regarded as intruders from another culture and no natural contact was developed between them and the villagers.

At this time a government office was established in Lisbon that was given the responsibility for adult education. A few new universities in the country were also sufficiently far-sighted to understand the importance of doing something in this field. Minho University in Braga in the northernmost part of Portugal decided to build up a special unit for adult education with research activities and training programmes for teachers of adults. I was one of a few Swedes from Linköping University who were engaged by SIDA between 1977 and 1983 to work at the government office in Lisbon and at Minho University to support these aspirations. SIDA had received a direct request from the vice-chancellor at Minho University and referred him to Linköping University. There he discussed cooperation with my superiors and myself.

Minho University had formulated what they wanted of their adult education unit in very specific terms: "The adult education activities run by the university shall mainly serve as an introduction, training and stimulation for those who shall go out into the field to initiate and implement adult education programmes in various forms

…. adult education that focuses on that part of the population in northern Portugal who have the worst prospects of genuine participation in social, economic and cultural development. The people who have the smallest possibilities of extending their horizons are usually to be found in the small villages."

The Swedes who were engaged to work in the spirit of this objective were Thord Erasmie, senior lecturer at the Department of Education at Linköping University, Harald Vallgårda, the principal of Åsa folk high school, and myself. It was intended that Erasmie would be primarily responsible for building up the research and development work. Vallgårda would work together with me on training and didactic material.

My first period of service

I was the only Swede who was stationed in Portugal during the first year. SIDA arranged five-weeks' training in Portuguese for me. I had already had three years' experience of international development cooperation, and therefore it was not necessary for me to attend SIDA's preparatory training programme. Nor did SIDA provide a special course about Portugal apart from the information that was given during the language training. In other words it was a question of private study.

Minho University had already appointed the staff who were to collaborate with me. One was a woman of about forty-five years. She was an educationist and had previously worked with educational planning at several departments at Minho University. The other was a Catholic priest of the same age. He had worked for many years with youth education and adult education within the framework of the Catholic Church. Both had shown an interest in working with adult education at the university. As part of the SIDA project they had travelled to Sweden in the autumn of 1977 to study adult education of various types in Linköping. Both sides regarded this as a good form of preparation for our subsequent collaboration in Braga. I had therefore been together with them and helped them enter the Swedish adult education world for two months before I travelled to Portugal with my family in January 1978. The first period in my work there was an extremely taxing period for me and provides a good example of what an aid worker can be subjected to where initial difficulties are concerned.

I was to start work immediately in a team which consisted of the two people mentioned above and myself. The woman could speak English, but the priest knew no English at all. However, it was considered that I was now able to speak Portuguese and therefore, out of consideration to him, our meetings were held in that language. It was up to me to try and follow what was said, but it was often the case that I was unable to understand what the others were saying. It was not much help that I could sometimes formulate, with the utmost difficulty, a sentence or two in the new language.

It was possible for me to cope with this situation and still retain a reasonable amount of my working capacity. But what was not possible for me to straighten out were the relations between my two colleagues and myself. There was a tremendous clash, both cultural and personal, which I was quite unprepared for since the three of us had been together for two months in Sweden and there had not been any conflicts in our work or in the time we had spent together there.

After some two months of rather unbearable conditions at work, I finally real-

ised – through various observations I made and comments I heard – that the difficulties in our cooperation with each other largely depended on the fact that I had been foisted upon my two colleagues by the vice-chancellor. This provides a clear illustration of a situation that is highly typical of many situations in development cooperation work. In concrete terms, Sweden had offered its support to the new government in Portugal after the revolution. In a situation of this type SIDA usually offered support in fields in which Sweden considers itself to be particularly proficient. And, in this case, the vice-chancellor of Minho University had realised that adult education was a field of this type. He reacted rapidly to this opportunity and then made his visit to Sweden and reached an agreement on cooperation with us in Linköping. When this was finalised, he returned home and formally recruited the two persons who were to work in the team together with me. For these two persons, this assignment was a great step forward in their careers and they set their hearts on building up the unit on the basis of the ideas that they had already devised together. They naturally felt it was pleasant and interesting to travel to Sweden and learn about our adult education but I felt that, once back at home they were not interested in Swedish ideas which were more liberal and democratic. I felt that they had made up their minds to pursue personal academic careers and to try and avoid anything they considered would not promote their careers. In my opinion they were extremely formalistic and conservative. For them I was an unnecessary appendage, someone they were obliged to accept but to whom they did not intend to give any influence.

What I went through there was due to a mistake, a mistake that I have seen in several places where SIDA has programmes of development cooperation: SIDA holds discussions with a government in a country and agrees to provide support; the government informs the management of an institution in the country which, in turn, makes an agreement with SIDA and a Swedish institution on an individual project. But it is the management that concludes all the agreements. The responsibility for the implementation of the project ends up with personnel at a lower level in the institution who, often totally unprepared, merely have to accept everything that has been decided at a higher level, including the foreign personnel. In Portugal in particular there were conflicts of the type described above between local and Swedish personnel in almost all the projects supported by Sweden. The Portuguese personnel felt that they had been ignored and belittled since they had not been consulted on the plans in general or the experts recruited in Sweden. Perhaps they felt offended by being obliged to take advice and to expose the project to the influence of Swedish aid workers. It was often difficult for them, and not seldom with justification, to regard the Swedes as more highly qualified than themselves. In addition, where working abroad was concerned, most of the Swedes usually only had experience of working in developing countries, mainly in Africa.

The Portuguese had cherished their role as a colonial power for centuries. During the dictatorship it had been drummed into them that they had had an important civilising responsibility, not least in Africa. In addition they were very proud of their long and glorious history as an independent nation. They had written government documents from the ninth century and a very old and highly civilised culture. Now they were suddenly obliged to work in teams together with people from the cold and barren Nordic countries, who appeared to believe that they could convey deeper and more valuable knowledge to the Portuguese than they already had. (And these North-

erners had, in fact, not learnt to write properly before the twelfth century.)

The Portuguese who were put in this situation were often seriously upset by it, but they felt obliged to put a good face on it outwards. They learned to pretend to be interested in the knowledge and ideas provided by their Swedish colleagues and said "yes" to many of their proposals, but they often avoided ensuring that they were implemented. Instead they "ran their own race", in parallel.

The fact that the Portuguese apparently often felt obliged to act in this way led to several confusing situations for the Swedes – before they finally realised what was happening and why. The Swedes who came down to Portugal had thought they would find happy and expectant colleagues. And, on the surface, their colleagues also appeared to correspond with this picture. The following was a common course of events. The Portuguese and the Swedes started to plan together and reach agreement on what should be done. Then, time and time again, the Swedes saw that no action was being taken by the Portuguese to implement what had been agreed upon. The Swedes then became confused, believing that the situation must have arisen as a result of misunderstandings due to linguistic problems and cultural differences. They therefore started the process again and the same thing could happen, time and time again.

Nevertheless, the three of us in the first team succeeded in completing a course of the traditional type and producing a few chapters for a book on adult education. But I also knew that I could not continue to work under these extremely unsatisfactory conditions. Conversations with the other members of the team were not successful in solving the problems and creating mutual confidence. Finally I approached the vice-chancellor and explained that I wanted to leave after half a year, to break my contract and return home to Sweden, since I felt there was no role for me at the university. I did not want to work in the same way as my two colleagues since I felt that it could not possibly lead to any progressive development. They did not want to have what I believed in and could give. I therefore felt that I was merely costing money without achieving anything important.

However the vice-chancellor had another opinion. He had received reports from other employees at the university who had observed the character of the work in our small team and had clearly noted how the other two were trying to isolate and silence me. After long talks in various constellations, which did not lead to a solution of the fundamental problem, the vice-chancellor transferred the two to other duties without further ado. The Swedes at the university were now given the opportunity to seek other partners in cooperation there through all the contacts we had made, in spite of everything, during our first six months. We naturally wanted to have colleagues who believed in democratisation and a different approach to education. The vice-chancellor and our immediate superior supported our ideology.

We then worked in a team together with two other Portuguese up to the end of the project. One of them was a woman, Vitória Sancho, whom we had carefully selected, together with the Portuguese management, from among the participants in the course which I had just finalised. She was about thirty-five years old and had worked for many years as a social welfare officer and a director of studies at an institute for the training of social welfare officers. She had therefore acquired a great deal of experience in educating adults. As a first preparatory step prior to starting work in the adult education unit, she visited Sweden for some months to study Swedish adult education at Linköping University.

The other Portuguese in the team was a young man, Licínio Lima, who was studying teacher training at the university. According to his teachers, he had shown extraordinary talent for both education and organisation. In addition he had spent many years working voluntarily with the education of adults in forms which were similar to folk development education activities.

Eventually we developed into a team that worked very well. Everyone listened to each other and, from the very outset, we all worked in the same direction where approaches to people, knowledge, learning and democracy were concerned.

Target groups for our work

The newly formed team began working seriously on the task of identifying the target groups on whom we should focus our attention. On closer examination it became apparent that, apart from certain literacy initiatives and some limited experiments on the part of the authorities, there was only one generally accepted form of education that was regarded as adult education in Portugal, namely evening classes for adults who wanted to continue their studies after the compulsory school. The teachers of these classes came from the schools for children. They had been given a week or two of further education for this new type of work. However, this had not been enough for them to succeed in changing their approach when working with the adult target group. They simply treated their adult students in the same way as they had always treated their young pupils: in an authoritarian and know-all manner and where the learning process gave no time for thought and reflection.

In all countries there are various categories of officials who work with adult education although they do not regard themselves as adult educators. The most obvious categories of this type in Portugal were extension workers such as agricultural advisers, health advisers, family guidance counsellors and the equivalent. In many parts of their work they would come close to ordinary people and in these contacts they would act as trainers.

For us who were trying to follow Minho University's objectives for its work with adult education, it was most natural to take on the above-mentioned extension workers. They worked a great deal de facto as adult educators, but they did not have any awareness of this side of their work. They had really important information to give, but they did not have any real ideas on how they should pass on this information to enable it to have a practical impact on the individuals or the community they were part of. Quite the reverse. They behaved in a way that often directly alienated their target groups. This was due to the attitudes they had acquired when they were growing up under the fascist dictatorship. They felt that they represented the authorities. For example, as agricultural advisers they told the farmers how conservative and backward they were and how they should really run their farms. The farmers were not surprised. They had never seen any good coming from the authorities – only trouble.

As we saw it the extension workers had difficulties in "lowering themselves" to the level of their recipients. They definitely did not want to be associated with their target groups. They wanted to retain their higher status in the social hierarchy that they had achieved during their careers. Therefore, to start adopting a common touch and using a vocabulary that they had gradually succeeded in losing during their studies felt like taking an unpleasant risk. Instead, they preached, both orally and in writing, in a language that the villagers did not understand and had never been motivated to un-

derstand. In addition to the fact that they were not very successful in transmitting subject knowledge, they hardly made any contribution at all to the development of a democratic society. They were often rejected by the people they were supposed to advise, which made them feel insulted and that their merits were not appreciated. This often led to a situation where they withdrew from the instructional part of their work and tried to fill this part of their time by keeping even more statistics at the office in town.

In our work with the advisers we realised that we had something to offer that could really further the development of the country in both a material and a democratic perspective. It was clear to us that the teaching methods that the advisers should use had to be based on real participation and assumption of responsibility by their target groups. The approach had to be based on motivation and encouragement of local ideas and initiatives – and definitely not on "academism" and foisting unwanted ideas on people. The instruction clearly had to be based on discussions with the target groups and on material that was well adapted to their knowledge and ways of thinking. It had to stimulate questions and curiosity rather than present answers.

Under these circumstances we felt that our experience of study circles in Sweden provided us with a firm base to exert a fruitful influence on the thinking of the adult educators where learning and democracy were concerned. In order to train others in participatory education and to convince them of its viability, theory is important and field experience essential.

Courses and experience

Our new team now started a series of courses in order to help the advisers to really reach the local population and to establish appropriate conditions for effective learning. The courses were mostly based on helping the advisers to start up forms of training that contained features of efficient study circles. We saw that this would promote both in-depth learning and democratic development. We ran courses in study circle methods and leadership. We trained them to write texts in a natural style using language adapted to the target group. We had special courses in how to make study guides.

The participants showed considerable interest. Groups of participants on a course formed their own study circles and ran them as if they were real study circles out in the field. The participants took turns at leading the circles. All were given the opportunity to become used to making contributions of many different types and to listening to each other's views.

The last mentioned item, listening, may seem so obvious that there is no need to mention it, but it was this item that was to cause the greatest problems in their entire learning process. According to them, it was not part of the culture of most Portuguese to listen seriously to others and to respect their points of view. Instead they tried to interrupt others in the middle of their contributions and to gradually raise their voices in order to silence them. When I criticised them after observing their discussions, they often said: "OK. This may possibly work well in Sweden but it does not fit into our Latin culture. We act in another way."

I was sceptical about this but, during the seven years I worked in Portugal, I saw many examples of this tendency, which they themselves claimed was predominant in their culture. Naturally there were many positive exceptions, such as the new mem-

bers of our team in Braga, but I found that this tendency was actually so widespread that it quite often hampered work based on democracy and solidarity.

Another interesting feature in this context were the reactions of the Portuguese who participated in study visits to Sweden to our forms for studies. Several different groups that attended courses and seminars I had arranged in Sweden mentioned the listening attitude in several contexts, particularly in discussions, as one of the things that had made the deepest impression on them and which they regarded as something particularly positive.

Since the ability to listen and to attach importance to the contributions of others is fundamental to the entire study circle philosophy and, not least, to permit democracy to function in practice, we had to work very hard on it. We wanted to create a new attitude to cooperation and ensure that it had an impact in the practical training. In our work in Portugal we succeeded in getting participants to understand the idea and importance of listening. On the other hand, we never succeeded particularly well where its practical application in our courses was concerned. And we realised that it would often be difficult for those in the field to get others to apply it.

Results

In view of the course participants' interested and positive response to the ideas and content of our courses, we believed that they would go back to their fieldwork and initiate working methods that had a great degree of participation, with themselves or with local people in the villages and suburbs as leaders. We also believed that some of them would try to spread these ideas to their colleagues and to motivate them with the result that training of this type could be extended to more people.

The actual course of events clearly showed the difficulties inherent in this type of work which basically means that an attempt is made to change people's ways of carrying out their jobs. It constitutes a serious threat to an acquired professional identity that has been built up over generations. To deviate from this identity it is necessary to acquire, step by step, a new pattern for one's actions. This creates a great deal of uncertainty. The theory can be acquired without any great difficulty, but taking the first steps in its practical application is very hard. There is also greater uncertainty since the content of the new pattern does not merely concern the specific profession, it is also experienced as not having any natural support in the culture people have grown up in. Quite simply, it did not exist there before and when, as in this case, an adult educator identity has been formulated, it is given low status in the educational hierarchy. Under these circumstances, adaptation to this new identity and the new way of working requires, apart from the theory, a step by step practical guide until such a large part of the pattern has been absorbed that a sufficient feeling of security has been acquired to continue alone.

However, the results of our work did not only reveal these difficulties, they also included some successful and healthy events: adult students will always use what they have learnt in the way they feel is the most important – and this is not always what their teachers have foreseen or wished.

One year after the end of our course programme we visited Braga to follow up what had happened. We found that many participants had not succeeded in converting anything that we had worked with into practice. They had drawn up extensive and excellent plans on how they should start to apply what they had learnt, but had had

absolutely no response at all at their workplaces. Their superiors and colleagues treated the changes they proposed with great scepticism, even aversion. This taught us the lesson that we should not just recruit one or two participants from one unit. Preferably all the staff at the unit should participate. Otherwise the typical "prophet in his home town" effect will arise, namely that no one wants to listen to a person who comes with new knowledge or ideas. In this particular case the advisers' managers had only put pressure on them to provide "rapid results". What the results actually contained was clearly not important. Two fine statistical tables at the office were preferable to two slow learning processes out in a village somewhere. These were some of the major reasons for the failures that the different advisers described to us. But, in addition to this, it seemed to us that it was also difficult for them themselves to deviate from their old, ingrained attitudes when they eventually returned to their old fieldwork situations.

The few family guidance counsellors who attended our courses were the exception. They were entirely convinced from the very outset that a participant-oriented approach was necessary. They needed our courses merely as a catalyst. They sought both moral support and concrete guidance where methods and material were concerned. Several of them had already started study circles in some villages where they used, to some extent, the study materials that they had produced themselves during their courses and had then further developed.

The most interesting development that had taken place and which, moreover, was also unexpected, was a study circle organised by some of the health advisers. Most of them, both men and women, worked both as regular nurses at Braga hospital and as advisers in the field. They had accepted the study circle form with great enthusiasm, but not for their fieldwork, as we had taken for granted, but to meet a need they had felt for a long time in relation to their own in-service training. Between our first and second course they had already started a study circle for their own group at the hospital. In this circle they studied the hospital's routines and how they could be improved.

Between the third and fourth courses they took the initiative to start yet another circle, basing the work on a subject we had studied together: how to produce study materials and guides. They produced this type of material on the theme of "hospital hygiene". Some of them were given the task of going round and taking photos of the environment at the hospital, examples of what to do and what not to do. Other participants in the circle wrote small texts on certain hygienic problems. Others produced wall charts with interesting illustrations on the theme.

When our course programme had ended, the nurses continued working with their second circle. Towards the end, all members of the circle agreed that each one of them would now initiate a study circle of their own in the hospital. The participants would be nurses who had not participated in our courses, and assistant nurses. All these ten circles were actually formed and studied the subject of hospital hygiene with the aid of the material that had been produced in the original study circle.

The ten study circles clearly had a great effect where changing the hospital's routines was concerned, but not least they meant a great deal for changing relations between the different categories of staff at the hospital. In the groups real equality was achieved between nurses and assistant nurses. This contributed to genuine teamwork after the end of the circles.

The head nurse arranged a big meeting to evaluate the programme. It was attended by the leaders and participants in the circles and three members of the hospi-

tal's adult education unit. Some nurses had made a written evaluation based on interviews with all participants and leaders in the circles, as well as on their personal observations of the work on hospital hygiene before and after the study circles.

At this meeting everyone agreed that something akin to a revolution had taken place in the in-service training of staff. The training had changed radically. Previously it had merely consisted of lectures, sometimes given by members of the hospital staff, but most often by visiting professors from Lisbon. The nurses were heartily tired of this form of training. These were pure and simple theoretical lectures with few opportunities to ask questions and no opportunity at all for discussion. They had led to almost no progress at all in the work of the nursing staff. The in-service training they had now arranged themselves had engaged both those who had taken the initiative and others and had led to a type of teamwork for the improvement of working conditions and the work as such. The staff had analysed the problems that had to be solved together, and they had also felt motivated to solve them together by studying different materials and by coming up with and testing different ideas. The assistant nurses had dared to speak up if they thought that a nurse was not working in the most appropriate way. They acquired an increasing degree of self-confidence. Even a few doctors had shown a certain supportive interest in what happened in and after the study circles.

Several documented observations of immediate and concrete changes in the participants' ideas and behaviour were presented at the meeting. The study material produced had also worked very well. The written evaluations indicated one hundred per cent interest in continuing this type of in-service training.

The personnel director planned a minimum of ten further circles for the following year. Some nurses had also prepared study material on venereal diseases. They intended to start study circles on this theme with young patients who had been hospitalised for a long time as participants. During the course of this process, other hospitals in the country had heard positive rumours about what was happening at the hospital in Braga and had asked to be informed about methods and results.

A large number of nurses said that the activity had been good and necessary in itself, but it had also given them practical experience of working in a study circle, which they needed to give them the courage to introduce study circles outside the hospital.

As in all countries in which a hierarchical and authoritarian tradition permeates society, it is very difficult to introduce adult education with the new forms of teaching that it requires. Many pilot projects with study circles in other fields than those we worked with had met considerable problems in Portugal. Their failure was often connected with the same factors that affected our advisers in the case described above. But their failure was also due to other phenomena, directly connected with popular culture. Most people in Portugal have a café culture. To these people it appears quite absurd to sit in a classroom or a private home after work in the evening in order to study instead of going to their regular café and talking with each other on any questions that happen to pop up. Swedes working in Portugal and other countries have had a naïve belief in the inherent attractive and motivating power of the study circle. We feel that it should automatically be as attractive to people in other countries as it is in Sweden.

Therefore it was very surprising and inspiring to see, as in this case, how people in another culture discovered that the study circle could provide considerable benefits

and happiness in another context than the one we had focused on.

If another country requests to be informed about Swedish forms of adult education, it is not wrong to agree and present these forms of education to different categories of educators. But it is important that we encourage them to see where these forms would possibly fit in and benefit their environment and culture, in order not to confine ourselves and the foreign target group to Swedish experience.

I am convinced that Swedes working with international development cooperation should take yet another step: we should not come to a country with the idea that we are there to introduce one or more Swedish forms of adult education. We are there in order to study, together with some of the citizens of the country, how some of the country's problems in a certain field could be solved. In this work our experience from Sweden can be of benefit, sometimes substantially remodelled but always adapted to forms that have been produced on the country's own social, cultural and economic terms.

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Adult Education in a Military Dictatorship

by Folke Albinson

The question

Is it possible to run adult education in a meaningful way in a military dictatorship? Is it not to throw good intentions into the jaws of a power-hungry regime that sticks at nothing to devour anything that comes its way in order to strengthen its own position? Are there any possibilities of success for an educational approach that focuses on increasing the power of people over their own conditions? Or is it, as some people possibly believe, selling your soul?

These were some of the questions that passed through my mind in the summer of 1986 when I was asked whether I would like to participate for a few years in a SIDA-financed programme of support for adult education in Ethiopia. My duties would include long-term planning, personnel training and programme development. The background was as follows. A request had been received from the Ethiopian Ministry of Education for Swedish assistance to follow up the successful literacy project that had been running since 1979. Approximately 15 million people, almost half of the adult population, had successfully reached basic levels in reading and writing – a result which was regarded with pride in one of the poorest countries in the world, where the proportion of the population that had been able to read and write at the start of the programme was around seven per cent. Amongst women in rural areas the ability to read and write was almost non-existent, less than one per cent. However, now the resources were stretched, no progress was being made where methods were concerned, and the original enthusiasm was in the process of being replaced by despondency. There was a clear risk that most people would soon lose their newly acquired literacy. In order to make further progress, help was needed in the form of both money and ideas.

The Ethiopians had several reasons for approaching Sweden. Perhaps the major reason was that contacts and cooperation between the countries were well established. The first contacts had taken place in the 1860s when the first missionaries stepped ashore in Massawa. After Haile Selassie's visit to Sweden in 1924, cooperation was extended to include technical and administrative expertise of various types in both civil and military fields. The missionaries had made a good impression on the Emperor. Hard pressed between different great power interests, he sought contact with a little country that had no imperialist ambitions. During the Italian occupation of Ethiopia, the Swedish public showed their support for the Ethiopian people by contributing SEK 680,000 in a collection organised by the Red Cross to finance an ambulance brigade and a field hospital. The Swedish-Ethiopian society was established in 1952 with the aim of deepening the amicable contacts that had developed in many areas. And when, in the 1950s, the question arose of supporting development programmes in poor countries, Ethiopia had a given place among the very first countries to receive support. The long and unbroken cooperation in the educational field was started with the construction of the building technology institute that is still serving its original purpose, now at academic level. Among more recent additions, the village school building project that started in 1965 is one of the most highly appreciated.

Was it correct now to include adult education in the programme of cooperation with Sweden? The Ethiopians had noted that adult education in Sweden was started

in a typical farming country that was on the threshold of industrialisation, and that it had then played an important role in the development of society and democratisation. The fact that Sweden also had experience of working with adult education in other places in Africa increased its relevance for Ethiopian needs.

Despite the good reasons one doubt remained in my mind. Would it be possible to succeed with a project that was based on the values and teaching methods of folk development education. It was no coincidence that there was a hard authoritarian government in the country. The country had always been governed in this way, by kings, feudal lords and church dignitaries in combinations of various types. There was a strong tradition of slavery. It was only in 1942 that it was formally abolished. The people were used to being governed by orders, and educating more people than the regime needed to execute its business was regarded as quite unnecessary. It could diminish the people's loyalty and foment insubordination.

The restrictions on entry to schools and education in general bore witness to this attitude. In 1974 only twelve per cent of the children of primary school age were able to go to school. Starting a new school was not easy. In order to obtain a government grant to build a school, usually from development cooperation funds, the villagers had to contribute half of its cost. Critics were of the opinion that this was a way to restrict entry into the education system rather than stimulate an interest locally in education.

Literacy was traditionally regarded as a trade, in other words as one low status job among all the others. A gentleman could spend just as little time reading or writing as dirtying his hands by working with wood or metal. In order to avoid any humiliating situations, he could always, whenever necessary, find a person who could write down a message for a small sum of money.

Is it possible to conceive a harsher climate for adult education activities, particularly when the strong tradition had fallen into the hands of a military regime? But the question could also be put the other way: Isn't it in a situation like this that adult education is really needed? The reason why the first folk high schools and lecturing societies were formed in Sweden was certainly not that the establishment wanted them. The driving force behind them was that there were others who felt that they were needed.

The crucial factor behind my final decision to accept the assignment was that I had already encountered a different Ethiopian reality behind the cruel façade. I had met it as a living reality during a study I had made in the country and as a historical reality in the books I had read. It existed as a living and strong manifestation of a culture that was several thousand years old. It also existed as an undercurrent of a longing for freedom and the anger of the people at the oppression and injustices. It had been shown over the centuries in the number of uprisings and revolts – farmers rising up against the inhuman taxes of their feudal lords, soldiers mutinying against the cruelty of their commanders.

In the beginning of the 1950s, students and a scattering of intellectuals started to voice the dissatisfaction that was growing under the surface. Their protests, strikes and demonstrations contributed to creating the climate in which a few officers dared to make the first attempt to overthrow the imperial regime in December 1960. The timing was deemed to be opportune since Haile Selassie was making a state visit to Brazil. The bold attempt was quickly put down by the Imperial Guard. Despite this, and despite the fact that the students were forced to apologise to the emperor in writing, the event contributed to broadening and radicalising the opposition in a long term perspective.

This became clear through the events that led to the final overthrow of the imperial regime in September 1974. On this occasion the students had the support of the Ethiopian teachers' union and other trade unions. The voices of the farmers also started to be heard among the expressions of dissatisfaction. Political platforms were formulated with demands for land reform, free education for all and severe measures against the widespread corruption. Famine was common in the history of the country but it was not possible to conceal the famine that occurred in 1972-1973, as the regime had been used to doing previously. This further incensed public opinion, particularly since the famine was given attention in international media. From January 1974 the country was paralysed by mutinies in the army, strikes by teachers and industrial workers, and plundering in rural areas. One of the most effective actions was the strike by taxi drivers in Addis Abeba. The credibility of the regime and the aristocracy and their capacity to govern the country was fatally undermined and its days were quickly numbered.

The driving force in the revolution was not a political freedom movement of the same type that had inspired revolutions in the former colonised countries in Africa. Nor was it an organised mass movement with a clear organisational structure and a specific programme. It was hardly a military coup in the normal sense of the term. Those who come closest to the truth are perhaps those who regarded it as an expression of deep and widespread popular anger at the oppression and perpetual hardship.

American, British and Soviet interests competed for military power in the Horn of Africa in the political vacuum that arose in the country after the coup. It took some time before the political course the country intended to adopt became evident. The provisional regimes, which replaced each other for a time, vacillated between different alternatives before the political course supported by the Soviet Union was finally established with military means.

During this time popular demands for reforms had grown increasingly stronger. Land reform was highest on the list. It came in March 1975 and was perceived as one of the most radical in Africa. It was included as the core component of the mobilisation for rural development called Zemecha, which was started at the beginning of the year. The campaign was inspired by the Chinese and Tanzanian model of using students and teachers to implement reforms in rural areas.

Almost 60,000 campaign workers, mainly secondary school students and teachers and students from universities and colleges participated in Zemecha, which took place without interruption until June 1976. The campaign had been put together hastily, as a result of the pressure of the demands for reforms, and possibly also to get the most vociferous agitators off the streets. There were certainly critics who claimed that this was the case. Undoubtedly there was enthusiasm and genuine conviction in the ranks. But the lack of preparations, combined with poor organisation of the fieldwork and the students' moderate enchantment with life in rural areas, did not pave the way for a successful campaign.

However, one successful feature was the literacy programme where the teachers and students felt that, to some extent, they were on their home ground. It was run in five of the largest local languages and had the result that an estimated 160,000 adults learned to read, write and count. The experience gained provided a source of inspiration and a foundation for the above-mentioned national literacy campaign, which started in 1979.

This was the picture I saw when I turned the question over and over again in my mind on the attitude I should adopt to the assignment in Ethiopia. The gravity and

drama in the picture aroused my curiosity and a desire to come even nearer to reality. I saw the ruthless government of the country as just one side of the picture. The other side, which was more important from the adult education perspective, was the tradition of popular determination to react against oppression and hardship. Should a country, which had showed such determination to revolt against the behaviour of its rulers, be less entitled to adult education projects than a country in which the form of government was milder? Not at all. It could only be denied by introspective adult education which had become an end in itself and forgotten the necessity of taking risks.

What remained were all those uncertainties that only a test of reality would dispel. Would the prevailing system provide the space necessary to do the work in a meaningful way? What snares had been set on our path to trap and disarm our ambitions? And, not least, how easily could everything be turned to the advantage of the government? In the mouth of the government successful projects would be turned boastfully into its own successes. There would be collusion, whispering behind the scenes: Let Sweden pay for our adult education so that we can buy weapons instead!

It was simply a matter of learning to live with questions of this type in the hope that there would be no negative answers. It was in this frame of mind that I started to work at the Department of Adult Education (DAE) in the Ministry of Education in Ethiopia at the beginning of 1987.

Among colleagues in Addis Abeba

In the world of international development cooperation one occasionally meets certain consultants or advisers who seem to be possessed by their own expertise. It is part of their body language, in their consultancy jargon, in their overfull diaries. They take everything for granted, have already formulated their answers to the basic questions on arrival – the description of the problem, risk factors, strategies and solutions have already been typed into their computers. The only thing they lack is some supplementary local data which they quickly acquire. Their meeting with new situations does not instil any uncertainty or alarm. Their apparent superiority is reinforced by the fact that their clients at home, those who hold the purse strings, have their ear.

These advisers are an unfortunate feature of development cooperation. They bear the insignia of modernity, have everything their counterparts lack but perhaps secretly dream about, and therefore seldom encounter resistance at the meetings. For them the world is just as standardised as their ready answers. I had been shocked by their one-track approach before I came to Addis in January 1987. The last one I had met had proudly told me how he usually planned his consultancy assignments so efficiently that he never needed to ”kill time” by strolling around the streets or making a visit to ”the bush”. He called this wasted time. The last time it had happened to him was in Hyderabad. On that occasion he had hired a taxi that drove him around the town for a whole afternoon. It had been a terrible experience. He would rather forget it.

I was also naturally characterised by western modernity, had answers up my sleeve – opinions, ideas, conceptions resulting from experience I had gained in different contexts. But in the beginning I wanted to suppress what I had brought with me in order to make room for the new reality I found myself in, to make the new reality the point of departure of what I saw and thought. I wanted to acquire the same internal perspective about things that I imagined my colleagues had, to modify some-

what the "we/them" way of thinking which is always part of the way we experience the world, in one way or another. First I needed to be confronted with my colleagues' way of looking at the world, and they with mine. In this meeting of minds I hoped that we would find a common way of looking at our forthcoming work – a sort of common ground to stand on and to be inspired by.

I was already acquainted with the reality as it was described in the official documents. But what type of reality, for example, lay behind the statistical successes of the literacy work? What were the results of the education programmes run at the more than 400 district centres for adult education? And what type of persons were my new colleagues? Did they believe in what they were doing? What was important, and unimportant, for them? Were they all faithful party members? Had the regime appointed a special agent to keep an eye on things? Would successful cooperation be possible at all?

My wish to spend the first few weeks at the Department visiting the other sections there was understood and granted. A programme was quickly arranged which included interviews and meetings, and conversations with colleagues on operations, problems and plans. It provided a good opening for the future. We then had something to refer to, both in the working situation and at the personal level. I had shown that I wanted to be open and clear in my relations with them. In return I was met in the same way.

Language was not a problem. My colleagues were just as accustomed to using English at work as the national language, Amharic. Hardly anyone expected that I, a non-Ethiopian, would have a good command of Amharic's complicated syllabic characters. The language goes back to the ancient Giiz language, the Ethiopian "Latin". But I had both pleasure and use of the elementary knowledge of the language I had acquired during a three-week intensive course prior to my departure for Ethiopia. My fumbling efforts to communicate in the language were an unfailing means to create contact both at work and after work.

The first person I interviewed was one of the veterans, who was now responsible for the administrative unit. He was a man of the church, and had been since he was young. When he was young, a priest in the Coptic Church had taught him to read and write both in the Ethiopian "Latin" Giiz and Amharic. His enthusiasm and ability later led to a scholarship for academic studies at the American University of Beirut. He had trained teachers for some years but then remained loyal to adult education. He first started on the literacy programme as an enthusiastic volunteer and then became the assistant leader of the entire campaign. He had made the campaign's proud motto his own: "We fight illiteracy either as teachers or learners". If a person was illiterate, it was his duty to learn to read, write and count. If a person had already learned to do this, it was his duty to teach the skills to others.

Even if his picture of reality was now more characterised by nostalgia than a sense of reality, his interest and commitment were unbroken. He told me with feeling about how support from the very highest levels first materialised when the campaign had proved to lead to results. This was news to me. At the outset of the campaign, in 1979, 1.3 million participants were planned for the first year – 6.2 million applied. He told me about the shortages of everything – textbooks, blackboards, wall charts, chalk, teachers. They made paint in order to paint "blackboards" on the wall by using the charcoal from discarded batteries, made alphabetic wall charts from old sacks and cut illustrative letters from discarded X-ray films. The teaching was often done in two shifts – one group early in the morning and another late in the afternoon.

The veterans were not party men. A handful of others were party members. For some it was a means to safeguard their careers. For others it was due to their deep, traditional belief in authority. This was certainly the guiding principle for one of them. As a child at home his father had been the authority. It was his father who decided that he should train as a teacher, marry the woman his parents had selected as being suitable, and take the subjects at university that the ministry had recommended as being most suitable for him. At the Department he ran the party's business as chairman of the compulsory workplace committee.

Another person worked with great determination to avoid being a party man. He had been the party secretary in one of the northern provinces, but had finally got his request for a transfer to our Department approved. He was of the opinion that the party had become an introspective bureaucratic colossus, without any contact with reality. He wanted to feel that what he did would benefit people in difficulties. He thought that he could do this when he came to us.

Some of the youngest members of the Department were Muslims. They were open, had a genuine interest in what they were doing, and always gave their best. Whatever had to be done was done. I never understood what drove them. Possibly it was the Muslim faith. In any case the Muslim movement was the fastest growing movement in the country. Some people were of the opinion that it was this movement that had the strongest and most genuine popular commitment.

Among my colleagues there was also an adult educator of the purest type, Getachew Mekuria. He was uncompromising in his ambition to keep alive the ideals he started to work for among impoverished nomads in the burning climate of the Ogaden desert during the chaotic years in the mid 1970s when it was believed that everything was possible. His creed was as follows: "Always start by living among and listening to the people you want to do something for. Without the knowledge that this gives you, you can never be of lasting help to them." This was the way he and his group had worked in the Ogaden. It had made him famous. It had taken them a whole year to find out what the nomads needed, what they hoped for, and what they were prepared to contribute. Then the work picked up speed. It included a Koran school for the children and training in handicrafts for both young people and adults. Unfortunately this adventure was short-lived. The Somali invasion of the Ogaden soon stopped everything they had succeeded in starting up.

He had never obtained a wider impact for his ideas. The donors were far too interested in rapid results and the school bureaucrats were far too traditional to treat his activities as anything more than experiments. But his ideas were kept alive, partly through his charismatic preaching, and partly via the Burayo Basic Technology Centre, which I shall return to below.

Most of the women worked in the typing pool. There were only two women among the administrative staff. One was a well-educated domestic science teacher who had worked there for a long time but she had lost her enthusiasm in the quibbling over the courses and material in her subjects. The other had been recruited to work with the pilot project that we started later with the aim of adapting adult education to the needs of women. She was ambitious, with high academic and practical qualifications, but her husband was abroad for postgraduate studies and her responsibility for a large family drained her strength.

The unifying force was the person who had been head of the department for half a year, Mammo Kebbede. It was not easy for him. There were strong external pres-

sures – the constant clamouring for teaching aids in new languages, in new subjects and at new levels in the literacy campaign, demands from above for reports and for participation in different contexts, and a never-ending stream of visitors. He characterised the situation in the following way: "We don't just move, we have to run all the time." His rivals for the head of department post did their best to discredit him. Thanks to his working capacity, his belief in knowledge and education as a tool for a better life, and his integrity, he kept them at bay. He did not believe in politicians, he lived without the party book. He was faithful to his convictions.

As the youngest son at his home in the cold and windy highlands in northern Shewa, it fell to his lot to tend the cattle while his brothers were allowed to start school. He regarded this was an insult, and felt that he had suffered a cruel injustice. When he was eight he ran away from home, made his way on foot to Addis Abeba – a journey of well over 150 miles – where he traced an elderly relative with whom he was allowed to stay in return for helping with simple jobs. Eventually he was able to start school and one day, after a certain amount of ups and downs, he was able to obtain the academic degree he had previously dreamed about. The pleasure that his studies gave him was his driving force. Now it was the pleasure of giving others the opportunity to experience the same feeling. On this point we were allies, it led to many good conversations.

These are a few of the colleagues I got closest to among the 100 people or more who worked at the Department – administrators, subject experts, technicians, craftsmen, textbook writers, and so on. We were certainly a mixed bunch, and I have often wondered where we acquired the sense of belonging that I perceived as a unifying force in our work. It stimulated us and kept the working pace at a high level in a natural way. Perhaps it was the case that the opportunity to study had meant so much in the lives of most of them, not just in my superior's and mine. Now it was an incentive we all shared in our work of giving others the same opportunity.

Even if we shared the conviction on the great importance of adult education, it was certainly initially the case that we hardly shared the same views on its aims and how it should be run. My colleagues' views were permeated by the formal school system. However, they saw the shortcomings in the formal system and were very open to alternative solutions which made it easier for me to gain a hearing for my thoughts on how we should proceed.

What did my colleagues think of the country's political leadership? In one respect they were undoubtedly positive. In every politician's speech on adult education there was a recurrent slogan, which was not merely empty rhetoric: "Adult education is the way to development for all!" This gave us a shot in the arm. But otherwise opinions were mixed.

Several had been badly treated and had terrible memories of the revolution. Others were pleased that they had had the opportunity to go to school and obtain a job which previously they had been excluded from doing. For many there was a growing frustration that the good times, once promised by the regime, never came. They seemed always to be part of the future. This feeling can be characterised, for example, by the water cascades in the fountains in the hospital park which were called "the poor man's TV".

Some adopted the servile, civil servant attitude of doing their duties but never showing any feelings. However, it was possible to suspect that many had a critical opinion under the surface. This critical opinion could not be expressed openly, of

course – one could pay dearly for this – but in an indirect way, in the close circle of friends, in allegories, in epithets. The method reminded me of what I had experienced in literary and artistic presentations in cellar theatres in Warsaw in the mid 1960s, when the political leaders were criticised in songs, recitations, and small stage plays. In Addis there were a large number of jokes. When a new postage stamp was issued with the face of the dictator, Mengistu, on it, people said that it was so hard to stick to envelopes since people always spat on his picture on the front. Another joke was about a parcel that Mengistu had received one day from Goba. It proved to contain a number of small parts which he assembled. It turned out to be a bicycle but it lacked pedals. When he rang to ask why there were no pedals, he got the answer that they did not think pedals were necessary. After all, everything was going downhill in Ethiopia.

Mengistu was rarely mentioned by name. He was "the chief", "the man up there", "the boss", "the boss man". Towards the end it was claimed that his bodyguards wore masks that made them look like him in the hope that any would-be assassins would make a mistake and shoot one of them instead. There was widespread indignation about corruption at the top. People would say with a sigh that, despite everything, it was better before: "At least one knew then who the exploiters were." Now there were an increasing number of exploiters and there was a great deal of uncertainty as to who they really were.

Adult Education in Ethiopia 1986/87

The responsibilities of the DAE included all forms of adult education that were not part of the regular school system or offered by any other organisation. The emphasis was on three programmes of a distinct "Non-Formal Adult Education" character, which had been created on the basis of totally different criteria than the formal school system: National Literacy Campaign (NLC), Community Skills Training Centres (CSTC) and Basic Development Centres (BDE). If the concept of folk development education is applied in the Ethiopian context, it is a question of these three programmes. All our efforts concentrated on them. They overshadowed the evening course programme and distance teaching programme, which were both compensatory programmes that gave adults the opportunity to study for examinations corresponding to those taken in the primary and secondary school. The mandate was given by the state. It was not based on a popular movement tradition, but on a mixture of elitist dreams of development and progress in the name of the people, a traditional education philosophy, and confidence in the culture of bureaucratic authority. The potential for popular development in the programme had a good interpreter in the Minister of Education, Yayeh Yirad Kitaw. This was of great use to us. He was a person who had studied philosophy and medicine, including training as a doctor in Paris in the 1960s. His experiences during the student revolt in 1968 had, he said, a decisive influence on his radical views on society.

Formally there was a great degree of popular influence, particularly in the literacy programme. In the coordination committees, which were to be found at all levels in the administration, organisations of all shades of opinion were represented. At the highest level there were as many as 36 – from religious and voluntary organisations to political organisations. The only real popular influence was at local level and was exerted by the more than 20,000 farmers' organisations. These were a product of the

early revolutionary wave of the mid 1970s in connection with the land reform that transformed overnight the country's propertyless rural population into small farmers with the right to use their own small plots of land as they wished.

The farmers' organisations exercised a certain amount of local self-government and could, on the strength of this, exert an influence on the local adult education programmes, especially in the first few years.

The objective was clearly functional. By improving their knowledge and skills the adult population would be equipped to overcome the difficulties of everyday life and the perpetual threats to their survival. Education would have a liberating function, not primarily for the sake of personal development as the Swedish adult education often see it, but by liberating adults from the slavery of the harsh and humiliating conditions they were subjected to.

The National Literacy Campaign (NLC)

This was the great, high priority programme. As I have mentioned above, it had its roots in Zemecha of the revolutionary years. Up to 1986 almost 19 million participants had been registered at the *basic level*. Of these 48 per cent were men and 52 per cent women. In total some 15 million had achieved approved levels in reading, writing and arithmetic at this basic level, which corresponded to the requirements of class 2 at primary school. The objective from the outset was that all members of the population over the age of ten should have achieved this level by 1986, but the statistics showed that only 62 per cent had reached it: 85 per cent in the towns and 60 per cent in the rural areas. Several circumstances had contributed to this state of affairs. One was that the first population census in the country, made in 1984, had shown that the number of people living in the country could be ten million more than had previously been assumed. Another was that the recurrent periods of drought and crop failure had complicated the work. A further reason was that the admission capacity of the primary schools had always been low and was still unable to give more than about 30 per cent of the children the opportunity to start in the first class when they reached primary school age.

The teaching was given in 15 local languages, which were spoken by some 90 per cent of the population. It was mainly provided by the most recent graduates from the upper secondary school, in total some 20,000 persons, and was given at times during the year which were most suitable in consideration of the farming work.

At the central level, the DAE was responsible for implementing the campaign. It required considerable efforts. The most demanding parts of the work included producing and distributing the teaching aids – portable wall charts and "blackboards", reading, writing and arithmetic books, teachers' manuals, and so on. At the local level, the farmers' organisations, women's organisations and local district organisations had the responsibility, together with the principals and teachers at the village schools.

There were more than 10 million participants registered in 1986 at the *intermediate level*, 5.6 million men and 4.8 million women. This level was more demanding, not only for the participants. Considerable demands were made on the teaching aids in respect of linguistic correctness in all the 15 languages. Where several languages were concerned, this was the first time they had appeared in print. The subject content was to be functional and to focus, at every level of studies, on important matters of daily life. The first level took up, for example, subjects such as the importance of clean

water, infectious disease controls, soil conservation, pregnancy. The next level took up the importance of a balanced diet, childcare, chicken breeding and cooperative activities. The next level took up health and sicknesses during adolescence and the storage and conservation of food in the home.

Great efforts were made to stimulate participation and perseverance in the studies. Radio programmes were produced in the different languages each week. The radio network was well developed and the programmes could therefore reach some 90 per cent of the population. Furthermore, Rural Newsletters were produced in five of the largest national languages. These were published quarterly with some 150,000 copies in each edition. In addition to this, some 50 local newsletters were produced which related in various ways to local conditions. This made a dialogue with the participants possible, for example by encouraging the participants to write their own contributions for publication. It was a great achievement for people to see their own texts in print for the first time. It also acted as an incentive in the studies. Several of the newspapers in the country had a special column for the same purpose.

There were problems at all levels in the campaign. One factor that threatened to turn the whole programme into a waste of effort was that most of the participants lived in an illiterate environment: all activities were based on oral communication. There was nothing to read in the form of newspapers or books. At best pens and paper could be borrowed within the walls of the school. There were no practical opportunities for people to exercise their newly acquired skills and consequently, motivation diminished. Dropout rates at the intermediate level were therefore high. Preliminary studies also indicated that many who had passed the first level soon lost their new skills.

Community Skills Training Centres (CSTC)

I had very deep feelings for these centres. There was no mistaking their kinship with our early folk high schools. Up to 1986 centres of this type had been started in 408 of the 591 districts in the country. In other words, two-thirds of the districts had a type of course centre whose main task was to offer men and women from the villages education and training in practical skills and subjects that could contribute to improving their life and work. The annual throughput of course participants was some 20,000 of whom 18 per cent were women.

As a rule the courses had a duration of 3-4 months and were dominated by practical subjects such as joinery, forging leatherwork, weaving and pottery. In addition there were some lessons each day – sometimes in the form of intensive short courses of 1-3 weeks – in health questions, forest and soil conservation, farming technology, gardening, bookkeeping and similar useful practical subjects. One basic principle was that the education and training should have a "multiplier effect". When the participants returned home on completion of their studies they should use their new knowledge and skills as "entrepreneurs" for the benefit of the villages. It was intended that the local farmers' organisations should provide assistance by constructing buildings, so-called satellites where the work could be done, and by obtaining implements and tools.

Teaching was to be based on local needs and designed independently of the requirements for the examinations and certificates in the formal school. In this way the people living in the area would be stimulated to develop the local potential, both human and material, and thereby improve their living conditions and strengthen their self-reliance.

But there were many problems – few and inadequately trained staff, almost a total lack of training materials, lack of transport (the principals' visits to the villages in the far-flung districts had to be made on foot, on a borrowed horse or mule, or on rare occasions by motor vehicles when one happened to be available and the roads were passable), lack of tools and workbenches, etc. On average, capacity utilisation was considered to be around 50 per cent. The centres appeared to have a great potential but a considerable reorganisation was necessary if they were to be used efficiently. I will return to this below.

Basic Development Education (BDE)

The programme consisted of the central Burayo Basic Technology Centre, on the outskirts of Addis Abeba, and some 300 local centres with small workshops, classrooms and dormitories in various places in the country. The basic idea, which Getachew Mekuria had developed, was to assist people living in rural areas in their endeavours to solve their problems and create a form of social security. The programme demonstrated how everyday life could be improved, for example, by using solar energy and fuel-efficient stoves in the households, manufacturing furniture and building houses of mud mixed with straw.

The programme was based on a well thought-out step-by-step strategy. If people were to participate and do something new, they must have participated from the start. They must have seen the new ideas as a way to rectify the problems they experienced, have realised what it was all about, understood the consequences of what they had gone into, and felt that they had the skills required to do the work. The concept "basic" was important. The development of models was to be based on local material – mud, straw, wood, and so on. And the social services the programme was intended to promote were the bare necessities of life, for example water, food, health, housing and education.

The programme had problems in making headway. It had low status in the bureaucracy, where people were of the opinion that resistance to the programme in 1986 was greater than when it started ten years earlier. Now it was only being kept alive thanks to financial support from UNICEF.

Distance Education

This programme was also more than ten years old. It deviated, in the same way as the evening class programme, from the profile of DAE's main programmes since the courses were based entirely on the rules and regulations of the formal school. The difference was that the course material had been drawn up for distance education of adults. The level corresponded to classes 9-12 in the formal school. The number of participants was just under 5,000, mostly primary school teachers living in rural areas. The second largest group was soldiers. These were two professional groups where employees were encouraged to improve their position on the formal scale.

Evening classes

The only differences between this programme, mainly urban, and the programmes of the formal school were that it was directed towards adult students, its lessons were held in the evening, and it was administered by our department. Otherwise the teachers were, as a rule, teachers from the primary and secondary school, trying to supplement their incomes. The textbooks and syllabuses were the same. The programme

opened the door to education for study-motivated dropouts from the primary school or for the reserve of talent that was to be found at the intermediate levels of the literacy campaign. The motivation of some participants was so strong that it held all the way to a university degree.

In 1985/86 the throughput in the five programmes was some 3,600,000 participants (2,240,000 at the basic level in the literacy programme, 960,000 at the intermediate level, 20,200 in the CSTC programme, 5,000 in distance education and 400,000 in the evening classes). All in all, some 670 employees at the ministry were working with adult education, 150 centrally and 520 in the field. In addition to this, there was a large number of volunteers. In the government budget for variable costs, only 2.6 per cent was allocated to adult education. Income from other sources consisted mainly of contributions from the farmers' organisations in the form of work, material and quota-based contributions, and from some donor organisations, chiefly UNICEF and, from 1986/87, SIDA.

This was my life for the next four years. At the department my time was spent working with the normal duties of a central education administration: producing plans, budgets, guidelines, reports, questionnaires, orders, etc for different development purposes; preparing and participating in meetings of various types, holding discussions with consultants, experts, resource persons, visitors etc; contacting other organisations and institutions; and, not least, participating in conferences, seminars, workshops etc. The best time was the time spent working in the field on seminars, workshops, monitoring, data collection, etc. On average I spent 95 days per year outside Addis Abeba for purposes of this type.

Short-term or long-term priority?

The pressure for rapid changes in the programme resulting from the new SIDA commitment was great from all quarters: telephone calls, letters and visits from the field, civil servants responsible for programmes, the Minister of Education and SIDA itself. The wishes mostly concerned solving problems and clearing bottlenecks in ongoing activities, rather than new approaches and the long-term direction of the programme. The instructor training component in the literacy programme was on the verge of coming to a standstill, there were not enough copies of many of the textbooks, it was necessary to start work on follow-up books in new subject areas, there were requests from the CSTC programme for help with implements, tools and materials for craft courses, course books, and transport for the principals.

The funds at our disposal for the budget year 1987/88 were SEK 3,850,000, an amount that was increased to slightly more than SEK 5,000,000 for each of the following years. These funds could have been multiplied many times over. The simplest solution would have been to hand over the money straight away. However, the question was whether the multitude of problems in the programmes were merely due to a lack of funds. Was there any practical use at all in the villages for the new skills in reading, writing and arithmetic? Were the participants treated as adult persons with a great deal of experience of life by their instructors or as any other school pupils? What did the principals, instructors and teachers feel that their teaching should be based on? Were the objectives related to the long-term development desired by all? Did the content of the courses correspond to the actual felt needs of the people? Perhaps the motivation of both leaders and par-

ticipants was so weak that the activity was merely experienced as yet another decree from above?

No one had the answers to these and other similar questions. Nor did the many written documents provide much information. The unanswered questions, together with the strong demands for immediate action, led to two important decisions. The first was to use most of the funds to do something about the bottlenecks that threatened the entire operation of the major programmes. Primarily these bottlenecks concerned the production of textbooks and newsletters and the training of instructors in the literacy programme.

The other decision was to try and *establish a grip on reality*. Unless the data were improved, we would still be fumbling in the dark in the future. It was also necessary to establish a good dialogue with the field. The method we chose was to attempt to obtain a picture of the entire CSTC programme through visits and interviews in a sample of districts in different parts of the country. The more we thought about it, the more this programme emerged as the foundation of our work in the future. To shed light on its merits and weaknesses I visited 35 centres in four regions together with two of my Ethiopian colleagues – Welo in the north, Kefa in the west, Hararge in the east and Shewa in the centre and south. This meant that we were on the move for 41 days.

Both the centres and the regions had been selected to enable us to obtain a reasonably representative picture of the conditions at the centres, as well as their focus, local support, difficulties, plans, wishes etc. The study was the most ambitious that had been made of the programme. Most of the visits were made in the form of "surprise visits" and included interviews with principals, instructors and course participants and one or two members of the boards. The routine also included inspecting buildings and visiting any satellites.

These 41 days taught me a great deal and not just about the CSTC programme. In and around the centres I saw glimpses of a spirit of thrift and of recycling which reminded me of life in my childhood village. It was a case of making the best use of the life one had rather than changing it. Perhaps it was possible to dream about the latter, or to imagine it as an existence after death.

The things I saw were based on experience of life and good common sense – as well as on ignorance and a fair number of crazy ideas, at least when seen from the outside. They certainly did not contribute to making life easier. It was considered dangerous to use cow dung as a fertiliser in the fields. It meant that a cow would soon die. The dung was used for other purposes. When fresh it could be used together with mud and straw to make mortar for building houses. It could also be dried and used as fuel. It is true that by doing this it was possible to save work, but the price was high – smaller and smaller harvests were being obtained from fields that were already lacking in nutrients.

Evil spirits were always around. During the car journeys in the north it was occasionally necessary to slam on the brakes since someone rushed over the road the very second before the car passed. This was interpreted as making a desperate attempt to kill an evil spirit. If a person who was being pursued by an evil spirit ran over the road fast enough and close enough to the car, there was a good chance that the spirit would be crushed by the car. The number of spirits that perished in this way during our journeys is not known.

The spirits also turned up when we arranged demonstrations of simple equipment that used solar energy to boil water and suchlike. When, after a few minutes, the water in the saucepan started to boil, the villagers fled in terror without our knowing

why. The fact that water could boil without a fire was totally unreal to them. Their explanation was that only evil spirits could lie behind this phenomenon.

A newly appointed principal in Shewa told us that he had caused angry reactions from parents when he tried to do something about the vermin that were thriving in the girls' long plaits that were thick with grease. The parents reacted violently when he arranged to have the girls' hair washed and cut at the school. The task of the school was to teach children reading, writing and arithmetic. It was considered that the principal, who was an outsider, could not possibly have anything else sensible to offer.

Strange events could also have entirely natural explanations. It had long been a puzzle to me why raw meat was the great delicacy on ceremonious occasions. One explanation was that the custom had grown among soldiers during Ethiopia's military history. When they were out in the field and their stomachs were crying out for food, there were seldom any women present to prepare the meat from the animals that were killed. This was women's work, unconceivable for a man. Therefore, when the hungry warriors gathered around the felled animal, they had little choice, particularly since smoke from a fire could reveal their presence to the enemy. Therefore it became common practice to eat the meat raw, and raw meat subsequently thus became a much longed-for and highly praised delicacy.

The somewhat unhealthy customs and ideas of this type raised complex questions about the objectives and methods used for adult education. How far should traditional notions be challenged by scientific knowledge? However, our immediate task was not to answer questions of this type, but to see how the CSTCs actually functioned. To what extent did they correspond to the picture of flexible course centres which had been created to give young people and adults in the local community the opportunity to improve their knowledge and acquire skills they could subsequently use for the best of the people in their villages? How could we support their good ambitions in the best possible way? Perhaps we did not obtain exhaustive answers to all our questions, but we learnt a great deal. Here are some examples.

The activities at the centres were based on needs and conditions in the local community. The participants should be literate, healthy, motivated to study at the CSTC, willing to teach in their home villages, 18-45 years, mature, disciplined and reliable, and members of a farmers' organisation. There were three training programmes:

1. Most of the capacity of the centres was used for practical courses, usually of 3 to 4 months duration. The main subject was a handicraft. The most common were joinery, forging, leatherwork, weaving, sewing, pottery, knitting. Between 2 and 15 lessons each week were used for theoretical studies in subjects such as family life, health and medical care, farming, gardening, environmental conservation, bookkeeping and cattle breeding. Approximately 80 per cent of the participants were men and 20 per cent women.
2. Approximately 10 per cent of the courses consisted of seminars and short courses, usually of 2–3 weeks' duration. They were usually arranged in cooperation with an organisation or government authority with experts and field workers working with rural development, mainly farming, health care and family life. Here the proportion of women participants was much larger.

3. Some centres experimented with what they called "development work". This was a combination of practical farming and instructions/demonstrations connected directly with the work. The aim was to teach members of farmers' organisations, who came to the centre to work for a day or two on the farm, something new, for example ploughing, terracing, threshing, gardening, irrigation.

In other words, the craft programmes predominated. Training in the use of traditional methods and materials was considered to be an important task of the centres, partly to keep these crafts alive and partly to improve the traditional very low status of the craftsmen. There were few opportunities to work with new methods, implements and models, mainly since traditional crafts were the only crafts the instructors knew. However, there were exceptions, for example centres that had replaced ovens that used a great deal of fuel with fuel-efficient ovens that had been developed at our centre for basic technology in Burayo. This meant a great deal. Participants and visitors could see the advantages with their own eyes, and could participate in special courses and demonstration days and learn how to manufacture and install similar ovens for use in their homes. In comparison with placing the cooking utensils on three stones over an open fire, which was the traditional method of boiling, fuel wood consumption was reduced by at least 50 per cent. This not only eased the hard labour of women who had to drag fuel wood long distances. If used on a large scale the method could contribute to halting the process of deforestation that had been taking place for a long time and had now reached the stage that less than 3 per cent of the country was considered to be covered by forest.

The availability of tools and implements for the craft training programmes was relatively good. The situation was worse where other aids were concerned. Only one centre had manuals or other reading material in the craft subjects. Otherwise, the availability of textbooks was limited to what the centre had been allocated in the literacy campaign.

The centres' important responsibility as district centres in the literacy work appeared to be discharged very efficiently. This was true of the distribution of all the teaching materials, the training of organisers and instructors, and meetings with the coordination committees. Most centres also had their own literacy classes at different levels.

Leisure activities of different types were arranged at 15 of the 35 centres. Participants could choose to sing in a choir, practise a musical instrument, or possibly play football. Apart from the teaching activities, arrangements were organised for the general public, for example the end of course ceremonies. There could also be separate arrangements such as musical events, film shows, sports tournaments, harvest festivals, and so on. However, arrangements of this type were not everyday occurrences. The original idea, which was that the centres should function as the natural meeting place for the local community, was still in its infancy.

How were management and the instructors equipped to make something of the centres? Their task was not easy. The principals, who were the only permanent employees, were weighed down by an unreasonable workload. Apart from being the principals, they were the chief spokesmen of the Ministry of Education on all educational questions in the district. This included assuming responsibility for recruitment, solving disputes, and extensive committee work. And, as if this was not enough, the principal was also secretary of the district's literacy committee, which took up most of

his time (there were no women principals) during the year's four campaign months. In reality it was almost three full-time jobs.

None of the principals had been given special training for the position, apart from a certain amount of training in administrative matters. All had participated in teacher training programmes and had experience from the formal school. The exceptions were a few young principals, who had recently graduated from the Academy of Pedagogy in Bahir Dar. They considered that they had good use of what they had learned about adult education methods but had difficulties with the practical side of the job.

Usually 3–4 instructors were employed, of whom one was normally a woman. They had often worked as smiths, weavers, joiners, potters or in another traditional trade. Many of them had learnt their trade the practical way: in the family or perhaps at a neighbour. A growing number were former CSTC students. None had been formally trained as a teacher. The poor wages and employment conditions did not attract trained instructors. However, instructors in subjects such as home economics and family life normally had previously attended a vocational school of one type or another. The original idea was that all instructors should be given a special programme of further education in methods for teaching adults. However this had not taken place. Like the principals, they appeared to work in almost total professional isolation.

We had known for some time that centres had been started in more than 400 of the more than 600 administrative districts in the country. This was an impressive figure. It corresponded fairly well with the situation in the four regions we visited. There proved to be centres in 170 of the 247 districts. But the districts were as large as medium size Swedish counties, and to achieve the "multiplier effect", the local satellites were important. Here the situation was serious. In all only 71 satellites had been started. This meant that they were only to be found in 4 per cent of the local farmers' organisations which numbered 1,623. There were only 12 BDE centres. One prerequisite for the successful implementation of this difficult task was naturally strong support, partly from the main centre and partly from the villagers themselves. This fell short on both points. The principals and instructors at the centres had few real opportunities to follow up their students due to the vast quantity of other urgent duties, long distances and a lack of transport. And often the villagers had enough to do, merely to ensure their own survival.

However, despite the difficulties, we noted several examples of positive initiatives. Some centres arranged monthly meetings of former students to give them the opportunity to exchange experience and to obtain support and guidance for their work at their satellites. In other places former students had organised themselves into mobile teams that were equipped to help a large number of villages with the repair and maintenance of implements, tools, pumps, and so on. We would have wished to have seen many more examples of similar endeavours. They were completely in line with the original aim of the CSTC programme: "bringing opportunities for education and training to places where people live and work".

From the very outset the farmers' organisations had supported the programme with great interest and commitment This was still the case in some places. They were represented on the governing bodies, they had contributed labour and materials when the centres were built and then had assumed responsibility for the maintenance of the centres. They helped with the cultivation of the land belonging to the centre, usually

10 hectares, and they were responsible for the students during their studies, partly in respect of their living expenses and partly for helping the families of the students.

However, the administrative and financial levies imposed from above had gradually become more of a burden and had undermined the early enthusiasm of the organisations. Their commitment to their own centre assumed the form of a tax among all the other taxes, and finally too heavy a burden to bear. The attitude could change into open hostility. During the chaos in the wake of the civil war, some centres were plundered of their possessions by enraged villagers. They became concrete targets of the pent-up anger with the regime.

What did we concentrate on?

With the aid of what we learned during the weeks in and around the centres, we felt that we had much more concrete information for our assessments. There was nothing wrong with the philosophy – on the contrary it delighted my adult education heart. The failure lay in the implementation of the philosophy. The needs and problems were clear:

- The centres were not the focal points for activities of the village people as had been planned.
- They were far too dependent on grants. Their own production of food, for example, did not even cover their own needs at certain centres. Only a few sold fruit and vegetables at the market. There was a great need to increase the degree of self-sufficiency of the centres.
- Local acceptance and support for the centres was weak in most places.
- There were many weaknesses in the leadership of the educational activities and the teaching methods. One inescapable conclusion was that there was a need to break the professional isolation of the staff.
- There had to be another type of balance between training in traditional techniques, skills and knowledge and more "development-oriented" techniques etc.
- There was a need for more consultations and coordination with other organisations working with rural development, particularly in matters relating to farming and health.

This was the picture of the problems. But how many saw it in the same way? And how was it possible to reach a broad consensus and acceptance of the actions needed to improve the situation? It was necessary to create a *platform for dialogue* on these issues with adult educators and others concerned at all levels and from all categories. The platform we chose was a *series of regional ten-day further education seminars*. Apart from all the principals, all authorities and organisations that arranged programmes of adult education were invited to send participants. With an average of approximately 70 participants in each seminar, 14 seminars would be needed to reach, in principle, all the adult educators in Ethiopia in a period of two years. In this way we hoped to lay the foundation of regular opportunities for exchanging experience and new ideas among all concerned. The detailed implementation of this process was one of many questions we wanted to take up with the participants.

In parallel with the decision to start a series of seminars, we also took a number of other important decisions. Some concerned problems at the centres, which were in desperate need of concrete and rapid action:

- Provide some CSTCs with manually operated duplicators, sewing machines, hand pumps and certain tools.
- Produce teachers' manuals and textbooks relevant for teachers and participants.
- Provide a sample of principals, on a trial basis, with motorcycles or pedal cycles to improve their mobility in their districts.

Another group of measures were of a more long-term and preliminary character:
- Prepare two pilot projects. One had the aim of testing models and methods to strengthen the BDE programme, and the other of making all programmes relevant and accessible for women in rural areas.
- Plan and hold a national workshop for the production of long-term strategies for the literacy programme.
- Survey education needs of adult education staff in all organisations concerned.
- Strengthen the adult education profile at the department's documentation centre through the purchase of appropriate literature.
- Study the possibility of publishing a newsletter on adult education in Ethiopia.
- Prepare the introduction of adult education as a compulsory component in all teacher training programmes.

We regarded the series of seminars as the core component of the network of measures we had decided on and which we hoped would gather speed during the next few years. It could be the battering ram that broke down the traditional school thinking that the centres had become bogged down in; it could give prominence to problematical issues including acceptance and support for the work among the villagers and the paralysing effects of subsidies; it could be a starting point for regular meetings with adult educators in other organisations and, not least, open up a dialogue on all fronts between the special bureaucratic preserves.

The implementation of the series of seminars took a great deal of my time as well as that of my closest colleagues. At the same time the feeling that we were on the right track grew progressively stronger at each seminar. We held the series in two stages: the first stage in 1988/89 and the second in 1989/90. In order to cover the entire country we had planned 14 seminars but it was not possible to hold the last two, in Eritrea and Welo, on account of the civil war.

The total number of participants at the 12 seminars was 829 (818 men and 11 women), an average of 69 per seminar. The smallest seminar had 19 participants and the largest 84. In addition to all the principals and a number of members of the governing bodies from our own centres, in principle all pedagogical and administrative personnel, whose work was connected in one way or another with the CSTC programme, participated in the seminars. This was the first time a programme of this type had been held. Of the participants, 56 worked for the Ministry of Agriculture, 53 for the Ministry of Health, and 51 came from voluntary organisations and farmers' organisations. The key persons included administrative staff from the regional and provincial administrations. If we were not successful in winning them over to our cause, much of what we wanted to accomplish would get bogged down in the bureaucratic mire.

We wanted to see the following effects after the seminars:
- Greater awareness of the fundamental ideas – concepts, methods and experience of non-formal adult education.

- Greater expertise in the planning of needs-related non-formal education.
- Greater cooperation between the arrangers of education in the regions.
- Feedback on our new programme to strengthen non-formal adult education in Ethiopia.
- More opportunities for people to use their newly acquired reading, writing and arithmetic skills in their daily lives.

The methods used at the seminars consisted of presentations of situation reports from the various arrangers of adult education in the regions, lectures in the form of dialogues, group work, practical exercises in interview techniques and data collection, role plays and study visits to a CSTC and its satellites. The group work and the practical exercises accounted for approximately one-third of the time. The staff of the DAE team were responsible for leading the educational aspects of the seminars, together with some representatives selected by and among the participants. The administrative aspects were handled by the regional offices of the Ministry of Education. A social evening was arranged at the end of each seminar, with food and drink and both cheerful and serious contributions. In the flush of the moment, the qualities and blessings of non-formal adult education were praised in various forms – prepared speeches mixed with spontaneous contributions, role plays, occasional poems, music played on local instruments, folk dancing, solo song.

What we were unable to exercise full control over was the presence of the political apparatus. It is true that it was planned as a feature of the formal opening and closing ceremonies, at which protocol demanded that the speeches were held by one of the highest political and administrative dignitaries. Sometimes it was the governor himself, who, by virtue of his office, held both positions. Since they were necessary features of the ceremonial parts of the programme, the speeches did not disturb the aims of the seminars, rather the reverse. Often they took the form of powerful appeals for adult education: how important it was for the country…, the duty of everybody…, the engine of development…

Otherwise the political presence was outside the programme. It was naturally present, both in the form of informers and the knowledge possessed by everyone of the borderlines for open criticism. But no interventions were made in our plans and no one was affected, as far as is known, by any unpleasant consequences. Perhaps no politician gave close thought to the fact that the result of what we were doing was to strengthen the power of the people over their own conditions. Perhaps they counted on the fact that we had a long way to go to achieve our goal. Therefore we could hold our seminars. They themselves had more serious problems to deal with.

What happened?

The seminars were evaluated in two ways. One was a so-called *process-oriented participant evaluation*: at the end of each seminar all participants responded to a questionnaire containing both multiple choice questions and open questions. The other was a *results-related evaluation,* which was an attempt to measure the extent to which the seminars had had an effect on the participants' work in their villages. This evaluation was made by the DAE in two regions – Semen Omo and Bale – in May-June 1990 through visits to a sample of districts with CSTCs. Semi-structured interviews were held with different categories of seminar participants and with a sample of other

persons with insight into CSTC work. In total 40 persons were interviewed. Six CSTCs were visited. The evaluation in Semen Omo was made a year and a half after the seminar, in Bale just six months after the seminar.

The process-oriented evaluation gave a very positive result. However, this is what we had expected. We knew that many people were deeply aware of the need of seminars. In addition it is the custom in Ethiopia to be polite to hosts. The issues and subjects we took up were considered, for example, to be highly relevant and practically useful. It was felt that the participatory method had greatly contributed to making the weeks instructive and full of variety. We could not agree whether the comment made by 37 per cent of the participants that the time allowed for group work was too short should be interpreted as criticism or praise. One thing that many participants particularly appreciated was that the seminars had contributed to drawing attention to the CSTC programme in the regions, thanks to the broad support on the part of the organisations and the reports on them in the media. Another thing that was appreciated was that the participants were able to leave the seminars with concrete suggestions on how they could cooperate with each other on the creation of practical opportunities and incentives for people to use their newly acquired skills in reading, writing and arithmetic.

Many participants wanted to make the regional seminars into regular events. The subjects requested in particular included the management and planning of non-formal adult education, the role of adult education in society illustrated with experience from other countries, and teaching methods in practical subjects for adult students.

Naturally the results-related evaluation did not show any spectacular changes. Nor had we counted on this, particularly not in Bale just half a year after the seminar. This region was also seriously affected by the growing intensiveness of the civil war through imposed increases in the raw materials that had to be supplied to the armed forces, conscription of soldiers, etc. The armed forces took an ever-increasing share of the resources at the expense of schooling and other educational activities, among other things. Several centres, for example, had felt obliged to close down until further notice. The same also applied in Semen Omo.

Nonetheless, the seminars had had their effects. Cooperation with other organisations had improved. The field workers at the Ministry of Agriculture had arranged demonstration plots at several centres and provided greater scope for practical exercises. The Ministry of Health had made its clinics more accessible to both staff and course participants at the centres. The Ministry had also made more of its staff available for teaching in nutrition, health care, child care and family life. Both ministries had increased the use of the centres' facilities for their own courses. In Semen Omo the central administration had decided that the participants' living expenses should no longer be debited to the farmers' organisations but to the regional development funds instead.

At four of the six centres visited, a systematic inventory was being made for the first time of the education needs in the villages. Field workers from various organisations had assisted in ascertaining individual and community needs with the aid of questionnaires. Sometimes the questions went too far and had the opposite effect – farmers had refused to respond and had sometimes threatened to use violence. Their suspicions had been aroused. Perhaps the interviewers' ambitious thirst for knowledge had overcome their sense of discretion and feeling for good form.

At some centres the principals had started to interest the instructors in teaching methods for adult students, for example by formulating specific learning goals and acquiring/producing teaching aids in the preparation of courses.

Several centres had tried to increase their self-sufficiency as a direct result of the seminars. Some had started bakeries or manufacturing soap. Others had started producing fertilisers, acquired milking cows, started breeding chickens, bee-keeping, cultivating new plants such as coffee, papaya, bananas, sugar cane, citrus fruit, mangoes, potatoes, maize, and so on. The pilot projects had three aims: to make the centres more self-sufficient, to provide an income from the sale of products at the centres or at the markets, and to give the course participants new knowledge and skills.

Most districts had made efforts to implement the plans for making local neighbourhoods "literate", which we had produced at the seminars. Some had arranged facilities and equipment for reading, listening to the radio, group meetings. Others had started producing notice boards, local newsletters, posters and small booklets in local languages. The regional educational aids resource centres provided technical assistance for production purposes.

One of the most important messages at the seminars had been that more support should be given to former course participants in their endeavours to put the lessons they had learnt into practice in their home villages. This message had had an effect in some places. Several new satellites had been built. The centres were better at providing participants with tools and implements, usually on loan. Some had started to visit former participants in order to ascertain how the centres could give them better service. One district had held two-day follow-up seminars for former course participants.

Something more had happened

A meeting of people with common interests can lead to things happening in addition to what has been planned. This is what happened in our case. At almost every seminar requests were presented for a seminar for adult educators from the entire country. There was a need to meet, exchange ideas and experience, possibly reach agreement on a common platform to underline the importance of adult education for the country's development. The requests had the effect that, in May 1990, we arranged a two-week seminar in Ambo where, for the first time, adult educators from the entire country were gathered – with the exception of Southern Omo, Assosa and Southern Gondar where military unrest prevented participation. All in all 73 key persons came, some with many years' experience and others who were new to the work. The main aim was to shed light on the basic ideas, concepts, content and practice of non-formal adult education. We had mobilised resource persons, ten in all, not just from among ourselves but also from related organisations and institutions. These persons had also undertaken to make written summaries of their presentations. The plan was that, together with reactions from the participants, these summaries would form the material for a planned handbook in teaching methods in adult education. This was something we had succeeded in doing in Tanzania at the beginning of the 1970s.

We were a tired but happy team that travelled home after the seminar in Ambo. The atmosphere as a whole, together with the comments made during the breaks and meals and, not least, the contributions made during the plenary sessions indicated clearly that there was a growing understanding and belief in the importance of non-formal adult education for the country. It was clear that we had established a nation-

wide dialogue in adult education issues: a dialogue that we felt was needed when we started the series of seminars. The unanimous request for an annual seminar felt like a confirmation of this. Was this the birth of an *Ethiopian* adult education vision?

The civil war intervenes

One of the remarkable things about the Ambo seminar was that it was possible to hold it at the same time as the civil war between the sitting regime and the freedom movements was growing in intensity and the front line in the north was getting closer and closer to Addis. For some of us the day started by listening nervously to the BBC news. Many of the participants had had to make a great effort to get to the seminar. The army had commandeered all the best buses in the country's bus fleet and, as a result, the well developed, regular road transport system had been transformed, in a matter of months, into a capricious and highly hazardous venture. It had taken four days instead of one for some participants to come to the seminar. We met several bus convoys transporting soldiers on our way to the seminar, in one convoy we counted 38 buses.

Afterwards it occurred to us that the good atmosphere at the seminar was possibly merely an expression of everyone's need to escape reality. It was not just the bus traffic that had been affected. The armed forces' requisitions of materials, money and labour affected all sectors in society. The farmers were most severely affected. Their sons were taken to the front, as well as large parts of their harvests. They were also subjected to continual demands for financial contributions to keep the war machinery going. They could no longer support our programmes, pay the living expenses of course participants, assist with ploughing and suchlike at the centres. The conscription of soldiers had the effect that there started to be a shortage of labour on the farms and therefore it was all the more difficult to send participants to the centres.

The momentum of both the literacy programme and the CSTC programme declined catastrophically. In Bale more than half of our centres were forced to close, others were taken over by the armed forces. The anger of the farmers was directed towards everything that, in their view, represented authority – cooperatives, schools, and clinics were plundered of their possessions. Field workers no longer dared to go out into the field for fear of their lives.

In other words, everything that could reasonably be described as development work had come to a standstill. The country's own resources for development purposes were allocated instead to the war. We had to forget our planned follow-up seminars. Therefore there were no "objective" prospects of continuing my assignment. Spending time merely keeping things ticking over with a "wait and see" attitude did not seem to be particularly fruitful. But it was not an easy decision to make. We were starting to see the results of our work. Our project which, in advance, had sometimes appeared to be impossible to work with, had proved to be fully possible in practice. And the comradeship I experienced was amongst the very best in my professional career.

Nonetheless, I felt that my decision was the only logical and correct decision. What I repressed was the situation of my colleagues. They had no choice. I clearly understood how they felt about the situation on one of the last evenings before my departure, when I once again tried to explain the rational grounds for my decision. One of the leading members in the group then said the following: "What you and

other foreigners who get close to us by working as one of us never learn is that *it is in crises that we need you most.*" He was of the opinion that abandoning them was to give up something we had started to build up together. Now the work had to come to a standstill. And therefore it was now more important than ever to be able to persevere and to keep dreams and visions alive. "This we can only do together," he continued. "It is not possible to do this alone. We must support each other in order to prevail. Cooperation between countries seems to be mostly a case of money and material things. But its real foundation is people who want it."

My decision was experienced as a betrayal and my sorrow persists to this day. Things were not made any easier later, when it became clear that the new regime placed adult education low down on their agenda. Our work was not the only work to be affected – whatever the previous regime had been in favour of, the new regime had to be against. Unfortunately this is not true in all respects. Human dignity is not in greater favour, views on human rights have not changed. This attitude is far too deep to be modified by a change in government or by isolated adult education programmes.

My consolation is that some still have the strength to struggle on. When the support provided by the Ethiopian government and SIDA came to an end, some of my colleagues took the initiative to form the Adult and Non-Formal Education Association in Ethiopia (ANFEAE). After considerable difficulties it has now acquired legal status as a national non-governmental organisation. Thereby it is entitled to receive international support, which it depends on for its survival. The only organisation that appears to have offered support hitherto is the German Adult Education Association.

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Adult Education in Tanzania

By Rolf Sundén

A Resident Tutor in Moshi, 1968–70

Many Swedish adult educators worked in Tanzania in the 1960s and 1970s. Ever since Independence, emphasis was placed on the importance of adult education for the Tanzania's development. President Nyerere often returned to this theme in his speeches and writing. Two sentences in his speech to Parliament in 1964 are famous: "*First we must educate adults. Our children will not have an impact on our development for five, ten or even twenty years.*" In Sweden there was a political preparedness to test whether the Swedish adult education model, which had been successful in Sweden, could also be used in other countries under radically different conditions.

And it was therefore quite natural that Tanzania requested Swedish support for its adult education programme, and that Sweden granted this request. The Swedish contribution was made in the form of funds and personnel. Part of the Swedish contribution was allocated to the Institute of Adult Education, which was a faculty of the University of Dar es Salaam that had its roots in the British extramural tradition, i.e. the universities' work with adult education. In other words it was a form of adult education that only had a few similarities to adult education in Sweden. I was to serve in this institute. My position was Resident Tutor for the northern regions and I was based in Moshi, a town at the foot of Mount Kilimanjaro. The position of Resident Tutor corresponded approximately to that of an adult education adviser in Sweden, but with one very important exception: the position was an outpost of the University College in Dar es Salaam and its academic status was strongly emphasised.

SIDA had prepared the Swedish contribution for adult education in Tanzania very thoroughly. A study had been made of the role Swedish contributions could play in the development strategy of developing countries, the areas in which they would be of most use etc. A delegation had been sent by SIDA to visit several countries in East Africa. A meeting with Paul Bertelsen, acting director of the Institute of Adult Education in Dar es Salaam, had convinced the delegation that IAE would be a suitable recipient of Swedish adult education support.

At the same time preparations were being made in Sweden which had strong features of Swedish adult education. A number of adult educators had been invited by SIDA to a series of seminars on developing issues in general and on adult education in developing countries in particular. I was one of the persons invited to the seminars. We met 4-5 times at different places in the country and were given a pack of development literature to read and discuss during the seminars. We were given English lessons by telephone (a somewhat odd experience), and a smattering of Swahili, the national language of Tanzania.

When I travelled to Tanzania in June 1968, I felt quite well prepared. I also had a picture of what I wanted to accomplish (and when I look back today, much later, at myself at that time, I see a picture of both self-confidence and humility):

- with all conceivable respect for Tanzania's needs of political, cultural and ethnic integrity,
- with determination to be open and receptive to impressions from a new environment,

- full of admiration for President Nyerere, his personal stature and his interest in adult education as a lever for development in the country,
- I had no intention at all to pass on a blueprint of the Swedish model to Tanzania,
- but to test whether our Swedish (Nordic) conception of *adult education* could be applied in the developing country context. Would popular interest and commitment be a source of inspiration for people and the motor of development that Nyerere had spoken about – and in an environment where there were no popular movements in the broad sense of the term. *This was the challenge; this is what I was going to focus my efforts on.*

I was not the only Swede at the Institute. During the time I spent in Tanzania there were seven Swedes at the Institute – three at the regional centres and the remainder at the Dar es Salaam office. In other words it was a case of a solid Swedish contribution, with full financial support.

Moshi was a lively town. It had a large and colourful market where peasant farmers came to sell their bananas, vegetables, eggs, hens, and so on. But Moshi was also the main centre for the highly important cultivation of coffee on the fertile slopes of the mountain, and it was in Moshi that the raw coffee was first processed and then auctioned on the world market. In the Kilimanjaro region there were more secondary schools than anywhere else in Tanzania. Most had been started as a result of private initiatives, by people with a strong awareness of the value of education. Some of the schools were run by missions. Moshi was also the centre for cooperative education and training in East Africa. A number of Scandinavians served there and we built up good forms of cooperation with them. This also applied to most of the Tanzanians who formed the largest group among the supervisors and teaching staff at the Cooperative College.

I soon noted that my possibilities to act were fairly limited. Our tentative quarterly plans had to be checked and approved by the Acting Director, Dorothy Thomas from the USA. She was a friendly and highly efficient woman who emphasised the academic status of the Institute. I worked for a long time without having many opportunities to test new approaches. There was plenty of work, but my duties did not seem to me to be the most urgent duties. For those of us working at the Moshi office our main task was to continue the work that our British predecessors had spent a great deal of time and energy on.

Adult Education Associations

My immediate predecessor as Resident Tutor in Moshi, David Crowley, was an Englishman who had some experience of adult education in Ghana. He worked intensively on an experiment with what he called Adult Education Associations in Moshi and Tanzania. These associations were societies in the villages on the densely populated south slope of Mount Kiliminjaro, which were supposed to arrange different types of adult education at different levels with the support of the IAE office. The idea was that teachers for courses of a more academic character would be supplied through the Institute. In return those who were given the advantage of attending these courses would lead courses for the uneducated villagers in basic subjects. A large proportion of these participants were teachers in the many schools, but there were also a number of other categories, for example farming

instructors and some persons with basic medical training. (There were a few Adult Education Associations in other parts of the country. However, most were linked to the Moshi office.)

It certainly did not lack ambition. An association of this type could acquire a good conception of existing needs of education in its working field and could find suitable persons who were able to do the teaching, primarily in the local community. The teachers could be extension workers in the farming and health care sectors, or political and trade union leaders. And, of course, the teachers working in the schools who were assumed to be willing to give up a few evenings in order to give the villagers some basic education. A good climate for cooperation was foreseen. Courses were arranged for board members. This form of adult education was also placed in a political context: the constantly propagated idea of "self-reliance". The village community should do exactly as proclaimed in the national doctrine. It should rely on its own resources, with the aid of the associations and with support of the IAE.

It is possible to see a pattern in the demand for evening courses. With the exception of an occasional course in common law, the subjects for which the Institute was requested to supply teachers were adapted to the wishes of the elementary school teachers. It was not merely a question of studies to improve their knowledge. There was a more materialistic motive for the teachers' interest in further education. If teachers could obtain a number of certificates from our courses, they could be upgraded and thereby be moved up a step on the salary scale.

While those of us at the IAE office in Moshi did what we could to meet the requests for evening courses made by those who were already fairly well educated, we really felt that another type of activity was more important: the education of the large number of people who had very little knowledge at all. Here – according to the ideology – teachers, extension workers in farming, health care and medical care etc. could repay their debt to society that had given them the privilege of studying and advancing on the social ladder, by helping to educate the less fortunately endowed villagers. But when we presented these ideas to the people who had benefited from the courses we had arranged, we were met by a solid lack of interest. There were many arguments but they all made the same point: we have not got the time, we will not be paid for it, it cannot be our job, there must be others who can do the job, and so on.

It is not difficult to draw the conclusion that the adult education organisations had failed in their task of raising general educational levels. It was quite clear that adult education, in the wide sense of the term, could not be built up in this way. The enthusiast, David Crowley, was forced to admit this himself. He stated laconically, in an evaluation, that the results had been mixed and the successes very modest. As far as I know, these organisations disappeared fairly rapidly.

With some knowledge of our own adult education history in Sweden, it is possible to find features of the Adult Education Associations that bear some resemblance to early Swedish organisations that were also called *associations*, that were formed during the first half of the 1800s and which sometimes took on the responsibility for spreading enlightenment among the general public, particularly among workers and peasants. A fairly typical example is the *Society for the dissemination of useful knowledge*, which published small booklets on practical subjects. A few years later saw the formation of *educational circles*, *lecture societies* and *workers' institutes*. These early Swedish creations for the promotion of adult education were almost always initiated by persons from higher levels in society. A number of successes could be noted. Many lecturers became very popular

and attracted large audiences, a number of libraries were founded, a number of academics became interested in the idea of a "folk university". But, without exception, the perspective was top-down. The educated classes shared a little of their education with the ignorant masses. A certain amount of general education started to emerge. But it did not make a great mark on society. It was only when adult education obtained a foothold in the popular movements that it became a dynamic force in society.

In the case of Tanzania, just over a hundred years later, there were requests for evening courses that originated from a genuine need: the desire of teachers to qualify for upgrading and an accompanying increase in salary. There was nothing wrong with this in itself but it could hardly be called popular education.

The idea behind the Adult Education Associations was possibly correct. But they lacked roots in everyday life in Tanzania (to a much greater degree than the Swedish associations over a hundred years earlier). They did not have the acceptance and support of the community in the same way as the Swedish adult education had in its linkage to the emerging popular movements. Neither my predecessor nor I, myself, was successful in planting the idea among the leaders in the villages. They did not feel that they had any need at all to ensure that the large majority of the adults, illiterates and also those who were ignorant in other ways, were given assistance in acquiring more knowledge. The time was not ripe, the ground had not been prepared. A couple of Europeans, who had been in the country just a few years, could never get under the skin of the inhabitants. We were quite probably respected but what we lacked was strong and thorough backing on the part of the local leaders. It was only when President Nyerere and the party made powerful declarations about the significance of adult education and established an administrative and political apparatus for the purpose, that it became important for both the well educated and the illiterates to invest in adult education.

At the end of the 1960s we had failed to create an adult education system based on independent associations. The local leaders had not been inspired at all by the idea that they should help the uneducated to acquire knowledge. There was no breeding ground for broad adult education.

However, the situation was to change relatively rapidly. In the 1970s, political leadership in Tanzania invested both financial and ideological resources in adult education. The ground was prepared through speeches and publications of the President and through political decisions of the party and the government. An administrative apparatus was built up. A climate emerged that favoured adult education. Now the time was ripe for the mass study campaigns which attracted a great deal of attention, even internationally. There was certainly a great interest in the two largest projects. A significant part of the Tanzanian society was involved. An apparatus had been created for the purpose, a large number of Tanzanians (and not merely a group of "whites") had participated at different levels in the preparations, drawn up plans and worked with the course material to make it fit into reality in Africa and, not least important: a large number of study group leaders had been trained. The subjects that the two most extensive campaigns worked with: "Mtu ni Afya – People are Health" and "Chakula ni Uhai – Food is Life", were down-to earth subjects, not theoretical constructions at all. Without any doubt it was certainly Europeans, primarily Swedes, who initiated the study campaigns, but it is equally clear that there had been a great deal of success in planting the need of mass studies in the Tanzanian reality. In that respect there was a decisive difference vis-à-vis the failure of the Adult Education Associations.

There is a simple answer to the question of why an experiment with adult education organisations in the villages on Mount Kilimanjaro failed, and was actually doomed to failure. It is something every aid worker should be aware of and base his/her work on: the fundamental principle of *community development work. One cannot come in from the outside or from above and plant new ideas in old, well-established communities, however well-meaning and correct the ideas may be. It is only when the recipients of the new ideas have experienced the need of adopting the new ideas themselves – and only then – that new ideas are received and in time contribute to developing a community which is not only well-established but has possibly become fixed in its ways.*

For me personally working with these adult education organisations meant that I spent a great deal of my time doing something that I did not really believe in. It was not adult education. It was a frustrating experience.

The uproar in Mashati

However, working on the Adult Education Associations did not take all my time. We were also responsible for a number of other activities. I will never forget one of these.

In the Arusha and Kilimanjaro regions there were a large number of churches, both Lutheran and Catholic. Many of the priests in these churches had strong personalities as well as great authority among their congregations. One such was Father Gabriel in Mashati, a long way up on the east side of Mount Kilimanjaro. We were happy to cooperate with him.

We wanted to test whether it was possible to arrange a course in everyday economics for common people without higher education, during the daytime and for a relatively concentrated period of time. As the course leader we had a young secondary school teacher from the district, Mr Mmbaga, who was in complete agreement with us that no long and beautiful English technical terms would be taught on the course.

Father Gabriel announced the course in connection with the Sunday service and added: "I think you should come to this course. I think it will be useful for you."

The course started and the room was full of people. Father Gabriel was one of the participants. Some of us from the office in Moshi sat in on several occasions. The students worked with very elementary financial questions: "If you sell 15 sacks of coffee weighing 50 kilos each and you receive 1.50 shillings per kilo, how much money should you get?" "If you borrow 100 shillings at a bank and pay back the money with 12% interest after six months, how much must you pay?" And, slightly more topical: "If you are in great need of money and go with your pay cheque of 1,000 shillings to an Indian merchant one week before you are paid and receive 900 shillings from him, how much interest do you pay?" (This was a common occurrence.)

During a lesson at the end of the course Mr Mmbaga asked the men who were naturally sitting at the front, as if in passing: "When you go to the bar in the evening, how many beers do you drink?" After some discussion it was concluded that the answer was three to four bottles plus some swigs of the locally brewed beer, pombe. "And how much does a bottle cost?" After some simple multiplication it was possible to write the evening's expenditure on the blackboard. "And how many evenings each week?" "And how many weeks?" After a great deal of discussion and further calculations, a figure was arrived at and was written on the blackboard: "This is the amount you spend on drinking beer at the bar."

Mr Mmbaga then turned to the women. "Can you think of anything you would very much like to buy for the children, if you had a little more money?" A list was quickly produced: school uniforms, other clothes, shoes, money for schoolbooks, and so on. All the costs were noted. I never understood how it happened but finally a figure was reached – exactly the same amount as the men's expenditure on beer. Then uproar broke out. People shouted and screamed from all corners of the room. "Now you can see – you drink so much beer that the children have no clothes!" "This is no way to count!!" If Father Gabriel had not sat there calmly and confidently, there could have been a brawl. It was a truly shattering experience for both the men and the women. I still feel today that this was a good example of home economics. And it was certainly folk development education!

The Mashati course was not an isolated phenomenon. It was one part in the very first step in a number of extensive and successful mass media campaigns (see page 91 and below), and was intended to ascertain the level at which it was possible and meaningful to teach home economics. Tanzania's second five-year plan had just been produced. The Minister of Finance had published a popular version entitled *The People's Plan for Progress* in both English and Swahili.

The People's Plan was chosen as the course book for a regional pilot project in the Kilimanjaro region (and the Mbeya region in the south) to introduce the study circle as a working form. We had successfully established a number of groups that were to meet 7–8 times to study the country's finance plan. Two more study aids had been produced: a number of radio programmes were transmitted over a local transmitter with the assistance of the Cooperative Education Centre in Moshi. The Institute's Dar es Salaam office had produced a stencilled manual to assist the groups' discussions. We used the designation *Radio Study Groups* in order not to provoke unnecessarily our British colleagues with our Swedish concept – the study circle.

Discovering problems in the groups' activities was not difficult: the study manual was not very good and was used in a stereotype fashion: the questions in the manual were often gone through, one by one, and a tick was placed against the right answer, i.e. no discussion was stimulated on the question. Many participants lost interest after a while. However, the pilot project provided useful experience for the future. It was possible to use radio programmes plus a simple course book and a manual for "study circles" in the villages. But the preparations had to be meticulous: group leaders had to be given training, the study material had to be well-adapted to its needs, and at least part of it should be tested during the course for leaders. Experience gained from these small-scale pilot projects came to good use when the first campaign of a number of national mass study campaigns was implemented, namely *Kupanga ni Kuchagua (to plan is to choose)*.

Old wisdom in Kibosho Juu

On New Year's Eve 1969, President Julius Nyerere broadcast his traditional speech to the nation. He announced the decision made by the governing party, TANU (Tanganyika African National Union), that ignorance would be combated and that illiteracy (which was 67% when the country became independent) would be eliminated. A few regions had been selected for pilot activities, including Kilimanjaro. An administration for the literacy campaign was created in great haste. Adult Education Officers were to be given training in adult education methods through the IAE. The President proclaimed that 1970 was to be the year of adult education.

The head teachers in the schools were made responsible for the direct contacts with the people living in the vicinity of the school and for organising literacy classes: obtaining teachers and premises, recruiting participants and supervising the progress of the work in the groups. This was a completely new working field for the head teachers. They were extremely hesitant where their role was concerned. At the IAE in Moshi we clearly understood that the head teachers had a great need of support. We were their closest allies in this respect and invited them to a number of two-day seminars at which TANU's magnificent focus on education was presented and discussed in depth. During my last six months in Moshi it was obvious to us that our work on the literacy campaign was our most important task. We held discussions and cooperated with TANU's regional chairman, with the school authorities and with Mama Maendeleo (responsible for village development and a person who had experience of teaching elementary reading skills to adults).

We arranged a great number of seminars around the region. Our intention with these meetings was obvious. We wanted to motivate the senior teachers for the assignment they had been charged with and which many of them regarded as an extra burden and nothing more. It was important to emphasise the positive sides: they had been entrusted by TANU and the government of the country to be the final link in a magnificent venture, which was going to mean a big step forward for the villagers. (This part was always the responsibility of a representative of TANU.) Much of the time was spent on methods for the literacy work. We took up matters relating to recruitment etc. In addition we tried to squeeze in a few adult education methods into a tight programme, mainly to indicate that adults required another type of reception than the children they taught every day. To demonstrate that we wanted to live as we learned, we designed our parts of the meetings as conversations rather than lectures. And the conversations were lively.

We held our meetings in schools, churches, cooperative stores, anywhere where there was space enough. I felt somewhat euphoric during this intensive work; finally I was taking part in something that really felt meaningful. This was adult education in at least one sense of the term (and a very important sense too), even if one important ingredient in our Swedish adult education philosophy was lacking: the driving force behind the literacy campaign that had just started was in no way a bottom-up initiative. It had been decided upon by the political elite in its (very sensible) insight into the importance of literacy for the development of the country. The initiative came from above and not from the people, which a more orthodox adult education ideology would have demanded. *Nonetheless it was adult education.*

One Saturday-Sunday in May, after the rainy season and after the roads had almost dried out, we held a course in a village high up on the mountain, Kibosho Juu. (Juu is the Swahili word for top, upper part.) We sat in a cooperative store room sharing the space with sacks of coffee, insecticides, artificial fertilisers, and so on. TANU's district chairman had just spoken about the campaign (in a manner that was a little too authoritarian in my opinion, as well as that of several others too). Mama Maendeleo had given her input on methods. We had had a role play on how young schoolboys recruited older men to the reading classes and, to the cheers of the participants, made every conceivable error. My Tanzanian colleague, Leonsi, and I ended the meeting with an input on adult teaching methods. With the aid of many examples and obvious gestures, Leonsi, who was a teacher himself, drummed home the message that lessons for children and lessons for adults were different in many respects. During

our planning of the courses we had decided that Leonsi would give extra emphasis to one fundamental feature of all adult education: there was no room in adult education for the authoritarian system that characterised the normal school system.

I tried with a somewhat clumsy mixture of English and Swahili to explain that it was also possible to study in a group without a real teacher, i.e. the study circle idea, but without mentioning the term study circle. At this point an elderly man stood up and, with the courtliness that was common to many Africans, apologised for disturbing the important lesson, for using valuable time for a very simple thought, and so on. But if it were so permitted, he would like to say something (and he then raised his voice and his complaisance was replaced by authority). What I had talked about was truly nothing new, nothing that Africa had to learn from Europe. For as long as there had been people in these parts, the old men had gathered under a tree in the middle of the village and held discussions until they reached agreement. So when I had said that people could learn from each other, he wanted to say that that had always been the case in Africa.

This was a great triumph. I could not explain better than the courtly old gentleman in Kibosho Juu what I wanted to say: *Adult education in the sense we understand it is in no way in conflict with the African tradition. On the contrary, it is based on the same popular participation as "village democracy". Adult education work can thus make good use of the old tradition of the long conversations under the mango tree in programmes of adult education since it is closer to African nature than British Adult Education with its roots in the academic world.* (The fact that African village democracy had serious deficiencies need not be commented on here. It is the use of the conversation as a teaching method that is of interest in this context.)

A Tanzanian folk educator

Leonsi Ngalai was my closest Tanzanian colleague. While I was Resident Tutor, his title was Organiser. Leonsi was a colourful man in all respects: teacher, head teacher, and now an organiser at the Institute. I admired his ready wit. I will never forget his cutting comment when I complained about the chicken we had just been served at a little bar and which was tougher than usual. "There is no tough meat, only Europeans with bad teeth."

If I left any mark at all in Moshi, it was undoubtedly through Leonsi. We worked constantly side by side. I was totally dependent on him as my interpreter to Swahili and Kichagga, and on his knowledge of the area. We planned courses and arranged teaching at these courses together. Initially he was very sceptical about my attempts to use conversational teaching methods. I, the expert, an academically trained Resident Tutor, should not waste time holding discussions with course participants. I should merely tell them directly what was correct.

But later on Leonsi also started to have a dialogue with the course participants, without being really aware that he had changed his method. With his ready wit and humour he was naturally a brilliant conversational educationist. Once he took up the subject in the car on the way home from a course. "Have you thought how much you can get out of normal people if you just treat them in the right way?" he said. On one of the courses we had for teachers who were to be responsible for the literacy campaign and where a TANU leader was always present, he made so bold as to point out that, if one wanted to obtain popular support for something, better results would be

achieved if one conversed with the participants instead of laying down the correct line in a lecture. In the opinion of Leonsi, Mwalimu (President Nyerere) was a master of this art. Unfortunately I cannot remember that the local party man allowed himself to be influenced. But Leonsi was convinced, there was no doubt about that.

I was given a further example that Leonsi had adopted a more democratic attitude towards people in general. In a letter he sent to me after I had completed my contract in Moshi, Leonsi complained that my successor – a young Tanzanian academic – treated course participants arrogantly and overbearingly: "Here old men come up to me and say that they were used to being treated with respect by the European (Mzungu). And now this young African is trying to give us orders as if we were schoolboys." A statement of this type must naturally be taken with a pinch of salt. Most is probably due to African courtesy. But I interpret the fact that Leonsi mentioned it in his letter as proof that he still regarded the non-authoritarian attitude as the right attitude.

Many years later, in August 1982, I was in Dar es Salaam on a short-term assignment for SIDA. One afternoon I was walking along one of the quieter streets in the town when I suddenly jumped at the sound of a fierce signal from a car. A small truck stopped at the kerb and out climbed Leonsi with a much bigger body but with his old, broad, dazzling grin. The pleasure at meeting each other was mutual. Leonsi was now a member of parliament and, as I heard later, permanently in opposition. "Do you remember our courses at Kilimanjaro," he wondered, "how we held discussions with people instead of holding lectures? I have often done the same thing when I hold political meetings in my constituency. People actually think that they have the chance to express their opinion then. It certainly takes time but perhaps it helped me to be re-elected." Two thoughts came into my mind. Imagine if a little of what he says is true, and if there are other politicians who have been influenced by the adult education methods. If so, we have actually made a *contribution to democracy*, however small.

When Tanzania experienced considerable economic difficulties in the 1980s and approached the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for help, the country was forced to introduce very severe restrictions which, among other things, had an effect on adult education and also on the Institute of Adult Education. At this time SIDA also reduced its support to the adult education sector. The scope of adult education, which had once been such a vigorous activity, was considerably reduced. What was left was, more or less, merely self-financed activities. The Institute offered courses which smoothed the way for university entrance examinations. There were many people who had not succeeded in gaining admission to university from the secondary school and they were now prepared to pay the high course fees that the Institute charged participants for giving them this opportunity. It was no doubt an important contribution, but it was a long distance from the adult education philosophy on which we based our work in the 1960s and 1970s.

As a teacher trainer in the FDC project, 1976–1978

In 1976 I was back in Tanzania again, this time as a trainer of teachers for the newly started folk high schools which the Tanzania government had energetically requested and which received considerable support from SIDA. At the request of Tanzania, two Swedish experts in adult education had studied the possibility of establishing schools of this type that were specifically adapted to conditions in Tanzania but which would

use the teaching methods of Nordic folk high schools. The schools were subsequently called Folk Development Colleges (FDC), in Swahili Vyuo vya Maendeleo ya Wananchi (schools for the development of the citizens). There was no support for the two Swedish experts' recommendation that the programme should start on a small scale. Tanzania was in a hurry. The project started with 27 schools and quickly expanded to more than 50 schools.

Teacher training for the new form of school was located at Kibaha, 40 kilometres west of Dar es Salaam, as a part of the old Nordic Tanganyika project. It was my task to teach about adult education methods in general, to introduce the Swedish (Nordic) folk high school spirit and, not least, together with the teachers at Kibaha, to turn Kibaha into a educational power house from which basic teaching approaches and methods would be spread to a growing number of FDCs. It was not an easy task. It is true that the picture had several positive aspects, but while I struggled each day with the problems, I certainly felt that the negative aspects were in the majority.

I had the best conceivable authority to lean on – President Nyerere. He had discussed adult education in several major speeches. The thoughts he presented could very well have emanated from a Swedish folk high school man. I thought then – and still do – that he was one of the foremost in the world where adult education philosophy is concerned. As early as in 1967 he declared: The education that is offered must stimulate the development of three things in every citizen: curiosity, the ability to learn from others, and a clear belief in his or her position as a free and equal member of society. He made fun of those whose only purpose with their studies was to receive a diploma to put up on the wall, to obtain a reputation as a learned man – a professor in knowledge.

All teaching must have the aim of liberating people. But people can only liberate themselves, they cannot be developed or liberated by other people. People do not develop in a vacuum, isolated from society and their surroundings. The capacity of people is developed in a process of thinking, reaching decisions, and taking action. All this requires working together with others.

Nyerere's ideas are also very similar to folk high school ideas where methods of adult education are concerned. A mother cannot "give" her child the art of speaking or walking. Speaking or walking are not "things" that a mother has and can give her child. What the mother can do is to support and help the child in its aspirations to learn these things. Exactly the same applies to the adult educator. He/she shall stimulate students in their acquisition of knowledge. One more fundamental remark: Every adult person has knowledge in a subject that interests him. It can be a theoretical or practical subject. The major task of adult education is to stimulate the students to make their contribution. (We Swedes should not have any difficulties in recognising the philosophy and methods of the study circle.) President Nyerere was called "Mwalimu" (the teacher), and for very good reasons.

There were no difficulties at all in making references to the President's thoughts in the teaching. His down-to-earth examples were well suited for this purpose. One attitude that was far too common was that the teacher had something which the students totally lacked – knowledge – and which the teacher should "give" the students in the classroom. With Nyerere as the point of departure, it was possible to have conversations about this. The same applied to his remark that every student had something to contribute and that one of the teacher's most important tasks was to stimulate the participation of the students in the acquisition of knowledge. The peda-

gogics of liberation, the song of praise to cooperation, the strong emphasis on curiosity and belief in one's own ability as the basis of all teaching and upbringing, that could be seen in Education for self-reliance (1967), should have been included as an introduction to the curricula that were produced for the FDCs.

I can confidently say that President Nyerere's ideas on teaching methods, and particularly on adult education, were my main thread when I taught the trainee teachers. Unfortunately I never had enough time to make practical applications of these ideas. Experience of teaching, from the perspective of the student or the teacher, that both young trainee teachers and older teachers brought to occasional further education courses were in diametrical opposition to these ideas: "cramming", not learning for life, but just for the next examination.

The teacher of farming at Kibaha was always ready to take part in a discussion. My knowledge of farming was minimal, and completely non-existent where tropical farming was concerned. So he taught me about the potential of farming in tropical areas. I ventilated a pet theory of mine on teaching methods: the interaction between practice and theory. Can one take problems from the practical work in the "shamba" (field) into the classroom and, for example take up vermin theoretically, when they are found in the fields? Was it also possible to give the students greater scope to find their own ways of acquiring knowledge? The teacher of farming was not reluctant to make a modest experiment: he could well consider those parts of the course that took up weed control, vermin and fertilisers. But he was strongly tied to the central syllabuses. In the following few weeks, groups of students went around asking questions and trying to obtain suitable books. However, it was an experiment, a start. But it is clear that all journeys start with a first step.

An elderly man who had four years' schooling but "a university in his hands" was the teacher in practical subjects. The youngest member of the staff was the home economics teacher. I had more conversations with them on teaching methods and the ideas behind the FDCs than with the teachers who had an academic background. The latter appeared to have a shield of prestige that protected them from new ideas.

The most conspicuous problem for teacher training at Kibaha was the fluctuations in the numbers of students. For long periods there were no prospective FDC teachers there at all, and no further education programmes were run for the benefit of active teachers. It was easy to place the blame for this on the Ministry of Education's Adult Education Department. There was an obvious lack of long-term planning. Behind this shortcoming there was another problem of a more fundamental type, typical of developing countries. Tanzania lacked a sufficient number of academically trained persons. The allocation of trainee teachers for the FDCs quite simply did not cover the needs.

One of my brightest memories is connected with the Ministry's irregular use of Kibaha. A message was suddenly received one day from the Ministry that a large number of craftsmen from villages around the country had been invited to attend a course at Kibaha. They were to be given rapid training that would enable them to become teachers in practical subjects in their home villages. The course was to start at very short notice. The fact that no classrooms were available was of no concern to the Ministry. The elderly teacher in handicrafts, a very practical man, dealt with the dilemma in a very elegant manner. The course participants would quite simply have to create classrooms for the course: make drawings and calculations, manufacture bricks, eventually build the classrooms with the bricks they had made plus a wide-

meshed chicken net on the upper parts of the walls and a tin plated roof. This necessitated both calculations on the strength of materials and cost calculations. The participants on this course left Kibaha with knowledge that was easy to use at village level.

I had many conversations with Mrs Nyiti. She was the teacher in home economics. She taught both at the FDC that was located at Kibaha, and the FDC teachers who came to Kibaha for short further education courses or the basic teacher training courses. Her problem was whether she should allow the FDC girls cook food of the type that they were used to in their home villages, or whether she should take out the European cookery books in the same way as so many of her colleagues. She solved the dilemma by asking the girls to bring seeds from plants that they grew at home and which they liked to eat. The seeds were planted. This provided an opportunity to give lessons on fertilisers, irrigation, use of insecticides and so on. The vegetables were used to cook the food that the girls were used to and liked to eat. Mrs Nyiti's made a point of discussing in depth how this traditional food could be made perfectly adequate with the aid of additional nutrients.

There were thus several examples of determination and ability to use unconventional methods. But there was one field where I continually ran into a brick wall.

A very important element in the FDC ideology was the idea of cooperation between the schools and the surrounding area. The course offered should correspond to needs in the villages. Each school should have a governing body consisting of members of the village council. This governing body should exert a certain degree of influence over the operation of the schools. There were requests for courses, for example for the librarians of the small libraries which had been established, training in bookkeeping for the villagers' needs, special housing arrangements for women who took small children with them to a course. It was intended that these needs and many others should be discussed and solved through channels for cooperation between the FDCs and the villages in the area.

On the other side the requirements made of the villages were mainly that they should defray part of the costs of "their" FDC students. This did not work at all. On the one hand the villages were very poor and, on the other, contacts between the schools and the village councils were mostly totally non-existent.

I took great pains in interesting school management and the teachers in cooperation with the surrounding villages. All my efforts fell flat. There were a great number of counter arguments, both new arguments and some that changed form continuously. The people on the village councils were simple, ignorant peasants. They could hardly give anything of importance to the work of the teachers. Were there any funds allocated for this purpose? How should we get out to the villages? The school's Landrover was most often occupied for the transport of vegetables to the university canteen or for driving the principal and others to the Ministry in Dar es Salaam. I offered the services of my private car. But didn't I understand that the roads were in terrible condition, almost inaccessible? My car would fall apart after a few journeys of this type. And so on.

It was not difficult to understand where the shoe really pinched. None of the teachers were interested in exchanging the comforts of a desk in an office for bouncing up and down on bumpy and dusty roads just because this idealistic but ignorant (of the conditions in rural areas in Tanzania) Swede had got the idea that something would be achieved with these futile activities – or even worse, sacrificing part of one's

spare time to talk to ignorant people out in the rural areas, people whom one had nothing in common with, whom one could not speak with at all. But the Swede naturally did not understand this. None of this was said to me, politeness forbade it. So I did not experience any trips out to the villages around Kibaha together with my teaching colleagues. As far as I know, there were no contacts at all with the area around Kibaha, at least not during the time I was there.

I must regard some of my efforts in both Moshi and Kibaha as failures. The lessons I personally learnt from these efforts are simple, but they are fundamental to all development work (and, in principle the same in Kibaha and Moshi).

Those who are the subject of development or innovative efforts must feel the need for change themselves. Either the need is original or a situation must be created so that the need of change is obvious for those concerned. It has proved to be difficult or impossible to create acceptances to new ideas and change imposed from above or from the outsight. It is only possible for new ideas to take root as a response to a need – original or created. In my opinion these are conclusions that must have an impact on the work that is done when cooperation projects between Sweden and a developing country are discussed and concretised in the text of an agreement. It is not enough for the political leadership in a country to express a need. Representatives of the groups that are directly affected, persons in the developing country who will work with the tasks in the project, must participate in the preparations at a very early stage to ensure that the need for change does not merely exist in the minds of the political elite. It is true that this would complicate the preparatory work. But it can also probably reduce the risk of failure when the project is implemented. And then complications at an early stage are a price worth paying.

(How the FDC project was seriously affected by the severe economic cutbacks of the 1980s and the decline in Swedish support and how it seems to have landed on its feet once again is described in the next chapter by Johan Norbeck: *From Tanzania's Folk Development Colleges.*)

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From Tanzania's Folk Development Colleges

by Johan Norbeck

Students present their project work

It was time for the students to present their project work at Kibaha Folk Development College (FDC). The entire school had assembled in the largest classroom. There were two tables in front of the blackboard and five students sat behind these tables facing the assembly.

The five students started to present their report on the results their project had given. They had tried to learn as much as possible about HIV and AIDS, particularly about the spread of the disease in the area around the school. They had led their studies themselves, which was a new approach. They had been told by their teachers that, as far as possible, they should search themselves for information on the subject they wanted to learn about and then the group would be helped in the planning and implementation of their studies and in understanding what they had learnt. The teachers would follow their studies and step in whenever there was a need.

They said that initially they were very suspicious of the teachers. It seemed odd that the teachers suddenly changed their role so radically – from the totally authoritarian "parrot style teaching" to a type of joint learning approach with necessitated that the students should think themselves, collect sources of information, and critically examine these sources. But, after a few weeks, they began to understand that the teachers really were serious and then they experienced a great sense of freedom and motivation when they got to grips with the project. They also noticed that the teachers knew very little about the subject. The students found it extremely stimulating that they, for once, were ahead of the teachers in both knowledge and understanding.

This resulted in frantic activity which far exceeded anything the teachers had imagined or even believed possible in Tanzanian society. The students were not at all satisfied with the small amount of material on HIV and AIDS that was available at the school. They went out into the community and obtained sources of information in many fruitful ways. Some of them went to the nearby hospital and asked to speak to the doctors who knew the subject. They interviewed two doctors. They also got the opportunity to obtain other written material through the doctors. Other students interviewed nurses who had worked with AIDS in the field. Others went out into the villages in the neighbourhood which had a partly different ethnic composition. There they asked both the old and the young about their views on the subject and about their knowledge of the existence of HIV and AIDS.

When they had studied all the information they had collected, they discovered that they had acquired a great deal of new knowledge and they realised that this knowledge did not exist at the school. They decided to present the results of their project by forming a panel consisting of five members of the group and one of the doctors from the hospital. They did not want the teachers to be on the panel since they had noted that the teachers had not contributed in any way at all to the collection and study of the valuable information. The doctor had been invited by letter but he wrote back saying that he regretted that he was unable to participate in the presentation due to his work. However, he wished the students good luck.

The five members of the panel presented their newly acquired knowledge. Their audience, the principal, teachers and students, sat quietly and were increasingly af-

fected emotionally. They talked about what HIV/AIDS was and said that it was widespread in the area. They had learned that the area around Kibaha was one of the most seriously affected in Tanzania. They were able to talk about disease and death and they could demonstrate that a great deal could have been prevented if more information and knowledge had been given to the common people. They gave practical instructions to those present on how they could protect themselves against the disease and help to reverse the trend in the villages they came from.

After they had presented their report the panel offered to answer questions. There was a small session of questions and answers, but soon one of the farming teachers raised her hand. She wanted to say something about what she had just heard. She held a speech that was full of enthusiasm and praise for the students in the project group and emphasised the importance of the knowledge they had acquired in this way and the fine example they had set the other students. She admitted frankly that she had not known a fraction about what she had heard and she did not believe that any other teachers at the school had a grasp of this important subject.

She had hardly time to finish and sit down before the principal stood up and made a similar speech which he finished by saying that it was important that project work of this type was implemented in all the FDCs in Tanzania.

A few of the teachers responsible (our teacher trainers who were being trained) told us afterwards that the students had taken initiatives that the teachers would never have dared to take, and that the community's response to these initiatives was totally different to what they had expected. They themselves would never have dared to go to the doctors and question them as the students had done. They regarded the difference in status between them and the doctors as far too great. They did not believe their ears when they heard that the doctors had not merely accepted the initiative, they had even encouraged it. And they were taken aback when the doctor who had been invited to the presentation had replied with a courteous letter to the students' invitation.

When those of us who were leading the training programme for the teacher trainers at this time heard the results, we were very astounded but also very happy. Was it possible that these were the same students who we had observed here just six months ago? Then they had had a totally different attitude to their studies. Could they have been liberated so rapidly from their great passivity and parrot-like repetition of what the teachers preached from their desks?

Why were we so astounded? And what was behind this course of events?

Folk Development Colleges, origins and development

The Folk Development College, or FDC as it is called, is a type of school that was developed in Tanzania from 1975 onwards. It came into being since there had long been a great need in the country of a form of schooling after compulsory school for young people living in rural areas. There were already a few different types of schools in the rural areas, for example agricultural schools and centres for rural development, but the hopes that had been placed in these schools had not been fulfilled. They had not proved to be able to give the young people in rural areas what they needed to make them want to stay in their home district and help to develop it, or to become interested in local self-government and the work of creating a democratic society. At this point of time, this was regarded as being particularly important since rural devel-

opment had been given priority in the country's political aspirations. For some years a type of school had been sought which could give young people in the rural areas a form of all-round development, in other words a form of education that did not focus narrowly on, for example, farming or home economics for girls. A broader education was desired that would turn the young people into agents of change in their villages at several levels and in several fields.

President Nyerere became interested in Swedish folk high schools after a study visit he made to Sweden in the beginning of the 1960s. In 1971 he sent a delegation to Sweden to make an in-depth study of this type of school. When the delegation returned to Tanzania, it recommended that Tanzania should introduce a new school form that was inspired in many respects by the Swedish folk high school.

In 1974 and 1975 objectives, regulations and study plans were produced for a school of this type and a special training programme was implemented for its prospective teachers and principals. All this was done under great demands for haste. The leader of the project appointed by the government wanted to establish 85 FDCs, one in each district, during the first two years. The actual figure was 52. This haste had, as it was eventually shown, several negative effects. Teachers and principals were far too inadequately prepared to be able to fully absorb the underlying purpose and character of the new school form. They had been recruited directly, mostly from primary schools and a few from secondary schools. They were never given enough time to properly understand the major difference between these two school forms on the one hand and the FDCs on the other well enough to enable them to actively promote the development of the new school in accordance with the fundamental ideas. This would have necessitated a great deal of follow-up support which they were never given. The principals and teachers took the leadership styles and teaching styles, as well as their conceptions about suitable subject content, from the schools they came from. Another contributory factor to the problem was that, as opposed to the original intentions, all FDCs were given study plans that had been drawn up at the central level, instead of being adapted to local needs.

When two evaluations, made in 1980 and 1990, demonstrated the shortcomings in the development of the FDCs, SIDA and the Ministry of Education in Tanzania approached the Adult Education Centre at the University of Linköping for support, primarily for training teachers at the FDCs in teaching methods. There were several reasons for this, but the decisive reason was that there were staff at the University who had worked with adult education in Tanzania ever since 1969.

The TANDEM project, preparations in Tanzania and Sweden

In this programme of cooperation between Linköping and the Ministry responsible in Tanzania, a broader project was eventually developed known as the TANDEM project, which was to provide support for the entire FDC system through organisation development and the training of more or less all categories of personnel.

During my visits to prepare this project, I was talking one day to the teacher of bookkeeping at Chisalu FDC. He told me that he had originally taught two lessons of bookkeeping each week for two groups of thirty students. "But," he said with a certain amount of pride in his voice," I teach the same things to both groups so I thought this was a waste of time. I have now combined them into one group of sixty

students." In other words he had managed to reduce the number of lessons each week to two instead of four. I asked him if I might visit his lessons. He readily agreed and I noticed that he looked forward expectantly to demonstrate his teaching skills.

Later that day I sat in on his bookkeeping lessons and what I saw was the following: during the two lessons he sat still behind his desk. He read aloud all the time from notes that (I later heard) he had written when he was being trained as a teacher 15 years earlier. The students did not have access to a textbook. Some of them tried to listen but the few that had pens and paper did not even try to make any notes. There was no break between the lessons and the teacher did not write anything on the blackboard. Approximately five times during the two lessons he broke off to ask a question to the sixty students. On some occasions his question was: "Class! Am I right or wrong?" To which the class replied in chorus: "Right, teacher." On other occasions the question was: "Can you follow me?" On one of these occasions one of the students answered a little before the others. At this the teacher became extremely irritated and roared: "Mussa, I didn't ask you! Class!" And then the entire class provided the right answer in chorus: "Yes, teacher."

After the lesson I spoke a little to the teacher and he appeared to be very satisfied with his performance. The students (aged between 16 and 23 years) had been obedient and disciplined. Everything had gone according to plan. I asked him why the students had not made any notes or asked any questions. "Well," the teacher replied, "most of our students cannot afford notebooks or pens, and we don't let them make notes during lessons anyway. If they do, they can't follow properly what the teacher is saying. They can make notes on what I said during their spare time. We don't allow the students to ask questions during the lessons either. They just disturb the other students. But they can come to me after the lesson and ask questions if they want to."

On our journeys to make preparations, my colleagues and I found that this situation was not at all unusual. We saw similar lessons at almost all FDCs. There were naturally exceptions also: teachers who had a different relationship with the students and who activated them in several different ways. But it appeared as if teachers in general considered that the outward form was what was most important, more important than the learning process itself. I saw, for example, teachers of English who were proud to be able to show me how the students followed a carefully practised pattern. The adult students always stood up to answer a question and, at the order of the teacher, they always clapped their hands when one of them gave a correct answer.

The teachers' methods were very similar to the forms used in the formal school in the Nordic countries in the 1800s, the forms that Grundtvig reacted against and called the "black school". His ideas on folk high schools were partly a protest against these methods.

The teaching methods that we saw at the FDCs were naturally partly a product of the teachers' own schooling and, unfortunately, also a product of the teacher training they had undergone. This was appropriate for a society characterised by Bantu cultures and colonial powers. Both these cultures favoured an extremely authoritarian and hierarchical pattern where, in all types of professions and situations, everyone should obey orders from above without reflection, without asking questions or taking any initiatives of their own. Students should merely repeat what the teacher or the textbook said. Questions, analyses and independent initiatives were quite simply punished.

Wherever we went we could see that it was common for adult students at the FDCs to be very low-spirited and unmotivated in the lessons and therefore also silent

and passive. They were not stimulated, for example by being given scope for critical thinking and creative activities. What we felt was absurd was that in a developing country, where there are considerable needs for change, development and democracy, the teaching methods used were of a type that least of all promoted change, development and democracy in the students. We felt convinced that the best way for adult education to work could be presented here as alternatives for the FDCs to test and make comparisons with. But we also saw what a herculean task it would be to change the underlying attitudes of the teachers and principals who had worked so differently for so many years.

In view of these foreseeable difficulties we decided to invite a few representatives of the FDCs to courses in Sweden. It was intended that these persons should see how folk development education teaching methods functioned in Sweden. If, without further ado, a teacher from abroad starts to present alternative teaching methods, the recipients in the developing country might easily suspect that the teacher is trying to force something on them or to deceive them. So many things had been foisted on them already by colonisers and aid workers in different guises. How could they know whether this new approach had any value at all for them or whether it functioned well anywhere? We realised that it was absolutely necessary that some Tanzanians from the FDC world should first experience and work with participatory pedagogy in a setting in which it had existed and often worked well for a long time. Then they could participate in testing it out in the Tanzanian setting (provided that they believed in it themselves). If a few, well-known and respected representatives of FDCs in Tanzania were able to say that they believed in this type of change, others would find it easier to be receptive to learn about it and to try it out in their own reality.

Nor was it merely a question of learning the educational theory and practice. They had to be present in Swedish folk education long enough to feel certain that what they saw was genuine and not a type of theatrical performance staged for their benefit. They had to be able to see how a democratic approach could be present in a folk high school or in study circles, wherever organisation, human relations and learning were concerned. And they had to see that it did not mean chaos or laissez-faire.

Some course participants came to places where the object of their study was not so successful, for example folk high schools that had shortcomings in both standards and democracy, or study circles with leaders that preached. Both phenomena are, unfortunately, far from uncommon in Sweden. But we succeeded in arranging at least a few good experiences for everyone. It turned out that one of the things that had made the deepest impression on them was the relationship between the course leaders and the course secretaries or the cleaning staff at the university. Perhaps it was these types of events that contributed most to their "aha experiences" after a few months in Sweden and which led to thoughts such as: *Democracy is not necessarily only words. Democracy can actually be put into a practical form that means something important for both learning and for the social and political life in a country.* Or: *Students who assume a great deal of responsibility for their studies are not necessarily undisciplined.* Or: *It is not such a bad idea to allow students to ask questions or quite simply to question.*

The knowledge that they could accept this in earnest in Sweden had the effect that we felt more secure prior to our task of taking on the majority of the staff working at the FDCs in Tanzania.

Further education of teachers – a cultural clash

Our project subsequently worked with both principals and teachers. But in order to reach the teachers, it was firstly naturally necessary to train the teacher trainers. It was these persons who would have the task of passing on the training to the great majority of the teachers.

We therefore started a course with a duration of one and a half years for specially handpicked, good teacher trainers and for teachers who would graduate as teacher trainers at the end of the course. The group contained 12 participants. It was our intention that these would then pass on the message in stages to all FDC teachers.

When we started by giving them a description of an alternative approach to learning, and thereby also alternative relations between principals, teachers and students, they appeared very sceptical. When we asked them to draw up a list of the difficulties they foresaw for the introduction of these teaching methods and this approach to learning at FDCs, even those who had visited Sweden took up obstacles which appeared to them to be more or less insurmountable, for example: *principals will never give up any part of their powers; the students will be undisciplined and lazy; the local communities will wonder what we are actually doing at the FDCs; when the top officials at the ministry understand the extent of this they will forbid it.*

We noted the obstacles and problems they had listed and asked them if, nonetheless, they would like to know what we had brought with us and try to use it in practice, as an experience. This they accepted.

For several days we then presented our views on knowledge, education and learning and the outlook on people that lay behind our ideals. We also spoke about the conditions in the environment that had to be present if this learning would be possible to implement. Most of this was in striking contrast to what normally happened at their FDCs according to their version: they painted a picture in which the ministry at the centre sent orders to the principals who then followed them slavishly – even if often only superficially. In other words their reports to the ministry presented reality as if the orders had been followed. However, what happened out in the schools was mostly quite different. Students were put to work on the principal's private fields instead of attending lessons. There was a reduction in the lessons of theoretical subjects in favour of practical work of this type. Teachers were used to run errands for the principal at any time, even during lessons. The principal overlooked the fact that teachers combined groups to reduce their workload. And so on.

Teachers and students had no insight into these things but were merely told that everything that happened was on the ministry's orders.

The teachers acted slavishly on the principals' orders – but also often only superficially. They ruthlessly exploited the students as servants and workers for private purposes. They reduced their teaching hours in the same way as the bookkeeping teacher at Chisalu mentioned above, or they did not turn up to lessons but attended to private business instead.

The picture we were given showed that ministry officials, principals and teachers were often in collusion with each other in order to guarantee that different officials retained certain privileges. Bribes were often given to superiors so that they would overlook improprieties. Teachers and other employees normally had no insight into the school's budget or how the funds were used. But if, on the other hand, the ministry got to know that principals or teachers had taken the initiative to change teaching

methods or the content of a subject, they could really crack down on the persons concerned. Taking initiatives to improve the learning of students was not encouraged unless they corresponded, in one respect or another, with the ministry's detailed directives. Even if the initiative was merely a suggestion for change of this type, the authorities were often indignant. Changes that had not been initiated on the highest authority were a bad thing. One special problem in this connection was that the senior officials were not interested in developing subject content or teaching methods. The school was therefore static. If there was any movement at all it was, in general, towards slow decay.

The attitude towards people was quite clear in all of this: the higher the rank a person had in society, the greater the value this person had as a person. A subordinate could be used freely as a tool for one's own purposes. Only people at the highest level had anything important to contribute. Their view of knowledge and learning was also clear-cut: knowledge is something one learns and can then reproduce faultlessly in the form it has been received. Learning is to receive passively and then to memorise. The main point of knowledge is to show it and, if it is possible to show it successfully, it can lead to a higher place in society. Knowledge has no value of its own, which would mean, for example that it could help people to create new knowledge themselves. We were given a clear example of this on our course for teacher trainers. Several participants said that they remembered that during their teacher training programmes they had read texts and heard about an alternative educational theory that was reminiscent of the one we presented during the course. But one day they suddenly said spontaneously that they could never in their lives had imagined that it was possible to use it in real life. They had acquired knowledge about it by reading about it and then reporting on it for their teacher in a degree project. They told us that no one had ever suggested to them that they should try it out in their forthcoming work as teachers. When practising their profession after teachers' training college, they had, as could have been expected, followed the teaching role they had been subjected to at primary and secondary school – and at teacher training college.

It was no wonder that they were sceptical when we seriously urged them to test another approach to learning, particularly when this form of learning involved a change in their relationship with the students, a break with the universally prevailing authoritarian and hierarchical pattern.

It was also no wonder that they were met with the same scepticism by the students when they eventually came out for teaching practice, using the lines of action from our course. The general opinion of the students and of others around them was initially that there was "something fishy" in the wind.

What had happened then in our project? Why was the scepticism shown by the teacher trainers, the teachers and the students eventually broken down? How could the students at Kibaha do their theme work on AIDS as they did it? How did they dare?

Design of further education programmes for teachers and principals

Those of us working with the training of the FDCs' teacher trainers arrived at the conclusion that there was a crucial difference between our course and, for example, the course the participants had participated in, in their original teacher training. *We*

practised what we preached, which is generally fairly uncommon in educational theory and practice. We showed them with all earnestness that we meant what we said, and we did it by consistently applying what we were speaking about. We did not merely demonstrate a new pattern of teaching or new methods, we also treated the participants in a new way, namely as valuable people. We pointed out that we often learned from them. Throughout the course we encouraged analytical thinking and we appreciated the initiatives they took, for example in the form of teaching innovations. We never showed any tendency to irritation about their questions or criticisms, quite the reverse. When they eventually found out that we were always consistent in our attitude, they started to understand that we were completely serious about what we were doing and that we would not suddenly do a complete turnabout and disavow or punish them.

One thing that was very important to enable them to understand the earnestness of our democratic aspirations was that we also lived together with them, under the same conditions, throughout the entire course. We all lived at a FDC in the countryside and had the same very simple standard of living, hygienic facilities, and food and drink as them. They were very aware of this the whole time and made a special point of taking this up at the end of the course when they expressed their appreciation about it, since it had contributed to their belief in us and in our message in the training.

It was also much easier for us to gain this confidence since they themselves lived with the new attitudes and the new views on learning every day of the course. And it was naturally a great help that some of them had been in Sweden and heard that we said the same things there as in Tanzania.

Something that they also experienced as almost revolutionary and very positive was that we naturally involved them throughout the course in the planning and implementation. For example, we ended each week with an evaluation and with the planning for the following week. All participants took turns at being chairman for the day and minutes were written by two participants. These were combined into one set of minutes before they were read the following day.

It was just as natural for us to say to their superiors at the Ministry how important it was that our participants should be a resource group for the reform of FDCs' rules and special directions, as well as the guidelines for the further education of teachers in the system. This very idea – that the participants should be able to exert an influence on the formulation of official documents was, it proved to be the case, something completely new, something that appeared initially to be absurd and dangerous to management at the Ministry. We emphasised to the people at the Ministry that our participants, who were really aware of the situation these directives were intended to govern, were totally indispensable where revising the documents was concerned. Management at the Ministry from the permanent secretary downwards accepted our proposals with extremely great hesitation as an experiment. For us this was an important integral part of the whole concept of the project and a great success in our aspirations to create motivation and confidence in our participants.

Between each course period of three weeks, the teacher trainers had approximately three months' practical training at different FDCs. They worked there as normal teachers with the schools' regular students. It was intended that they should try to apply the new approach to learning and study that we had presented and practised on the course. Initially they worked in teams to support each other.

When they were out on their first period of teaching practice, we – the persons

responsible for the entire training programme – were very curious to know what had happened. Had their own apprehensions been confirmed? Had, for example, the strict order in the schools been replaced by general slackness and undisciplined students, or even by chaos? We had travelled around and made some visits to them at the schools where they were doing their teaching practice and seen many positive signs – but these could have been coincidences. Now, when the results of the teaching practice were summed up, we could really breathe out. We were not only confronted with dry facts, but with great enthusiasm. Together with their students, they had experienced the same type of reactions and changes during their teaching practice that we had experienced with them. We were very surprised and impressed by the rapidity with which they and their students could assimilate the new approach, not just as ideas but also as actions. The positive testimony was overwhelming.

After some weeks the students had noticed that their teachers were really in earnest when they urged them to seek and produce knowledge themselves, or when they said that they and the students could seek knowledge together, or when they encouraged them to ask critical questions and take initiatives of their own. And when they had gained confidence in the teachers' new attitude, the students were like calves in the countryside. The passiveness and the "parrot mentality" that we had seen in them before had, in many cases, completely vanished.

Our course participants, the teacher trainers, had several times pointed out that, in their opinion, the greatest risk to what we were recommending was that it could result in the students losing respect, order and discipline. When they came back from their teaching practice they had to admit that this had not been the case. On the contrary, the students had shown more motivation for their studies and showed more interest in assuming responsibility than ever before.

Occasionally, we also tried to show them that our model also promoted democratic development at certain levels. In parallel with the change of the learning process in itself and relations between students and teachers, we worked in our project with internal democracy in the FDCs' organisation. In the TANDEM project we had organised a special training programme for principals, which ran in parallel with our course. The role and attitudes of the principals was a recurrent theme mentioned by the teachers as a major threat to the necessary changes towards democracy. Both the teachers and ourselves felt that we could see that the principals regarded their FDCs as their own small kingdoms. It was thought that the idea of giving away their absolute power would be something very shattering and repugnant to them. For them to start treating teachers as equals could be to lose everything.

Getting the principals to adopt these ideas, and not just to work with them but to work for them, was certainly one of the greatest obstacles. The course for the principals worked intensively with this and other issues.

Relations with the communities close to the school was a very important issue in this respect. The original idea was that the FDC would work intimately together with the villages in the vicinity of the school. The FDCs and the villages should plan courses and other activities together that could assist in meeting the needs of the community. But, during all the years from 1975 onwards, this had only taken place to a very small extent. The FDC had become far too much of an ivory tower, which made it naturally easier for the principals to retain their power and keep their rule intact. In this respect also, our project, and in particular the course for the principals,

took forceful action. This issue, "democratising" the school in relation to the community, was an important part of the concept of the project. The issue was treated so effectively that it soon had great significance for the development of FDCs.

There were principals who openly opposed changes of this type, there were those who tried to adopt the ideas without any real success, and there were finally those who really understood the advantages, not only for the school as such but also for themselves, and who were successful in applying a new and democratic approach.

Some reflections on the work of the Tandem project

What fate will our endeavours in this project meet with in the future? Have they succeeded in adding something that will lead to positive change, however small? Has the project provided any knowledge and training that can give Tanzania an increasing number of young people who can and dare act as agents of change? Many questions of this type arose when the project ended in December 1996. I would like to provide some thoughts on these questions here.

Tanzania's economy was so weak that during the latter part of the project the Ministry of Finance had no funds to give to the FDCs. From 1995 to 2000 the FDCs had, in practice, not received a shilling from the state, apart from the salaries of the staff. In the project we had worked hard at giving principals and teachers new ideas on how they could work if they were more independent of the Ministry, how they could adapt their work more to the needs of the local community, and how they could become increasingly self-sufficient. With the rather sudden withdrawal of government funding for the FDCs, this perspective assumed acute importance.

Two years after the end of the project, the Ministry has made a sort of evaluation on how different FDCs have coped. The evaluation found that, despite the lack of funds, approximately one-third of the FDCs have coped well in the sense that they have relatively extensive activities. A third are running a few activities, and the final third have stood completely still.

It can well be the case that most of the schools that succeeded best at maintaining activities have managed to do this on account of the fact that they were serious in adopting new patterns for democratic leadership and collective responsibility, as well as the project's models of ways of working with the local community. The development of real democracy in the schools could have mobilised far more resources for survival, resources above all for assuming responsibility and providing motivation. Closer cooperation with the local communities in order to get to know their problems and their needs of education and training could have mobilised these resources and provided, as a result, ideas for different activities. Some of these could have provided an income.

Where our focus on a new approach to learning is concerned, it is possible to see different scenarios: it is probably very difficult to maintain life in the patterns that the teachers and teacher trainers tested together with us, particularly since this pilot project was fairly unique in a society that was otherwise dominated in more or less all other respects by old authoritarian, hierarchical patterns and a view of learning that could have been taken directly from a novel by Charles Dickens from the mid 1800s. However, against this there are other forces that would favour our approach and the practices associated with it.

There is considerable pressure to develop democracy in all countries today. Partly citizens of certain countries feel the need of another form of government than what

they have been used to under dictatorships, which has taken from them both self-esteem and resources. Partly countries feel the pressure from donors. Communities such as these have little access to knowledge, particularly practical knowledge, on how democracy can be established and developed. Many institutions and organisations in these countries are searching high and low for advice and assistance that can help them to show that democratic development is underway. In the final stages of the project we experienced that a few formal schools turned to the local FDC and expressed interest in being informed about its experience of democratisation that they had heard about during the course of the project. Perhaps some FDCs can serve as interesting models in some respects. Perhaps the Ministry can understand that it has something to demonstrate here that it had not previously understood the importance of.

Other forces that favour the survival of the new approach are the advantages that teachers, principals and students have experienced with them. Several teachers told us at the end of the project that it would be very difficult for the principals to continue along their old autocratic lines now that the teachers had seen that they had a great deal to gain from internal democracy. In many places the teachers are now demanding full insight and participation in the running of the school, its finances, administration and teaching. Some principals have experienced the advantages of being able to delegate duties now that the teachers have been given insight into how the school is run. They have also noticed how much easier it is to achieve positive cooperation with the staff. The students find that they have a much more stimulating and developing time at school if they are permitted to participate in internal democracy and to pursue their studies in accordance with the new approach to learning.

The case that I described at the beginning of this chapter, the project study on AIDS in Kibaha, was a stimulating experience for us. It was a type of model case that both the Tanzanian teachers and ourselves thought was almost too good to be true. During the course of the entire project we saw several similar cases, even if they were not quite so exemplary. We also saw schools where students had started using the school library for the very first time. We saw teachers who had started to prepare their lessons by acquiring new information instead of merely falling back on their notes from the time when they were training. They felt the demands of the students who now dared to voice their criticism. We saw students who dared to report teachers who had taken the day off to the principal. We saw principals, teachers and students who sought contacts in the local community in order to find out how the school could best serve the needs there. And, not least, we saw that many teachers had gained a professional identity and pride in their occupations which they had never had before.

Naturally we also saw results of our work that seemed mediocre. In our analysis this was mainly due to the fact that we had had difficulties in getting some of the participants to cast off their dependence on the forms we used, and to bear in mind instead the goals that they were there to achieve, in other words the underlying ideology. We tried to show them different ways to achieve the major goals of the educational theory, i.e. analytical/critical thinking, curiosity, creativity and in-depth learning, to mention a few. But we emphasised that, on each occasion, they had to choose forms that were relevant to the goals.

We also saw examples of something that I had experienced in many places in my work in Africa. My colleagues had a tendency to stick to the outer forms and attach the greatest importance to following these forms "according to the book". In the first

place they are naturally easier to grasp than the ideology and easier to transform into practice. But, secondly, this tendency is related, as I understand it, to the authoritarian upbringing of people mentioned above. It is deeply rooted in the soul of the people that they should adhere to the rules for behaviour laid down by authority. People are not used to getting explanations of these rules, and are traditionally encouraged not to seek explanations either. On the contrary, people are accustomed to the fact that deviations from the rules are frowned upon.

We saw fine examples of innovative thinking where teaching methods were concerned, but we also fairly often saw a soulless application of the methods we had used, a type of mechanical teaching, which in some ways had reintroduced the method of arranging learning processes that we had tried to counteract in our work.

However, this is far from the whole truth where the mediocre aspects were concerned. In some respects few projects have received such a high degree of acceptance and support as the TANDEM project. I had a well-established, professional relationship with the head of the teacher trainers at FDCs, W. Kimambo, for more than 15 years. On several occasions over the years, he and I had had the opportunity to exchange opinions on adult learning and FDCs. We had five FDC teacher trainers at a three-month course in Sweden in 1980. It was Kimambo and the five teacher trainers who advocated that we at Linköping, with our special views on learning and democratic development, should support the development of FDC staff in the project that became the TANDEM project. I worked out the goals and content of the project together with the Permanent Secretary at the Ministry. We had also the courses that prepared the project in Sweden. In all these contexts the ideology behind adult education and education theory had been taken up a great deal, and we felt that it was these ideas that the Tanzanians were particularly interested in.

Nonetheless, for us the project provided a sort of awakening. Despite the strong acceptance and support that we considered the project had, there was still some behaviour that indicated that the participants had not understood or (a bewildering thought) that we had not understood. They were perhaps pleased to take from us, but they reshaped what they had taken in accordance with their own values or with what they considered to be valuable parts of their own culture. Perhaps we quite simply had not understood their behaviour since we did not know enough about their culture and thoughts from the inside.

Participants in a development cooperation project must continuously adapt innovations to the local situation. This adaptation should naturally be encouraged. Care must be taken that it is not counteracted by the chauvinistic, pedantic zeal of a field worker. The participants shall absorb the innovations as a stimulation to develop something themselves and not as one more layer to be stored on top of those they already have.

In the light of this it is also interesting to note an occasional ambivalence in ourselves. For example, it was sometimes difficult for us to accept that our message could easily be changed second-hand, since the project had been built up in such a way that we trained the teacher trainers and they, in turn, trained the teachers. We thought that some things had been lost on the way. But it was in fact a great advantage that the teacher trainers were given this trust. They worked in groups of three, and each group had the responsibility for training all the teachers at one FDC at a time. In this way new knowledge and attitudes could be spread relatively quickly and in addition it was possible to get them accepted and supported by people who were completely

inside the local culture. We quickly realised that there were considerable benefits to be gained from this. Nevertheless, we could sometimes feel a sense of loss – that our message had been distorted or had not been passed on in its entirety. For field workers, the desire to get one's own ideas accepted is often a very strong driving force, for better or worse.

Due to several factors, which have been partly taken up above, much of our work in this project will lie fallow and some will be forgotten. Some of our work will survive and be used in other ways than we had imagined.

But we are convinced that, in many respects, the project has left traces that will never be completely erased. Those who were confronted with it will now and then inevitably meet similar ideas in other educational programmes or in new directives from ministries or in programmes on radio and TV. Some of the ideas and methods will gradually be strengthened and disseminated. If you have experienced, as the students at Kibaha, the intensive happiness and strength of implementing your studies on your own initiative or of presenting your knowledge to the entire school, you will never forget it, and this experience will affect your future activities in life in one way or another. Successful development cooperation is not usually successful in the form of a landslide but in the form of the drops that slowly build the stalagmite.

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Joint Comments

Does support for folk development education promote democratic development? Yes, we are convinced that it does. But our accounts do not provide specific confirmation that this is the case. They cannot. Strengthening popular participation in democratic processes takes a long time. Projects that take place over a period of just a few years cannot be much more than isolated measures, small steps on the way towards democratic development. Even if the projects had not been discontinued prematurely, they would hardly have been much more. Nonetheless, all the projects were broken off at an early stage. Their potential was never fully tested. The projects were discontinued, not because the objectives had been reached but on account of circumstances outside the control of the projects: crises in government finances, civil war, new administrative priorities, short-term considerations in the world of development cooperation...

It is a disappointment to us that our work, in a short-term perspective, tends to have had the appearance of isolated measures rather than an introduction to regular and long-term contributions with the objective of democratisation. One consolation at the personal level is that the experience of what it was possible to achieve during the short time we were there lives on – not just with us, but also with our colleagues and others who were affected by the work at the places we have been. We know that there are persons who are trying to take the work further, despite unfavourable circumstances.

The way in which the experiences we have described will appear in a long-term perspective depends not least on the impact they have on our readers. It is possible, for those who wish to do so, to interpret our accounts as further examples of failures in programmes of development cooperation. However, we hope that there are others who may wish to use them in a more constructive way, as contributions to creating clear-sightedness and objectivity, and hence for the dispersal of the rhetorical mist that can be found in both the world of development cooperation and the world of adult education. Then, perhaps, the accounts can contribute to creating a better climate for further adult education contributions for the promotion of democracy.

Our accounts provide examples of what happens in practice, in programmes of adult education support implemented under varying conditions. We would like to believe that contributions of this type are important at the present time in the aspiration of transforming adult education into the force for democracy in development cooperation that it has the capacity to be. A concentration of effort is needed in order to build up a *common base of experience*, where both successes and failures are transformed into useful lessons for the future. Voluntary organisations have a great deal to contribute, as well as governmental donors.

We have much to learn from each other. One important field concerns the *tasks* that should be given priority in programmes of adult education support. Another important matter is under what *conditions* it is possible to run successful projects of a folk development education character. Here there is a need for a shift in perspective: from the internal working processes within the project to external circumstances such as preparations, gaining acceptance and support, back up etc. We take up below some experience that we believe is important from the perspective of *promoting democracy*. Other perspectives can lead to other conclusions. What our accounts can provide from different research perspectives, for example, is an interesting question that we have not taken up. We hand it over with warm encouragement to the world of research.

Important responsibilities in adult education development cooperation

Provide adult education where the democratic processes have already started!

In folk development education we want to create opportunities for learning for those who do not have them, for those whose needs are not met by the established channels. Who are these people? What do they see as important problems? What needs can we do something about within the framework of adult education? Who can we cooperate with in order to achieve the intended result in the best possible way? Who has the perseverance and idealism necessary?

Where are the answers to fundamental questions of this type? In the first place it is necessary to avoid getting bogged down among the instant standard solutions provided by development cooperation organisations, authorities and consultants. Their solutions have most often been formulated on the basis of other perspectives than ours, sometimes on the basis of narrow self-interest. Where these solutions are concerned, it is seldom the case that those people who might benefit from the contribution are consulted.

The views of *self-help organisations with popular support at grass root level* should be listened to and taken into consideration – formal and informal women's groups, cooperatives, savings societies, funeral societies... As a rule these organisations are genuine in the sense that they are not top-down organisations or run externally, but have their roots in local efforts to do something about common problems. Adult education support that focuses on democratic development should gain the full acceptance and support of these organisations and have, as its point of departure, the needs, interests and ambitions of these groups. The point is that *the democratic process has already started here* and contributions to local adult education provide a source of strength in the work the participants are already engaged in. Adult education shall be provided where people and needs exist. It is then that the contributions have a great chance of benefiting those they are intended for. Their commitment is the motor that drives the work forward.

It is in a dialogue with groups of this type that it is possible to reach a conclusion on what it is sensible to do. Therefore, the groups themselves must be permitted to express their opinions in one or another way. Our first task is to listen to what they regard as problems and needs, what they see as possible solutions, the experience they have of earlier attempts, what they are prepared to do themselves, what they believe must be introduced externally...

Before we enter into deeper cooperation with groups of this type, we must acquire an understanding of the degree of their independence. Are they genuine in the sense described above or are they driven from behind the scenes by politicians with personal career interests or by private profit interests or by foreign voluntary organisations whose foremost objective is to promote their own aims? If external pressure makes it difficult for them to be free, perhaps we can help in making them more independent.

Literacy

If the world merely consisted of independent local village communities, perhaps we all would survive as illiterates without any problems at all. But this is not the case. We live in a world where what happens in the small villages is increasingly depend-

ent on what is happening in the larger ones. In this context, the illiterates have serious problems, excluded as they are from most things in the world of knowledge and thoughts that lie outside their immediate surroundings, close to home; poorly equipped to see through and check the tendencies of those in power to manipulate their environment; poorly equipped to make effective use of their democratic rights, and so on. Also in the small, everyday world the illiterate is constantly under pressure – in shops, in traffic, at work. The IT society does not make their situation easier.

Literacy projects have had low priority on the development cooperation agenda for a long time. The major campaigns run by Unesco and other agencies did not provide the hoped for results. The trend-setting economists appear to be uninterested in the question and the illiterates themselves do not constitute a strong pressure group. In the world of adult education the question is hardly discussed at all.

This issue seems extremely important to us from the democratic perspective. In self-help groups, people who are unable to read, write and count are quickly marginalised. They are handicapped where looking after accounts, documenting decisions, and arguing with persons in authority are concerned. As the democratic process is increasingly extended and intensified, their handicap assumes increasingly larger proportions. As long as this problem is not solved, it can have the effect, in a long-term perspective, that the results of programmes of adult education support will be to increase inequality. Therefore, it is important to take up this matter in all discussions on adult education contributions. It is a case of "help for self-help" in the best sense of the term. The task is not easy. It grows every year. The situation is not helped by the fact that the *proportion* of illiterates in the world population over 15 years of age is falling and now is perhaps in the region of 25%. Population growth has the effect that the *number* of illiterates is continuously increasing and is now estimated at about a billion.

Training of leaders

The need to train leaders is another question that is important to discuss prior to the start of an adult education project. There are several good reasons for this. The foremost is the decisive importance of leadership in the activities of societies. Today we have a broad base of experience at our disposal since, over the years, leadership training has been included in many development cooperation projects in the adult education field.

It is an issue that does not merely concern the staff responsible for educational activities. It should also be discussed in a wider perspective. Adult education activities are dependent on support from, and cooperation with, leaders in many different fields, not only the political and administrative fields but also from the sectors of agriculture, health and medical care, water supply and so on. In all these fields there is a need of leaders that have a good understanding of the content and importance of adult education. A programme of leadership training should therefore also include suitable orientation courses for leaders in all relevant fields. Not least it should demonstrate the importance of cooperation between organisations and authorities in the field and give the prospective leaders education and training for cooperation of this type. The objective must be to achieve real teamwork, for example between advisers for agriculture, health care, social work and adult education.

Leadership training is usually not only regarded as important, it is also experienced as a rewarding and stimulating task by those who run it. Despite this, it seldom leads to the desired results. After the training is over, far too many participants soon relapse into their earlier educational patterns and ways of thinking. One reason for this is that the professional identity of the participants is usually rooted in the authoritarian approach and methods of the formal school system. This, in turn, supports the traditional view of the character of leadership, which is different from the democratic leadership style we want to encourage. Listening and taking advice may be signs of good leadership to us, but they tend to be regarded as signs of weakness in many African contexts.

One common mistake is to implement the leadership training programmes as isolated programmes. If they are intended to provide results, they should consist of a series of projects in which periods of theory are mixed with periods of practice. Each theory period should be followed up in the next period of practice, and then the period of practice should be followed up in the next theory period, and so on.

Deliberate democratisation

We are convinced that a democratisation process is included in all folk development education, as we defined it in the introduction to this book. There are many opportunities to achieve democratic development in adult education but, in order to be used to the utmost, they require deliberate ambitions.

Democracy in a society is best developed when the people/citizens really take part in the development process. It is precisely this active participation that is not at all obvious to people in general, and least of all to people in developing countries with a traditional culture that tends to counteract participation of this type. In our adult education activities we can work for a democrative approach in several ways. A first natural, and ideal, step is to plan projects from the bottom-up, i.e. ensure that, as far as possible, the design of the project should first engage the target group and thereafter be further processed by project workers and leaders. A great deal has been said about this method in development cooperation but it has seldom been used.

It is possible to continue in this spirit during the course of the project. The target group can participate actively in evaluations and be entrusted to work with the further development of the project.

We can go one step further and contribute to ensuring that, during their training, the participants are given the opportunity to exert an influence on their working life in society. For example, the project should establish cooperation with employers who accept their employees under training as a reference group for reforms and development ideas. The possibility to work in this way must be negotiated as a main component in the planning of development cooperation projects. As an integral component of a training programme, it promotes exceptionally well the preparedness of students to participate actively in the development of society.

What is often neglected is to give participants the opportunity to think about different democratic problems and solutions in their training, professional life and social life, and to give participants real training in democratic forms. These things are not automatically included in the work of the adult educator. They require a conscious effort.

Learning through democratic work with responsibility and trust creates the motivation for more learning, and thereby the adult education process develops into a *positive* circle.

Some conditions for successful adult education support

Pay attention to the dialogue!

One essential component of a good development cooperation project is that the parties can have a good dialogue based on frankness and mutual respect. A dialogue of this type should take place throughout the project. It can be likened to a good conversation in which one is open to what others have to say, one is prepared to allow the arguments of others work against one's own strongly-held opinions, one dares to test the content of one's own "truths" in the light of other truths. It is not a question of reaching a settlement, of winning or losing: the objective is to solve a problem together in concord and a spirit of mutual trust.

As early as during the first tentative contacts between the parties, there must be an ambition to create a good *climate for discussion*. Openness to discussion and thorough preparations pave the way for successful implementation of projects. The parties shall be given time to sound each other out, test each other's standpoints in important issues and concepts, discuss the division of responsibilities and duties, formulate goals and visions for cooperation. As long as any doubts or suspicions remain, the above process should continue. If it is not possible, despite this, to achieve genuine agreement on how to proceed, the project should perhaps never be started.

The good dialogue must be nurtured in all phases of the project, from the preparatory phase to the implementation and follow-up phases. It should take place at all levels in the work, from the highest to lowest, from the formal to the informal. It is not just a question of *one* dialogue. Many dialogues of this type should take place simultaneously. Practical opportunities for these dialogues to take place must be arranged in advance – a type of inbuilt platform or meeting place at different levels and in different contexts to deal regularly with problems as they arise, to exchange information, plan the next step and so on. The platforms provide a certain guarantee that parties will speak to each other regularly during the course of the project.

The pressure for rapid results is a perpetual threat to the good dialogue, as well as short and fixed project periods. Project periods of this type are usually set in the dark, without an understanding of how demanding and unpredictable in terms of time many stages of the work will be. Few have understood that the time and resources invested in preparations with the aim of creating a good climate for cooperation often pay for themselves many times over in the implementation phases.

Another threat is the lack of equality in the powers of the parties. Those who have the money and the ideas have an advantage over those who need them. The division into "donors" and "recipients" clearly demonstrates this. It is easily the case that the former speak, and the latter listen and swallow. In such cases no attention is paid in the planning stages to some of the most fundamental points of departure for the project – local traditions, experience, ambitions and so on. The local reality, where the project shall be implemented, ends up outside the field of vision.

There are also similar difficulties at the psychological level. We come armed with our long history of adult education. We have a strong base in our views on education, knowledge and methodology and we have a long custom of expressing our thoughts on these subjects. There is a risk that, instead of having a real dialogue, we start to have a quasi-dialogue. What the adult educator says, and his/her development country partner passively agrees with, replaces the mutual giving and taking of points of view and experience in the joint search for common solutions.

From the dialogue point of view, the issue of the partner in cooperation is also important. Who does one cooperate with in a country which lacks popular movements? Does one cooperate with the government and ignore the problem of popular support, or does one believe that it is possible to create popular movements with the aid of the government? This is doubtful – we have no good examples of it. The popular movement idea itself is, of course, alien to government bureaucracies – top-down, hierarchical, corrupt and reluctant to change as they so often are. In addition, in all the countries we have worked in, we have seen that government is an unreliable partner, extremely vulneralbe to political and economic fluctuations.

If it is possible to cooperate with a popular movement that has the same ideological base as one's own, the point of departure is promising. But, even here we meet complications. A popular movement is seldom free in an African country. The conditions for its existence seldom rest in the hands of the people. They are dictated by the state on the basis of its purposes.

The guiding principle for the choice of a partner in cooperation should be to support and stimulate, as directly and efficiently as possible, the ambitions of local interest groups to come to grips with their own needs and problems and those of their surroundings. If it is possible to do this, one has planted the seed of adult education in the soil where it can grow.

Acceptance and support

Without a good internal dialogue in the project, it is difficult to get the work to run smoothly. This dialogue is also just as necessary in the contacts with external agencies and organisations that the project is dependent on in one way or another. In other words, it is a case of the degree of *acceptance and support the project has in its environment* – often a neglected side in development cooperation. It is not least important in adult education projects, which usually have low status and whose character is unknown to most people.

The work of gaining acceptance and support starts as part of the preparations for the project and then takes place continuously. It is best carried out in a team. An external member of staff should never do this on his/her own, but together with one or two local members of staff. It is very much a case of building networks for mutual support – personal contacts, exchanges of information, opportunities for cooperation. The aim should be to create a broad network of contacts since it is usually the case that organisations normally run activities which, in one way or another, have points of contact with adult education. These points of contact can be leadership training, teacher training, instructor training, organisational development, publication of books and newspapers, library activities, small scale technology, literacy. A new adult education project must show, very clearly, that it intends to establish its place on the map. Sooner or later it will find others striving in the same direction.

The work of gaining acceptance and support is often neglected. Few seem to have understood how important it is. Many factors contribute to this state of affairs: demands for rapid implementation from politicians and others in the partner country; equally vociferous demands from tax-payers in the donor country; tight time schedules from the donor organisation; demands from all quarters for tangible results; an exaggerated belief on the part of the aid workers themselves that the strength of their enthusiasm and their convictions is enough to overcome all obstacles without any assistance. Prospective aid workers must obtain guarantees that they will be given

sufficient resources in the form of time and money to succeed in gaining the necessary acceptance and support.

Relationship between theory/ideology and practice

The expression that "without deeds, belief is dead" is not merely an important ingredient in the ideological heritage of the Swedish Free Churches. It is a central component of all work with popular movements and adult education. It is when the belief has been expressed in deeds that it is given life and gains importance in social life. Its strength has lain in the strong protests against the evils of society – abuse of alcohol, bullying, exclusion. Adult education has opened the door to worlds of knowledge which otherwise would have been closed to many. Sometimes the work has ended up in a blind alley, demands for orthodoxy have led to an introspective obsession with harping on theses. However, for good or bad, explicit or secret, the link between learning and life has always been there, today perhaps only as an undercurrent in the popular movement tradition.

This vein in the popular movement tradition is part of our view of folk development education and has affected our way of working. We believe that it is important in all development cooperation work, in several ways. In the first place *the credibility of the development cooperation worker* stands and falls to a great extent with the issue "practise what you preach". If you preach cooperation in all situations at the same time as you obstinately do your own thing, without listening to others and taking others into consideration, the substance of what you claim you stand for is soon lost. The dialogue you want to have with those around you will be experienced as a meaningless ceremony instead of a source of strength for all in the work. For example, the TANDEM project started to have an impact in the folk development college world in Tanzania when the teacher trainers began to incorporate the ideas on democratic attitudes into all their action and statements.

Secondly, the link between ideology and practice has been at the core of our *adult education methodology*. When the objective is a democratic approach to life, it is not possible to use authoritarian methods to reach it. The result will be the opposite. But, with the aid of democratic methods it is possible to build the objective into the means. The means contribute to undermine authoritarian attitudes. According to Simone de Beauvoir, who has perhaps expressed the situation best, a deed cannot be done with the aid of means that destroy its very meaning. As our accounts from Tanzania and Zambia show, the relationship is in no way obvious in African countries. This makes it even more important to observe it in development cooperation work.

Thirdly, for us the link has had a great effect on the questions of *priorities and choice of methods in the work*. At the Moshi office, it became more important to work with mass study campaigns for a broad public on the slopes of Kilimanjaro than with the earlier upgrading courses for the district's teachers. In order to make the bottom-up perspective a tangible point of departure for the planning work in Ethiopia, the first half year was spent on extensive and down-to-earth field studies.

Preparatory training

Donor organisations with self-respect usually ensure that their project personnel are given one form or another of preparatory training. The donor organisation perhaps organises the training itself, in cooperation with another organisation, or perhaps purchases it from a consultant. One common denominator of almost all training is

that it is arranged for the personnel travelling to the developing country. The personnel of the partner in cooperation, who are going to participate in the project work, do not take part. This is part of one of the major imbalances in all development cooperation traffic. Instead of using preparatory training as a means to create common understanding and attitudes, one prepares rather for the reverse.

We are of the opinion that three demands should be made of preparatory training programmes: they should be arranged for the personnel of *both parties*; all participants should receive *more or less the same training* (with the exception of, for example, languages); and it should *normally be located in the country where the project shall be implemented*. In the same way as the question of extending and intensifying the work of gaining acceptance and support, this will cost both time and money. But, in both cases, the additional expense should pay for itself, with a good rate of interest, in the implementation phase. The objective should be to promote a team spirit, to reach a common consensus on all important aspects of the forthcoming work (concepts, terminology, management, methods, administration, division of responsibilities and duties etc.), to identify and discuss any problems that could arise, cultural clashes etc. It is a case of creating a common ground to stand on, a climate of trust and expectations in the group that enable people to see themselves as bearers of change. The methodology should make participants co-creators in a learning process, not passive objects for teaching.

Something to be on guard against is the tendency to give an idealised picture of adult education. When we present it as a model, we easily forget that, in practice, Swedish folk development education has shortcomings and problems. Many of the difficulties we meet in our work in a developing country can also be found in Sweden. Comparisons of problems in different countries can lead to reflection and humility.

One important issue concerns professional identity in the adult education field. This hardly exists at all in countries we have experience from. For most people adult education is a sideline occupation – something one does one or two evenings a week. A teacher's professional identity is in the formal school system. There are simply no traditions or institutions to identify with in adult education. In teacher training programmes, adult education is not treated particularly favourably, perhaps not at all. Knowledge of the situation in other countries is small.

Support and back up

The projects we have described above were broken off on account of external circumstances. They became isolated measures. This indicates a *vulnerability* of adult education support. It is a serious threat to the possibilities of development cooperation to contribute to long-term democratic development. We have already touched upon several reasons: the low status of adult education in most academic and administrative establishments; that it is not established as a profession with its own formal training, career paths and organisation; that adequate acceptance and support are seldom gained for development cooperation contributions, and so on. When the work is successful and leads to an increase in knowledge and extended horizons, as was the case, for example, in the study circles for cooperative member training in Zambia, it can provoke counter reactions among leaders and other favoured groups. They feel that their privileges are being threatened and do what they can to stop the work. Such events have the effect that adult education, in all its forms, is at a serious disadvantage, particularly when the economic screws are tightened or the political winds

change direction. This shows how important support and back-up are. Committed people at all levels are the best resistance.

Dependence on backup from the "donor country" is another side of the matter. How strongly do Sida and non-governmental organisations argue for adult education contributions in discussions with their partners in cooperation. Do adult education organisations themselves run any form of opinion-shaping work in support of development cooperation projects? Who speaks on behalf of adult education in international forums when questions of democracy are taken up? Is enough being done to interest young people? Are aspects of adult education included at all in the debate on development cooperation? The possibilities available to adult education to play a role in the future in the work with democracy in our partner countries is greatly dependent on contributions of this type.

Presentation of the Authors

Folke Albinson

I was born between the wars in a small village in the Swedish province of Värmland. My future was to live and work in this village. But, at an early age, I started to dream about another life. These dreams were nourished by books I borrowed from the village library, by reports about strange countries and people that I heard on the radio, and by slides shown by visiting missionaries in the mission-hall. But there were few occasions in village life that fired my imagination and provided such enriching experiences. Liberation came when I was 18 and attended a course at a folk-high school. My life was given a new direction.

After obtaining university degrees in behavioural sciences and philosophy, my professional life has focused on trying to make education possible for others who, like myself, have had problems in gaining access to education. This has given my work a sense of meaning and has taken me to various places, given me various assignments, and brought me into touch with people living in different circumstances. In Sweden I have worked as a teacher and principal in folk high schools, as an advisor and head of department at the National Board of Education, and as personnel manager at the Swedish Cooperative Centre. In the field of development cooperation, I have worked as training officer and advisor in the field of popular education and adult education for some 12 years, mainly in Ethiopia, Tanzania and Zambia. After retirement I have worked on studies and written books and articles on development cooperation and education issues.

My interest in the life and problems of the poor part of the world was aroused at the end of the 1950s when I participated in some seminars arranged by the popular movements in a campaign called Sverige Hjälper (Sweden is Helping). Since then, the periods I have spent as a field worker in programmes of development cooperation have been the most meaningful.

Johan Norbeck

I grew up in an upper class environment in which folk high schools were rarely mentioned at all but, when I was a student, I made up my mind to become a folk high school teacher. I did this thanks to some advice I was given by a wise uncle of mine and some rewarding study visits to folk high schools. I became what I wanted to be and felt, when I started working as a teacher, that I had finally found my place in Swedish society.

Thanks to a wise colleague, Torgil Ringmar, a person with great experience of the world of development cooperation, I soon became interested in development issues. I started to learn about the Third World and to take it up in my teaching.

I was a teacher at Åsa folk high school for ten years, including an interval of three years as an adult educator in Tanzania. This was during the first years of the major adult education programme there, between 1969 and 1972, and President Nyerere was my idol.

In 1974 I became a tutor for prospective folk high school teachers in Linköping and remained so up until my retirement. But my development work dominated my life, either through working abroad or through courses in Sweden for people from developing countries. In this work I felt that I was first and foremost a folk development educator.

Folk development education as a force for democracy is my greatest inspiration. I have used this force in Swedish adult education, at folk development colleges in Tanzania, for the training of study circle leaders in Portugal, for students attending master's degree programmes in Tallinn and for the basic training of adult educators at the school of education in Mozambique. I have not regretted my choice of occupation for one moment.

Rolf Sundén

I am a traveller between classes. My first stop was in a mining community in Bergslagen where there were almost over-explicit class differences between the white-collar workers and the blue-collar workers. I was the first person with a working class background for a very long time who was given the opportunity to continue to study after elementary school. After a number of years this led to a teacher's certificate and teaching posts at a number of places in central Sweden.

After some years, my wife and I felt the urge to continue our studies. For my part it was political science, economics and economic history at Uppsala University. In 1960, I obtained a post as a teacher at the newly opened folk high school in Skinnskatteberg, my home municipality. There I served as a teacher and principal until 1992.

The environment in which I grew up in Bergslagen did not only contain class differences. There was also a very strong popular movement tradition: the temperance movement, the working-class movement (with a vigorous syndicalist variant), the Workers' Educational Association with its many study circles and its library, and a vigorous people's park. This popular movement tradition made a lasting impression on me.

In the 1950s, my interest in the problems of developing country problems was aroused. I took this interest with me to the folk high school. And then it so happened that I was one of the participants in a SIDA course for adult educators with international interests.

My concrete developing country experience was acquired during two periods of two years each in Tanzania plus a short period of time for evaluations. Back home there have also been a number of lectures, reviews of publications with links to developing countries, and co-authorship of some books on the field of adult education in developing countries.

Education Division Documents Series, No 1–67, 1981–1995

The following documents are still available upon request:

No. 5 "Education in Guinea-Bissau 1978-81" by R. Carr-Hill, G. Rosengart.

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