RETHINKING EDUCATION IN ETHIOPIA

The fear of God is the beginning of knowledge.

Tekeste Negash
Rethinking Education in Ethiopia

Tekeste Negash

Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, Uppsala 1996
To Professor Sven Rubenson and Haleqa Tekle Rijio Hawki

Indexing terms
Non-formal education
Educational policy
Educational systems
Development aid
Ethiopia

The opinions expressed in this volume are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of Nordiska Afrikainstitutet

Cover:
Dr. Mohamed A. Abusabib, Department of Aesthetics, Uppsala University

Language checking:
Elaine Almén

© Tekeste Negash 1996
ISBN 91-7106-383-8

Printed in Sweden by
Reprocentralen HSC, Uppsala 1996
Contents

Abbreviations 4

Some social indicators 5

Preface 6

Chapter 1
Introduction 11

Chapter 2
Non-Formal Education: What It is and What It Is Not 28

Chapter 3
Bilateral Donors and the Ethiopian Education System 51

Chapter 4
The Profile of the Education Sector as seen by USAID and UNDP 62

Chapter 5
The New Ethiopian Education and Training Policy 78

Chapter 6
Conclusion: Let the Formal Education Sector Defend Itself.
Invest in the Non-Formal Education Sector 87

Appendices 93
Education and Training Policy

2. State owned establishments in Ethiopian industry, 1990 100

3. The Ethiopian Educational System: A brief historical outline 101

Bibliography 113
### ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADLI</td>
<td>Agriculture Development Led Industrialization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BDE</td>
<td>Basic Development Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BESO</td>
<td>Basic Education System Overhaul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSTC</td>
<td>Community Skills Training Centres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DE</td>
<td>Distance Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EEP</td>
<td>Environmental Education Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EETP</td>
<td>Ethiopian Education and Training Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EICMA</td>
<td>Educational Institutions Construction and Maintenance Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMI</td>
<td>Ethiopian Management Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMIS</td>
<td>Educational Materials and Information Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPDM</td>
<td>Ethiopian Peoples Democratic Movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPRDF</td>
<td>Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Democratic Front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDR</td>
<td>German Democratic Republic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICDR</td>
<td>Institute of Curriculum Development and Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDA</td>
<td>International Development Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOA</td>
<td>Ministry of Agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOE</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOH</td>
<td>Ministry of Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OLF</td>
<td>Oromo Liberation Front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OPEC</td>
<td>Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PGE</td>
<td>Provisional Government of Eritrea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVS</td>
<td>Primary Village Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEPAR</td>
<td>Southern Ethiopian Peoples Administrative Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIDA</td>
<td>Swedish International Development Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sida</td>
<td>Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (from 1.7.95)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TERALA</td>
<td>Teacher Education Research in Latin America and Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TGE</td>
<td>Transitional Government of Ethiopia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TPLF</td>
<td>Tigrean Peoples Liberation Front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TTI</td>
<td>Teacher Training Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TVET</td>
<td>Technical and Vocational Education and Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USSR</td>
<td>Union of Soviet Socialist Republics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WCEFA</td>
<td>World Conference on Education For All</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ETHIOPIA: SOME SOCIAL INDICATORS

Population: 53 million of which 26 million are under 16 years of age. 1995 estimation.
Rate of population growth: 3.2 per cent. The population is estimated to reach 65 million by 2000.
Total primary school enrolment: 22.9 per cent. About ten per cent of those who start Grade 1 complete Grade 6.
Accessibility to food: severe malnourishment; between 5 and 8 million people affected.
Calorie intake: 1500 calories or 70 per cent of what is recommended by WHO.
Land under cultivation: ca. 2 million hectares.
Total land area: 113 million hectares. 48 per cent in the highlands and 42 per cent in the lowlands.
GNP per capita: 120 USD.
Export value 1993/4: 260 million USD.
Import value 1993/4: 980 million USD.
Total revenue for fiscal year 1994: ca. 840 million USD out of which 200 million USD external aid.
Total expenditure for 1994/5: 1,675 million USD.
Development aid for 1993/4: 300 million USD.
Currency: Birr. 1 USD is equivalent to 6.25 birr.
PREFACE

The primary objective of this study is to show that the strategy of non-formal education is a far better alternative both as regards the expansion of literacy and the fulfilment of educational needs than formal education. I argue that the current and planned expansion of the formal education sector cannot be defended either on moral or on developmental grounds. Inevitably, the expansion of formal education would mean the use of scarce resources (collected from the rural areas) for the benefit of school children in urban areas. The great majority of school children and adults would fall outside the sphere of the Ministry of Education, since most of the expansion of formal education is bound to take place in the urban and semi-urban areas of the country.

In 1990 I published a small study called The Crisis of Ethiopian Education: Some implications for Nation-Building. The main purpose of that study was to examine the relevance of the teaching of history in secondary schools (grades 9 to 12) for nation-building, i.e. the extent to which the curriculum and the teaching-learning process were used to impart knowledge about the country and its history. Another feature of the crisis of the education sector was that the sector was producing nearly a hundred thousand students yearly into the labour market, the majority of whom had no chance of finding employment in the modern sector of the economy for which they were presumably trained.

The structural crisis of the education sector was known and discussed earlier. What was new in The Crisis of Ethiopian Education study was the extent of the irrelevance of the curriculum and the self-defeating organization of the secondary education sub-sector exemplified by class sizes between 90 and 120, and by chronic shortage of teaching materials. Moreover, I argued that the objective of formal education is the inculcation of socio-political values. The formal education system is not suitable for imparting practical skills.

Driven more by a desire to initiate a wider public discussion, I put forward some ideas of how the education system can be reformed if it is intended to play a role in nation-building as well as in development. I suggested that the government made a clear distinction between formal and non-formal education and that in view of the fact that the great majority of the population are in the rural areas, that more resources be made available to the non-formal education sector than to formal education.

The Crisis of Ethiopian Education study was received well in Ethiopia. I have been told that the study has been one of the source books used in the production of the educational policy which was made official in April 1994. It can be argued that the Ethiopian education sector has been reformed or is in the process of being reformed. However, a closer reading of the policy [see appendix 1], demonstrates too readily that a great deal remains to be done. Moreover, the state of non-formal education, is in a far worse state now than what it was in the
earlier system. The newly promulgated Education and Training Policy says very little on non-formal education. Literacy campaigns, which had been the flagship of the earlier regime have now virtually stopped. The various "non-formal" education programmes such as the Community Skills Training Centres (CSTC’s), and Basic Development Education (BDE’s) have nearly disintegrated and are not even reported in the Annual Education Abstracts. There is a clear trend within the MOE that non-formal education is of less strategic importance for the development of the country. On the contrary, the MOE puts all its emphasis on formal education.

This study argues for the establishment of two separate education sectors, i.e. one sector for formal education and the other for non-formal education. Whereas the emphasis of formal education with curriculum and quality improvements would continue along the present path, non-formal education would have to be designed to meet the development needs of the rural population and the urban poor. At the outset I hasten to anticipate the criticisms against a creeping danger of providing a second class education for the rural population and urban poor.

Since the state of research on Ethiopian education is scanty indeed, I shall attempt to argue my case from the Tanzanian experience. I shall rely almost exclusively on Joel Samoff’s extensive studies. Assessing the impact of the massive expansion of educational services where up to 85 per cent of all school age children are involved, Joel Samoff (1990:253) wrote that primary schooling can never become the basic education, universally available and complete in itself. He further argues that educators, parents, and students themselves all insist that primary schools continue to prepare students to proceed to secondary school even though currently only 15 per cent of those who complete primary school are selected for government and private secondary schools. On this point, I believe that Samoff’s research is slightly outdated. Recent studies and surveys on attitudes to schooling appear to indicate that peasants are more interested in practical inputs rather in the expansion of primary schools. (Adri Kater, 1994). However, I fully concur with Samoff that primary schools and teachers are assessed on the number of students they manage to push through to secondary education. As a result, primary schools necessarily teach a curriculum that is neither adequate nor complete for the majority of their students.

Summing up many years of engagement with Tanzanian education Samoff (1990:252) wrote that the challenge thus far unmet is to develop an education system that is less costly and more responsive to the local situation and that at the same time does not become a major impediment to social mobility for most of the population.

Partly on the basis of my conviction and partly on the basis of Samoff’s study I argue that such a challenge is impossible to meet within the current educational framework. The Ethiopian economy is predominantly rural. The formal education sector though involving only 20 per cent of school age children is producing thousands of school leavers with very few employment
opportunities in the modern and public sector. The country has too many school leavers in search of employment. It is, therefore, extremely unlikely that the further expansion of the formal education sector would serve any developmental purpose. The educational challenge which Samoff discussed may only be met if we begin to entertain the strategy of devising an education programme especially designed to meet the developmental and educational needs of the vast majority of the population.

I am fully aware that in the short term the establishment of two parallel educational systems may be interpreted as laying down the ground for the further subjugation of the countryside by the city. I am also aware that the urban/rural divide which exists, but is not talked about, might become more pronounced. But the city is dependent for its food supply on the countryside. The interesting question is the system and structure of appropriation of food crops from the peasantry. As long as the city manages to provide services and consumer goods in exchange for the food crops it gets from the peasantry, the rural/urban divide will continue to exist. From this perspective, what I am arguing may yet be described as conservative. I plead guilty. But I wish to stress that I fail to see the progressive content of those who argue for the expansion of the formal education system which is not at all designed to meet the needs of the great majority of the population.

Moreover, I believe that it needs to be clearly pointed out that although all human beings are equal in front of God, they are certainly not born equal into this world. All those born in the North Atlantic countries have 100 per cent opportunity to complete primary education whereas less than ten per cent of Ethiopians have that opportunity. Some are, without it being their choice, born to a life of material comfort while many others are born to die before they reach the age of five. Even within the Ethiopian context, not all children are born equal. It matters a great deal where and to which parents one is born. The growth of cities and the influx of foreign aid, most of which is consumed in the urban areas, has further sharpened inequalities between rich and poor and between the urban and rural areas.

It is indeed a noble ambition to devise strategies to bridge inequalities between a regional, gender or ethnic nature. The Ethiopian educational policy in fact contains several statements to such effect. However, before we applaud the humanist content of such statements, we need to look very closely first into whether the government has the determination to back up financially its egalitarian policies. Secondly, we need to be fairly certain as to the human, economic and social returns of such investments. The problems of the Ethiopian education sector are drastic expansion and the irrelevance of the curriculum to the conditions of the country. Paradoxically, the country has far too many school leavers seeking employment in a sector that is far too small. In such context, the policy of the government to expand the formal education sector to the countryside can hardly be defended or justified. I argue, like Coombs and Ahmed (1974) did before me, that what the peasants (the great majority of the popula-
tion) need are a series of inputs (ideas and services) which enhance the knowledge which they already possess. The primary concern of Ethiopian peasants is food and food production followed by health, clothing and shelter. In this regard, the non-formal education approach is much better suited to their needs than formal education. The non-formal education approach is also of great relevance in the urban areas. Educational and development needs of dropouts, school leavers, and all those who have very little or no chance to benefit from the formal education sector can indeed be reached by a non-formal education programme. This argument is the main subject of Chapter 2.

Although the role of non-formal education is the central theme, this book is also designed to introduce the education sector to the general reader as well as to those who might venture to pursue their studies on the subject. The introductory chapter surveys the development of the education sector and the role of external assistance. There is also a discussion on regionalization and the politicization of ethnicity. It is concluded with a brief discussion on the context of development.

In Chapter 3 I discuss the history of USAID (1955–74) and the ambitious programme which USAID has recently launched. The Swedish role in the development of education in Ethiopia is also outlined. The question of the choice of only two donors may certainly be raised. The involvement of the World Bank was limited to the provision of financial resources to a continuously expanding sector, its policy inputs were rather insignificant. It is true that the now defunct Democratic Republic of Germany (GDR) had an important role in the development of the curriculum throughout the period of the Menghistu regime (1974–91). Most of their inputs, especially their attempts to introduce a polytechnic curriculum appear to have been completely shelved leaving very little impact behind them.

The profile of the education sector as seen by USAID and UNDP is the subject of chapter four. This chapter describes the constraints of the sector, the ambitions of the government and some assessments as to growth trends. Chapter five introduces the new education policy which was approved in July, 1994. This is followed by a brief chapter on the formal education sector. The issue of the need for the establishment of a parallel sector for non-formal education is discussed from cultural, developmental and also from equity viewpoints. Here it has to be mentioned that the Ethiopian government has only recently produced an Education and Training Policy document which deals entirely with formal education. So the main objective of chapters two and six is to emphasise the role of non-formal education, which I believe has hitherto been a neglected priority.

I have benefited greatly from the support and encouragement of many people and institutions. Foremost I would like to express my gratitude to Dr. Christine McNab and Dr. Kjell Nyström at the Swedish International Development Coop-
eration Agency, (Sida), for a very generous, no conditions attached, grant. Mr. Lennart Wohlgemuth, the director of the Nordic Africa Institute, has been the chief sponsor of this project and his constant and timely reminders have been challenging as well as inspiring. I acknowledge my deep appreciation to Mr. Karl Eric Ericson, director of publications at the Nordic Africa Institute for his prompt professional inputs. I have benefited greatly from my contacts with the recently established network Teacher Education Research in Africa and Latin America (TERALA) within the department of Education at Uppsala University.

Dr. Elihu Feleke, Dr. Kjell Havnevik, Dr. Adebayo Olukoshi, Dr. Eva Poluha, Professor Sven Rubenson and Mr. Michael Wort have read the manuscript and all of them have been generous with critical and constructive comments. Owing to pressure of time and the exploratory nature of the study, only some of their suggestions have been incorporated. I hope they understand that I shall return to their comments when I get the opportunity to look more closely into the link-age between education, society, and social change. All errors of fact and judg-ment are entirely my own.

Tekeste Negash
Department of History
Uppsala University
October, 1995
Chapter 1
Introduction

PREMISES

This study is built around three major premises. The first premise is that it is morally wrong and economically unjustifiable to invest scarce resources on the formal education system whose contribution to the development of the society is at best tenuous and at worst irrelevant. I argue that the continued expansion of the formal education system may not contribute to development at all. The problem is not that Ethiopia has few educated people, but it has too many of them and that the majority of them have little chance of finding employment. Given that 85 per cent of the population live in the rural areas and an equal number of them are dependent on agriculture and pastoralism for their livelihood, the measures that the government takes to mobilise the rural population will determine the pace and pattern of development. The educational system as it is currently organised has very little role to play. The education sector is very much an urban phenomenon. The Ethiopian government ought not to continue to spend revenues collected from the rural population or derived from donors to educate those who live in the urban areas.

The second premise is that the Ethiopian rural population as a whole has little respect for the formal education system since it has continuously ignored their culture. For education to be relevant it ought to be built on a profound appreciation of the cultural heritage of the people and communities to whom it is directed.

The third premise is that development efforts may succeed only when they are responsive to the needs of the actors. In this context education is only one of the many dependent variables which in combination with other inputs may have a role to play in the development of the country.

These being the premises, I would like now to define and discuss briefly the parameters of development. By development, I have essentially in mind the physical and mental capability of a person to fulfil his/her basic needs of food, shelter and clothing. The most crucial factor for any development effort is the availability and accessibility of food. In the case of Ethiopia where up to fifty per cent of the population not only run the risk of famine but appear to survive

---

1. In a study which is now slightly outdated, Coombs and Ahmed (1974:14) argue that “a forward thrust in agriculture is one of the essentials for initiating a broader rural development process”. Their view is quite similar to mine.
under constant danger of malnourishment, it is important to stress the implications of famine and famine related shortages on health and productivity.

The role of sufficient food intake on the mental development of a child is now quite well established. Leaving aside for the moment food needs of the adult population, Ethiopia has in 1995 up to 15 million children whose mental and physical development (and hence their future contribution) is greatly dependent on the availability and accessibility of sufficient food intake. I do not think that the authors of an Oxfam country profile exaggerated when they wrote that nearly two thirds of those children who manage to survive their first five years of life are physically stunted and their mental development greatly inhibited. Neither is Oxfam the first one to point out the wider implications of food security. In a pioneering study on Ethiopian peasants, Mesfin Wolde-Mariam wrote that the minimum one can expect from any effort to develop the rural areas or the peasant sector was to raise the level of food security. Without food security (accessibility of food) all attempts to bring about positive changes rest on a serious misconception of both development and the peasants. If the government fails to mobilise its human and material resources to enhance the capability of the rural population to produce sufficient food for the millions of growing children, we can be quite certain that the challenge of food production will be even more difficult in the future when these half nourished children become adults. I am of the opinion that the importance of food for development can hardly be exaggerated. In so far as development is the cumulative result of the physical and mental efforts of every individual to improve his/her conditions, then it can be argued that the availability and accessibility of food is of crucial importance. There appears to be a good degree of correlation between improved food intake and societal development.

Here, it is worthwhile to stress that development does not depend on charismatic leaders, although the presence or absence of such leaders can at times be important. To keep the momentum of development alive, it is absolutely important that the great majority of the population are physically and mentally fit. Such fitness is to a great extent dependent on availability and accessibility of food. I argue that in the Ethiopian context, the strategic foundation for the development of the society ought to be the production and distribution of food. If I may be allowed to adapt a political slogan from the late 1950's first attributed to the Ghanaian leader Kwame Nkrumah, the slogan of the Ethiopian government (present and future) ought to be: Seek ye the kingdom of food and all other good things in life will follow thereafter.

4. See the pioneering study by Lynn White, 1962 (1965) where the author discusses how the social changes of the early middle ages were related to the adoption of the three field rotation system and especially the discovery of legumes which in turn led to the increase of food production and the improvement of the diet.
There is yet another factor which compels policy-makers to make the question of food production and distribution a crucial and urgent issue. With the relative peace which has followed the fall of the Mengistu regime (1974–91), it is most probable that the population will continue to grow not at 3 per cent per annum but probably at 3.2 per cent. This would mean that the country would have to feed between 1.5 and 2 million more people every consecutive year. Even if we take a conservative estimate, the population of the country would undoubtedly surpass 65 million before the end of this decade.

In the foreseeable future, birth control policies and campaigns, useful as they might be would have very little chance of making progress. Trustworthy channels of communication between the government and the majority of the rural population have yet to be established. The government and its agencies (these include donors as well) have to gain their confidence by doing something positive for the peasants before they can successfully persuade the latter to adapt a fundamentally new idea such as birth control.

If the availability and accessibility of food is the most pressing challenge of the Ethiopian state, what role if any has education to play? At the outset, I would like to make it clear that although education has a role to play it does so only under certain conditions. I disagree strongly with the underlying philosophy of Education for All where it is clearly and categorically stated that "education leads to economic development". Education in the manner it has been conceived and implemented in Ethiopia will certainly not lead to development.

A strategic key to the development of countries like Ethiopia ought to lay emphasis on the production and distribution of food. The implementation of such a strategy depends more on the establishment of clear laws dealing with the security of tenure and on the infrastructural support to peasants and the countryside. In this context it is worthwhile to mention that there is a considerable amount of knowledge among donors as well as Ethiopian scholars on recurring drought and famine. The studies of Desalegn Rahmato and Mesfin Wolde Mariam on the nature and extent of famine can be taken as the main background sources for the evolution of non-formal educational strategy to stave off the scourge of famine. At a more practical level, I think it is also relevant to mention that Sida is in the process of developing a programme of food security as one of its main components of assistance to Ethiopia.

Without prejudice to the timely focus of Sida on food security, I wish to stress that it will not suffice that the Ethiopian government limits itself to supporting the Sida programme which in all likelihood will be concentrated on one sub-region. I argue that the government should organise itself and mobilise

7. For a most recent study see the exhaustively documented work by Yeraswerk, Admassie, 1995.
its resources for the production and distribution of food. One of the sectors which can be mobilised for such an end is the education sector.

POLITICS OF REGIONALIZATION AND FOOD PRODUCTION

The underlying philosophy for the politics and policies of decentralisation of the TGE is undoubtedly the right of ethnically organised groups to political self-determination up to and including secession. This political manifesto was put out a few weeks after the EPRDF had seized power in 1991. Between 1991 and the end of 1994 when the present constitution was promulgated, the TGE took several decisive measures. One of the most striking measures was to divide the country into 13 ethnic regions. Although it is known that the country is inhabited by no less than 75 different ethnic groups the TGE decided to lump together the politically less significant groups with the larger ones. If ethnicity is considered as the main basis for self-determination, then it is not really up to the TGE in Addis Ababa to determine the ethnic boundaries but up to the ethnic organisations themselves. The new Constitution actually provides possibilities for the emergence of other ethnically based states within the federal framework.

The political groupings which are represented in the TGE are no doubt convinced that the division along ethnic lines and the safeguarding of ethnic organisations to self-determination will lead to peace and development. The civil war which raged in the northern part of the country was, according to the TGE leaders, caused primarily by the refusal of the Menghistu regime to safeguard the rights of the Eritrean and later the Tigrean peoples to self-determination. The only way to ensure peace, according to TGE is to attempt to rebuild the country on the basis of voluntary decisions on the part of the ethnic regions which are found within it.

The first region to make use of this right was Eritrea. In a referendum held in April 1993, the great majority of the Eritrean people voted for independence. Here it has to be noted that only the Eritrean people were asked whether they wanted independence or not. Whereas the independence option was clearly expressed and extensively campaigned for by the Provisional Government of Eritrea (PGE), there was no debate on an alternative option. The TGE which ought to have campaigned for an alternative solution opted instead to support the position of the provisional government in Eritrea.

The breaking away of Eritrea from Ethiopia has been explained as a settlement of a colonial relation. The independence of Eritrea, it has been argued, ought not to be associated with the politics of decentralisation of the TGE. Eritrea had to go, according to the argument of both the TGE and PGE, because it did not constitute part of Ethiopia. On the basis of this interpretation, the TGE created the conditions for the Eritreans to declare their independence. The Eritreans were also provided with all the logistical and material support by the
Ethiopian government. The media (radio and television) under government control argued in favour of Eritrean independence.

It is too early to argue whether the independence of Eritrea will inspire other ethnic organisations to launch similar claims. Although it would be difficult to substantiate, it is commonly heard that the Somali and Oromo ethnic nationalists appear to have carefully studied the Eritrean exit. In the independence of Eritrea all potential and aspiring nations and nationalities have an example. One can already notice that those nationalist forces who aspire to independence have the competitive edge. One of the most common mobilising arguments that one often hears in the streets of Addis Ababa goes as follows: If the Eritreans, who are close to the Amhara and the Tigrai, can get their independence, what are the grounds for keeping the Somali and the Oromo inside Ethiopia. Such arguments were widely heard before the promulgation of the Constitution.

On December 8, 1994 the constituent assembly ratified a Constitution for Ethiopia henceforth to be known as the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. On the most essential points the charter of the TGE and the Constitution are the same. The differences are, however, very significant. The charter of the TGE, designed to lead to the production of a constitution, was not meant to affect the internal and external relations of the country in a substantial way. This is true at least in theory. The practice, however, has been quite different. The TGE took two measures of great significance while it was presumably engaged in the drafting of a democratic constitution. The first measure was the position of the TGE on the Eritrean question. The second measure was the arbitrary delimitation of boundaries along ethnic lines. The significance of these measures has provoked some researchers to ask the question of whether one can speak, in the Ethiopian context, of a transitional or provisional government.

The inspiring idea for the Constitution remains the Transitional Charter of Ethiopia of July 1991. The Charter was by and large the product of the EPRDF. Many of the central features of the Charter were spelled out as early as 1986 by the TPLF. The position of the TPLF on the so-called question of nationalities can also be traced to the student politics of the former Haile Selassie University (Addis Ababa University) during the late 1960’s and early 1970’s. So in a sense the controversial aspects of the Charter and the Constitution have a long history behind them.

The fundamental idea which has transformed Ethiopian political discourse during the last four years is Article Two of the Charter which clearly states that the right of nations, nationalities and peoples to self-determination is affirmed. To this end, each nation, nationality and people is guaranteed the right to, a) preserve its identity and have it respected, promote its culture and history and use and develop its language; b) administer its own affairs within its own defined territory and effectively participate in the central government on the basis of freedom, and fair and proper representation; to exercise its right to self-
determination of independence, when the concerned nation/nationality and people is convinced that the above rights are denied, abridged or abrogated.9

In November 1991, the TGE restructured the provincial boundaries of the state according to ethnic and linguistic criteria. Such a division was and still is greatly opposed because of the implications that follow the politicization of ethnicity. If there had not been Article Two of the Charter where it clearly spells out that each and every nation and nationality can break away, then there would not have been great opposition to such restructuring. Meanwhile those who opposed the politicization of ethnicity have, by using the relatively wide freedom of political expression, continued to accuse the government of initiating the dismemberment of the country. The TGE has in its turn blamed its opponents for chauvinism and the desire to rule in the old form. Since November 1991 and up to the present time it has not proved possible to conduct a meaningful dialogue on this major issue between the TGE and those who opposed the Charter.

A great deal of hope was indeed placed on the drafting of the Constitution by people outside of the government. For reasons which could be debated for a long time to come, the TGE managed to transfer word for word Article Two of the Charter into the Constitution. Article 39 of the Constitution even goes further and outlines the procedure for secession. It reads:

Article 39.
1. Every nation, nationality and people in Ethiopia has an unconditional right to self-determination, including the right to secession.
2. Every nation, nationality and people in Ethiopia has the right to speak, to write and to develop its own language, to express and to promote its culture; and to preserve its history.
3. Every nation, nationality and people in Ethiopia has the right to a full measure of self-government which includes the right to establish institutions of government in the territory that it inhabits and to equitable representation in regional and national governments.
4. The exercise of self-determination, including secession of every nation, nationality and people in Ethiopia is governed by the following procedures:
   a) When a demand for secession has been approved by a two-thirds majority of the members of legislative council of any nation, nationality or people;
   b) When the Federal Government has organised a referendum which must take place within three years from the time it received the concerned Council’s decision for secession;
   c) When the demand for secession is supported by a majority vote in the referendum;
   d) When the Federal Government will have transferred to the people or their Council its powers; and,
   e) When the division of assets is effected on the basis of a law enacted for that purpose.

The Constitution as a whole has many positive inputs in the emerging Ethiopian political culture. The sections dealing with the division of powers between the federal and state governments; the establishment of two houses with separate spheres of activities; the provisions for the establishment of an independent court system are all to be encouraged and supported. However, there is a great risk that the positive aspects may be seriously affected by the presence of Article 39 which appears to invite nations and nationalities to break away.

No state, whether mono or multi-ethnic, is organised along the principle stated in Article 39. Although one can understand the philosophical basis of the TGE's policies on the national question, it needs to be stressed that the war waged by the Dergue was first and foremost a war for the monopoly of state power. Moreover it can be argued that the war waged from Eritrea and Tigray was for the control of the state. The state is now under the firm control of EPRDF (according to estimates, the EPRDF is made up of ca. 80 per cent TPLF and 20 per cent EPDM). Since the prime motive of seeking power is in order to rule according to an articulated perspective, it becomes interesting to ask what strategies the EPRDF is implementing.

The wars in Ethiopia were not national wars; they were not between the Ethiopian nationalities. They were primarily political wars. During the Haile Selassie regime the war in Eritrea was for more autonomy. During the Dergue period, the war in Tigray and also in Eritrea was for the control of state power. It is, therefore, unfortunate that the TPLF within the EPRDF remained with the old Leninist/Stalinist position on the national question. The Ethiopian people, in spite of arrogant and insensitive leaders have lived together as citizens of one state; there is very little reason to make us doubt that, if properly led, they would continue to deepen and strengthen the features they have in common.

From a cursory look at the constitution it appears that the EPRDF is engaged in the process of making itself redundant. If the Constitution is not either quickly amended or temporarily suspended, it will undoubtedly lead to the process of secession by several regions. One can almost be certain that the OLF, which has been in the limelight since 1992, would enter the arena and legally and constitutionally claim the secession of the Oromos. The same procedure can be expected from the Ethiopian Somalis as well. Even the World Bank is at present giving this issue the attention it deserves.\(^\text{10}\)

There are other problems connected with the establishment of regions along ethnic lines and with the Constitution itself. Regional administration has a very old tradition in Ethiopia. What is new is the establishment of regions along ethnic boundaries. While the implications of the politicization of ethnicity have already being noted, the Federal Constitution has added other problems. The vagueness of the constitution in many central issues can quite easily lead to

---

institutional inertia with consequences which we are, at the moment, not able to appreciate.

For the purpose of this study, the most negative impact of regionalization and the Constitution appears to be in the field of food production. Land, the key resource for development is now under the firm control of the ethnically organised regional governments. The Constitution has done very little in terms of strengthening security of tenure. Up to 1974 landless and poor peasants had the possibility of migrating to the least populated areas of the country. Although free movement of individual peasants was controlled by the formation of the Peasant Associations (1975–91), the regime of the period had devised a massive resettlement policy where up to half a million people were forcibly resettled in less populated areas of the country. The idea of resettlement had first been developed by the World Bank and was actually put into practice in the early 1970's.\textsuperscript{11} The resettlement programme assumed a completely different form under the hands of the Dergue and was rightly criticised. People were forced to resettle and in the process families were split. The number of those settled was more important for the government. There was a gross violation of the rights of families to decide for themselves.

Some regions are more densely populated than others. Some areas are also more environmentally degraded than others. Moreover, the size of cultivable land has to increase partly in order to accommodate the growing population and partly to increase production. Unless the central government has sufficient powers to empower Ethiopians to cultivate new land where it is readily available, some of the most populated regions would find it more and more difficult to produce sufficient food. As things now stand, the central government has virtually tied its hands tight through the policies of regionalization and the Constitution.

**Political context of aid and the education sector**

From 1941 up to 1972, the education sector was permeated with confidence and optimism. School construction was by and large in the hands of the Swedes. The Elementary School Building Unit, established and financed by SIDA had by 1972 constructed about 3,600 classrooms out of the targeted number of 4,800. Neither SIDA nor the MOE had any difficulty in persuading the Ethiopian communities (both rural and urban) to participate actively in the construction of schools.

Swedish assistance to the education sector was by far the most important during the 1974–91 period when Sweden was the biggest bilateral donor to the sector. In relation to total development aid, however, the Swedish contribution was in the range of five per cent. One of the corner-stones of Swedish aid is that the areas for support are those identified by the host country in equal and open
consultation with the donor state or organization representing the state. The reality is completely different. Most African countries have during the last two decades failed to reproduce a competent elite capable enough of negotiating with donors. This has meant that donor organisations have no one to negotiate with and are, therefore, compelled to define priority areas for support.

The official development aid also includes the bilateral and multilateral loans such as those originating from the IDA and the World Bank. Largely due to the opportunities created by the construction of rural schools, primary enrolment increased by more than 60 per cent during the 1968–72 period. While the Swedes were laying down the basis as well as the strategy for universal primary education, the World Bank began (1966) its first loan to the education sector. Since then the World Bank has implemented seven education projects covering various aspects of the sector to the tune of over 200 million USD.

With the completion of the Ethiopian government’s education sector review of 1971, the sector entered a new phase. Although primary enrolment was only in the range of 20 per cent of the school age group, the sector had by 1970 already produced thousands of secondary school leavers with very little chance of employment. The imperial government was beginning to feel the pressure of unemployed and unemployable educated manpower in the cities and towns of the empire. So as early as in the 1970’s the major problem facing the sector was not shortage of resources but more the inability of the economy to absorb those who were already graduating from the sector.

The imperial regime was overthrown in the autumn of 1974. Among the factors which contributed to its downfall were the series of agitations of teachers and secondary school students, ostensibly against the planned educational reforms, but really against the bleak future at the end of the school programme. The aim of the imperial education sector review was to control student intake to middle and secondary education so as to avoid a huge pool of unemployed secondary school graduates. Another objective of the sector review was also to expand basic education. For political and ideological reasons the education sector reform was defeated and swept away with the imperial system.

The Dergue (the military regime which replaced the imperial system) resolved the specific problem in what became a characteristic manner. The Dergue dismissed many of the educated elite which it inherited from the imperial era and filled the vacant posts by those who were to graduate under its benign support and encouragement. For the subsequent 15 years, the expansion of the education sector became one of the avowed policies of the government. Most of the school leavers were absorbed in the growing public sector, one of which was the Ministry of Defence. The regime guaranteed a certain financial return for education in terms of immediate employment but only to those who had persisted long enough as to earn a university diploma. Although only about ten per cent of those who sat for college and university entrance examinations were admitted, the realization that those who came out of the university
did get employment was sufficient for many parents to tighten their belts and finance the education of their children.

Between 1975 and 1990, primary enrolment continued to increase at the rate of 12 per cent per annum thus covering about 38 per cent of the 7–12 year age group. Junior (grades 7 and 8) and senior secondary enrolment increased also at about the same rate. By 1990, about 12 per cent of 14–16 year age group were enrolled in secondary schools. Although the problem of absorbing even the majority of the secondary school leavers was becoming apparent by the mid-1980’s, the government deemed it wise to stress the importance of education for the society as well as for the individual.

It has to be recalled that the Dergue was a socialist regime which was denied the support of the US and its allies. One of the strategies which the Dergue quite effectively pursued in its quest for support from the west was to use education as an item of foreign policy. Between 1979 and 1986, the Ethiopian government managed to mobilise thousands of school leavers to spend several months in the countryside in a nation-wide campaign against illiteracy. By the middle of the 1980’s the Ethiopian government announced to the world community that it had reduced the "scourge of illiteracy" from 90 per cent to 37 per cent. The drive against illiteracy, irrespective of the high risk of the neo-literates relapsing back to illiteracy, was witnessed and some of the results confirmed by international organisations such as UNESCO and UNICEF. Though isolated from the support of USAID, the Ethiopian government managed to mobilise the support of UNICEF, UNESCO, and UNDP.

The Eastern European countries were also present as aid donors but only the East Germans were involved in the education sector. The World Bank remained an important partner. Out of the seven World Bank loans to the education sector, four of them were concluded during the period of the Dergue. By means of these loans, the World Bank put in more than 200 million USD to the sector as capital investment.

In May 1991, the regime led by Menghistu Haile-Mariam was replaced by the EPRDF forces. While Menghistu fled to exile (currently in Zimbabwe), the socialist system which he built during his reign (1974–91) was repudiated and thus quickly dismantled. Like Menghistu Haile-Mariam’s Workers Party of Ethiopia, the EPRDF had a socialist programme. However, it appears that the EPRDF divested itself of its socialist programme when its military victory against the Menghistu regime became imminent. The timely assistance of the United States in the peaceful take-over of Addis Ababa and the subsequent market oriented policy of the EPRDF government lend strong support to such interpretation.

The return of USAID

Between 1952 and 1974, the Ethiopian education sector was greatly influenced by the Americans. Out of all the countries in sub-Saharan Africa, Ethiopia was
the most important region for the foreign policy of the United States. While more than half of all US assistance to Africa went to Ethiopia, the Ethiopian government in its turn complied dutifully to the demands which were placed on it by the US. Indeed, most of US assistance was in the military field, but the social sectors were also affected.

As regards the education sector, the US presence was pervasive. US experts were in the forefront in the structure and content of primary education. The nation-wide introduction of Amharic as the language of instruction for the first six years of primary education was made possible by the presence of US expertise at the Ministry of Education. US experts were also in the forefront in adult and non-formal education. Secondary education was even more under the influence and direction of the United States through the massive influx of Peace Corps volunteers. Between 1961 and 1973, up to 40 per cent of secondary school teachers were foreigners. Prior to 1961, Ethiopia had been dependent for secondary teachers on India. As the Peace Corps volunteers came for free and were much cheaper than Indian teachers, the Ethiopian government chose quite naturally the free supply of secondary teachers.

The presence of the US was also dominant in the organization and running of higher education. The College of Agriculture at Alemaya (established in 1955) was the springboard. Up to 1973, American academics were active in virtually all the colleges of the one and only university. The university structure was made compatible with American universities. The combined result of the concerted presence of the US was that Ethiopians who wanted to pursue their studies further chose the US. Such a choice was further strengthened by the availability of grants and scholarships. The impact of the US presence was no doubt strong although we have extremely few studies on the subject.12

Although the overthrow of the imperial system of Haile Selassie and the sweeping nationalisation of land and economic enterprises had strained Ethiopia-US relations, the final divorce occurred in the beginning of 1977. The US, then led by President Jimmy Carter, refused to supply arms to Ethiopia because of the latter’s record of human rights violations. Ethiopia had been totally dependent on the US for its supplies of arms. The Ethiopian army was trained mainly by the US and to some extent by Israel. Besieged by the “Eritrean rebels” in the north and the impending Somali invasion in the east, the military leaders of Ethiopia felt compelled to deepen the contours of their revolution by breaking diplomatic relations with the United States.

The world of the 1970’s was a contested ground between two super-powers. While American diplomats and other experts were leaving Ethiopia, the Russians were busy replacing them. In the history of the Cold War, 1977 witnessed a swapping of allegiances which demonstrated vividly the total neglect of concern for human lives. As the former Soviet Union moved into Ethiopia accompanied by several billion USD worth of arms supplies, the US took up its

position in Somalia which only a few months earlier had been the faithful ally of the Soviet Union.

The Somalian government invaded Ethiopia with the declared objective of freeing the Somali speaking region of Ethiopia. This was the second Ethio-Somali war. The earlier war took place in 1964 and compared to the 1977–78 war it was indeed on a modest scale. Although the Republic of Somalia had since independence been committed to the reunification of all the Somali speaking regions in Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya, the Somali furore was directed only against Ethiopia. Undoubtedly, the timing of the Somali invasion was determined by a calculation on the Somali part that it enjoyed a military superiority vis-à-vis Ethiopia. By 1977, not only was the Ethiopian army far smaller than the Somali army but it was running out of ammunition and spare-parts due to US embargo. The ease with which the Somali army pushed its way into Ethiopia was a clear proof of the balance of forces.

It would be futile to speculate as to what might have happened if Ethiopia had failed to exploit the Cold War climate to its favour. In the early months of 1978, Ethiopian and Cuban soldiers armed with Soviet weapons cleared the Somali army from Ethiopian territory. The Ethio-Somali war of 1977–78 had far wider implications for both countries. The Soviet Union committed itself to supply arms to Ethiopia and the Ethiopian government refined methods of military recruitment on an unprecedented scale. By the end of 1978, Ethiopia had an army of about three hundred thousand men and thus became a thoroughly militarised society. Meanwhile, the military debacle in Somalia proved to be a watershed for the ensuing civil war and the eventual disintegration of the country.

The dismantlement of the Soviet Union and the military debacle of the Ethiopian army both in Eritrea and Tigrai, and the readiness of the rebel forces to use US mediation brought back the US into the forefront. By the end of 1989, the US and not the Soviet Union had the upper hand in the Horn of Africa.

By 1990 the days of the government of Menghistu Haile-Mariam were soon to come to an end. The wars in the northern part of the country had drained the economy. The professional leadership of the army were killed after the attempted coup of May, 1990. The Ethiopian peasantry had lost the little love they had for the regime because of the excessive demands made on them. The government forced them to supply food crops below market prices, and secondly, it compelled them to hand over their sons to the warfront. The situation was made worse by the refusal of the Soviet Union to supply weapons.

Context of development

Relations between most African countries and donor states have all the characteristics of colonialism without colonies. In the 1920's the Austrian philosopher Joseph Schumpeter wrote a small book on the history of imperialism where he argued that the European colonisation of Africa had very little to do with the
spirit of capitalism. Writing at a period when the Leninist as well as Marxist interpretation of colonialism as the highest stage of capitalism had a rather uncontested hegemony, the views of Schumpeter were pushed aside.

The main argument of Schumpeter was that the spirit of European colonisation of Africa was that of feudalism. Although Europe was in the second century of its industrial and capitalist phase, its political culture was permeated by that of feudalism. The feudal culture was predominantly non-capitalist and was driven by values such as chivalry and honour. The feudal man was not driven by economic interests alone. Schumpeter argued that if Europe had been thoroughly capitalist (not only in the mode of production but also in the mode of thought), it would not have gone to the unnecessary business of colonising the world. A mature capitalist system, Schumpeter continued, does not require colonies; in other words, the job of extracting resources can be carried out by means other than physical colonisation. "Colonialism", Schumpeter predicted, "will wither away with the rise and maturity of capitalism".13

Colonialism made its exit in the early 1960's. Since then the role which was played by the former colonial powers has been increasingly played by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Obviously, the relationship between the World Bank and African states cannot be designated colonial in the sense that the World Bank officials have the executive power as the colonial governor once had. Nevertheless, the relationship can indeed be designated as a new type of colonial relationship as had been partially foreseen by Schumpeter in the sense that the major decisions which affect the majority of the African populations are taken by a Bank on a world scale also called the World Bank. It has to be recalled that the World Bank is not a voluntary, non-profit organization. It is first and foremost a bank engaged in ordinary bank activities with states rather than companies as its main clients.

Now, as during the colonial era, neither African citizens nor their leaders have a meaningful say in the running of their affairs. Since the mid 1980's, the national economies of most African states have been run by the World Bank.14

In the summer of 1992 while travelling on the Blue Train from Botswana to Zimbabwe, I had the company of a young Zambian civil servant who was on his way from South Africa to Lilongwe. In the course of conversation, it transpired that the young Zambian could not live up to his parents' expectation of producing up to nine children. The main reason was that his parents lived most of their child-bearing life during the colonial period when food and goods could be bought with current salaries. My friend concluded his story by saying that these days he has a lot of money but could buy neither food nor services for it. He described the colonial period which he remembers quite well as a period where people had security of tenure and where the cost of living was compatible with wages.

The most puzzling aspect of the discussion about development is to come to a consensus as to where and at what stage the less developed countries find themselves today. It is indeed worthwhile to resort to analogy in order to make the discussion more concrete. In 1960, W. W. Rostow wrote a fascinating book on the stages of capitalist development which he, in the true sense of the Cold War, called the Non Communist Manifesto. An eminent economic historian, Rostow identified four stages before a national or regional economy can reach the final stage, that of mass consumption. These were: i) the traditional stage (society) characterized by limited production functions and the predominance of agriculture; ii) the stage where the preconditions for take-off are present; iii) the take-off stage; and iv) the stage for the drive towards maturity.\(^{15}\)

Now to use Rostow’s typology as an analogy, where exactly is the Ethiopian development plane? Since the early 1960’s about ten billion USD of fresh money has been poured into the economy. Millions of youngsters (many of them now in their early forties) have been exposed to western education. What has been the impact of all these interventions on development? Is the Ethiopian development plane at the traditional stage or at the stage where the conditions for take-off are present? Or is the Ethiopian development plane still in the hangar being adjusted and readjusted due to structural defects detected by the IMF and the World Bank before the long awaited take-off stage? Such questions are very difficult to answer. Yet most policy measures are taken on an assessment of current stock (economic climate, growth trends etc.) as well as on evaluations of the trends in the foreseeable future.

Most of the economic and social indicators appear to convey the message that there is very little capital accumulation taking place. The inflexible land tenure system appears to be heading towards the impoverishment of millions of peasants. Since all land is state property which cannot be sold; every Ethiopian of adult age who wants to make a living by farming has a constitutional right for a piece of land. The land mass being limited, the growing rural population is being encouraged to push further with the fragmentation of tenure holdings by continuous redistribution. The economic policy of the government (agriculture led industrial development) makes very little sense so long as the peasant is firmly tied to a share from the constantly diminishing land mass. The average land holding of an Ethiopian peasant is already well below one hectare.

Even the education sector where a great deal of hope had been placed by the earlier regime is in the process of substantial disintegration as a result of the policies of regionalization and decentralisation. It can be argued that in the long run the policy of decentralisation should have a very positive role in making education relevant. Indeed the new government has considerably increased the budget for education, although most of the increase appears to have already been eaten up by inflation and currency devaluation.

\(^{15}\) Rostow, 1971, pp. 4–11.
In the economic field, there has not been a regular increase of export earnings with the exception of the first year of the TGE. At any rate export earnings are taken care of by the creditors club led by the World Bank. In 1994, total Ethiopian debt amounted to 4.5 billion USD. This figure does not include the debt to the former USSR estimated to be in the range of 3.3 billion USD. For decades to come Ethiopia will not be able to use its export earnings for investment. With all respect to the unpredictable turn of events (no one can tell what the world will look like in ten years time), we can predict that it will take a good many decades indeed before the Ethiopian development plane will reach take-off stage.

Is the Ethiopian development plane doomed to follow the Western path and pattern? Is it possible and desirable that Ethiopian leaders judge themselves how far they have marched along this road? Could there be an Ethiopian way to social, political, and economic development? It is far beyond the intention of this paper to even attempt to answer such generalised questions. It is, however, important to raise them since these and other questions form part of the underlying philosophy behind donor agencies as well as African governments' policies. There is also another reason to float such questions in the air. Although development as a whole takes place in a chaotic and unpredictable manner, some of its aspects can indeed be planned so as to avoid some of its worst dimensions. In order to explain the relevance of raising such questions, it is, once again, worthwhile to resort to analogy. If we perceive development as a mighty river which follows its own course, the role of experts would basically involve seeking ways and means of harnessing the potential of the river and of controlling the damage that such an uncontrolled river can cause its potential beneficiaries.

If the objective of education (not only non-formal education) is to increase the knowledge resource of the population and thereby enable the citizens to procure food and provisions and to enhance their health, then such a programme ought to be based on the already available structures and knowledge systems. In the case of Ethiopia, there are at least 20,000 churches which can quite easily form the basis for most of the non-formal education programmes in Christian areas. Our knowledge of the number of mosques is greatly deficient. Given that as many as 50 per cent of Ethiopians profess Islam, there might be up to ten thousand mosques in the country. The advantages of using holy grounds as centres of learning for the mundane purposes of fighting AIDS, teaching about health hazards, child care, maternal health etc. are too many to recount. The potential of non-formal education is discussed in Chapter 2.

At the outset it is important to dispel the ghost of fundamentalism that we are too prone to associate with religion. It is indeed true that since the triumphal march of Ayatollah Kohmeni in 1979 in Iran, we have noticed the revival of religious fundamentalism in several Islamic countries. With the passing of time, and as we learn more about the dynamics and objectives of fundamentalism, we notice that a fundamentalist ideology can and does co-
exist with the dominant system of production and trade. Iran is a good trade
partner with the rest of the world. Moreover, neither the theory nor the praxis
of fundamentalism is unique to the world of Islam. Both in Europe and the
United States, fundamentalist groupings (the free churches in Europe and the
moral majority in the United States) continue to wield formidable influence
over social policy far beyond their numerical strength.

What is being argued here is in fact in line with the philosophy of Education
For All. The final document of the World Conference on Education for All
pointed out the necessity of ensuring that both the content and the methods of
education are sensitive to and reflective of the local culture. Various aspects
may be taken into account: social organization, economics, family structure,
religion, politics, ritual and ceremonial behaviour.16

At this point I think it is worthwhile to sketch the extent of the pressure
imposed by the western world led by the World Bank on developing countries
such as Ethiopia. Since the fall of the Soviet Union, the focus of Europe and
North America has been on the democratisation of the continent as if the democ-
ратic political system was the only universal system for all societies in the
world. This pressure has been made to bite by a number of conditionalities
without which aid funds would not be released. In exerting such pressure,
donor countries and institutions exercise undue intervention in the domain of
intellectual life of African politicians as well as thinkers. At the heart of the
problem is the indebtedness of the country to the World Bank and other donors.
Most of the loan (in the case of Ethiopia ca. 4.5 billion USD) has been used to
expand the public sector. Very little was spent on agriculture. Up to thirty per
cent of the budget for running the activities of the state is either borrowed or
loaned,17 while funds for capital investments come either in the form of loans
or aid. Such extreme dependence on the World Bank and its conditionalities has
somehow to be resolved. An area where a start can be made is to curtail the
borrowing power of the government.18

Far worse, however, is the impatience of western donors on the slow
progress of democratisation in Africa. In the relations between Europe and
Africa mediated through different types of emergency aid, what emerges
clearly is the total absence of historical perspective on the part of Western
donors. Very few donor experts on Africa seem to be aware of how many cen-
turies and how much bloodshed it took for Europe to reach the present political
structure. Not only are relations between Western donors and African recipi-
ents permeated with the narcissistic culture of Western self-esteem but Western

18. Colonialism is gone but relations between most of the former colonies and the World
Bank have many similarities with that of colonialism. For an extremely balanced and
well written account of the World Bank and its relations with the poor nations, I
recommend George and Sabelli, 1994.
donors are also suspicious of ideas and approaches which they cannot immediately grasp and understand.

In many areas and for many years to come economically fragile and dependent states like Ethiopia will resort to the North Atlantic countries for material and non-material (technology) assistance. Theoretically, the responsibility for devising appropriate development strategy ultimately rests on African governments. So far, however, donors and the World Bank have not been able to resist the temptation of de facto running the affairs of such countries as Ethiopia. To a great extent relations between donors and the World Bank on the one hand and the least developing countries on the other can be described by the old saying: he who pays the piper calls the tune. For donors and the World Bank it will always be easy as well as tempting to advise Africa on its chequered development path. The more so if the development path chosen is the western one. Neither will there be shortage of reform and development packages for African states from the board rooms of the World Bank and major donor nations. However in the long run, the sustainability of development strategies will greatly depend on how closely these strategies are intertwined with the world views of their beneficiaries and the extent to which such strategies bear with them direct, immediate and concrete benefits. I believe that great strides would be made and a lot of financial resources saved if donors made some effort first to restrain themselves from advising too much, and secondly, if donors would make some more efforts to create the conditions within developing countries for the sprouting of locally devised development strategies.

Chapter 2
Non-Formal Education: What It Is and What It Is Not

In the first part of this chapter I shall attempt to define non-formal education. I shall then outline the knowledge systems of a few ethno-cultural communities with the aim of sketching broadly the foundations for non-formal education. This is followed by a discussion on the objectives of non-formal education and how these objectives can be related to rural development. In conclusion, I argue that religious and other indigenous institutions need to be viewed as partners rather than as obstacles to development.

Non-formal education is here defined as any educational activity organised outside the established formal system designed to serve identifiable groups and with identifiable educational objectives. Non-formal education is not "a system" of interrelated parts like formal education. Non-formal education falls outside defined institutional structure and is not bound by age restrictions, time schedules and sequences, curriculum boundaries, examinations, degrees and so forth.

In contrast formal education is a hierarchically structured and chronologically organised system extending from primary school to the university. The formal education system may in addition include a series of specialised programmes and technical and vocational training institutions. The definition of non-formal education is derived from Coombs and Ahmed. At the outset it needs to be pointed out that the definition of non-formal education of Coombs and Ahmed was developed, firstly within the context of formal education and secondly as a response to the inbuilt deficiencies of the formal education system as a vehicle for development. As early as 1974, Coombs and Ahmed wrote that the conventional primary schooling cannot alone precipitate a dynamic process of rural development. Many studies have since then confirmed the limitations of formal education in economic development.

In this study, non-formal education is understood and used as the most important strategic option available to the MOE in its efforts to spread literacy and basic education. It is possible to spread basic education effectively and cheaply throughout the country. It is also within the realm of possibility to argue that the spread of basic education through non-formal education would create a conducive environment for further interventions by government and other organisations, such as MOH, MOA, UNICEF, WHO, Sida, USAID.

However, the successful working of non-formal education is dependent on
the presence of two conditions. The first condition, and by far the most impor-
tant, is that non-formal education ought to rely on and make use of the elabo-
rate knowledge systems and traditions of education which prevail in the rural
communities. This would in turn involve the recognition by the government of
the importance and role of knowledge systems in the countryside. Unfortu-
nately the record of the earlier government and of this present government on
this aspect does not appear to be encouraging. The moral and philosophical
assumption that an education system which does not respect the traditions and
cultures of its beneficiaries is bound to fail has to be taken into account. The
second precondition is that non-formal education be treated as an equal partner
of formal education in terms of financing.

There is another reason in favour of non-formal education. We notice a
growing danger that the communication gap between the urban based and
modernising state and the vast majority of the rural population is growing.
Some students of Africa go to the extent of arguing that the peasants are
running away from the oppressive arms of the state. The policies developed in
the urban areas mostly in conjunction with western donors have failed to take
into account the needs of the peasants and most often are contrary to their
cultural and world view. This gap has to be bridged if the Ethiopian govern-
ment wishes to mobilise the rural population for developmental purposes.

The expansion of formal education with its irrelevant curriculum and inbuilt
bias against the world view of the peasant would certainly not be the solution.
The situation will not change very much even if the curriculum of the formal
education sector is satisfactorily reformed. On the other hand, investment on
nonformal education firmly based on the material and spiritual needs and per-
ceptions of the peasantry could go a long way in bringing the urban and rural
cultures to a level of mutual communication and understanding.

On the basis of extensive surveys covering many regions, Coombs and
Ahmed pointed out that few countries have yet made a serious effort to look at
rural non-formal education as a whole in relation to their practical development
needs. Although the authors did not single out any country, a cursory glance
at the new Education and Training Policy of Ethiopia shows readily that a great
deal remains to be done at the conceptual and operational levels.

21. In an article written a decade later, P. H. Coombs deplored the fact that non-formal
education was a big gap in educational planning. He cited six reasons why educational
planning has been so blind to the needs of non-formal education. It is relevant to
briefly mention the most important reasons. 1. Education was formally equated with
formal education and with the work of the ministries of education. 2. Virtually all
nations, old and new, were firmly committed to an educational development strategy
that called for the linear expansion of the inherited system. 3. Formal education was
closely linked to national development and modernization, measured by GNP. 4. The
belief that the growing economies of the world would absorb all of the output that the
educational system could produce. See Coombs, 1984, pp. 48–9.
The Ethiopian Education and Training Policy document describes non-formal education as an organised and formal educational activity aimed at those who for one reason or another are unable to attend school during normal hours. The immediate target groups appear to be working adults who appreciate the value of formal education rather than the rural population or urban children. The content and structure of non-formal education, as understood and practised in Ethiopia, is the same as that of formal education. The term non-formal education did not really exist in the vocabulary of Ethiopian education planners. It was only after 1991 that the term non-formal education was introduced into the system. However, in so far as the Ethiopian Education and Training Policy document sheds light on the meaning of the term, the structure and content of non-formal education is the same as that of formal education.

Throughout the 1970's and 1980's, the needs of those who were unable to attend day classes, was taken care of by the department of adult education. Indeed there was a lively discussion in the early 1970's on community development education, and basic development education. On a pilot level some centres known as basic development education centres were established. These centres never really took off probably due to lack of support from the MOE. The programme which had a longer life and better financing was that of Community Skills Training Centres (CSTC). First established with SIDA assistance in the middle of the 1970's, the programme had about 400 community skills training centres established in various parts of the country. Although these centres trained nearly 200,000 adults, they remained unpopular since trainees were arbitrarily recruited and the villages around the training centres were obliged to supply food provisions to staff and trainees. As one of the most visible structures of the military/socialist regime, most of the CSTCs were looted in the aftermath of the collapse of the regime.

As is indicated in the title of their books, Coombs and Ahmed are convinced that non-formal education can be used as an instrument for development. I concur with this view but with some reservations. For non-formal education to play such a developmental role its definition has to be broadened. Moreover, its objectives need to be defined more clearly and it ought to be organised in a more integrated manner. Equally important for success is that non-formal education ought to be given at least an equal (if not greater) share of public financing as formal education.

Moreover, Coombs and Ahmed's definition of non-formal education has some shortcomings. It refers only to those interventions by either the government (as in literacy campaigns) or by NGOs (UNICEF and its health education) or by donors (as in SIDA's CADU programme). Apart from the fact that these interventions were poorly co-ordinated and rarely evaluated, they were (and still are) implemented by teachers who have virtually no experience of non-formal education. The most serious weakness, however, lies in the fact that non-

22. See Appendix 1.
formal education interventions do not rely on and make use of the traditions of education and knowledge systems which prevail in all rural communities. I hasten to add that Coombs and Prosser were well aware of the role and importance of indigenous learning systems, which according to my understanding is a small, albeit important, part of the indigenous knowledge system.23

KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS: TRADITIONS OF EDUCATION IN RURAL ETHIOPIA

The idea of the school and its curriculum as it operates in Ethiopia today came with Europeans. Although schools organised along European lines have been functioning for nearly a century, the school system still retains its foreign origin and character. The greatest shortcoming of the education system in Africa in general and in Ethiopia in particular is that it is poorly related to and interlinked with the traditions of education which predate the coming of the modern school. The few studies available on peasant attitudes to the modern school appear to lend support to the view that an education system that fails to respect the culture of its beneficiaries will gain little respect.24

At some stage Ethiopia will have to develop an education system which is closely linked with its indigenous knowledge systems which have been the mainstay for the survival of its cultures and societies. Owing to the vastness of the country and to the no less than 80 different ethnic/cultural communities, I shall limit the discussion on the organization and transmission of indigenous knowledge systems to a few groups. The groups which I have selected as illustrative examples are the Oromo, the Amhara, and the Tigreans. These communities comprise more than 70 per cent of the entire population of the country. I also included a few paragraphs on Islam and Islamic tradition in order to partly redress the hitherto dominant image of Ethiopia as a Christian state. The purpose of this section is to give a glimpse of the breadth of the knowledge system which was passed from one generation to the other. As far as sources allow I pay more attention to the method of knowledge transmission rather than to the nature of knowledge itself.

The Oromo

The Oromo are by far the largest ethnic group in Ethiopia. They also occupy the largest and most fertile parts of the country. Unlike the Amhara and the Tigre-

23. Coombs and Prosser, 1973, pp. 41–3. They write: "The indigenous learning systems are generally overlooked by Western-oriented educational and training specialists, mainly because they do not fit modern conceptions of educational or training programmes and sometimes also because they are regarded as unwelcome competitors of newer educational models".

ans, the Oromo are related to each other not only by language but also by a myth of common ancestry. Although the majority of the Oromo profess Islam, a sizeable portion of them are Christians dating back several centuries. Unspecified numbers of them have remained true to the pre-Christian and pre-Islamic faith.

A specific feature of the social and political structure of the Oromo is the institution of the GADA. In those areas where the community has not been interpenetrated by either Christianity or Islam, every male Oromo belonged to and was part of a GADA. The GADA is essentially a refinement of the age-grade system which is prevalent among Bantu speaking African communities. Whereas the age-grade system aimed at constructing a feeling of solidarity among those who passed through the initiation ceremony at the same time, the GADA was an all encompassing system. The GADA community included all male members and divided them into eight classes. Passage or promotion from one GADA class to another took place every eight years. The management of the affairs of an Oromo community was entrusted to the last class, while the other seven classes exercised different functions, such as defence. Every eight years, the last class known as Abba GADA handed the responsibility of management to the class below it.25 Although actual leadership was entrusted to a committee of six elected people, those who elected them believed and felt that they were the leaders of the community for the duration of the period.

Every clan had its own GADA which for the purpose of this section can roughly be described as a government. Although all Oromo male members belonged to one of the eight classes with different functions, they were accountable to the community. Decisions on matters affecting the community as a whole were decided by a public assembly of all the members. The powers of the various GADA groups were, therefore, of an executive nature. It was the GADA assembly which decided on such matters as declaring war or concluding peace negotiations. The execution of the GADA assembly decision was then left to the last class.26

GADA ceased to function in those areas where the Oromo had intensive contact with their non Oromo neighbours, but the ideal of organising a small scale community remained fully alive in the memory of many Oromos. GADA also ceased to function in predominantly Oromo areas during the first decades of the 19th century as the growth of long-distance trade and the ensuing wealth differentiation gave way to the emergence of dynastic rule.

It has also to be pointed out that everything was not well with the GADA institution. Women were totally excluded from the running of political and social affairs27 in spite of the fact that Oromo women are reputed to enjoy wide sexual rights.28 If the ethnographic literature is to be believed, married Oromo

27. See also Dahl, 1979, pp. 113–34.
women were allowed to have several lovers visiting them regularly. To some extent women were compensated for their exclusion from public affairs. It was only married women who had the right to build huts. This important prerogative where unmarried men were dependent on married women for shelter created a functional dependence between the sexes. Women not only built huts but they owned them and were largely in control of the activities that went on inside them. As in most ethnographical studies the institution of the GADA runs the risk of being idealised. The fact remains that Oromo women are clearly at a disadvantage compared for example to Amhara women because they cannot inherit land. The situation is slightly better among the Muslim Oromo, where the Islamic law of inheritance entitles a daughter to inherit half as much as her brother.

Although Oromo men made decisions concerning ritual and all economic activities associated with the performance of rites, these decisions were often made in consultation with women. Except in a few cases where people of different ages and sexes participated in the same work, there were powerful taboos serving to keep the roles distinct. According to Asmarom Legesse the effect of these taboos was to make men dependent on their wives, mistresses, sisters and children for vital services. Role differentiation ensured an equitable distribution of rights and duties.

Fertility is the crucial factor in Oromo family structure and the first born son holds a most favoured position. The rule of primogeniture is one of the few points in which an authoritarian principle intruded into an egalitarian social system. As in all non-literate communities, knowledge is oral and transmitted orally. According to the typology of education developed by Coombs and Ahmed, the Oromo is socialised into his community through informal education. The effectiveness of informal education (the overall culture of conserving knowledge from one generation to the succeeding ones and the tradition of transmitting it to the young generation) can hardly be over-estimated. Disregarding its male bias, the GADA institution is a very interesting system worth studying in great depth.

The most striking features of the GADA institution are its egalitarian basis of political power and the high democratic content of its social organization where age and talent were intricately interwoven. It can indeed be argued that the GADA institution can only work in small scale communities. It has, however, to be remembered that institutions are in a constant state of change, as internal and external factors impinge upon them. The challenge facing Ethiopian education planners and policy-makers vis-à-vis the GADA institution and the Oromo culture is how to create the conditions for the modernization of the culture.

where some or all of its negative characteristics, for instance, gender bias aspects will wither away.

The "Abyssinians" (The Amhara and the Tigreans)\textsuperscript{33}

Since the terms Ethiopia and Ethiopians refer to the country and its inhabitants in general, I have chosen to describe the Amhara and the Tigreans as "Abyssinians". Compared to the Oromo and Southern Ethiopian Peoples region, both Amhara and Tigrai are the least economically developed regions of the country. If we take the modern educational infrastructure as an indicator, the Amhara region is at a great disadvantage vis-à-vis Tigrai, the Oromo and Southern Ethiopian Peoples region. The literacy rate among the Amhara is in the range of 13 per cent, while it is much higher in the Tigrai, Oromo and the Southern Ethiopian Peoples administrative regions.\textsuperscript{34}

A great deal has been written on the Abyssinians, mainly from the historical and anthropological dimensions. We have also some partial studies on their culture. For good and for bad, the Abyssinians have played an important role in the shaping of the country. Since 1974, their role, both political and cultural, has been on the decline. The reorganization of the country along ethnolinguistic boundaries and the introduction of mother-tongues (at present there are 12 official languages in use in Ethiopian schools) have further curtailed the expansion of the Abyssinian culture to non-Abyssinian areas.

The transformation of Amharic from a national language imposed from above into a lingua franca (a language accepted by consent), will, I believe, remain as one of the most important contributions of the present government. Yet it has to be conceded that the ground work was laid by the policies of the earlier governments and also by the cultural capacity of the Amhara to assimilate other cultures.

We now turn our attention to describe briefly the basis of the Abyssinian knowledge system and the modes of its transmission. One of the most positive features of the Abyssinian culture (as well as its main drawback) is its historical consciousness. This consciousness is built around the introduction of Christianity, the interpretations of the Bible and the role of the Abyssinian as a central figure.

\textsuperscript{33} The Amhara and the Tigreans use the term Abyssinian among themselves and they would describe themselves as Abyssinians. The term Abyssinian is rarely, if ever, used to describe the country of the Amhara and Tigrai. This combined region has been known by the term Ethiopia, at least since the 14th century.

\textsuperscript{34} See MOE, 1995. Yet the Amhara as a whole have been condemned by the present government and other opposition parties as the single ethnic group which had ruled and exploited all other ethnic groups. If both economic and political power was ever in the hands of the Amhara, the summary execution of the ruling elite in 1974 and the indiscriminate expropriation of land and other properties by the military regime in 1975 had taken that power away.
The introduction of Christianity via Egypt with its strong tradition of monasteries, as early as the 4th century A.D., and the eventual isolation of the country from the Middle East and Europe created a free environment for the Abyssinian to search further for collective identity. A few centuries after the introduction and consolidation of Christianity, the Abyssinian kingdom was on the decline and the centre of power had already began to move southwards from Aksum. Between the sixth and the ninth centuries the Abyssinians developed an ideology on the origins of their state. It was during this period that the myth of the
Queen of Sheba and her only son as an offspring from her visit to King Solomon of the Jews was indigenized and elaborated. The offspring of the Queen of Sheba became the founder of the Abyssinian dynasty, and the Abyssinians began to believe in all earnest that they were the chosen people of God. In this way the Abyssinians created the myth of 3,000 years of history which was to create a great deal of conflict and controversy in the 20th century.

The legacy of the 3,000 years of history has its positive features as well as its drawbacks. It was during this early period that the idea of the Abyssinians as the chosen people of God was developed. At the best of times and throughout most of the last millennium, the Abyssinians had a political ideology which united the ruling elite and the ruled. This ideology was both expansionist and assimilationist. The main source for the ideology was the Holy Bible with the Orthodox Church as the sole interpreter. For most of the country's history, this ideology functioned well in keeping the polity together. Whatever the value of historical consciousness, the Abyssinians appear to have it in abundance.

The translation of the Holy Book from the Greek original into the ancient Abyssinian language (Geez) and subsequent interpretations of the Holy Book gave birth to further ideas on the identity of the Abyssinians. In the course of the centuries and certainly before the 14th century, the Abyssinians began to describe themselves as Ethiopians and their country as Ethiopia, thus appropriating all the Biblical references unto themselves. This was made easy by the collapse of Christianity in Nubia (Meroe) in the first half of the 4th century which during the Greek and early Christian times was known as Ethiopia. The appropriation of the Greek word Ethiopia for the Abyssinian landscape and its inhabitants had indeed profound political implications. This I think can be best explained by the motto of the imperial Ethiopian state: Ethiopia Stretches Her Hands unto God.

The 3,000 years of history as well as the Abyssinians as the chosen people of God are certainly as faulty as the myth of the purity of the Jewish race. Yet the myths and traditions, developed over a thousand years, were the main ideological foundations of the Imperial Ethiopian State which came to an end in 1974. Imperial rule appears to have been overthrown for good, but many of the ideas which gave rise to its ideology are still alive.

35. The story of the Queen of Sheba is commonly known throughout the Middle East. It is very likely that the Abyssinians appropriated the story as their own as early as the sixth century. By the ninth century, the Coptic Church at Alexandria believed that Abyssinia was the original home of the Queen of Sheba. See Sawirus, 1948. The earliest evidence from Ethiopia on the Queen of Sheba as the founder of the state is from a manuscript called the Kebra Negast (The Glory of Kings) of the early 14th century. The manuscript is introduced and translated by E.W. Budge, 1922.

36. There are two mottos and one biblical reference which identify and describe the Abyssinians and their culture. These are: 1) Ethiopia stretches her hands unto God; 2) The conquering Lion of Juda; and, 3) The fear of God is the beginning of knowledge. For further literature see Ullendorff, 1968; Levine, 1974.
The most important institution responsible for the creation and perpetuation of the Abyssinian historical consciousness was the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. However, this was not the only area where the Church was engaged. Divided into parishes and monasteries, the Church was the repository of all learning until the first decades of this century. There are many monasteries and two monastic orders spread throughout the Abyssinian landscape, and these were (and still are) engaged in the elaborate and painstaking teaching of theology and other Church related subjects. The great monasteries, like those of medieval Europe, have been the centres of art and higher learning. Church education was of a very long duration taking up to 28 years of full-time study before an ambitious candidate could earn the title of a learned man. Whereas the Churches in Europe managed to lay down the basis for most of secular higher learning, the Ethiopian Church appears to have failed to pass through a similar transition. It is most probable that the location of the monasteries (virtually all of them situated in the most inaccessible parts of the country) had contributed to the low outreach of the Church.

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church was a state Church up to 1974. Since then Church and state are separate. The indications are that the Church has benefited from such separation. Although we have no specific studies, it appears that the Church, now fully maintained by the contribution and participation of the faithful, is adapting itself well to the new times. As many as 25 million people belong to the Ethiopian Church. There are also active but much smaller Catholic and Evangelical communities in the country.

The Abyssinian culture is greatly influenced by the teachings, beliefs and presence of the Church. The expansion of secular formal education and the Marxist ideology, first developed by the university students in the capital city and later continued as official policy by the regime in power (1974–91) has, however, eroded some of the influence of the Church. The Ethiopian Church has been criticised by the urban, radical, socialist and modernising elites as belonging to the “feudal” political system which was represented by Emperor Haile Selassie.

The teachings of the Church were not only limited to religion. In addition to teaching, the Church was also entrusted with the writing of Ethiopian history. For most of the 1970’s and 1980’s the Ethiopian Church became an alternative to the Marxist ideology which dominated public life. The separation of the Church from the state is, however, incomplete. The state has still a great deal of power over the Church. In my opinion a national educational strategy which fails to take into account the Ethiopian Church as an important partner in development will make very little headway.

38. Medieval universities in Europe were dominated by the Faculty of Theology. Medicine was the next branch of learning to appear followed by the Faculty of Laws.
The Islamic tradition

It is estimated that up to 50 per cent of the population of the country are adherents of Islam. While the Ethiopian Somalis are by and large Muslims, Islam exists as a minority religion among all the major ethnic groups. Harar is the centre of Islamic learning and the majority of the Hararis are Muslims, while in Addis Ababa the adherents of Islam comprise at the most 15 per cent of the inhabitants of the city.

The Islamic tradition in Ethiopia is as old as Islam itself. It has even been argued that Islam was taught in the northern part of the country before it became the dominant religion in the Middle East. A greater part of Shewa and Wello was predominantly Moslem up to the end of the 17th century. For a brief period in the middle of the 16th century, the Christian parts of Ethiopia were ruled by a Muslim follower Ahmed Ibrahim el Ghazi, known as Ahmed Gran, who had the clear ambition of founding his own dynasty. In the 19th century, Ethiopian rulers had with varying success attempted to convert en masse their Moslem territories. Such practice was virtually stopped from the late 19th century onwards. As the Ethiopian empire continued to expand, it contented itself with the conversion of the ruling elite of the defeated communities.

Although the policy of the last emperor (Haile Selassie I, ruled 1930–1974) towards Islam was indeed liberal, it was during the brief Italian occupation of the country that Orthodox Islam was given official recognition. Italian policy towards Islam was politically motivated. Italy was determined to stay in Ethiopia and therefore counted on Ethiopian Moslems to hold at bay the Abyssinians who had reason to resist.\(^\text{40}\) In addition to mosques which the Italians heavily subsidized in the Christian and Moslem areas of the county, they also founded an Islamic centre of higher learning in Jimma, in the south-west of the country.

Fortunately the defeat of the Italians and the return to power of Emperor Haile Selassie from exile did not lead to a reversal of the gains of Islam. Yet, there was a clear constitutional provision which circumscribed the rights of Ethiopian Moslems. Although this was limited to the statement that the Ethiopian emperor has to belong to the Ethiopian Orthodox faith, it nevertheless was discriminatory. It favoured the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. Moreover, the Orthodox Church was a state Church, albeit that the Emperor continued to remind his subjects that the country belonged to all and their religious belief were their private affair. In practice, succession to the throne was hereditary and there was very little risk that the line which traced its origin to the Queen of Sheba and King Solomon would convert to Islam.\(^\text{41}\)

---

41. The constitutional provision (1955) was designed to protect the faith of the throne from Catholicism and probably from other Christian denominations rather than from Islam, which was quite inconceivable. As to the fear by the Church of the Emperor (who is also the head of the Ethiopian Church) going over to Catholicism, the Ethiopian Church had indeed good grounds. In the beginning of the seventeenth century,
Admittedly, our knowledge of Islam in Ethiopia is far more rudimentary compared to what we know about the Ethiopian Church. For the most part, and with the exception of the town of Harar and some parts of Wello region, Islam in Ethiopia was the religion of the nomadic and semi-nomadic peoples of the country. Moreover, Islam did not have the opportunity to develop hierarchical and administrative structures embracing all its adherents dispersed throughout the country. Although the position of Islam improved greatly during the Menghistu regime this may well be, as has been recently argued, due to the discriminatory policies of Ethiopian regimes with the possible exception of the present government. Indeed, there were some Oromo states which had converted to Islam in the first half of the 19th century. These states were incorporated into the expanding Ethiopian Christian state towards the end of the last century.

the Ethiopian Emperor had in fact been converted to Catholicism thus unleashing a veritable civil war.

42. Hussein, 1994, pp. 775–801.
As Christianity in Ethiopia has features which are unique to the country, Ethiopian Islam has also its specific peculiarities. According to Trimmingham, the expansion of Islam in Ethiopia has occurred among those whom he called pagans. Very few Christians had converted to Islam. Although we have no idea of whether Islam has been expanding during the last few decades, we can be quite certain that active support by the oil rich Middle Eastern countries, is contributing to its consolidation.

By way of conclusion

Under the presumptuous heading of indigenous knowledge systems we have sketched broadly the cultural landscape of two groups out of about 80 other ethnic entities which inhabit the country. It is appropriate, therefore, to conclude this section by attempting to answer the question. What usable and relevant knowledge do these cultures possess?43

Thanks to historical and anthropological studies carried out during the last twenty years we know a great deal about the extent and complexity of knowledge among the illiterate or semi-literate designated communities of the world. For centuries all those communities who inhabit Ethiopia have successfully tamed their environment. On every aspect of individual and collective activity, each and every Ethiopian community continues to possess a reservoir of knowledge accumulated over a long period of time. In the course of centuries, each of these communities developed elaborate systems of political, social, ideological and economic socialisation which suited them and their natural environment. These communities were neither stagnant nor static, nor isolationists. Each of them has been responsive to new ideas and technologies as long as these were in harmony with the overall cultural framework.

European colonialism and the efforts to mould African societies in the image of Europe through a series of modernization programmes jolted the delicate balance which African communities in general and Ethiopian communities in particular had established.44 Moreover the pressure for modernization, accompanied by external loans, grants and development blueprints, led to the emergence of modernising states in Africa with programmes which take very little account of the needs of the majority of the rural population.45 One way of measuring the disregard of indigenous knowledge is that rural populations are

43. There are several questions of a theoretical and conceptual nature which are not discussed at all. How indigenous is indigenous knowledge? Are there convincing cases where indigenous knowledge has internalized foreign ideas and technologies without disruptions? How is change (social, political, economic) related to indigenous knowledge and praxis?
44. Although Ethiopia was hardly colonized, its post Second World War development strategies were based on either western or eastern (European) models.
45. There is a growing literature on the communication gap between the state and its rural inhabitants in Africa. O'Connor, 1991; Bayart, 1993; Fantu, 1991.
treated as subjects rather than as actors. Almost all of the studies published during the last ten years indicate that leaders of African states run the risk of losing their legitimacy completely unless they develop policies responsive to the needs of the rural population. Before we proceed further, however, we need to point out that indigenous knowledge pertaining, for instance, to food production and health has serious limitations. Likewise indigenous knowledge appears to be ill adapted to the pressures of rapid population growth and growing rural unemployment. Recurrent food shortages and the prevalence of widespread diseases can partly be explained by the inadequacy of indigenous knowledge as much as by the failure of African governments to build on the knowledge systems which already exist.

NON-FORMAL EDUCATION PROGRAMME FOR DEVELOPMENT

The most pressing challenge facing Ethiopia in the coming decades is feeding its growing population. I would like now to discuss how non-formal education can be used to meet this pressing challenge. It is appropriate to begin the discussion with a brief recapitulation of educational objectives as stated in the new policy document. Like most policy documents the objectives are mentioned in very general terms but the intentions guiding the document are clear. Education is understood as a "very important factor to human development" and is, therefore, a high priority of the government. The document further states the objective of "bringing up citizens endowed with humane outlook, countrywide responsibility and democratic values" (with the cognitive capacity to) "participate in the development and utilisation of resources and the environment at large". 46

For the implementation of the objectives of education, the reader is directed to the structure of education. With some notable exceptions there is a striking continuity between the new policy and those practised by the two last governments. 47 The educational structure has three stages. Primary education is of eight years duration offering basic general primary education as a preparation for further general education. Secondary education shall be of four years duration consisting of two years of general secondary education and the remaining period of two years for further preparation for higher education or for employment. 48 It is implied that students would be provided with vocational and technical training besides their academic subjects. This aspect of the policy cannot be seriously entertained here as earlier attempts at vocationalization of the formal education programme had completely failed.

For those who are unable to attend the regular formal education structure, the policy provides non-formal education programmes "beginning at and

46. See Appendix 1, section 1.
47. See Appendix 2.
48. See Appendix 1, sections 3.2.2 and 3.2.3.
parallel to basic education and at all levels of formal education". In the minds of today’s Ethiopian educational planners, non-formal education is equivalent to evening classes. The content and structure of non-formal education is the same as formal education. This is further proved by the dismantling of the department of adult education and its transformation into a panel. In 1990, the department of adult education had a staff of 142 and a functioning library. By early 1994, the department was virtually abolished. Currently, there is a panel for non-formal education with a staff of four under the department of programmes and supervision.

Basic development issues can indeed be addressed successfully by means of a non-formal education programme if such a programme is designed and implemented with clear objectives. I argue that one such central objective of a non-formal education programme ought to be to increase and deepen indigenous knowledge pertaining to technologies of food production, health, clothing and shelter. The designing of such a programme can indeed go a long way in enabling the government to implement its ambitious Agricultural Development Led Industrialization policy (ADLI). According to ADLI agriculture is assigned a central role in the development of the country. Since agriculture in Ethiopia is dominated by smallholder farmers, ADLI has two strategies for increasing their productivity. The first strategy, known as allocative efficiency input, would attempt to develop means and ways of using existing resources of land, labour and capital in a more effective way through improved agronomic practices. The second strategy, known as technical efficiency input, would concentrate on the introduction of improved technology, i.e. biological, chemical and mechanical. For this type of non-formal education to succeed, it has to be closely related to the various aspects of rural development. Here it is worthwhile to stress that since one of the values inculcated among rural (peasant) children is pride in work, a focus on strategies of increasing and developing indigenous knowledge could indeed be accepted and appreciated.

Before I proceed further in support of a national non-formal education programme with a clear objective, I would like to draw the attention of the reader to the studies of Coombs and Ahmed on the subject. They argue that a

... non-formal education programme aimed at promoting rural development should be planned within a framework of well-conceived national and rural development strategies, policies, and priorities. Though national plans often speak of strategies and policies for rural development, little progress has been made in most countries in actually fashioning realistic and internally consistent frame-

49. See Appendix 1, section 3.2.5.
works, not only for planning non-formal education but also for planning all other pertinent rural development efforts.52

Here we may also add that the excellent review of Kenneth King carried out twenty years later shows that little progress has taken place in the implementation of non-formal education within a larger framework.53 The message of Coombs and Ahmed, though stated twenty years ago, appears to have been lost on the way. The message may have been lost, partly because it was aimed at donors rather than at policy-makers in Africa. An additional reason might also have to do with their too broad and rather vague definition of non-formal education.54 My study is, in a way, a further elaboration and adaptation of Coombs and Ahmed’s vision of the role of non-formal education to the Ethiopian situation.55

Having postulated the potential role of non-formal education, I would like now to anticipate the series of questions which inevitably will arise. Who are the targets of non-formal education? Can non-formal education with a rather specific objective that has been attached to it be used in the urban areas? How is non-formal education related to formal education? Can the Ethiopian Ministry of Education as it is currently organised carry out the non-formal education programme? Is there a commitment for rural development among Ethiopian policy-makers?

It is appropriate to begin with the target groups of non-formal education. Ethiopia is a rural country with up to 90 per cent of the population living in villages and dependent on agriculture and pastoralism.56 As the rate of literacy among school age children in rural Ethiopia is in the range of between 13 and 16 per cent, successive governments have had the ambition of extending the bene-

52. Coombs and Ahmed, 1974, p. 208. They also added that the best approximations to such frameworks are to be found in those relatively few special cases, such as CADU (Chilalo Agricultural Development Unit) where a “substantial amount of broad planning was done for a selected area prior to launching an integrated development scheme”.
54. The major emphasis of Coombs and Ahmed is on the non-formal educational activities carried out by donors and activities carried out by governments on the direct or indirect inputs from donors. They rarely discuss how the educational system of any given country can be designed to make use of non-formal education for the achievement of basic needs.
55. As early as 1974, Coombs and Ahmed wrote in the same book the following: “What poor farmers need most and what governments are best adapted to give are: 1) infrastructure, e.g. roads, improved water supplies; 2) advice on farm planning and agricultural production; 3) credit and marketing facilities; 4) social services (including education) with respect to education, sanitation, nutrition, clothing; and 5) management services”, pp. 225-6.
56. See the 1984 census for the breakdown of the population between rural and urban areas.
fits of formal education without due regard to relevance. Moreover, the main target of the formal education sector has been children in the 7–12 year age group. With the exception of the literacy campaigns and the CSTCs, both of which have virtually disintegrated, the government has no strategy for reaching the adult rural population. During the last ten years and especially after 1991, the limitations of the formal education sector have become more clear in the rural areas. The major bottlenecks of the formal education sector are still its irrelevant curriculum and its drastic expansion in relation to the capacity of the modern economic sector to absorb school leavers. The manufacturing sector of the economy has a total employment of not more than 100,000 workers in a country of at least twenty million able-bodied adults. While this strongly underscores the rural nature of Ethiopian society as well as the economy, at the same time, it indicates that many of the deficiencies of the formal education sector can be redressed through non-formal education inputs.

The formal education sector pours out as many as 70,000 secondary students every year seeking employment in the modern sector. Most of these secondary school graduates are from the urban areas and are not prepared at all for village life. The expansion of the formal education system (whether it is designated as basic or primary education) to the countryside would further increase the number of unemployed and unemployable youth. For these reasons, the rural population should be the main target group of non-formal education with a specific objective of increasing the already existing knowledge pertaining to technologies of food production, health and shelter.

The targeting of the rural population for a non-formal education programme designed to increase their knowledge base on food production and health raises one principal question related to the delivery of two types of educational services, namely non-formal education for the rural population and formal education for the urban population. As non-formal education, unlike that of formal education does not immediately lead to white collar employment, targeting it to the rural population can be criticised from the moral/ethical grounds of equitable access and equal opportunity to education. On the basis of the few recent

57. According to the 1993/4 education statistics, gross enrolment ratio was 22.9 per cent. It has, however to be noted that urban enrolment is up to three times as high as the national figure. Out of the 2.8 million students in primary schools, about 280,000 students are from Addis Ababa.

58. For a penetrating analysis of the inadequacy of the formal education system to reach the adult population see the unpublished reports of Sven-Bertil Magnusson, the Swedish senior advisor on adult and non-formal education to the MOE, 1991–4. The reports are available at SIDA, Education Division.


60. For further discussion see my earlier study, 1990.

61. Increasing existing knowledge would in the long run not be enough. The knowledge base would eventually need to be changed so as to meet the challenges of over-population and environmental damage.
studies, however, I am inclined to argue that peasants might well be grateful for an education programme which is designed to meet their immediate needs.

Indeed I am arguing that the best the government can do is to build and expand the non-formal education programme for the rural population. More specifically, I am arguing that the government should create two completely separate educational services. Therefore, I cannot escape from pleading guilty to the critical accusations mentioned above. This does not at all mean, however, that non-formal education has no relevance for urban areas. Indeed it is equally important for the hundreds of thousands of the urban poor, dropouts and school leavers. I have stressed the rural areas and the rural population because they constitute the majority of the population. Yet, I strongly maintain that if the government is intent on increasing and developing the knowledge base pertaining to technologies of food production, such a programme can best be implemented within the non-formal framework. I, therefore, believe that in order to reach primarily the rural population and the urban poor, it is important to create two parallel educational systems. It has to be emphasized that the experience of formal education in the rural and semi-rural areas has not in any way contributed to either increased production or increased relevant knowledge.

Recent studies on peasant attitudes to education and on basic needs, I believe, strengthen my argument. The series of surveys on peasants' perceptions of basic needs in several regions in central Ethiopia which SIDA has commissioned, clearly show that the provision of educational services was not one of the urgent needs. The insightful study which USAID commissioned on the demand for schooling in rural Ethiopia also demonstrated that once Ethiopian peasants were no longer compelled to send their children to school, many of them turned their backs to it. The drastic decline of net enrolment from 38 per cent in 1990 to 20 per cent in 1994 can hardly be explained in any other way.

We now turn to the question as to whether non-formal education as we have defined it above can do the job. This question cannot be answered directly because such a task is not the sole responsibility of the Ministry of Education. We have, however, related evidence which Coombs and Ahmed repeatedly mention in order to demonstrate the viability of non-formal education. The example they mentioned was that of CADU (Chilalo Agricultural Development Unit). CADU, it has to be noted, was not an education programme. It was an integrated rural development programme where the emphasis was on improving production knowledge, technology, infrastructure, planning and marketing. Although CADU was accompanied by sufficient funding, part of its success

62. See for example, USAID/Ethiopia, 1994; Baker and Dessie, 1994. See in particular Poluha, 1995, p. 11, where the author writes, "... formal education is encountering great problems at present. ... Farming needs training from a young age and those sons who have been to school, have neither learned to farm properly, according to their fathers' ways nor have they learned any new ways. As a result many parents all over Ethiopia have stopped sending their children to school".
was, according to Coombs and Ahmed, due to the series of non-formal training inputs (education) which were incorporated into the programme.63

However, the question that has yet to be confronted is whether the non-formal education programme designed for the rural population and urban poor can indeed function? As hypothetical question it can only be answered hypothetically. However, instead of attempting to provide an answer I wish to underscore the conditions which are conducive for a successful implementation of such a programme. An educational programme has a much better chance of success if it is based on an appreciation and recognition of the immense knowledge that exists in the rural and urban communities. Such a programme has also a greater degree of acceptance if it is designed to make use of the indigenous systems of socialisation as well as of the various indigenous social and spiritual institutions.

How would the non-formal education programme which we have sketched above be related to formal education? Although we shall return to this question in the last chapter, it is worthwhile to treat it briefly in this chapter. I argue that there ought to be a clear separation of the two programmes. The non-formal education programme would function better if it is developed as a programme independent of the formal education system. The non-formal education programme need not be seen as either complementary to formal education or as a second best service to rural communities. The non-formal education programme needs to be developed as an end by itself. At this juncture, we need to dispel the fear of a permanent division between the countryside and the urban areas on account of the different systems of education operating side by side. What we are arguing is that at this moment and for the foreseeable future, the main concern of the rural population is not the expansion of the formal school system, but concrete inputs which enhance their capacity to produce more food, clothing, health and shelter.

A much easier question to answer is that related to the role of the Ministry of Education towards the designing of the non-formal education programme and the role of regional governments. Although the Ministry of Education has, according to the new policy, assumed upon itself the daunting task of providing vocational and technical training to all students and at all levels, we argue that, it is beyond its responsibility to do so. Moreover, the Ministry of Education, even if it were to be provided with the necessary funds, cannot implement the non-formal education programme.

The job of the MOE is to supervise and oversee the smooth running of the formal education sector. The perennial problems of the relevance of the curriculum and the maintenance of an acceptable quality of education are the tasks of the MOE. There is a great deal to be done by the Ministry of Education itself and by bilateral and multinational donors to improve the quality, relevance, management and delivery of the formal education sector.

63. For a comprehensive history of CADU, see Cohen, 1987.
Finally, there is the question related to the commitment of the government and policy-makers to rural development. We have earlier stated that the present MOE, like the MOE of the earlier governments, still adheres to the assumption that more formal education will bring about development. We have argued that this is a mistaken policy and a misplaced priority.

WHO CAN IMPLEMENT THE NON-FORMAL EDUCATION PROGRAMME?

I mentioned earlier that unlike formal education non-formal education is not a system. The main distinguishing feature of non-formal education is that it is an activity carried on outside the established formal education system. As the term non-formal includes many different kinds of activities, I have decided to narrow its scope within the framework of a programme with clearly delineated objectives. There is indeed a danger in limiting the scope of the programme to objectives defined beforehand. Although it would have been desirable to maintain an open-ended approach, the scarcity of human resources and funds argue for the selection of key priorities.

A successful implementation of a non-formal education programme would demand the active involvement of the ministries which are directly involved with the components of the programme itself, namely, agriculture, health, environment, and education. How is active involvement going to be secured and which department or departments would assume the responsibility for co-ordination? These are so far hypothetical questions since the government has first to accept the viability of the non-formal education programme as I have defined it above. However, assuming that the government accepts the non-formal education programme, then we can attempt to sketch a structure of how it can be implemented.

One such structure is a new co-ordinating department mandated to implement the objectives of non-formal education, namely food production, health, clothing and shelter. This new department would have as its point of departure the existing knowledge base and make use, as much as possible, of indigenous institutions and structures. The new department would also be mandated to negotiate and assist donors in the development and implementation of non-formal educational inputs. Within this framework the MOE would have two responsibilities. Its first task would be to spread universal literacy. This goal can be easily and cheaply achieved in partnership with the religious institutions. Its second task is to monitor the teaching-learning processes which include pedagogical training for those involved in the programme.

65. In the reorganization of the cabinet which took place after the July elections, the Ministry of Natural resources was merged with the Ministry of Agriculture.
The creation of a new co-ordinating department would necessarily involve the restructuring of old departments. Since the budget of the Ministry of Education is much higher than those of Agriculture and Health, a considerable portion of the financial resources for the new department would most probably have to be derived from the Ministry of Education.

THE OPTIMAL PLACES FOR NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

If the objective of non-formal education is to increase and qualitatively improve the knowledge mass that the people already possess, then the locus for such activities ought to be the places which attract the largest number of the inhabitants. There are two such places in the country. The first such place is either the church or the mosque. The second is the market place.66 The market place or a location close to the market place for non-formal education input is not a completely new idea. The Swedish financed and led Chilalo Agricultural Development Unit (CADU) had in fact used locations very close to churches, major roads and markets as demonstration plots in order to spread new farming technologies.67

Although the churches and the mosques run some confessional schools, they are insignificant compared to government schools.68 The policies of the earlier regime as well as of this regime to make the state a secular one are indeed correct. It behaves on the government, however, to first recognise the role of the spiritual sphere in the history of the country and, secondly, to create a conducive environment for religious institutions to carry on with their spiritual responsibilities.

For the purpose of carrying out non-formal education one can say that the country has about 20,000 churches and probably a comparable number of mosques spread all over the country. These confessional buildings are constructed on holy ground and are looked after by the community of the faithful. Ethiopian rural churches and mosques are distinguished by the variety of trees and other vegetation which encircle them. These trees belong to the churches and mosques and are well looked after by the faithful. The environmental consciousness as well as knowledge which exists in the country and which can be readily seen in the manner the trees and other vegetation are maintained around the churches and mosques can indeed form the basis for launching a sustainable environmental education programme.69 Here I think it is worth-

66. For the role and importance of markets see Cohen, 1987, pp. 57-8 and 100.
68. According to USAID, less than 10 per cent of primary students were enrolled in private schools. Although confessional schools are included under private schools, not all private schools were confessional.
69. Since 1985 SIDA has invested a considerable sum of money to launch an environmental education programme with modest success, although the interest for the programme within the MOE has not been encouraging. See Grönvall, 1995.
while to re-emphasise the link between environmental degradation and poverty on the one hand and on the other hand the importance of increased food production as the best means of countering further environmental crisis. This is, I believe, very clearly stated in Marie Grönnvall’s conclusion. I quote:

Ethiopia is facing an environmental crisis. Land degradation, due to over-use of cultivated land, overgrazing and deforestation, is undermining the natural resource base on which the population’s very survival depends. The high population pressure and prevailing land management practices are causing serious depletion of the environment at an accelerating rate. A combination of improved land use systems, soil and water conservation and intensive integrated crop-animal production is needed to reverse the situation. The food/population imbalance is the issue on which Ethiopia’s future depends and if this problem is not attended to, all other efforts will be useless.70

Co-opting the religious institutions and tapping some of their vast knowledge and treating them as partners in development would, undoubtedly, be a significant step towards the realization of the goals pointed out by Marie Grönnvall. However, not all the churches and mosques would be suitable for carrying out a non-formal education programme, but there can be no doubt that the great majority of them would indeed be ideal places.

The economic advantages arising from the use of churches, mosques and other sacred places for non-formal education programmes can be easily appreciated. Universal literacy, for instance, can be achieved in a very short period of time through the active involvement of the religious institutions.71 Moreover literacy can also be sustained since it would be designed to bring concrete and immediate benefits to its beneficiaries.72 But we have to bear in mind that these places would not be transformed overnight. The sacred places cater, first and foremost, to the spiritual needs of their followers. Yet religious institutions and their holy surroundings can indeed be used for the purposes of non-formal education. For such a programme (all or parts of it) to be accommodated within the compounds of holy places, the content of the programme as well as the method of its teaching ought to be compatible with the basic tenets of the confessional institutions.

Designing and implementing a non-formal education programme compatible with the belief systems of the various religions is necessarily a process which requires a considerable period of gestation. Firstly, the government agencies entrusted with the non-formal education programme would have to develop a system of communication with religious institutions (as the repositories of indigenous knowledge systems) based on mutual respect. Secondly, the

---

72. According to Edmunn, 1986, p. 83, motivation for and sustainability of functional literacy appears to depend on concrete and immediate economic benefits arising as a result of such literacy programme.
government agencies need to consider confessional leaders, not as agents obstructing the relentless march of modernization, but rather as partners in the implementation of the non-formal education programme.\textsuperscript{73}

Whether the religious institutions would allow their compounds to be training centres for a non-formal education programme and whether confessional leaders would be co-opted as partners in the process would depend on the commitment and determination of the government. It is up to the appropriate government agencies to make the first move. And as far as the non-formal education programme as we have defined and described it above is concerned, there is hardly any reason why it cannot be implemented in conjunction with religious and other institutions. In view of the growing religiosity of the population where up to ninety per cent of the population appear to be firm believers, it is imperative to involve religious institutions as partners in development. We have in fact a modest example of the role played by the Ethiopian Evangelical Church (Mekane Yesus Church) in the promotion of literacy in the late 1970's and early 1980's.\textsuperscript{74}

We have dealt with the physical infrastructures for carrying out non-formal education. Implicitly, we have argued for the involvement of religious personnel, (the priest, cadi, Kallu) in the programme. Indeed, they should be treated as partners in the development effort. There is still one category of human resource which can be mobilised for the purpose. This category is made up of elders, those who owing to age and experience have a higher standing in the community.

**CONCLUDING REMARKS**

I have argued that the non-formal education strategy can indeed be used to confront problems of literacy and development. As regards universal literacy, the goal can be achieved with little cost and with a minimum of external indebtedness. Indigenous institutions (e.g. churches, mosques) already possess sufficient infrastructure as well as personnel. The areas which require considerable creativeness and firm commitment deal with the content of non-formal education programme for development. I have argued the importance of identifying the target group (rural population and urban poor) and the object of the programme (food production, health, shelter). I have briefly discussed that the expansion of formal education cannot be justified on either economic or moral grounds.

\textsuperscript{73} The leaders of the first republic (1974–91) had a negative attitude towards peasants and confessional institutions. Members of the Workers Party of Ethiopia were obliged to state openly that they were atheists. See, the Workers Party of Ethiopia regulations. In 1980, only 8 per cent of the inadequate budget of the Ministry of Agriculture went to peasant farming. See, Cohen, 1987, p. 166.

\textsuperscript{74} Sjöström, 1983.
Chapter 3
Bilateral Donors and the Ethiopian Education System

From 1955 onwards the major bilateral donors to the Ethiopian education sector were the United States and Sweden. While USAID was interrupted during the era of the first republic (1974–91), Swedish assistance to education continued throughout the entire period. In some ways Swedish assistance built on what USAID had started, but in many other ways SIDA initiated new programme areas within the sector. Between 1974 and 1991, Sweden was the single largest bilateral donor to the education sector. The now defunct German Democratic Republic (GDR) had to some extent replaced USAID, though their involvement was limited solely to the field of curriculum. In this chapter I shall attempt to assess the new USAID input to the education sector. In the second part I shall outline the Swedish input and raise briefly the trends within SIDA concerning support to the sector.

USAID IN ACTION: BASIC EDUCATION SYSTEM OVERHAUL (BESO)

In July 1994, USAID launched a very ambitious programme to be implemented over the next seven years. The objective of USAID is to improve the quality and equity of primary education in an expanded and expanding primary education system. Although the experts who designed the programme were fully aware that it would require more than seven years, they quite rightly argue that the implementation of the programme would mean a basic overhaul of the education system of the country.

There is no doubt that this is by far the most ambitious and comprehensive programme to be initiated by any single donor. We can be sure that the major concern of USAID as well as its relations with the MOE and other donors will, in the coming decade, centre around BESO (Basic Education System Overhaul). It is, therefore, worthwhile to describe the programme in some detail. By basic education, the US mission has the formal primary education in mind; the duration of primary education is currently six years of schooling. Primary education will be eight years, divided into two cycles of 4+4 when the new educational policy comes into effect. According to the latest implementation strategy, the changing of the structure is to go hand in hand with the writing of the new curriculum. This will take five to six years to complete.

The BESO document which is described below is the Program Assistance Initial Proposal and the Project Identification Document released in June, 1994. To my knowledge, this is the basis for USAID so far. Some modifications
mainly regarding implementation may be made in the course of the life of the programme, while the basic principles are, I believe, bound to remain. Now what is this BESO? How realistic is it? Is it really possible to overhaul the education system with the design instruments?

BESO has its origins in the sector review which USAID carried out in 1992 and 1993. The programme was partly designed to help meet the educational objectives of the Ethiopian education policy which at the time of the drafting of BESO was quite well known. The BESO document, as in the USAID sector review, identifies and discusses constraints of the sector. Partly on the basis of an appreciation of Ethiopian needs and partly on the basis of US experience, the USAID team came to the conclusion that the constraints operating at the primary level are the most severe in scope and complexity. USAID also added that the primary level represented the most strategic and advantageous place to start addressing system-wide problems.

The main concern of BESO is to improve the quality and equity of primary education. BESO has in turn two programme targets. The first target is to achieve improved decentralised management of the primary education system. BESO would assist both the central and regional governments to strengthen and improve the management of the primary education system. BESO experts thus hope that they would influence and help with the implementation of major organizational reforms associated with decentralisation.

The second target is to achieve improved key quality-related inputs and equity enhancing measures for primary education. Under this target programme, BESO aspires to improve the quality of primary education and enhance equitable access (from gender and rural/urban dimensions). With the BESO document in hand the USAID mission appear confident that they will be able to influence the evolution and implementation of policy, budgetary, administrative and institutional reforms.

On the ground, BESO will in the coming years concentrate on five areas. These are: i) management of decentralised primary education; ii) rational and effective sectoral financing; iii) pre-service teacher training; iv) quality and equity of primary school environment; and v) effective delivery of key quality-related services. There is no need to discuss what BESO intends to do in these areas and how it envisages implementing them. Suffice it to mention here that the document is a gold mine of innovative proposals and imaginative solutions.

BESO is conceptually and strategically conceived to work from both bottom up and top down—using a systems approach. BESO will work and affect all four levels of the system: national, regional, (including zonal and district), teacher training institutes and the school. Improvement (the key concept of the programme) will flow in both directions. The starting point for launching USAID assistance will be the region. Hence USAID have deemed it wise to concentrate on two regions, namely Tigray and the Southern Ethiopian Peoples Administrative Region (SEPAR). They argue that in view of the recent government policy of regionalization, efforts to strengthen the primary education
system must focus on the role of the regions. They further state that the centre (MOE) lacks the capacity to effectively manage the education system.

Moreover, for the BESO programme to achieve its goal, its reforms (those which will be introduced at the regional level) "must be shared, systematic, systematised and sustainable". While the implementers of BESO continue to evolve and devise reforms, they expect that from the Ethiopian side the commitment to reforms must be widely shared. Specifically, BESO is referring to the concerned ministries, regional and lower level administrations, education offices, teacher training institutions, schools and communities.

BESO resources, it is readily admitted, will not be adequate to assist all regions. At this juncture it is relevant to mention the financial inputs of the programme. For the first life-span of BESO, i.e. for the 1994–2001 period, USAID have set aside 30 million USD. As the successful implementation of BESO is dependent on the commitment of the Ethiopian government and its institutions, the USAID have set aside another 50 million USD as a premium which the government of Ethiopia can freely dispose of. This is indeed a very ingenious idea. The release of all or parts of this non-project fund is tied to certain conditions which the Ethiopian government have to fulfil. These conditions (described as covenants in the BESO document) deal with the budgetary allocations and administrative reforms that the government of Ethiopia will have to carry out in tandem with the expansion of primary education. By means of this non-project fund, USAID anticipate that they will influence policy at the central and regional levels.

Even if we make due allowance for the fact that a considerable amount of the 30 million USD would be eaten up by consultants and experts, the financial resources of BESO are probably adequate for the implementation of the programme in two regions. If BESO either fails to achieve its objective or if it is simply buried under the dead weight of constraints in the sector, the reasons would not be due to the meagerness of financial allocation. My experience from working with SIDA is that the major problem facing the Ethiopian education sector has not been the shortage of funds but the inability of the sector to use in time the already allocated funds.

The BESO document stresses that enrolment at the primary level would increase from the low 18 per cent net enrolment in 1992 although they are wise enough not to speculate on the rate of expansion. The belief in the expansion of primary enrolment partly explains the purpose of the programme, i.e. to improve the quality and equity of primary education in an expanded (and expanding) primary education system.

The successful implementation of BESO is dependent on three important assumptions. Firstly, the government of Ethiopia and regional governments will continue to exert the political will to achieve educational reforms and system rationalisation, and to provide adequate funding for an expanded system characterized by improved quality and equity. Secondly, BESO assumes that economic growth will be adequate to support the required expansion of social
sector funding. And finally, it is strongly assumed that as the democratisation and decentralisation processes unfold, these will lead to adequate political stability and security. These assumptions in themselves are by no means unrealistic. However, there is a critical question, which has not been addressed in any of the magnificent studies carried out by USAID, and which will certainly affect the will of the Ethiopian government to provide funding. This issue is the employment possibilities for school leavers.

Since the late 1960’s one of the bottlenecks of the education sector has been the problem of finding employment for secondary, let alone primary, school leavers. The problem was temporarily resolved in the 1970’s and early 1980’s through the massive expansion of the public sector and forced recruitment to the army. The problem of school leavers surfaced again in the late 1980’s. So although less than 25 per cent of the primary school age population attend some form of schooling, the challenge facing the government remains, and will in all probability continue to be, to find employment for school leavers. Indeed it can be argued that this problem is implicitly treated in the assumption that the continued growth of the economy would generate employment for school leavers. This implicit argument finds little sustenance because the school system, in the African context, expands much faster than the rate of economic growth. I raised this issue as an example of how the key assumptions for the successful implementation of BESO can be frustrated for reasons other than the lack of commitment on the part of the Ethiopian federal and regional institutions.

Before assessing the potential outcome of BESO for Ethiopia and its society, I find it important to stress the role, so far, of USAID on the education sector. Since 1992, USAID has been in the forefront with surveys and analysis of the sector which has greatly contributed to our knowledge. The USAID education sector review (1992–3), the demand for primary schooling in rural Ethiopia (May, 1994), improving the quality of teacher education (August, 1994), gender and social analysis (August, 1994) and several others do not only provide reliable current data but suggest pointers and areas for further study. The landscape of the Ethiopian education sector has become very clear indeed.

Weakness of BESO

In my opinion, the most serious weakness of BESO lies in its choice of support. Its weakness is, therefore, conceptual. Is primary education really the sector which has the most severe constraints? Could the successful fulfilment of the programme, i.e. the improvement of quality and equity of formal primary education in an expanded and expanding education system contribute to development? How would the Ethiopian government and economy absorb the hundreds of thousands of school leavers, the number of which could reach at least two million by the end of the first phase of USAID?
The major problem facing the Ethiopian economy and society since the late 1960's, was its inability to absorb school leavers which were coming out from the education sector. With only 25 per cent of the school-age children in the education system, the problem was, as has been repeatedly described and discussed, to devise means of how to control expansion. Within the Ethiopian economic context, the problem was not the lack of educated citizens but the presence of hundreds of thousands of them. It was a problem created by the drastic expansion of the education sector far beyond the absorption capacity of the modern sector of the economy.

Here it has to be pointed out that the decision to support the expansion of primary education was not solely taken by USAID. Since early 1993, the policy of the Ethiopian government has favoured the expansion of the formal education sector. It needs to be further stressed that the attitude of the Ethiopian government to adult and non-formal education is more negative than that of the earlier regime. Yet, USAID had the possibility and the prerogative to identify the areas and aspects of the education sector for support. BESO is the result. This does not mean that USAID has had no other alternatives. USAID has an illustrious record of engagement in non-formal education.75

BESO runs the risk of defeating itself. Quality and equity of primary education within the context of an expanding system would be very hard goals to achieve in an environment where students and parents fail to see clearly material returns from their investments in education. My greatest reservation is that USAID and BESO have, by putting undue emphasis on formal primary education, excluded other forms notably adult and non-formal education. USAID can indeed argue that they have no monopoly over the Ethiopian education sector and that it is up to Ethiopian authorities and other donors to identify areas for support. However, such an argument is only partially true. Through BESO, USAID have mobilised all their intellectual and material resources and are determined to influence policy and to manage reforms of the primary formal education sector.

By way of conclusion I wish to stress that if USAID wish to be real partners in the development of Ethiopia and its inhabitants, then I strongly propose the following. Firstly, USAID seriously consider concentrating on curriculum development during the first phase of BESO and then phase it out. Secondly, for the post 2001 period, USAID explore the possibilities of the best means of reaching the rural population of the country on the basis of extensive studies and surveys on the needs and world views of the beneficiaries. Adult, community and non-formal education might well be worthwhile candidates for USAID support. According to Coombs and Ahmed, the field of non-formal education was in the 1970's one of the few top priorities of USAID support.76

75. For an account of USAID involvement in non-formal education see King, 1990, pp. 163, 170.
SIDA and Ethiopian education

If the commanding heights of Ethiopian education (between 1955 and 1974) were dominated by the heavy presence of USAID, the day to day activities of the sector were carried out in partnership with SIDA. Ethiopia has had a special position among Swedes since the 1930’s. The benevolent attitudes of the late Emperor Haile Selassie towards Sweden before the second world war and the nation-wide Swedish sympathy and support for Ethiopia during the Italian invasion of the country were some of the reasons for early Swedish involvement in Ethiopian development projects. Swedish involvement was further strengthened by the pro-Swedish policy of the late Emperor Haile Selassie.\textsuperscript{77}

Since Ethiopia, unlike many African countries, had neither a colonially inherited educational tradition nor established school infrastructure, the Swedes had a wide latitude of priorities for their inputs. When the Swedish development aid workers first arrived in Ethiopia in 1953, the entire student population in Ethiopia was about 85,000. With the establishment of SIDA in 1965, Ethiopia became one of the first recipient countries.\textsuperscript{78} The most important contribution of SIDA’s assistance to Ethiopia was in the construction of schools. Between 1965 and 1982, 4,780 primary schools were built with the assistance of SIDA. The total number of government primary schools in 1982 was 5,409.\textsuperscript{79} More than 85 per cent of all schools built in the country were partially financed by SIDA. In financial terms SIDA’s contribution amounted to 265 million Swedish kronor.\textsuperscript{80} Between 1965 and 1991, SIDA was in one way or another an active partner in the construction of schools throughout the country. In 1993, there were about 8,196 government primary schools in the country.\textsuperscript{81} Out of these some eight thousand schools, about 6,000 of them were built with the financial, technical and infrastructural assistance of SIDA.\textsuperscript{82}

While SIDA’s engagement in school construction will remain the most important legacy of the history of Ethio-Swedish relations, it has to be noted that SIDA did not fully finance the cost of school construction. In fact SIDA’s changing involvement in the primary school programme gives a good indica-

\textsuperscript{77} For the policy of the Ethiopian government and for the role the Swedes played in Haile Selassie’s Ethiopia see the excellent study by Halldin-Norberg,1977.

\textsuperscript{78} Up to 1994 Swedish assistance to developing countries was mostly concentrated in Africa covering twenty countries. Outside of Africa, SIDA had development programmes in India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Cuba, and Nicaragua. Since the summer of 1995, the new Sida (incorporating SAREC, BIT5, and SWEDECORP) has assumed a new function, namely to assist Eastern Europe.

\textsuperscript{79} Gumbel et al., 1983, p. 113.

\textsuperscript{80} Gumbel, op. cit.

\textsuperscript{81} In addition to the 8,196 government schools there were 478 private schools. No information is given as whether these are schools run by religious institutions. It is interesting to note the distribution of schools. The Amhara region had 2,429 while the Orommiya region had 3,380 both government and private primary schools. See MOE, 1995.

\textsuperscript{82} For the pre-1982 period see Gumbel, op. cit., p. 79; Lundgren et al., 1992.
tion of the diminishing role of education in development. In the 1960’s, the heyday of great optimism on the role of education, SIDA’s contribution to school construction was fifty per cent, sufficient enough for the construction of schools in stone or hollow concrete. Those cement schools built in the 1960’s and 1970’s are still in good condition. In 1974 there were 2,800 primary schools in the country.

As primary school education expanded into the interior of the country, SIDA’s financial support for school construction was successively reduced. There were several reasons. Firstly, rural communities were unable to raise enough matching resources for the construction of schools in hollow concrete. Secondly, the de facto devaluation of the Ethiopian currency increased the cost of imported construction materials. The devaluation of the Swedish currency was also a contributory factor. Thirdly, Sweden was reluctant to increase its aid to the military regime. At any rate by 1986 there were 8,300 primary schools, the majority of them built with local materials (mud and wood). Towards the end of the 1980’s the African Development Bank and the World Bank were also involved in school construction.

From 1985 onwards SIDA accepted the strategy of the Ethiopian Government to abandon the construction of schools in stone or hollow concrete. The reasons appeared convincing at the time. Using local materials (mud and wood) was much cheaper and would thus enable the government to build more primary village schools (PVS) with the same amount of SIDA’s financial support. Known as Chika schools these (PVS) were indeed of low cost but had a much shorter life than expected and required periodical substantial maintenance work. However, since repair and maintenance costs were high, the total cost per year of lifetime turned out to be much higher than those schools built in brick, hollow concrete or stone. These schools were unpopular and were of a much lower quality than those financed by other agencies such as the World Bank (loaned funds), the European Union, the African Development Bank and OPEC. The reasons for such differences were that while SIDA schools were built by the village school committee, the schools built by the World Bank and other donors were built without any local community participation. In places where SIDA financed schools were to be built, the communities concerned had to provide the labour as well as the materials. It was, therefore, not surprising that the SIDA schools were unpopular.

By the early 1990’s, signals were reaching SIDA and the Ministry of Education that communities preferred fewer but well constructed schools to more

83. Relations between Sweden and Ethiopia reached a low ebb 1989. Earlier Sweden had opposed the resettlement programme of 1986 and more vocally the villagization programme which followed afterwards. There was also a great dispute on the agricultural policy of the government. Swedish development aid to Ethiopia was cut down and the funds were transferred to emergency aid.
84. Lundgren et al., 1992, pp. 35–6.
85. Lundgren, op. cit.
schools built in *chika* (mud and wood). Moreover, the increase in prices of imported materials (corrugated iron and nails) had further led to the reduction of SIDA’s contribution. From 1990 onwards, the Ministry of Education had great difficulty in constructing the agreed number of *chika* schools. The demise of the Menghistu regime in 1991 and the policy of decentralisation and regionalization did very little in clearing the backlog problem. SIDA, quite rightly, continued to demand a full account either in terms of the construction materials bought by SIDA funds or in terms of the actual construction of the agreed number of schools. By 1994, most of the *chika* schools which ought to have been built in 1990 had not been built. There is very little reason to believe that they will be built.

For the first time in nearly thirty years, we read in the agreed minutes of the joint sector education review of 1994 about the temporary withdrawal of SIDA funding for school construction.\(^{86}\) No doubt there are many reasons which contributed to such a radical measure. The unpopularity of the *chika* school was an important factor. The inability (coupled with extreme incapacity) of the department entrusted with school construction to give an adequate account of the resources allocated for 1990 and 1991 was also another reason. There was also the creeping knowledge, which was already cautiously noted as early as 1982, that there was less demand for schools in the rural areas.\(^{87}\) As early as 1982, there was already a decline in enrolment. Finally, since the policy of decentralisation and regionalization pursued by the TGE had put the entire responsibility of primary education and school construction on the regions, the meaningful partners in effect became the regions rather the central Ministry of Education.

It appears that SIDA had seriously miscalculated when it went along with the Ethiopian government concerning the construction of *chika* schools. It also appears that SIDA was interested more in quantitative results. There were not sufficient justifications in the mid 1980’s for the construction of more and cheaper schools. The study carried out by SIDA personnel had in fact advised the construction of fewer schools.\(^{88}\) Yet, the fact remains that out of the existing 8,196 schools (1994) at least 6,000 of them were built with the financial assistance of SIDA. No other donor has a comparable record.\(^{89}\)

Throughout the years, and especially during the Menghistu regime when SIDA was the largest bilateral donor to the sector, the number of programmes kept growing, although school construction remained one of the most important. Next in importance, which has distinguished Ethiopia from many other African countries, was textbook production. An elaborate and all-encompassing structure known as EMPDA (Educational Materials Production and Distribu-

---

86. MOE and SIDA, 1994.
88. Gumbel, *ibid*.
89. Lundgren, *op. cit*. For a quick introduction on the nature and volume of Swedish aid, see Abraham, 1992.
tion Agency) was established with the heavy involvement of Swedish funds and personnel. EMPDA was responsible for the production and delivery of textbooks, science kits, and furniture. The cost of machinery was funded by SIDA as well as printing paper. Between 1980 and 1990, SIDA supplied EMPDA with more than 60 million Swedish kronor mainly for printing facilities, training and paper. During 1993–94, EMPDA had the technical capacity to print up to five million textbooks in over ten languages.

Throughout the 1974–91 period, EMPDA was on the whole fairly well managed. While the printing department was the principal focus, SIDA was also involved in the production of furniture. The department for the production of science kits, on the other hand hardly reached the level expected of it. The distribution of science kits was extremely poor; level of production was limited to only one science kit per class with illegible users manual ad no spare parts. As EMPDA was virtually the only printing and publishing house in the country, there was no way of costing the textbooks.

The liberalisation of the economy and the regionalization of the education sector have brought the destiny of EMPDA into focus. Is it compatible with the policy of the government that EMPDA continues to be the sole agency in the field? Is there a technical capacity in the country for the establishment of regional EMPDA’s? Are there other private publishing houses which can compete with EMPDA in the production and distribution of textbooks? EMPDA is dependent on the supply of paper, chemicals and equipment from abroad. The Ethiopian government appears determined to assist and encourage the stronger regions to establish EMPDA-like structures. While the policy has a great deal to commend it, there could be a serious risk that EMPDA might be regionalized before ambitious regions have developed the necessary infrastructures. More important, financial arrangements for the continuous supply of equipment and paper from abroad need to be clearly worked out.

Another area where SIDA invested considerable resources was in the field of non-formal education. By 1985 the Ethiopian government had achieved considerable success in its literacy campaign. According to government sources, illiteracy had been reduced from an estimated 93 per cent to 37 per cent. The success of the literacy campaign was logically followed with an assessment of post-literacy needs. The engagement of SIDA in the non-formal education sector can indeed be dated to the mid 1980’s. A modest sum was set aside in 1986 for a post-literacy and basic skills development programme. Between 1987 and 1992, about 15 per cent of SIDA’s total assistance to the education sector was directed to non-formal education in general but particularly to the CSTCs (Community Skills Training Centres). By 1991, there were about 400 CSTCs in

---

90. Moreover, it was reported to the Ethio-Swedish delegation that teachers were liable to pay for damaged or broken science kit material. The unfortunate result was that science kits once delivered to the schools were securely put behind locked doors.
the country. Most of their farm implements and other materials were purchased through SIDA funds.

The organizational structure and the programme of the CSTCs was on the whole well constructed. The department of Adult Education was responsible for the training of teachers as well as for the distribution of the required implements. The problems which contributed to a very negative reaction among the beneficiaries of CSTCs were mainly political. Firstly, the Mengistu government applied forced recruitment and burdened the communities to provide food for the trainees. Later on towards the end of the 1980's many of the CSTCs were converted into military training camps. When the Mengistu government was overthrown, nearly half of the CSTCs were vandalised and destroyed.

Nearly 70 per cent of the ca. 40 million Swedish kronor annually allocated to the education sector was earmarked for school construction, textbook production and adult education. Although these remained by far the most important areas for Swedish assistance, a new programme, which was given increasing support was added in 1986. This was the Environmental Education Programme. Initially a pilot project, the Environmental Education Programme (EEP) was fully integrated within the SIDA assistance programme to the education sector. By 1993, the EEP programme was being financed to the tune of 3 million Swedish kronor.92

Other areas which were supported by SIDA were distance education for unqualified teachers (still at the stage of course writing), curriculum development, educational management and information systems, teacher upgrading (through summer in-service training) and an annual subsidy to the Alemaya Agricultural University.

Since 1991 a series of internal and external factors appear to have exerted considerable pressure on SIDA to carry out a comprehensive review of its assistance to the education sector. Within Sweden, the conservative coalition government (1991–94) and the emergence of a new political party (New Democratic Party, 1990–94) with a strong anti-development aid stance virtually forced SIDA to scrutinise more fully the hundreds of projects it either supports or finances. There was (1991–94) a great deal of talk of management by result and the scrapping of projects which do not clearly show results. The real danger of funds traditionally set aside for the less developed countries being re-allocated to the eastern block was also in the background. To the list of these arbitrarily selected internal factors, we need to add the growing realization of the decline of quality of the Ethiopian education system.

Within Ethiopia the combined policies of regionalization and decentralization appear to lead to a major shift of focus away from the MOE and more towards the regional bureaux of education. As regions assume more power in the running of their affairs, SIDA's assistance to education will have to be directed to meet specific regional needs and priorities. It is believed that SIDA

92. MOE and SIDA, 1993.
will soon carry out a comprehensive review of its education assistance with the view of identifying areas for support. The changes which have taken place both in Sweden (the creation of a new Development Agency incorporating SAREC, SWEDECORP, and BITS) and in Ethiopia do indeed warrant such a review. However, abandoning old projects and initiating new ones involves moral, psychological and infrastructural implications. Moreover, the Ethiopian government, appreciative of SIDA's assistance argue for the continuation of all the SIDA programmes to the sector. In view of the magnitude of the constraints facing the education sector, setting new priorities would not be an easy task. Yet in order to maximise the impact of inputs, priorities have to be made.

What should SIDA's assistance to the education sector look like? Which programmes are going to be phased out, and which new ones should be added? Should SIDA's assistance be heavily directed towards the regions? In line with the central theme of this study, it is appropriate to argue that non-formal education and environmental education ought to be high priority areas of SIDA's support to the education sector.

We have devoted considerable attention to USAID and SIDA because these two donors had played important roles in the shaping of the Ethiopian education system. However, they were not the only actors in the field. As regards the development of the curriculum, the now defunct German Democratic Republic had virtual dominance. By 1990 there might have been up to 38 experts in the country dealing mainly with curriculum development ranging from kindergarten to the university. I have elsewhere commented on some of the impact of their inputs.93 In addition to the Germans, the Russians were also strong in curriculum development in the vocational and technical schools. Throughout the 1980's and up to the present there are 14 technical and vocational secondary schools in the country with a total enrolment of about 4,000 students.94 For the bulk of the funds for capital investments and the expansion of the education system, the Ethiopian government resorted to the World Bank. Up to 1994, the Ethiopian government had contracted seven loans amounting to over USD 200 million. Most of the junior and secondary schools were built by loaned funds from the International Development Association section of the World Bank.

93. See Tekeste Negash, op. cit.
94. MOE and SIDA, 1993.
Chapter 4
The Profile of the Education Sector as seen by USAID and UNDP

While the Transitional Government of Ethiopia was busy laying down the structures in accordance to the Transitional Charter, USAID and the UNDP were engaged in wide ranging sector studies. The World Bank was also heavily drawn into the picture since it became known that the TGE had plans to dismantle the socialist and command economic system of the Mengistu regime. In this section I shall not deal with the introduction of the structural adjustment policy designed by the World Bank and adopted by the Ethiopian government, other than noting that Ethiopia, has been an “adjustee” for the last two years. Instead I shall pay particular attention to the series of studies carried out by USAID. Not only do the USAID studies provide up to date surveys on the various aspects of the education sector, these studies also provide pointers and guidelines for future USAID intervention in the sector.

The USAID education sector review

The USAID education sector review was carried out towards the end of 1992. By then the TGE had reorganised the country along ethnic boundaries (November, 1991) and it had allowed the formation of political parties along ethnic lines. The intentions of the government to produce a new education policy were widely known. The replacement of Amharic as the only language of instruction by nationality languages of the regions was also known.

The USAID Education Sector Review is divided into six main chapters. The first three chapters deal with the background material on the status of Ethiopian education and the new government’s policies. The relevance of these chapters is limited since the document was finalised before the publication of the Ethiopian Education and Training Policy.

The relevant chapters are from four to seven. Out of these, by far the most important is chapter four where the problems and constraints are treated from a very open and unprejudiced perspective. This is followed by a short chapter on donor activity in the education sector. Chapter six and seven deal with options for USAID and the strategic objectives which USAID will in all probability be engaged in in the foreseeable future.

PROBLEMS AND CONSTRAINTS OF THE ETHIOPIAN EDUCATION SECTOR

Under this heading, the review dealt with four issues namely—financial and resource constraints, regionalization, use of nationality languages, and educational demand and equity.

Financial and resource constraints

The USAID sector review does not add any new information. The USAID sector review’s assessment was that more than 98 per cent of the recurrent budget for the primary and secondary education sector was eaten up by salaries. Vocational schools had 24 per cent of their budget earmarked for non-salary expenses while salaries took only 59 per cent of the institutions of higher learning. Moreover the sector review noted that about 85 per cent of the investment budget originated from loans and assistance.

Regionalization

The policy of regionalization has added one additional layer to the previous structure. The new administrative structure has now five layers; i.e. School, Wereda, Zone, Region, MOE. The old one had only four. There was no wereda education office. The implementation of regionalization is being complicated by a series of factors:

- National policy is poorly understood by middle level civil servants and not fully endorsed.
- There is a great variability in the availability of staff and infrastructure among regions.
- Staffing is incomplete and lacks guidance.
- There is little understanding of the problems of education financing and it receives little priority.
- Mechanisms to be employed to enforce national policy are unclear.

One of the serious impacts of regionalization is the cost aspect of it. Staffing of the Wereda offices would require more than ten per cent of the present teaching force in the country. This means that up to 7,000 people have either to be recruited or taken away from the teaching force and assigned to their new Wereda education offices. In view of the budgetary constraints, the sector review expresses the fear that the Wereda Education Offices would have even fewer resources to support schools than did the old Awraja Offices.

Summarising the part on regionalization, the review noted that a series of assessment studies need to be conducted to detail the management needs of the new decentralised structure and estimate the resources needed to allow the
decentralised administrative system to adequately support schools. A newly established organ called the Management and Educational Staff Development Department hopes to conduct the above assessments. The USAID report team are of the opinion that such an assessment deserves USAID support.

Use of nationality languages

On the whole the opinion of the team on the use of nationality language is critical on the grounds of principle and efficiency. According to the assessment of the team, language issues have been identified as a constraint affecting primary education because the implementation of a major shift in educational language policy requires extensive revision of educational materials as well as the retraining of a large portion of the teaching force.

After noting the operational consequences of the introduction of many nationality languages for primary education in terms of textbook production and teacher training orientation, the USAID review took up other issues of broader significance.

The first issue is the level at which language choice will be made. This is of particular relevance to minority groups. Is the use of the nationality language decided by the Wereda, or the zone or the region or the central government? This issue has been confronted in the urban areas with the result that in towns like Jimma, Ambo, Nazreth, Bale, schools are divided into Amharic and Oromo language streams.

The second issue is the problem of retaining literacy in the newly-written languages. So far, there are only school textbooks hastily translated from the Amharic primers. Given the lack of resources and the shortage of expertise, there will continue to be extreme shortage of literature in the newly-written languages. Therefore, the risk of relapsing to illiteracy remains quite serious.

A third issue which the report mentioned was that the policy on the use of nationality languages was bound to affect inter-regional communication, especially between regions and the central ministry. The TGE are no doubt aware of this problem and are convinced that they have a solution to it. This solution is the teaching of Amharic as a foreign language from grade 1. However, such a solution would be carried out at the expense of the school child who would have to be exposed right from first grade to three languages and two scripts. These are English, Amharic and the nationality language. The views of the USAID team on the use of nationality language are very critical indeed.

---

96. It is not at all clear whether Amharic is taught from grade one or from grade four. In Awassa, the capital of the Ethiopian Southern Peoples Region, Amharic, Sidama and English are taught right from the first grade.
Educational demand and equity in primary education

The most remarkable feature of the sector review is on demand for education. After pointing out that national gross enrolment for primary education has declined from a high of 35 per cent in 1988 to an estimated 22 per cent in 1992, the report noted the following: *There is evidence that many children in Ethiopia may not be kept out of school because of lack of school places, but because their parents may have made the conscious decision not to enrol them.* Here it is worthwhile to add that as early as 1982 SIDA noted the decline of enrolment and the under-utilisation of classrooms in rural Ethiopia.

The team was able to gather many types of information related to demand for education. Even under the Marxist regime, the USAID team argued, there was a lack of demand for education which the government masked through the introduction of forced participation. [Parents in the rural areas were forced to send their children to school.] Now that parents are not forced to send their children to school, enrolment has reached its natural level. The supply side appears to meet the demand side.

Further explaining the low demand for education, the USAID team attempted to detail the important factors. These were:

*No further educational opportunities.* Parents witness that their children have limited possibilities of attaining the level of schooling necessary to obtain a non-farm job.

*Education does not lead to non-farm employment.* The high rate of unemployment among the secondary school graduates functions as a deterrent making parents think twice before they decide to send their children to school.

*Irrelevance of schooling to rural life.* Parents do not relate schooling to improved agricultural production. A great part of the blame rests with the MOE and its curriculum.

*High direct cost of schooling.* The negligible fees for registration, book rent, clothing, exercise books and pens take up between five and thirteen per cent of the annual household cash income.

*High opportunity costs.* Children are important for the economic survival of the household.

*Poor quality of schooling and infrastructure.* Some parents cite the instability of the curriculum and the number of educational reforms.

*Confusing language policy.* Some parents are angered because they had paid so much for their children to learn Amharic. Others react because their own language has not been chosen as a medium of instruction.

*Resentment of schools.* Under the previous government, parents were forced to enrol their children and to support schools with labour and monetary contributions with little voice in decision-making. This, coupled with the perceived non-usefulness of education, produced a deep resentment and distrust on the part of some parents and communities towards education.
It has to be noted that the above factors are observations rather than the result of a specific study designed to deal with the nature of demand for education. Although the USAID team has indeed opened up new ground concerning the basic assumptions of education, this new ground needs to be studied further.

In its conclusion on the problem of demand for education, one can say that the USAID team has laid down a research and policy programme on the subject. They write:

It appears that schools in rural areas, representing much of Ethiopia, are neither valued nor supported by many of those they are supposed to serve. Easing supply constraints by expanding basic education and reforming the curricula is unlikely to have much effect on those who send their children to school whose goal is not basic literacy and numeracy, but advancing through the system to a government or wage job. For those who do not enrol their children, it is unlikely that a new emphasis on basic literacy and numeracy will convince them of its utility in a traditional agrarian economy in which literacy is little valued and ostensibly appears to contribute little or nothing to agricultural production. The task of making the curricula more relevant must take into account parental aspirations for their children, as well as be realistic about the appropriateness of schools as the means to transmit agricultural knowledge currently taught at home. Finally, the assumption that the costs of educational expansion will be borne in significant amount by parents and communities appears unrealistic in light of the negative attitudes towards schools and the demonstrated lack of community support.

The greatest challenge facing Ethiopia is that of developing a relevant curriculum which at once is appreciated by the rural population and does not create a dual system of education which renders rural education inferior. It ought to be a curriculum which can actually offer a practical skills programme which will have significant value in the market place and surpass the knowledge of agriculture transmitted in the home.

With pleasant surprise, the USAID team noted that the participation rate of girls as a proportion of total enrolment averaged about 42 per cent in primary school, 46 per cent in junior secondary and 45 per cent in senior secondary schools.

It is at the tertiary level that female participation is a major concern. Not more than 20 per cent of the teachers are women. In the universities, female enrolment is in the range of 10 per cent.

In addition to the gender divide there is also the rural-urban divide as well as wide regional variations. The most notable feature of this urban-rural divide is that the primary school curriculum is aimed at the modern urban sector. This has contributed to a wide feeling among rural communities that education is disruptive of traditional culture. Moreover, rural schools are given fresh teachers who are then transferred to the urban areas after they have gained some experience.
EDUCATION SPECIFIC CONSTRAINTS

This section adds very little to the existing knowledge about the constraints. I shall briefly mention the main points stressed under each specific constraint.

The teaching profession

While the quantitative capacity of the Teacher Training Institutes (TTI’s) to produce teachers is adequate for the current level of enrolment, the quality of those teachers is a major concern. The principal constraints are: lack of motivation at the time of recruitment, theoretical approach to pedagogy, unqualified TTI teachers, deteriorated physical plant and poor living conditions.

Mentioning that the MOE offers in-service training only to unqualified teachers, the Sector Review pointed out that the focus of in-service training is to help unqualified teachers acquire certification. No specific training adapted to the special needs of these teachers is provided, nor is there any follow-up support during the periods between summer sessions.

On-the-job support for teachers is generally lacking. The Pedagogical Centres seem to be declining because of the drying up of foreign aid funds.

The current policy of the MOE is to establish pedagogical centres at every Wereda (there are currently 583) without any analysis of the cost of opening and running these centres.

Teaching support systems

Dealing with curriculum development, materials production and use of educational mass media, the USAID team noted that in comparison with many other African countries, Ethiopia’s central level capacity in these three areas as exceptional.

Curriculum development

Surprisingly enough the USAID team see few problems with the Institute of Curriculum Development and Research (ICDR). The review notes that regionalization and decentralisation would create curricular instability. It also warned that the talk of “more relevant” curriculum risks reproducing the mistake made elsewhere in introducing practical subjects too early in the formal primary cycle. Books are being translated into new languages without consideration of differences in complexity of vocabulary and without appropriate analysis from the perspective of grade appropriate readability. Finally, curricular focus needs to shift from “what to teach” to “how to teach” specific topics.
Material production

"One of the most impressive features of the education sector", wrote the team, "is the MOE's capacity to develop, publish, produce and distribute textbooks, and educational materials." This is about the Educational Materials Production and Distribution Agency (EMPDA).

Nonetheless, the USAID team noted some important constraints to sustainable production and optimal use of materials. These are that production of materials is subsidized through external financing and that production is neither based on need nor on any targeted level of student to book ratio. EMPDA, according to the Sector Review does not know even how many of its books reach the classrooms.

Statistics and planning

EMIS (Educational Media and Information Systems) has the capacity for the collection, aggregation, and computerization of education system statistics. Full computerization of the education systems information network is proceeding under World Bank and SIDA support. The main shortcoming of EMIS is that it performs little or no analysis beyond collection of standard indicators. Planning has been highly centralised and must now be devolved to the regions where little capacity or experience exists.

Infrastructure: repair and maintenance

The extremely poor maintenance of facilities is a result of inadequate financing of recurrent maintenance, community disinterest in participation and lack of initiative and interest in even the most simple upkeep at the school level.

Staff development and training

The Centre for Educational Staff Development (CESD) shall be the platform for the new department known as Management and Educational Staff Development Department. Its main function will be to train staff for the regional needs.

Adult education

The Adult Education Division, which had been the flourishing centrepiece of the Dergue's educational programme, is now in a state of decline. Its staff of 150 has been reduced to 42. Its library is closed for lack of a librarian. Since 1994 the staff at the centre has been reduced to four. The status of the Department of
Adult Education has also been changed from that of a department to that of a panel. It is now known as the Non-Formal Education Panel.

Private schools

According to the US report, 12 per cent of primary schools were private. Enrolment in private schools amounted to 15 per cent of total enrolment.

DONOR ACTIVITY IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR

Commenting on the chart of all the major donor activities, the US review noted that some projects such as EEP (Environmental Education Programme) are experiencing successes. However, the US review report continued, given the limitations of these projects and the size of Ethiopia, there is cause to question the tangible impact they are having on the sector. One might also add here that the EEP is an extreme case of donor inspired and driven project. The support from the MOE has been lukewarm.

The USAID team are of the opinion that donors should rush to provide assistance to education. The MOE should be called on to play an important role in co-ordinating a multitude of programmes and projects.

OPTIONS FOR USAID IN ETHIOPIA

When it comes to the commitment of USAID to the education sector in Ethiopia, one notices that what is suggested is very traditional. USAID is committed to formal education and only at the primary level. This decision is based on two assumptions:

1. A firm belief on the social rates of return to primary education. This belief is, however, based on the fulfilment of one important condition. The rate of social return is based on the level of the quality of primary education.

2. The USAID team write that Ethiopia is at a crucial juncture in its educational development. The past twenty years have shaken popular support for schooling. The TGE has initiated a sweeping educational reform which will focus on primary schooling and equity and quality issues. This new environment offers USAID an opportunity to contribute to and influence systemic and qualitative changes in the sector.

The process will take decades. But to best serve the country’s long term needs and the USAID short to medium term strategic interests, the place for USAID to assist initially is at the foundation, i.e. primary education. The Ethiopian primary education sub-sector is according to the US review team, seriously under-
financed, quality is poor, teachers are under-qualified and unsupported, educational inputs are unevenly available and inadequately used, and equitable access to schools is denied many rural children and girls. Efforts to overcome these problems are further complicated by the introduction of nationality languages into the schools and the expansion of the curriculum.

As a final important note, the US review team noted that it will be essential to co-ordinate USAID efforts with those of the other donors, especially the World Bank, African Development Bank, and SIDA.

Two further reasons are mentioned for a more committed USAID engagement. The first reason is the abundant good will for American assistance much of it based on the positive experiences with Point IV, A.I.D. and the Peace Corps programme. The second reason is the belief that the US has the most effective model to assist Ethiopia in the implementation of the plans of decentralisation. So the US has the opportunity to help meet the challenges of re-directing and rebuilding Ethiopia's primary school system. On the basis of the above and other studies, USAID launched in July 1994 an education assistance programme known as BESO (Basic Education System Overhaul). The programme is described and commented in Chapter 4.

THE EDUCATION PROFILE: THE UNDP EDUCATION SECTOR SURVEY

While USAID were refining their strategic inputs, the UNDP together with the Ethiopian government carried out in early 1993 a similar survey with emphasis on goals rather than constraints.97

The document was prepared by a technical team drawn from the various departments of the MOE. The team was assisted by two national and three international consultants provided by UNESCO. The document was written at the time when the education policy was in the making. The document was compiled, drafted and distributed by the UNDP office in Addis Ababa. Notwithstanding UNDP's disclaimer, it is more correct to identify and describe it as a UNDP study.

Besides being a sector survey the UNDP document has also the ambition of being an implementation document. Therefore, under each sub-sector, the document has calculated the amount of donor funds required for the years 1994–2000. Moreover, in addition to setting achievement targets, UNDP appears to have been entrusted by the Ethiopian government with co-ordinating donor assistance both as regards the channelling of funds to sub-sectors and overall planning.

The UNDP document was discussed at an informal meeting of some of the major donors where the problems of such a generalised programme were raised. The education sector is far more complex, and donor inputs cannot be co-ordinated in the manner desired by the UNDP since donor agencies are

97. UNDP and TGE, 1993.
accountable to show results to their home governments for the funds they have disbursed. In summarising the UNDP document, I have omitted the budgetary needs and stressed those areas which provide new insights for our knowledge on the education sector.

FORMAL EDUCATION

Pre-primary education

After noting that there are only 632 pre-primary schools in the country, the document stressed that measures be taken to expand the sector in semi-urban and semi-rural areas. It also emphasised that more attention be given to the training of pre-school teachers and to the production of pre-school educational materials.

Primary education

The policy of the TGE is committed to the provision of educational opportunities to all children of the 7–12 year age group. By the year 2000 the objective of the government is to attain 70 per cent enrolment of all children in the 7–12 year age group. However, a 70 per cent participation rate will not be achieved with a conventional approach. Community-driven strategies will be required. One such strategy is the establishment of Community Education Centres. This figure has since then been revised by the MOE. The current goal is to achieve 50 per cent participation by the year 2025.

Secondary education

In 1988, about 20 per cent of the 13–15 year age-group were enrolled in junior secondary schools. Enrolment in senior secondary schools was in the range of 12 per cent of the 16–18 year age-group. This figure is more than twice those enrolled in Tanzania.

The bottlenecks with secondary education are the inadequacy of the curriculum and the extreme shortage of equipment. The most important action needed is to vocationalize secondary education. Through new and relevant fields of training the secondary school curricula should prepare students for employment. Here it is worthwhile to remind the reader that the secondary school programme has been vocationalized since the late 1960's. From the perspective of employment, vocationalization has been a complete failure. Moreover, it has been shown that the school is ill-adapted for the purpose.

No figure is given as to the participation rate. In the table accompanying the April document, however, it was stated that the goal is to achieve an enrolment figure of 50 per cent of the school age group by the year 2000.

Special education
Out of the estimated 1.6 million disabled school age children, only 1,700 students have access to school. There are 14 schools for the disabled in the country. The document points out the need to develop special vocational programmes for handicapped children. Moreover, instructional material and methods that are in current use to teach the handicapped should be designed more carefully.

Technical and Vocational Education and Training
Currently, there are 14 (TVET) schools in the country. Students are admitted after completion of grade 10 and are trained for a further three years (10+3). Although the physical capacity is for a total of 6,000 students, real enrolment has never been more than 3,700. The policy of the government is to establish a National Council for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (NCTVET). The Council is in the process of being legally constituted.

In order to meet the development challenges, the TVET system needs serious reorientation, and restructuring. The TVET system needs a viable institutional framework; a system of standardisation, a research base, and institutional capability to maintain and repair instructional equipment.

Tertiary level education
In 1991–92 there were 9,232 students in the BA programmes out of which 898 were women. In the Diploma programmes for the same year, there were 5,262 students 781 of whom were women. The document notes that while satisfactory progress has been made in tertiary level education, the sub-sector is now facing new challenges. Some of the actions needed include: improvement of the quality and relevance of higher education; assessing the internal and external efficiency of higher education; setting guidelines for equitable distribution of higher education institutions between regions and sexes.

Teacher education
There are 12 TTI's with an annual output capacity of more than six thousand primary school teachers. Recently, a new TTI (Special Education Teacher Training Programme) was established in Nazareth. The teacher training pro-
gramme has many problems, the most important of which are: i) organizational and staff shortages; ii) low participation of female teachers; iii) poor quality of the programme; iv) serious shortage of materials and equipment; v) limited and sporadic in-service training; vi) teachers and lecturers at the TTI's and colleges are not trained to teach; vii) low motivation of teachers.

Among the actions needed, the document lists the following:

- A comprehensive review of the curriculum for the pre-school teacher training programme.
- Adequate national guidelines regarding recruitment of trainees, certification and teacher placement in view of the fact that regional governments and private institutions should assume more responsibility in the establishment and management of pre-schools.
- Expansion of the pre-school training facilities.
- Training of more primary school teachers and the upgrading of unqualified teachers.
- The reorganization of in-service training programmes so as to make them more regular.
- The search for appropriate mechanisms to enhance teacher motivation.

NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

There are seven non-formal education programmes organised under the MOE which can be grouped under three categories. These categories are: i) adult literacy; ii) community development education; and iii) continuing education.

Adult literacy

Through the countrywide effort of the National Literacy Campaign, over 20 million adults received certificates for acquiring basic skills in reading and writing. By the end of February 1990, the literacy rate was 77.2 per cent. By the end of 1993, the literacy rate was estimated to be 55 per cent.

The positive experience gained through the past years can now be utilised for the development of new policies and strategies. The decentralisation policy of the government and the process of democratisation are expected to facilitate the involvement of the communities. It is the policy of government that communities be involved in the planning and management of non-formal education activities, including needs assessment, target setting, and monitoring. Communities shall be the owners of the facilities and programmes.
Community Development Education

The philosophy behind the evolution of the Community Development Education is the interrelationship between education and development. This inter-relationship is expressed thus: "... education leads to development while development supports education". This view of the role of education in development though directly taken from the World Conference on Education for All (WCEFA), 1990 document, had been the inspiring idea since the early 1960's. On the basis of these principles, various non-formal education programmes are carried out under the MOE, the most important being Basic Development Education (BDE), Community Skills Training Programme, Environmental Education and Population Education.

Basic Development Education

BDE was started in 1975 to provide community based programmes with special attention to girls and women. BDE had also the ambition to introduce low-cost and simple technologies suitable for the rural conditions. Since 1975 over 300 BDE centres have been established. The BDE has a national centre at Burayu (near Addis Ababa) for developing and introducing basic technology.

Although important for development and for the spread of environmental education, the UNDP document clearly states that BDE has not functioned. It suffered from the lack of proper evaluation and research. In order to revive BDE, a proper evaluative study needs to be carried out. Moreover, development workers need to be trained at BDE centres. Here I wish to add that BDE remained at the level of a pilot project. Moreover, it appears that there is a confusion between BDE and the Community Skills Training Centres (CSTC). There is no information on the BDE centres in the education statistics for 1993/4:

Community Skills Training Centres

Starting from 1975/76 about 400 CSTCs were established for the purpose of integrated rural development with a special emphasis on training change agents. By the end of 1990, the CSTCs had trained 189,313 adults of whom 33,126 were women. The major problems were lack of follow-up of the trainees on their effectiveness as multipliers and lack of tools for the ex-trainees to start their work once they got back to their localities. Among the actions recommended are that CSTCs should be provided with well trained adult educators and that follow-up studies should be regularly conducted in order to assess their effectiveness.
Community based education pilot projects

POPULATION EDUCATION PILOT PROJECT
This project has been disseminating information on family life education and population mainly to the post-literacy followers. No more information is provided as to the current status of the project. To my knowledge, the Population Education Project remained at a pilot level.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROJECT
Initiated to enhance community sensitivity and participation regarding environmental protection, regeneration and participation, EEP has been carried out in selected educational institutions. Now a national programme, the EEP is heavily financed by SIDA. Over 2,500 education staff have participated and 68,544 students have been reached through the project.

WOMEN IN ADULT EDUCATION PILOT PROJECT
This project was designed to identify and test methods which would increase the participation of women in rural CSTC's. The project lasted for three years (1988–91). One can rightly question why this pilot project was included as an ongoing programme.

Continuing Education

DISTANCE EDUCATION
Distance Education has been in use since 1978. About 6,500 adults (7.5 per cent women) have been able to benefit. Distance Education covers only academic courses at senior secondary level. The figures are contestable. At the time of my visit (October, 1993) the DE panel had a staff of only one educator. The main problem of DE has been organizational and financial. The potential of DE is not tapped. DE is potentially economical and can be cost-effective. A comprehensive study on viable infrastructure and organization should be carried out so that DE can serve both general and tertiary level education.

THE EVENING EDUCATION PROGRAMME
This programme includes academic, and technical vocational education using the formal education curriculum, manpower and facilities. In 1989–90 3 per cent of the primary, 7 per cent of the junior and 15 per cent of the senior secondary students were enrolled in the evening programmes. One of the major problems, especially at the primary level, is that the curriculum designed for the 7–12 age group does not take into account the age and work experiences of the adult participants. Among the actions put forward include the introduction of vocational courses such as tailoring, metal work etc. General knowledge courses such as human rights, democracy, etc. should also be provided.
MANAGEMENT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Educational policy elaboration and planning
The document gives credit to the last government by pointing out the main orientation of its policy. A common problem is that policies are formulated enthusiastically without ensuring that they are supported by adequate resources.

Decentralisation of educational services
The MOE shall be responsible for the management and administration of secondary and tertiary level education. All other educational services shall be the responsibility of the regions. Therefore, there is a strong need for building up the capacity for educational planning at the regional level. Moreover, a formal training scheme should be developed and implemented to provide better qualified educational staff for the regions.

Educational staff development
MOE has recently established the Centre for Educational Staff Development (CESD) and the physical plant is ready for use. CESD plans to provide training for educational personnel centrally and at regional education bureaux. However, in order to carry out successful training programmes, CESD requires needs assessment, appropriate infrastructure and professional links with local and international institutions.

Teacher education and training
Teacher training programmes lack direction. Most of the teachers from the primary to tertiary levels are unqualified or under-qualified. The focus should be on determining a sustainable system of teacher training, institutional leadership in teacher training and regular in-service programmes. A strong planning and co-ordinating office for teacher training is needed at the MOE. Salaries and career advancement should also be carefully developed.

Inspection and supervision
There are three departments dealing with inspection. Inspection services are in place at regional and zonal levels. There are, however, too few inspectors.

SPECIALISED TRAINING FOR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGE

Ethiopia is in the process of change from a command economic system to a more market based system. On this basis, the training of manpower for prop-
erly identified occupations in various areas and in different skills is a priority. The Ethiopian Management Institute (EMI) is the only institution that provides specialised training to any significant degree. The services of EMI have not extended to lower level managerial positions and to the small scale organisations in the regions. EMI should be strengthened in terms of trained staff, facilities and materials.

FINANCE OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Budgetary allocations

Due to the shrinking national domestic revenue and foreign exchange earnings, capital expenditure on education and training has been inadequate. Beginning from 1993–94 and up to 1997–98, the government’s decision to increase the capital budget in relation to recurrent expenditure should enable the government to meet its matching funds.

Ongoing external assistance

Table 1. External assistance for education and training by programme and donor (in USD)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-sector programme (period)</th>
<th>amount</th>
<th>donor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adult Education (1991–94)</td>
<td>1,240</td>
<td>SIDA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>730</td>
<td>UNICEF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV/AIDS (1991–94)</td>
<td>382</td>
<td>SIDA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning (1991–94)</td>
<td>1,100</td>
<td>SIDA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>160</td>
<td>UNICEF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum (1991–94)</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>SIDA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>185</td>
<td>UNICEF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>72</td>
<td>CODE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMPDA (1991–94)</td>
<td>7,500</td>
<td>SIDA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>205</td>
<td>UNICEF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EICMA (1991–94) (new)</td>
<td>3,445</td>
<td>SIDA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>245</td>
<td>ADF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment (1991–94)</td>
<td>1,250</td>
<td>SIDA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher upgrading (1991–94)</td>
<td>625</td>
<td>SIDA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,665</td>
<td>UNICEF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspection (1992–93)</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>UNICEF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass media education (1992–93)</td>
<td>395</td>
<td>UNICEF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special education (1992–93)</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>UNICEF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational education (1992–93)</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>UNICEF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All programmes (1987–92)</td>
<td>1,830</td>
<td>UNDP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The figures are derived from p. 44 of the April document of 1993.
Chapter 5
The New Ethiopian Education and Training Policy

INTRODUCTION

In the course of the last forty years, Ethiopia has undergone several major political, social and economic changes. Just slightly over forty years ago, the main political issue which preoccupied the imperial regime was Eritrea. The issue was decided by the United Nations and Eritrea was united to Ethiopia as an autonomous entity in a federal framework. This took place in 1950 and the federation was launched two years later. Exactly a decade later, the Eritrean assembly partly of its own conviction and partly under duress voted to abolish the federation thus paving the way for the incorporation of Eritrea into Ethiopia. While the decolonization of Eritrea and its incorporation into the Ethiopian empire were indeed of great historical momentum, the changes which were taking place in the rest of Ethiopia were also of great interest.

In 1955, Emperor Haile Selassie revised the imperial constitution of 1931. Although the principle of divine rule was left intact, the constitution of 1955 was nearly as modern as constitutions could be. In some important aspects it was much more progressive than the Eritrean constitution which was drafted by the expertise of the United Nations in consultation with the Eritrean and Ethiopian leaders. Here I am thinking of the provisions dealing with universal suffrage and the extension of the vote to women. In the Eritrean constitution, there were no provisions for universal suffrage and women were not allowed to vote.

Between 1941 and 1974, Ethiopia experienced drastic but uneven changes in virtually all fields. The commercialisation of the economy, especially in agriculture was beginning to produce a class of landless citizens. Addis Ababa had expanded from a small town with nearly 100,000 inhabitants in 1941 into a city with over a million inhabitants. The educational system, inspired and largely manned by experts from Europe and North America, also witnessed a sharp expansion. The number of enrolled students rose from 35,000 in 1946 to over a million in 1973.

In a period of just twenty years, the country became sharply divided into two distinct groupings, with the population of Addis Ababa playing the decisive role. The first grouping was made up of the Emperor, the royal family, the aristocracy and the religious institutions. The second grouping was made up mainly of students, and the younger members of the bureaucracy and the
armed forces. This latter grouping was greatly responsive to regional and ethnic movements which were never completely suppressed. Here we may mention the role of the Eritreans who opposed the abolition of the federation. It would hardly be an exaggeration to state that it was in response to the Eritrean challenge that the Ethiopian student movement began to develop a strategy for resolving the problems of nation-building. The theoretical underpinning of this search was the "national question", a political and theoretical standpoint first developed by Lenin in the beginning of this century and later developed by Joseph Stalin in the 1930's.

Between 1960 and 1973, opposition to the imperial system was at first attempted by military officers very close to the Emperor. The attempted coup of 1960 aborted because some branches of the armed forces were still permeated with imperial pathos. Although the Emperor was able to resume power for another decade, the attempted coup had fundamentally shaken the pillars of the Ethiopian polity. The loyalty and reliability of the army to the Emperor could no longer be taken for granted. As the events of 1973–4 were to prove, the church and the monarchy, as institutions, were far weaker vis-à-vis the army. While the monarchy eventually began to realise the conflict of interests between itself and the army, the university students had in earnest launched their war against the empire and the imperial system.

A great deal has been written on the background to the demise of the imperial system and the emergence of the armed forces as the rulers of the country. The 1974 coup was indeed revolutionary. It swept the monarchy away and it introduced hitherto unknown systems of social and political mobilization. If the monarchy was described of being absolutist, the regime which replaced the emperor was even more so in deeds though perhaps not in theory. In so far as the relations between the peasants and the state were concerned, the absolutist presence of the state and its servants was much more pervasive during the Dergue period than during the period of Emperor Haile Selassie.

It is too early yet to study the 1973–91 period with some objectivity, therefore, we shall limit ourselves only to noting some pointers. As the capital city continued to grow, the regime further extended its authoritarian arm into the countryside in order to appropriate sufficient food for the urban population. This was achieved by the Agricultural Marketing Corporation, a state authority which bought food from the peasantry at extremely low prices. The education system expanded beyond any rationality with at least two undesirable consequences. The first was that the system was producing school leavers who had very little chance of getting employment in the modern sector. The chances of the school leavers going back to the villages were even smaller, since most of these were from urban areas and since their training was mainly theoretical. The second consequence was the overstaffing of the statal and para-statal departments. This was inevitable because of the commitment of the government to guarantee employment to graduates form the colleges and universities.
Notwithstanding the rhetoric, the Ethiopian people were provided with a constitution from above (1987) in the same way as had been done by the Emperor. The constitution declared the country a republic and set it on the path of socialism. After slightly more than a decade of rule by decree, the Ethiopians and the outside world were expected to believe that the adoption of the constitution and the declaration of a peoples democratic republic would be sufficient to legitimise the regime.

The regime and constitution of the Ethiopian Peoples’ Democratic Republic had a very short lease of life. In the middle of 1991, they were swept away for good. The Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Democratic Front, (EPRDF) the successor power appears to be the complete antithesis of the Dergue regime. Whereas the earlier regime was organised according to the slogan of Ethiopian unity or death, the slogan of the EPRDF is the right of every ethnic group to self-determination up to and including secession.

The Ethiopian Education and Training Policy (EETP), 1994

Although the final and official education policy was issued as late as July 1994, a de facto policy had been in operation since February 1993. It was in February 1993 that the proclamation 45/1985 (1993) was promulgated. The proclamation 45/1985 (Ethiopian calendar) dealt with the decentralisation of decision-making and the division of power between the central and the regional administrations. Although the regions were created in November 1991, it was after the regional elections in the following summer that the regional administration was set up.

By virtue of proclamation 45/1985 (1993), the regions began to assume formal and practical responsibility for running their own affairs in consultation with the central government. A central feature of the 1993 proclamation was that each region had the right to use its own language for instruction, and that each region was virtually responsible for the provision of primary education (from grade 1 to grade 8) to its citizens. While proclamation 45/1993 gave the regions full responsibility, the same proclamation and subsequent policy actions reduced the role and responsibility of the central ministries.

For all purposes proclamation 45/1993, which dealt with the separation of powers between the regions and the central authority, functioned as the cornerstone for the education policy which at this period was in the process of being drafted. Both the central government and the regions appeared to have known the contents of the education policy nearly one year before it was officially promulgated.

Already in June 1993, the MOE cancelled the national examination to certify those who completed grade six and were to proceed to the junior secondary programme. The argument provided was that regions had already begun to teach in their regional languages, and, therefore, they saw no reason to administer a national leaving examination in Amharic.
The EETP is divided into three parts. The introductory part, forming as it
does a context for reform, deals with the role of education. In addition to the
issues already mentioned, the introduction stresses the need and importance of
a new education policy so as to change "the deplorable conditions". According
to the introduction, the education policy shows clearly "the objectives and
strategies of the sector all the way through from kindergarten up to tertiary
levels, both formal and non-formal". The new policy would be distinguished by
its stress on "the scientific and problem solving characteristics of education".
The policy lays down the basis for "an active participation of development
organisations in education thus creating an interactive mechanism between
theory and practice". Aware of the key role played by teachers in moulding
the character of the young generation (by imparting knowledge, by shaping the
outlook of the student) the policy pays particular attention to the recruitment,
training, career and progress of teachers.

The second part deals with the objectives of education which in turn are
divided into two sections. The first is designed to deal with the general objec-
tives while the second part enumerates the specific ones. The general objectives
of education, as they are now put down, are much compressed and not so well
organised summaries when compared to the summaries in the background
papers produced by the various committees. As neatly put in the background
paper, the general objectives of education are:

i) to stress the role and importance of culture for the development of society.

ii) to enhance social and economic development.

iii) to strengthen democratic practices and traditions.

iv) to increase awareness of the need for environmental protection and wise
exploitation of natural resources.

v) to use education for research and development.

The section on "specific objectives", deals with no less than 20 rather well speci-
fied issues. A great deal of discussion time was devoted to ironing out each spe-
cific issue many of which ought not to have been included in the policy docu-
ment. Most of the issues under specific objectives are self-evident within a
functioning education system. For more details on specific objectives see the
English translation in the appendix.

The third and final part deals with educational strategies. This final part is in
turn divided into nine sections. These strategies are: curriculum, structure of
education, evaluation, teachers' recruitment and training, language of instruc-
tion, interaction between research and development, support inputs, manage-
ment and finance. For more details see the translation appended to this study.

New inputs and strengths of the policy

No doubt the most interesting inputs are those put down in the general objec-
tives. According to the new education policy, the curriculum would henceforth
be inspired by the values of indigenous culture, the teaching of democracy and
democratic practices, and the need for environmental protection. Whereas
thoughts about environmental education were well known within the curricu-
lum department, the lifting up of culture, democracy, civics, and respect for
human rights are indeed new inputs. They are contributions of the TGE epoch.
The curriculum taught in Ethiopian schools had earlier been severely criticised
for being irrelevant to the needs of the society and its citizens.

The position now accorded to an appreciation of one’s culture could no
doubt make the content of education relevant for the student and rewarding for
the teacher. The teaching of democratic principles and traditions as well as the
importance of environmental protection are goals which could radically change
the orientation of education in Ethiopia, where the emphasis would be the intel-
lectual and civic development of the individual. It has, however, to be pointed
out that it remains to be seen how soon and how effectively the institutions
dealing with curriculum development will be in a position to translate the lofty
objectives into usable textbooks and teachers’ manuals.

Another new input of the policy draft is the recognition given to regional
languages as a medium of instruction. The idea is not new. Literary campaigns
had earlier been carried out in local languages. What distinguishes this policy
draft is the close association between the recognition of political rights of lin-
guistic groups and the subsequent right of such entities to use their language as
a medium of instruction all the way in primary education, i.e. up to grade eight.
At present primary education is being given in twelve languages, namely
Amharic, Tigrinya, Oromiffa, Wellayta, Sidama, Kafficio, Benchi, Somali, Afar,
Haddiya, Kembatta, and Gideo. There is no limit to the number of languages of
instruction. The speed in which the Oromiffa, Wellayta and Sidama languages
were made to become languages of instruction for the entire primary education
programme (8 years long) strongly indicates the latent interest that remained
buried as well as the work already done on these languages during the Dergue
period. However, the transition would have been less chaotic and more eco-
nomical if the central government had been in a position to introduce this new
input stage by stage.

It is symptomatic of the new times in Ethiopia that the education structure
was changed from a 6–2–4 year system to 8–2–2, firstly before the government
had produced a final policy and secondly, before the provision of any guide-
lines regulating the transition from Amharic to other nationality languages.
There appears to be no study available on how those students who were in
grades four and above in 1993–4 would cope with the transition and with the
national school leaving examination.

The wisdom of the use of regional languages for the first eight years of pri-
mary education would, I believe, be questioned by many concerned citizens if
the government either finds it difficult to monitor the curriculum not only as
regards the maintenance of national standards but also as regards the fulfilment
of some of the objectives of education. Moreover, since the main reason for the
use of regional language as a medium of instruction is to facilitate teaching and the learning process, the new policy input could come under fire if it is seen to divide rather than enhance the potential for unity within the country and between its inhabitants.

Equally important is the recognition of the role of the teacher in the system. The background paper on teacher training recommended several changes which the education policy incorporated in general terms. The background paper recommended that the teacher be given access to continuous training. It further recommended that recruitment to the profession be based on knowledge, ability, interest and inclination. Finally, it strongly recommended the establishment of a career ladder for teachers.

The envisaged career ladder has six stages for each category of teacher, i.e. with certificate, diploma and degree background. In the course of twenty years service, the salary of a successful teacher can go up to three times the starting salary. The reform of the conditions of teachers envisaged in the Education Policy deserves the support of donors. Firstly, an investment in teachers is a right priority; and secondly, the implementation of such reform as only affects the teachers would entail a significant increase of the total budget. It is believed that the government will soon pass legislation regulating salaries and a career ladder for teachers.

Another new input is the recognition of financial constraints. The government has made it clear that its commitment will be to primary education and training up to the first cycle of secondary education (up to grade ten). It envisages that students in the second cycle of secondary education (grades 11 and 12) would cover up to fifty per cent of tuition costs. The implications of such a policy appear to be clearly foreseen by policy-makers as can be evidenced by the provisions which would be concurrently introduced. Some of these provisions are study loans, scholarships, for the needy as well as for outstanding students and a series of rectification measures to assist deprived and backward regions.

A new input which needs to be strongly underlined is the commitment of the government to increase the number of female students by the use of financial inducements. The practicalities of this ambitious goal remains to be seen.

By way of a preliminary conclusion to this section a note of caution appears appropriate. Although the policy has correctly assessed the key role of teachers, and therefore, the need for the improvement of their conditions, policy-makers appear to be expecting far too much from the teacher. Apart from the fact that the environment outside the school such as newspapers, peers, foreign broadcasts beamed to the country, plays a considerable role in shaping the outlook of the student, the means available to the teacher to carry out his/her functions are of equal importance. These means include the nature and quality of teaching materials, the type of training the teacher was exposed to, the teacher/student ratio and the opportunity of employment after completion of an education programme.
Weaknesses of the Ethiopian education and training policy

According to my judgement there are two types of weaknesses with the EETP. The first type are those which the policy either ignored or did not deem to be important. The second type of weaknesses are those which result from over-expectation. The first serious weakness of the policy is that it does not make a distinction between formal and non-formal education. So far non-formal education has no place in the policy. Non-formal education is in fact specifically mentioned in part three section two. Although, the policy does not define non-formal education, what is meant becomes clear from the way it is described. I quote, "The non-formal education programme would follow the structure of the formal education sector".

It can be safely stated that the concept of non-formal education is understood as a programme geared primarily to adults and the illiterate. The education structure for those in the formal sector and for those in the "non-formal sector" is, according to the policy, the same. This I believe is the most serious weakness of EETP. Non-formal education includes all types of training specifically designed to meet a well defined need. Whereas formal education is structure bound (e.g. 8-2-2 years), a programme developed within the non-formal framework is not bound to any structure and in most cases it is a programme conceived to be carried out within a maximum period of a year or two.

There are many reasons favouring a clear distinction between formal and non-formal inputs. According to African and Ethiopian experience, the formal education structure has been urban as well as white-collar oriented. In the case of Ethiopia, policy-makers are fully aware of the urban bias of the formal education structure. Given the fact that about 80 per cent of school age children as well as of the adult population are outside the reach of the school, and also given the budgetary constraints, Ethiopian policy-makers ought to have lifted up the role of non-formal education.

One can clearly discern a strong intention on the part of the government to evolve a curriculum of both theoretical and practical content. The intention of the government on the importance of including practical aspects in the curriculum are clearly expressed in several parts of the policy. In the first part of the policy, practical training at every level of the education structure is put down as an objective of education. (See translation of the policy in the appendix). This intention is further stressed in the third part under a separate heading: interaction between education, training, research and development.

Another serious weakness of the policy is regarding higher or tertiary education. Apart from the new input that students in the higher educational institutions shall cover all costs for their education, the policy is virtually silent on the matter. Part of the reason for the omission of a policy on tertiary education is historical. Higher education has not been treated earlier as part of the education sector.
The idea that students in higher levels of learning cover all or parts of tuition costs can be defended on grounds of equity and distribution of resources. However, the financing of higher education as well as linkage between manpower needs and criteria for access to such institutions needs to be clearly spelled out in either a separate government paper or as part of the Education Policy.

Another shortcoming of the EETP is its ambiguity on the divisions between the central and the regional departments dealing with education. According to the 1993 Proclamation on the establishment of ministries, the prime responsibility of the MOE is to set nation-wide standards and monitor their implementation. The MOE's power concerning curriculum for the primary level is limited to that of providing assistance if and when such a need is requested by the regions. Already there are conflicting signals as to the position of the MOE concerning the curriculum in use the regions. I have been informed that the curriculum developed for region four (Oromiya) is different from those used in the other regions. Unless the MOE strengthens its power of rectifying anomalies arising from implementation of different curricula, the former will find it very difficult to monitor the implementation of nation-wide standards.

It goes without saying that one of the implications of regionalization and decentralisation of decision-making instances would be the dramatic growth of recurrent expenditure, which is usually in the range of ninety per cent of total budget. Moreover, the ambition of the policy to substantially improve working conditions of teachers would impinge more strongly on the fast diminishing budget thus leaving virtually empty the post for capital investment, which in the Ethiopian case includes the purchase of materials.

If the government is committed to managing the education sector with the intention of achieving a balance between objectives and performance, then, its commitment to provide the funds needs to be clearly spelled out. One way of demonstrating a commitment which the government can resort to is to tie the education budget to a percentage of either Gross Domestic Production or of total government expenditure. In either one of the options, the government would not only demonstrate its degree of commitment to the sector, it would also enable the central and the regional departments to carry out long term development plans.

Another shortcoming, which though important is not of a substantial nature, is that EETP does not provide guidelines of how and where donor organisations can contribute to the education sector. Although most of the foreign funds for the sector originate as a loan from the World Bank, a considerable amount of financial resources are put in into the sector by governments as well as NGO's.

By way of conclusion, we need to mention two major assumptions which can indeed create serious misunderstandings and mistrust between policymakers and the teachers. The first assumption is the expectation of the policymakers on the role of education both at the private and social level. The policymakers have repeatedly stated the role of education as an instrument which
would enable the society to solve its multiple problems. The policy-makers, in effect, perceive education as an independent variable in the development process. In reality, the education sector is, for its success as well as relevance, highly dependent on the prevailing economic and political climate. At its best, a functioning educational system (based on a sound educational policy) can strengthen the potential of the individual in the first place and then of the society to confront diverse types of challenges.

The second issue is the responsibility assigned to or imposed on teachers. Indeed teachers do play a key role, however, the successful implementation of the education policy draft ought not to be left on the shoulders of teachers alone. This is because, in spite of the determination of the government to improve the working conditions, teachers would continue to work under great constraints. To take one example: the situation of the curriculum and teaching materials both for students and teachers would take, with the best of efforts, many years to be brought to a satisfactory level. To blame teachers for unsatisfactory performance would, in addition to being unfair criticism, poison the rapport between policy-makers and teachers.
Chapter 6
Conclusion: Let the Formal Education Sector Defend Itself. Invest in the Non-Formal Education Sector

Ethiopia has (1995) nearly one million students in grades 7–12. By the end of this decade the education sector will pour into the labour market nearly 400,000 secondary school graduates. The manufacturing sector with a total labour force of slightly more than 100,000 in a country of over fifty million, is far too small to be the basis for the expansion of the public and service sector which in turn can provide job opportunities for secondary school graduates. The market oriented economic policy, the new investment climate, and the structural adjustment programme have so far attracted few foreign investors.100

The education sector has profound structural constraints. On the one hand there is the reality that enrolment is only 12 per cent of the secondary school age population of the country. On the other hand, the sector is producing hundreds of thousands of graduates with very little opportunity for salaried employment. Some of this constraint has come as a result of poorly thought out and ill-integrated bilateral and multilateral aid. The expansion of the sector was supported by successive governments and condoned by the international donor community because of the plausible but mistaken assumption concerning the role of education in development. Education was seen as the magic formula for swift and painless development. We know now that education, and especially the Ethiopian variant has very little role to play. In fact it is one of the least important and weak variables in the development equation.

In view of the structural constraints, it is highly unjustifiable to use taxpayers and donor sources to expand further the formal education sector. It has already expanded beyond any rationality. The formal education sector, especially in the urban areas has expanded so much that one can argue that it can continue to survive on its own. The greatest majority of junior and senior secondary schools are in the urban areas. Addis Ababa alone with its three million inhabitants has nearly 170 junior secondary schools while the entire Amhara region with an estimated population of 18 million has 220 schools. More or less the same ratio applies to the distribution of senior secondary schools as well. To borrow Rostow’s analogy, formal education in the urban areas has reached a take-off stage. With or without government support, there will be schools and secondary schools in the urban areas.

It is understandable that the government may find it hard to reduce secondary school enrolment so as to increase employment possibilities of sec-

ondary school graduates. What is beyond any rational explanation is the determined policy of the government to expand the formal education sector including secondary education. Formal education is so well entrenched that it ought to be left to defend for itself. In policy terms and in practical language this would mean that the government would have to divert scarce financial resources away from formal education and invest them in the non-formal education sector.

There are some encouraging indicators along this line in the educational policy. If and when the new educational policy is implemented, secondary school students in grades 11 and 12 would bear up to fifty per cent of the costs of their education. However, this policy input is greatly qualified and practically nullified by the overall attitude of the government as regards formal education. On the one hand we notice a trend in the policy towards cost sharing and privatisation of senior secondary education. At the same time the government stresses its commitment to a rapid and massive expansion of formal education so as to increase enrolment to 50 per cent of the school age population by 2025.

Before proceeding further with the discussion it is worthwhile to raise some of the implications of what might be interpreted as an anti formal education stand. During the 1970's and 1980's continued expansion of the formal education sector was justified on the grounds of equity. It was believed that the more the formal education sector expanded the more it would reach rural children. In this way some steps would be seen to be taken to reduce the wide disparities between the rural and urban areas. This view was challenged in early 1990 but with insignificant impact on policy reorientation.¹⁰¹ On the contrary when the USAID made its entry in early 1992, it continued with the old assumption. This is basically the stand of USAID education assistance to Ethiopia. Moreover, neither the Ethiopian government nor the donor community would be accused of treating urban and rural children differently. As a short term policy, which characterises most of donor assistance, such orientation and philosophy is the least controversial and most safe. As a long term policy, however, it is untenable. Such a policy, to say the least, amounts to putting the wagon before the horse.

At the risk of overstating my case, I wish to stress the point made by Coombs and Ahmed that what peasants need most and what the government ought to provide are inputs (better technology, demonstration centres, infrastructure, tenure laws, and better prices for agricultural products and tradable goods).¹⁰²

At this juncture it is worthwhile to look closely into the objectives of formal education. The policy document clearly states that one of the objectives of formal education is to provide vocational and practical education in addition to ordinary subjects. The document further states that vocational and practical ed-

ucation would be provided to school leavers and at all levels. I argue that such a policy is unrealistic and most certainly self-defeating. Let us begin with the vocalisation of formal education.\textsuperscript{103} Formal education takes place in shifts which in effect means that a school day is made up of about three hours. Moreover, the usual class-size in the secondary schools remains between 75 and 90 students.\textsuperscript{104} There has been no significant reduction in the number of subjects taught and no betterment in the supply of textbooks. However, even if most of these constraints are overcome, it is virtually impossible to vocationalise formal education.

Formal education, as the study of Joel Samoff and many others show clearly, is designed and carried out to push students through the academic ladder leading up to the university. The criteria for judging the performance of schools and teachers is dependent on how many students they were able to pass to the next level of education and not on how well they taught practical and vocational subjects. Those countries, like Tanzania, which have tried to vocationalise formal education soon found out that the school is not suitable for the purpose. The incisive comment of Samoff, I believe, summarises the issue when he interrogated the wisdom of why it is better to teach vocational subjects three hours a week than to have a full-time apprenticeship on the farm or in the factory.\textsuperscript{105}

Given the serious constraints, one can argue that it is really a waste of scarce resources to try to combine formal education with vocational or practical subjects. Here we may also mention that according to a FAO study, the performance and productivity of the fully vocational schools fall far short in relation to the combined cost of running such institutions. A world wide survey on the role of agricultural colleges and universities in developing countries, pointed out clearly that these are most costly and least efficient units. Some of the major shortcomings of these institutions are: 1) the low quality and excessively academic character of their instruction and lack of field practice; 2) their lack of contact with rural life; 3) the virtual absence of faculty and student research; 4) the neglect or total absence of agricultural economics and rural sociology in the curriculum; 5) the heavy dependence on textbooks based on research experience of foreign countries; and 7) the lack of motivation in most of their students.\textsuperscript{106} These criticisms were restated with more force in a recent study on the performance of the agricultural colleges in Ethiopia.\textsuperscript{107}

\textsuperscript{103} Gustafsson, 1988; Lillis and Hogan, 1983.
\textsuperscript{104} According to the 1993/4 education statistics, the average class size for secondary schools is 63 students. This figure is reached by dividing the number of students by the number of teachers. In actual fact class-sizes are much higher. This is partly because the number of subjects (up to 14 subjects for grades 9 and 10) are too many and partly due to the fact that many subjects, such as history, are taught two periods per week.
\textsuperscript{105} Samoff, 1990.
\textsuperscript{107} Habtemariam, Kassa, 1994, pp. 36–49.
We have argued on technical grounds that the school cannot combine formal and vocational education. The school lacks and will always lack the resources and facilities to teach vocational and practical subjects in such depth which would facilitate the entry of students to the world of labour. However, there is another reason which militates strongly against vocationalization. The historical purpose and function of formal education is the inculcation of socio-political values, the development of the cognitive potential of students, and the creation of a ruling elite. This is a very important function of the school.

The current educational system is heavily biased in favour of the formal education sector where the latter appropriates all the budget leaving virtually nothing for the non-formal education sector. Although the government appears to be fully aware of the importance of non-formal education, as we can deduce from its educational policy, it has no clear idea as to the target group and objectives of non-formal education. We mentioned earlier that as far as the educational policy was concerned, non-formal education is used and understood as a short cut for students to enter the formal education sector. It was also noted that the non-formal education programme was the same as that provided by the formal education sector.

Budgetary commitment to the non-formal education programme

Up to 1991, the Adult Education Department, responsible for literacy campaigns within the MOE as well as for the Community Skills Training Centres (CSTCs), had a staff of about 144. The commitment of the MOE was exclusively limited to the provision of office facilities and salaries, while capital investment and training of experts was provided by donors, the most important of which was SIDA. Since 1992, the Department of Adult Education has been fully regionalised. This has meant that the Department of Adult Education is no longer a department but only a panel. It is now called the non-formal education panel and is one of the several panels under the Education Programmes and Supervision Department. The non-formal education panel has a staff of four experts who are entrusted with the responsibility of supervising the activities of regional non-formal education panels all over the country. In the regions, the non-formal education panels are run by a one person staff. Without having to enter into the merits of regionalization, we can clearly see that the government has to put far more resources into non-formal education.

The commitment of the government to formal education was shown in practice in the 1993/4 budget for education. The budget for education went up

---

108. With the exception of a small UNICEF training programme, virtually all the requirements of the Adult Education Department from printing paper, farm materials and motor bikes were provided by SIDA.
from ca. 700 million birr to 1,114 million birr.\textsuperscript{109} This was a staggering increase by 37 per cent. As far as the budget for 1993/4 is concerned, the share of the education sector in relation to total government expenditure went up from ca. 9.7 per cent to 13.6.\textsuperscript{110} Some questions have been raised as to the nature of the increase since it is not clear whether the World Bank managed Ethiopian Recovery and Development Fund for the education sector was included in the education budget. Nevertheless, there is very little reason to doubt the government's commitment to the formal education sector. Yet this remarkable commitment is barely enough to keep the rate of enrolment in the range of 20 to 25 per cent of the 7–12 year age group due to the increasing population growth. It is worthwhile to note that most of the budget will be eaten up by the expansion of the sector in urban areas. Moreover, further expansion of the formal education sector would only lead to the growth of unemployed and unemployable school leavers.

Rural areas and the urban poor (including dropouts) would scarcely be reached by the expanding formal education sector. Several studies have repeatedly shown that the services on which the rural inhabitants put high priority are practical inputs such as infrastructure, better prices, better seeds, and better agronomic innovations. The school is not one of their priorities. However, the Ministry of Education has assumed the task of preparing its students for the world of labour by exposing them to vocational programmes. Such a task, we argued earlier is far beyond the capacity of the MOE.

If the MOE is convinced about the role of non-formal education programme as we have defined and discussed it above, such a conviction needs to be reflected in budgetary terms. One of the consequences of siphoning resources from the formal education sector (thus reducing drastically its possibility for expansion) is the perpetuation of the gap between rural and urban communities. This is true. The urban/rural divide is here to stay at least for the foreseeable future. All the good intentions behind the expansion of formal education will not bridge the gap. The financial resources will not be there.

I strongly believe that the best way to bridge the gap is to address in an adequate manner the development needs of the rural communities. The alleviation of poverty is not primarily an educational problem. Ethiopian peasants most of the time find themselves in dire circumstances, not because they do not take pride in the value of labour, but mainly because they lack allocative (e.g. capital) and technical (e.g. better seeds) inputs.

\textsuperscript{109} The Ethiopian birr has been devalued twice since early 1993. Prior to 1993 the value of the birr was maintained artificially at 2 birr to 1 USD. Throughout most of 1993 the exchange rate was 1 USD to five birr. In 1994, the exchange rate was 1 USD to 6.25 birr. One of the consequences of the drastic devaluation was the increased teachers salaries.\textsuperscript{110} The figures are derived from Ethiopia: Public Expenditure Review, Issues in Public Expenditure, vol. 2, May 1995. Since the document is a White Paper, I have desisted from citing it directly.
A great deal has been said and written on the role of agriculture and the rural poor. This small study will have amply fulfilled its purposes if it succeeds in opening up the debate on the development goals of the Ethiopian government and on the instruments best suited to empower (physically and mentally) the great majority of the country’s inhabitants.
APPENDIX 1

Transitional Government of Ethiopia
Education and Training Policy
Addis Ababa, April, 1994.

Table of contents
1. Introduction
2. Objectives of education and training.
   2.1. General objectives.
   2.2. Specific objectives.
3. Overall strategy.
   3.1. Curriculum.
   3.2. Educational structure.
   3.3. Educational measurement and examination.
   3.4. Teachers.
   3.5. Languages and education.
   3.6. Nexus between education, training, research and development.
   3.7. Educational support inputs.
   3.8. Educational organization and management.
4. Areas of special attention and action priority.

1. Introduction

Education is a process by which man transmits his experiences, new findings, and values accumulated over the years, in his struggle for survival and development, through generations. Education enables individuals and society to make all-rounded participation in the development process by acquiring knowledge, ability, skills and attitudes.

One of the aims of education is to strengthen the individual’s and society’s problem-solving capacity, ability and culture starting from basic education and at all levels. Education enables man to identify harmful traditions and replace them by useful ones. It helps man to improve, change, as well as develop and conserve his environment for the purpose of an all-rounded development by diffusing science and technology into the society. Education also plays a role in the promotion of respect for human rights and democratic values, creating the condition for equality, mutual understanding and cooperation among people.

Education does not operate in isolation, rather it has to be integrated with research, practice and development to contribute towards an all-rounded development of society.

To date, it is known that our country’s education is entangled with complex problems of relevance, quality, accessibility and equity. The objectives of education do not take cognisance of the society’s needs and do not adequately indicate future direction. The absence of interrelated contents and mode of presentation that can develop student’s knowledge, cognitive abilities and behavioural change by level, to adequately enrich problem-solving ability and attitude, are some of the major problems of our educational system.

Inadequate facilities, insufficient training of teachers, shortage of books and other teaching materials, all indicate the low quality of education provided.
The gross participation rate of primary education is below 22 per cent of the relevant age cohort. Of these a large number of discontinues (sic) and relapse to illiteracy. The disparity among regions is high. Illiteracy is an overall problem of the society. Opportunities for high school education and technical and vocational training are limited to big towns. Higher education institutions are found only in very few regions. They are overcrowded and their research capacity is very low.

The necessary infrastructure to provide a relevant education to the rural population, which is over 85 per cent of the population of the country, is at an insignificant level of development. Aware of the complex problems the country has been plunged in by the previous dictatorial, self centred and vain regimes, the Transitional Government of Ethiopia has embarked on charting the right direction of development to break the vicious circle we have been entangled in.

Education, as a very important factor to human development, is of a high priority in the overall development endeavour of the government. Hence, it requires an appropriate direction to set a new process in motion and change the alarming situation. For this, a comprehensive education and training policy is formulated.

The policy encompasses overall and specific objectives, implementation strategies, including formal and non-formal education, from kindergarten to higher education and special education.

It emphasises the development of problem solving capacity and culture in the content of education, curriculum structure and approach, focusing on the acquisition of scientific knowledge and practice.

Along with this, it directs that there be appropriate nexus between education, training, research and development through co-ordinated participation among the relevant organizations.

The policy incorporates the structure of education in relation to the development of student profile, educational measurement and evaluation, media of instruction and language teaching at various levels, the recruitment, training, methodology, organization, professional ethics and career development of teachers.

Due attention is also given to the provision and appropriate usage of educational facility, technology, materials, environment, organization and management so as to strengthen the teaching-learning process and the expansion of education. The evolution of a decentralised, efficient and professionally co-ordinated participatory system is indicated in respect of administration and management of the education system.

It is also stated that the financing of education be just, efficient and appropriate to promote equity and quality of education.

Overall, the education and training policy envisages bringing-up citizens endowed with humane outlook, countrywide responsibility and democratic values having developed the necessary production, creative and appreciative capacity in order to participate fruitfully in development and the utilization of resources and the environment at large.

2. Objectives of Education and Training

2.1. General Objectives

2.1.1. Develop the physical and mental potential and the problem-solving capacity of individuals by expanding education and in particular by providing basic education for all.

2.1.2. Bring up citizens who can take care of and utilize resources wisely, who are trained in various skills, by raising the private and social benefits of education.

2.1.3. Bring up citizens who respect human rights, stand for the well-being of people, as well as for equality, justice and peace, endowed with democratic culture and discipline.
2.1.4. Bring up citizens who differentiate harmful practices from useful ones, who seek and stand for truth, appreciate aesthetics and show positive attitude towards the development and dissemination of science and technology in society.

2.1.5. Cultivate the cognitive, creative, productive and appreciative potential of citizens by appropriately relating education to environment and societal needs.

2.2. Specific Objectives

2.2.1. To promote relevant and appropriate education and training through formal and non-formal programmes.

2.2.2. To develop and enrich students’ inquisitive ability and raise their creativity and interest in aesthetics.

2.2.3. To enable both the handicapped and the gifted learn in accordance with their potential and needs.

2.2.4. To provide basic education and integrated knowledge at various levels of vocational training.

2.2.5. To satisfy the country’s need for skilled manpower by providing training in various skills and at different levels.

2.2.6. To make education, training and research be appropriately integrated with development by focusing on research.

2.2.7. To provide secular education.

2.2.8. To make education a supportive tool for developing traditional technology, and for utilizing modern technology.

2.2.9. To provide education that promotes democratic culture, tolerance and peaceful resolutions of differences and that raises the sense of discharging societal responsibility.

2.2.10. To provide education that can produce citizens who stand for democratic unity, liberty, equality, dignity and justice, and who are endowed with moral values.

2.2.11. To provide education that promote the culture of respect for work, positive work habits and high regard for workmanship.

2.2.12. To recognise the rights of nations/nationalities to learn in their language, while at the same time providing one language for regional and another one for international communication.

2.2.13. To gear education towards reorienting society’s attitude and value pertaining to the role and contribution of women in development.

2.2.14. To provide education that can produce citizens who possess national and international outlook on the environment, protect natural resources and historical heritages of the country.

2.2.15. To provide education that can produce citizens who have developed attitudes and skills to use and tend private and public properties appropriately.

3. Overall Strategy

3.1. Curriculum

3.1.1. The preparation of curriculum will be based on the stated objectives of education, ensuring that the relevant standard and the expected profile of students are achieved.

3.1.2. Create a mechanism by which teachers, professionals from major organizations of development, and beneficiaries, participate in the preparation, implementation and evaluation of the curriculum.

3.1.3. Ensure that the curriculum developed and textbooks prepared at central and regional levels, are based on sound pedagogical and psychological principles and are up to international standard, giving due attention to concrete local conditions and gender issues.
3.1.4. Create a mechanism for an integrated educational research, and overall periodic
evaluation of the educational system, whereby a wide-ranging of participation is
ensured to foster appropriate relation among the various levels of education, train-
ing, research, development and societal needs, maintaining the required standards.

3.2. Educational Structure
3.2.1. Kindergarten will focus on all-round development of the child in preparation for
formal schooling.
3.2.2. Primary education will be of eight years duration, offering basic and general pri-
mary education to prepare students for further general education and training.
3.2.3. Secondary education will be of four years duration, consisting of two years of
general secondary education which will enable students identify their interests for
further education, for specific training and for the world of work. General educa-
tion will be completed at the first cycle (grade 10). The second cycle of secondary
education and training will enable students to choose subjects or areas of training
which will prepare them adequately for higher education and for the world of work.
3.2.4. Higher education at diploma, first degree and graduate levels, will be research
oriented, enabling students become problem-solving professional leaders in their
fields of study and in overall societal needs.
3.2.5. Non-formal education will be provided beginning and parallel to basic education
and at all levels of formal education.
3.2.6. Basic education will focus on literacy, numeracy, environment, agriculture,
crafts, home science, health services and civics.
3.2.7. Non-formal education will be concrete in its content, focusing on enabling the
learners develop problem-solving attitudes and abilities.
3.2.8. Parallel to general education, diversified technical and vocational training will be
provided for those who leave school from any level of education.
3.2.8.1. Training will be provided in agriculture, crafts, construction, basic book-
keeping in the form of apprenticeship for those with the appropriate age and leaving
primary school.
3.2.8.2. Technical and vocational training in agriculture, industrial arts, construc-
tion, commerce and home science will be provided after primary education for
those who may not continue general education.
3.2.8.3. Technical training will be provided for those who complete grade ten for
the development of middle level manpower.
3.2.9. Special education and training will be provided for people with special needs.

3.3. Educational Measurement and Examination
3.3.1. Continuous assessment in academic and practical subjects, including aptitude
tests will be conducted to ascertain the formation of all-round profile of students at
all levels.
3.3.2. National examinations will be conducted at grade eight and ten to certify comple-
tion of general primary and secondary education respectively.
3.3.3. In order to get promoted from one level to the next, students will be required to
have a minimum of fifty percent achievement.
3.3.4. Students will be officially certified at the completion of the various levels of edu-
cation.
3.3.5. Official certification will also be given to those who complete technical and
vocational training programmes.
3.3.6. After the second cycle of secondary education, students will be required to sit for
examinations of relevant institutions for admission.
3.3.7. A national organization of educational measurement and examination will be established to provide central professional guidance and co-ordination as well as to make the necessary expertise available.

3.4. Teachers
3.4.1. Ascertain that teacher trainers have the ability, diligence, professional interest, and physical and mental fitness appropriate for the profession.
3.4.2. Create a mechanism by which employers, training institutions and the Teachers Association participate in the recruitment of trainees.
3.4.3. Teacher education and training components will emphasize basic knowledge, professional code of ethics, methodology and practical trainings.
3.4.4. Teachers will be certified before assigned to teach at any level of education.
3.4.5. Teachers, starting from kindergarten to higher education, will be required to have the necessary teaching qualifications and competency in the media of instruction, through pre-service and in-service training.
3.4.6. The criteria for the professional development of teachers will be continuous education and training, professional ethics and teaching performance.
3.4.7. A professional career structure will be developed in respect to professional development of teachers.
3.4.8. Teacher training institutions, including higher education, will function autonomously with the necessary authority, responsibility and accountability.
3.4.9. Teacher training institutions of all levels will be required to gear their programmes towards the appropriate educational level for which they train teachers.
3.4.10. Special attention will be given to the participation of women in the recruitment, training and assignment of teachers.
3.4.11. Teacher training for special education will be provided in regular teacher training programmes.
3.4.12. Various steps will be taken to promote incentives to motivate teachers especially to those assigned in hardship areas.

3.5. Languages of Education
3.5.1. Cognisant of the pedagogical advantage of the child in learning in mother tongue and the rights of nationalities to promote the use of their languages, primary education will be given in nationality languages.
3.5.2. Making the necessary preparation, nations and nationalities can either learn in their own language or can choose from among those selected on the basis of national and countrywide distribution.
3.5.3. The language of teacher training for kindergarten and primary education will be the nationality language used in the area.
3.5.4. Amharic shall be taught as a language of countrywide communication.
3.5.5. English will be the medium of instruction for secondary and higher education.
3.5.6. Students can choose and learn at least one nationality language and one foreign language for cultural and international relations.
3.5.7. English will be taught as a subject starting from grade one.
3.5.8. The necessary steps will be taken to strengthen language teaching at all levels.

3.6. Nexus between Education, Training, Research and Development
3.6.1. The participation of students in technical and higher education programmes, in gaining the necessary field experience before graduation will be facilitated.
3.6.2. The participation of teachers and researchers in getting the necessary field experience in various development and service institutions and professionals of such institutions in teaching will be facilitated.
3.6.3. Co-ordinated curriculum development will be ensured so that students and trainees will acquire the necessary entrepreneurial and productive attitudes and skills.

3.6.4. Governmental and non-governmental organizations can establish training programmes according to their needs.

3.6.5. An appropriate organizational mechanism will be created to streamline and accredit technical and vocational training and co-ordinate the necessary certification.

3.6.6. Non-formal education and training programmes will be organized by the various development and social institutions in co-ordination with the Ministry of Education.

3.6.7. Traditional education will be improved and developed by being integrated with modern education.

3.6.8. Research of practical societal impact will be given priority and the necessary steps will also be taken to facilitate the co-ordinated efforts of all those concerned.

3.7. Educational Support Inputs

3.7.1. In order to promote the quality, relevance and expansion of education, due attention will be given to the supply, distribution and utilization of educational materials, educational technology and facilities.

3.7.2. Mechanisms of manpower training and maintenance, proper utilization of educational support inputs will be developed to ensure relevance and standards.

3.7.3. A mechanism for co-ordinated production and distribution of educational support inputs at the institutional, woreda, zonal, regional and central levels will be created to strengthen the teaching-learning process, research and various other educational activities, in accordance with the curricular needs and standards of the various levels and types of education.

3.7.4. Due attention will be given to popular participation, in the production, distribution, upkeep, care and safety of educational materials, educational technology and facilities.

3.7.5. The participation of various organizations and individuals will be enhanced in the production, supply and distribution of educational support inputs.

3.7.6. Special attention will be given in the preparation and utilization of support inputs for special education.

3.7.7. Special attention will be given to women and to those students who did not get educational opportunities in the preparation, distribution and use of educational support inputs.

3.8. Educational Organization and Management

3.8.1. Clear guidelines, stating the rights and duties of all involved in education, will be issued to ensure participatory and proper professional relations in their activities.

3.8.2. Educational management will be decentralized to create the necessary condition to expand, enrich and improve the relevance, quality, accessibility and equity of education and training.

3.8.3. Educational management will be democratic, professional, co-ordinated, efficient and effective, and will encourage the participation of women.

3.8.4. Educational institutions will be autonomous in their internal administration and in the designing and implementing of education and training programmes, with an overall co-ordination and democratic leadership by boards or committees, consisting of members from the community (society), development and research institutions, teachers and students.
3.8.5. The management of teachers and other educational personnel will be organized, on the basis of professional principles, including professional code of ethics, salary, working conditions, incentives, professional growth and overall rights and duties.

3.9. Educational Finance
3.9.1. The priority for government financial support will be up to the completion of general secondary education and related training [grade 10] with increased cost-sharing at higher levels of education and training.
3.9.2. Mechanisms will be created for students to cover their expenses through service or payment after graduation.
3.9.3. Scholarship will be given to deserving (outstanding) students.
3.9.4. Special financial assistance will be given to those who have been deprived of educational opportunities, and steps will be taken to raise the educational participation of deprived regions.
3.9.5. The government will provide financial support to raise the participation of women in education.
3.9.6. The government will create the necessary conditions to encourage and give support to private investors to open schools and establish various educational and training institutions.
3.9.7. The necessary conditions will be created for educational and training institutions to generate their own income and to use it to strengthen the educational process.

4. Areas of Special Attention and Action Priority
4.2. Focus on teacher training and overall professional development of teachers and other personnel.
4.3. Change of educational organization and management.
### State Owned Establishments in Ethiopian Industry, 1990

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Number* of establishments</th>
<th>State-owned(%)</th>
<th>Employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>food</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>50.7</td>
<td>18,298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beverages</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>75.9</td>
<td>8,863</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tobacco</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>textiles</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>49.0</td>
<td>37,406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clothing</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>3,457</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tanneries and leather</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>3,142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>footwear</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>3,215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wood products</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>1,565</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>furniture</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>1,429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>paper and paper products</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>1,453</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>printing, publishing</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>38.1</td>
<td>3,333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chemical</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chemical products</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>69.2</td>
<td>2,133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>petroleum</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>1,433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rubber products</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>1,904</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plastic products</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>1,671</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>glass</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>675</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mineral products</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>43.7</td>
<td>3,851</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iron and steel</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fabricated metal</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>48.0</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>electrical</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>motor assembly</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>414</strong></td>
<td><strong>50.2</strong></td>
<td><strong>98,673</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


* Denotes public and private industrial and manufacturing establishments. As can be seen from the figures, the state owned half of all the establishments.
APPENDIX 3

This appendix is Chapter one in Tekeste Negash, The Crisis of Ethiopian Education. Some Implications for Nations-Building, Uppsala 1990.

The Ethiopian Educational System: A Brief Historical Outline

The foundations of modern education, ca 1900 to 1935

Modern public education made a modest entry into the history of the country in the beginning of this century (1908) with the establishment of the Minilik School. The idea for the school was certainly inspired by the mission schools that sporadically appeared after the middle of the nineteenth century. The Ethiopian Church, which up to that period had a virtual monopoly on education, strongly opposed the establishment of a secular school. The Ethiopian Church feared the undermining potential of a state school system managed, at least initially, by European teachers. Emperor Minilik (ruled 1889–1913) overcame Church opposition by giving in to many of its demands. The emperor stressed that the school would only be engaged in the teaching of foreign languages—the proficiency of which was essential for the maintenance of the country’s independence. Moreover, as a clear concession to the Church, the first teachers were to be Copts from Egypt—a group who, because of their faith, were unlikely to undermine the teachings of the Ethiopian Church.1

Minilik School was not perceived as an instrument for the development of the country. Its existence was justified on purely political grounds. The presence of Ethiopians knowledgeable in European languages was considered crucial for the maintenance of sovereignty. The ruling elite of the period saw a close link between the country’s independence and the presence of Ethiopians capable of communicating with the outside world.

During the first twenty years of its existence, Minilik School resembled a language institute rather than a proper school. There was no age limit for admission, but a prior knowledge of Amharic was a prerequisite. French, English, Italian and Arabic were the main subjects taught. Graduates found ready employment both in government and in the foreign legations. Between 1908 and 1925 approximately three thousand students passed through the school. In 1925 Minilik School had 160 students, 20 per cent of whom had been enrolled for four or more years.2

By the 1920’s church opposition to the establishment of secular education, as well as to the continued operation of the mission schools, had greatly diminished. Although Minilik School remained the only state financed institution, the scope and breadth of mission schools increased considerably. Regent Taffari Mekonnen, later Emperor Haile Selassie, patronized the activities of the missions in general and of the Swedish and American missions in particular. His views (fully quoted in the footnote) are indicative of the attitude of the period.3

The second government school was established by Regent Taffari Mekonnen in 1925. Like the Minilik School, the Taffari Mekonnen School functioned as a school for the teaching of foreign languages with the difference that Ethiopian religion was supposed to be taught in the latter. In the words of its founder:
In this school it is not only foreign languages that I have instituted, but there would also be study of our country's holy books and the Monophite faith. One who proposes to devote himself to foreign languages when he has not properly mastered the language and literature of his own country is like a boat without a rower.4

It was, however, with the imposition of a special education tax in 1926 that one can speak of the beginning of a national education system.5 This was because, in a strict sense, both Minilik and Taffari Mekonnen schools were funded by their founders and not by the government. From 1926 onwards, the government had a budget for education. By the time the “developmentalist” Taffari Mekonnen became emperor in 1930, assuming the throne name Haile Selassie, the building of schools had become a status symbol among the powerful elite.

The view that Ethiopia, once a great and powerful nation, had stagnated due to conservatism and resistance to change, had gained ground by the 1920’s. Ethiopian contemporary authors such as Gebrehiwet Baykedagn, Blata Gebregziabeher Gila Mariam, Afework Gebreyesus, and Aleqa Taye Gebre Mariam had repeatedly pointed out the backwardness of Ethiopia.6 From this early period, the modern school was seen as the institution which possessed the mysterious key to rapid development. Regent Taffari Mekonnen’s views on the role of education, expressed as early as 1928, are striking for their contemporaneousness.

Although the greatness of Ethiopia and the history of all her achievements may be found fully recorded in the books of many learned men, I constantly revert in my speeches to this theme of her past history, to show how the dissensions that arose within the country in former times pulled her back and prevented her regular breathing; now, however, through the education of her children, her voice is beginning to grow stronger and she is getting back her breath satisfactorily. Her history is being revealed in her deeds and glimmers of light may already be seen.7

In spite of the fact that Haile Selassie did not explain his allusions to Ethiopia’s past, he seemed to have had very strong views on the positive role of education. His ideas concerning the objectives of education were no doubt derived from the Swedish and American mission schools with their emphasis on loyalty to king and country. Haile Selassie's ideal for a school was that of a mission school. The introduction of religious education strongly suggests the inspiration of missionary activities and the spiritual commitment of Haile Selassie himself.

On the eve of the Italian invasion of Ethiopia in 1935, there were eight primary schools. In the provinces, there were a total of 14 schools—most of which were privately financed.8 There were also several more mission schools that provided different types of primary education.9 Prior to 1935, according to the pioneering study of Richard Pankhurst, up to two hundred Ethiopians may have travelled abroad for further education.10 Compared to the countries of colonial sub-Saharan Africa, Ethiopia had far fewer schools.11 On the eve of the invasion Eritrea had more primary schools than the empire of Ethiopia.12 The Ethiopian education system has been discussed by the American educator Thomas Jesse Jones and by Olle Ericksson, the head of the Swedish Evangelical Mission to Ethiopia.13

The brief Italian occupation (1936–41) seriously disrupted the educational system that had just begun to emerge. Government schools were either closed down or were requisitioned for military purposes. To the extent that they were engaged in education, the Italians had very different objectives. During their precarious exercise of power the Italians did much to disrupt the education system they inherited by their lack of interest and by their systematic elimination of educated Ethiopians.14
When the Italians left Ethiopia in 1941, the imperial government began to lay down the educational foundations virtually from scratch. The first post-war schools were opened in 1942, and that year’s expenditure on education amounted to 600,000 birr. There was an extreme shortage of teachers and textbooks, although some British staff from the British Council were available to the government.

From 1942 until 1955, the Ethiopian government was frantically engaged in the expansion of the education system without sufficient consideration as to relevance. Under the leadership of Haile Selassie, who held the portfolio of Minister of Education until 1966, the education sector functioned without curriculum guidelines and relevant textbooks. The late emperor continued to believe, as in the 1920’s, that education held the key to Ethiopia’s development.

The high expenditure on education in relation to total expenditure, as well as the geometric growth of student enrolment remain strong witnesses to the interest and commitment of the late emperor. Expenditure on education rose from just over half a million birr in 1942 to over 19 million by 1958–59. By 1959–60, enrolment in government schools had reached nearly a quarter of a million pupils, just over 50,000 of whom were females.

With the exception of Eritrea, where teaching materials in Tigriinya were widely used, the schools in the rest of the country lacked textbooks at the elementary level. Teaching at the elementary level (the first four years) and in the intermediate grades (grades five to eight) was virtually left up to the teachers. Secondary teachers had relatively fewer problems in locating teaching manuals, since they were the same as those used in Great Britain. Until 1960 students were encouraged to sit for the General Certificate of the University of London Examination—a practice that resolved, to some extent the teachers’ predicament.

In 1943 there were 19,000 students in the country. Six years later the total enrolment had increased to just under 53,000. Enrolment continued to rise sharply and passed the 90,000 mark by 1954–55. If there were shortcomings in the Ethiopian education system during the 1942–55 period, they were not debated. The modernization process, which began to transform the public image of the state, called for the rapid training of pupils sufficiently fluent in foreign languages. The creation and staffing of the various ministries and authorities along the Western European model favoured the consolidation of a Western type of formal education.

According to Edward Jandy, an American education expert who served in Ethiopia in the middle of the 1940’s, “the second highest item in the national budget” was education. Emperor Haile Selassie, we are told, had “no keener interest in any functional unit of his government than in the Ministry of Education—a unit more intelligently staffed, efficient and forward looking than any other ministry.” The emperor believed strongly that the new Ethiopia could not progress without education, but he certainly did not reflect on the type of education conducive to the development of his country.

The educational system expanded too rapidly and provided a programme hardly related to the realities of the country. In 1946, a school day at any one of the twelve schools in Addis Ababa might have fitted the description provided by Edward Jandy:

Now let us look in upon a typical classroom of any elementary or other school. Here we really sense the crucial nature of the educational situation as it exists for pupil and instructor alike. I have entered some classrooms where the only text available was in the instructor’s hands. Sometimes, there were two textbooks for the whole classroom! In the best schools there was rarely more than a text for every two pupils. Blackboards were lacking, so also were slates and crayons. Very little or no paper—not even scratch pads—and few pencils, or pens and ink with which to practice writing were to be had. The result is that teaching has been mainly on an oral level with not much pupil participation. Most of this critical shortage is due to the fact that in this immediate post-war period supplies from abroad are still difficult to get....
Add to the above classroom situation the fact that the pupils had to learn a foreign language (English) from foreign textbooks with illustration material alien to their own culture, and you get a dramatic picture of the crucial nature of the educational process for both pupils and instructors.23

At the time when Edward Jandy left Ethiopia in 1946, there were 34,844 students of whom 3,374 were girls.24

The structure of the educational system was a hybrid derived from Great Britain and from neighbouring African countries, for example, Sudan and Kenya. A three tier system (4+4+4) was followed whereby the first four years were designated as primary, the next four years as middle or intermediate, and the third four-year period as secondary. From mid-1940’s and throughout the 1950’s students were expected to sit for the General School Leaving Certificates Examination from Great Britain. The practice began to decline with the successive growth of the University College at Addis Ababa (established in 1951). By the mid-1960’s the Ethiopian School Leaving Certificate had become the only valid diploma.

While the ruling elite (the royalty and those engaged in the administration of education) up to 1954 remained unaware of the social contradictions that the educational system was bound to bring about, the United States’ aid organizations by this period had assembled sufficient knowledge on the educational sector. As a part of the aid package deal, the Americans began to shape the Ethiopian educational policy through an Education Advisory Group assimilated into The Long Term Planning Committee under the Vice Minister of Education.25

In its final report the Long Term Planning Committee recommended the introduction of community schools for basic education.26 The committee also recommended that the curriculum be designed to fit the student for better living in his home community and environment.27 It further advocated that educational objectives be geared to the quickest possible spread of universal fundamental education. Moreover, the committee called for the schools to teach students effective command of Amharic.28 If George Lipsky’s account is correct, Ethiopian schools had no Amharic manuals until the experts from the University of Oklahoma designed and published the first reader in 1955.29

Consolidation and decline, 1955–1972

With the establishment of a permanent body within the Ministry of Education (MOE) entrusted to implement the recommendations of the Long-Term Planning Committee, the education system began to gain more permanent structural features. The rapid expansion of elementary (primary) education was envisaged in order to provide candidates for the secondary and higher institutions, which had vacancies up to the mid-1960’s. More attention was to be paid to teacher training and the curriculum. The First Five Year Development Plan, 1957–62 stressed even more the need for manpower planning.

With a continuous influx of aid from the United States, the educational sector expanded at a rate that could hardly be justified by the growth of national revenue. Enrolment in public schools increased from about 35,000 in 1946 to approximately 95,000 in 1954–55.30

While the Emperor Haile Selassie continued to believe that he was laying down the foundations for the rapid development of the “New Ethiopia,” some young Ethiopians were reflecting upon the basic problems of the educational sector. In one of these rare reflections, Dr. Mulugeta Wodajo, writing in 1958, pointed out four conspicuous limitations of the system. These were i) the inadequacy of the system; ii) the irrelevance of
the curriculum; iii) the administrative and intellectual confusion created by the deliberate recruitment of teachers from many nations; and iv) overcentralization.\textsuperscript{31}

The shortcomings outlined above were frequently mentioned from the latter part of the 1960’s but not the conclusion that the author drew at such an early period:

If the schools are to preserve their identity, the Ethiopian national system of education must be both a reflection of the past and a guide to the future. The educational system must in the first place aid in the transmission of the nation’s cultural heritage from one generation to the next and, in addition, it must train capable persons who have the ability to interpret, enrich, and adopt that heritage to new needs and to changing conditions as they may arise. Any system of education in Ethiopia that fails to satisfy these demands is bound to make the country a lost nation—a nation living in darkness whom the world will forget and ignore.\textsuperscript{32}

There was hardly time for the warning signals of Dr. Mulugeta Wodajo to be given the consideration they deserved. The decade of the 1960s brought with it a conception of education akin to magic formulae that would bring about national development. With the UNESCO-sponsored Conference of African States on the Development of Education in Africa held in 1961 at Addis Ababa, educational plans and targets became the affairs of the United Nations and other non governmental organizations.\textsuperscript{33} According to the resolution of the Conference on African Education, Ethiopia, compared to other African countries, lagged far behind in educational development.\textsuperscript{34}

The objectives set down by the Addis Ababa Conference on African Education, i.e., universal primary education by 1980, plunged Ethiopia into a policy of expansion of the sector without regard to quality, relevance? and job opportunities. That the education sector did not expand according to the intent of the Addis Ababa plan was mainly due to lack of funds.

Equipped with the recommendations of the Long-Term Planning Committee and the resolutions of the Addis Ababa Conference on African Education (1961), the Ministry of Education proceeded to expand education well beyond its financial limits. Most of the expansion especially in buildings and equipment, was financed by a series of World Bank loans.\textsuperscript{35} The decade of the 1960’s witnessed the expansion of the sector, the introduction of a series of restructuring measures, and a growing awareness of the need for a more comprehensive reform. Enrollment at all levels increased from just over 196,000 in 1960–61 to over 1,100,000 by 197475.\textsuperscript{36}

The dramatic expansion of education notwithstanding, Ethiopia was by 1974–75 very far from meeting the target of universal primary education set out by the Conference on African Education. By 1974 primary education was accessible to only twelve per cent of the primary school age population. And yet, since the drastic expansion of the educational sector was not accompanied by a comparable expansion of the economic sector, students were beginning to perceive a future of unemployment after completion of secondary education. According to Desta Asayehegn’s assessment, by 1974 up to 25 per cent of secondary school graduates were unemployed.\textsuperscript{37}

While the education sector, gaining its own momentum, expanded virtually uncontrolled, the Ministry of Education attempted to restructure the system without any significant success. In 1963–64 the grade structure was changed from the 4+4+4 year combination into six years of primary school, followed by two years of junior secondary and a four-year secondary programme, that is a 6+2+4 year combination. With the new structure for the first time Amharic became the only language of instruction at the primary level—the most significant reform of the decade.\textsuperscript{38}

Another area where an attempt at some reform was initiated was curriculum. While the measures aimed at evolving a national curriculum for primary education were partially successful,\textsuperscript{39} similar attempts for secondary schools proved most intractable.\textsuperscript{40} Up to 1970 more than half of the secondary school teachers were English-speaking foreign-
ers—a teaching corps whose commitment to long-term national interests was indeed marginal.41 In spite of some attempts to introduce non-academic subjects into the secondary school curriculum, the predominance of academic subjects remained in tact.42

By the end of 1969 Ethiopian urban society and the educational sector were in a serious crisis. The modern economic sector (both public and private) proved too limited to accommodate secondary graduates. Due to the unequal access to education, virtually all the secondary schools were located in Addis Ababa, Shoa province, and Asmara.43 Therefore, most of the unemployed secondary graduates were found in the two major cities.

Fully aware of the bleak prospects for the future, from 1970 onwards secondary students had begun to stage demonstrations and to boycott classes. The university students, who from mid-1960’s assumed the role of the only organized opposition, began campaigning for a clean break with the country’s history and tradition. The university students’ boundless hatred of their country and its society and therefore, their determination to dictate a socialist ideology, lacked the most minimum knowledge of the dynamics of social change.44

Dissatisfaction with the educational sector was also voiced by conservative elements; the church and the nobility pointed out that those who passed through the modern school were disrespectful of their society and its institutions. They argued that there was very little that was Ethiopian in the curriculum. Furthermore, they pointed to the problem of employment facing secondary graduates—a most paradoxical situation in a country where only about four per cent of the age group had access to secondary education and where over 90 per cent of the population were illiterate.

Dissatisfaction from abroad dealt with Ethiopia’s extremely poor performance in its efforts to achieve universal literacy by the year 1980 according to the pledge entered by Ethiopia at the Conference on African Education held in Addis Ababa in 1961.

As a response to the above criticisms, the Imperial government made one of its boldest policy decisions, namely to conduct a thorough review of the educational sector.45 The Education Sector Review was officially constituted in October 1971 with the following responsibilities:

- to analyse the education and training system of Ethiopia and its capability of promoting economic, social and cultural development;
- to suggest whenever necessary ways to improve and expand the education and training system in order that it might achieve aims relevant both to the society and the overall development of the country;
- to suggest ways in which education could best be utilized to promote a national integration and;
- to identify priority studies and investments in education and training.

The Education Sector Review (ESR) was made up of 81 experts, 51 of whom were Ethiopians. Although in the course of its brief existence (October 1971 to August 1972) the ESR left behind precious documentation on the Ethiopian educational system, it hardly confronted the issues for which it was established. Instead, it devoted its attention to strategies for a rapid expansion of primary education with the view of achieving universal literacy before the year 2000.46 Universal literacy was justified on the ground that it was a long denied right of all citizens of the country.

The ESR proposed three alternatives designed to hasten the pace of primary education. The first alternative proposed a three tier system based on six years of primary, four years of junior secondary and four years of senior secondary schooling (6+4+4 years). It was envisaged that this system would work with the introduction of a double shift system and the lengthening of the school year from 180 days to 220 days.
Alternative two, with which ESR is closely identified, called for a system based on four years of primary education (known as minimum formation education) for the great majority of the population. About twenty percent would then proceed to follow another four year junior secondary programme. The best of those completing grade eight would be allowed to attend the four year senior secondary programme. Alternative two with its 4+4+4 year system was slightly different from alternative one, where the duration of primary education was six years. Alternative two was no doubt designed to limit the expansion of secondary education.\textsuperscript{47}

Alternative three was a modification of alternative two (4+2+4 years), where the junior secondary programme was reduced from four to two years. It was suggested that students begin grade one at nine years of age.

The ESR estimated that over 90 per cent of the primary school age group would have access to education by the year 2000, if either alternatives two or three were adopted for implementation.\textsuperscript{48}

The ESR conference that met in August 1972 approved alternative two together with the proposal for basic formation education (4+2 years) taken from alternative three. It was also envisaged that secondary education would increase at the rate of the growth of the population, estimated at 2.1 per cent per annum. This was indeed a sharp decrease compared with the over 10 per cent annual increment of senior secondary enrolment during the decade of the 1960's.

The most radical aspect of the ESR was that it made the rural population the target of educational policy. However, a serious oversight was committed when the ESR urged the government to implement the recommendations prior to a nation-wide debate extending over several years.\textsuperscript{49}

The recommendations of the ESR would have had far-reaching implications had they been implemented. They were not implemented largely because the urban population (teachers, secondary students and parents) rightly perceived the reform as detrimental to their interests. The ESR recommendations favoured the countryside and the rural population at the expense of the urban population. The countryside and the rural population lost the struggle, because in this poorly articulated controversy over allocation of scarce resources, the urban population saw to it that its interests were best served.

Although doomed to failure, the ESR and the crisis of the education sector were swept away in the successive wave of local and national strikes that began early in 1974 and continued unabated until the overthrow of the Imperial system in September 1974.

\textit{Old problems and new challenges, 1975–1990}

The new state assumed its responsibilities with two rather controversial interpretations of the educational policies of the former regime. The new state pointed out repeatedly that the educational policy of the Imperial regime was elitist (favouring some regions and urban areas) and that the curriculum did not take into account the concrete conditions in the country.\textsuperscript{50} With hindsight it can now be argued that the Imperial educational policy was no more elitist than the policy pursued by the post-Revolution state. On the eve of its downfall the Imperial regime confronted the twin issues of limiting secondary enrolment to the country's absorption capacity, as well as extending universal primary education. The rate of expansion of the sector between the last fifteen years of the Imperial regime (from 1960 up to 1974) and the first fifteen years of the Post-Revolution state (1975–89)) is indeed comparable. Enrolment (including those in private schools) increased from 224,934 in 1959–60 to 1,042,900 in 1974–75 or at the rate of about 15 per cent per annum. During the 1975–89 period enrolment increased from 1,042,900 to 3,926,700 or at a rate of about 12 per cent annually.\textsuperscript{51}
The Post-Revolution State is indeed correct in its criticism of the Imperial educational policy for pursuing a curriculum that was foreign to the needs of the country. Although the new state showed a far more consistent concern over the need of evolving an appropriate curriculum, the case of the history curriculum for secondary schools strongly suggests that in reality far less has been done. This is discussed in chapter three below.

The Post-Revolution State accepted the challenge of expanding the education sector on the assumption that education held the key to the country's development. In contrast to the Imperial regime the Post Revolution State appears to be fully aware that national development would be possible only with the expansion of education. This view, first laid down in the National Democratic Revolution (1976), was further elaborated in the five volume policy document known as the General Directives of Ethiopian Education produced by the Ministry of Education in 1980.

An area that the Post-Revolution State has every reason to be proud of deals, of course, with the literacy campaign. Established in 1979, the National Literacy Campaign Co-ordinating Committee managed to spread literacy among ten million people by 1983. The result of these literacy campaigns was that the rate of illiteracy was reduced from about 93 per cent in 1975 to 37 per cent in 1983. Ethiopia has been internationally acclaimed for its successful campaign against illiteracy, although more intractable problems, such as the impact of literacy on national development, have yet to be seriously looked into.

Between 1976 and 1982, junior and senior secondary school enrolment expanded well beyond the absorption capacity of the economy. As early as 1980, the MOE began to send warning signals to the government concerning the social problems created by the expansion of secondary education. At the same time the MOE devised a plan designed to avoid the growing pool of unemployable secondary school graduates. According to this plan, emphasis would be placed on providing eight years of universal polytechnical education and on a curriculum that would enhance integration into the world of labour. This policy, partially accepted by the government, had the ambition of providing eight years of universal education to all children of primary school age by 1986.

As this book goes to print, the MOE is in the process of seeking the approval of the government for a new educational policy that would entitle every citizen to a ten year polytechnical education.

The Post-Revolution State is certainly more inclined to meet the social, economic, political and educational challenges than its predecessor. It is my firm belief that the crisis of the education sector that is outlined in chapter six below did not arise due to the lack of commitment from the government but due to a variety of misconceptions about education and its role in society. Therefore, this study is conducted with the aim of initiating a debate on reform of the sector by questioning some hitherto unassailable assumptions.

Notes


2. Thomas Jesse Jones, Education in East Africa. A Study of East Central and South Africa by the Second African Education Commission under the auspices of the Phelps-Stokes Fund, in cooperation with the International Education Board, New York, 1925, p. 326.

3. Address by Taffari Mekonnen to the missionaries of Addis Ababa at a dinner given in their honour at the palace in November 1923.
“It is with great pleasure that I express my thanks to you for having accepted the invitation to come here on this occasion. Not alone on my behalf have I invited you to come tonight, you men who have come from the remotest countries of Sweden and America, but on behalf of her whom you have come to serve with such a spirit of self-denial; it is Ethiopia which in my person presents to you her most profound gratitude. I therefore, thank you on behalf of Ethiopia for having the desire to spread knowledge here.

It is historically proved that Ethiopia, our country which lies at one extreme end of Africa, has had its own government for many ages. Ever since the time she embraced Christianity in the third century (sic) up to recent times, she was engaged in bloody conflicts against Moslems and heathen in order to defend her Christianity. The enemies, however, failed to subject her and force her to deny her religion. On account of these facts, Ethiopia could not advance her power.

You honourable educators, who give instruction and direct the minds of the young people, however, are accomplishing this noble work. You are not teaching them solely how to read and write, how to calculate, but are also instructing them to be good servants of their country and to consider such service among sacred things. You teach them that the cause of the deplorable evils that afflict humanity in this world is selfishness. You teach them what brings honour and greatness to human beings is justice and helping each other. You have fulfilled the principle of helping others and renouncing self-love. You have taken as the basis of your work the words of the Gospel, “The man who gave to the poor loaned to God.” You, without expecting any recompense here, are accomplishing a great service.” (Quoted in Thomas Jesse Jones, *Education in East Africa*, p. 332.)


5. Ibid., pp. 268–9.


8. Ibid., p. 279.

9. For the number and type of mission schools available in Ethiopia during the 1920’s, see Thomas Jesse Jones, *Education in East Africa*, pp. 327–30.


16. According to Maaza Bekele, the first attempt to unify curricular offerings at the primary level was made in 1947. The elementary school curriculum for grades 1 to 6 was worked out by a committee consisting largely of foreigners. The official curriculum stated that Amharic should be the language of instruction in the first two grades with a gradual transition to English, beginning in the third grade. Maaza Bekele, *A Study of Modern Education in Ethiopia Its foundations, its development, its future, with emphasis on primary education*, Ph.D. thesis, Columbia University, 1966, p. 83.

17. “Education Report: Analysis of Developments in Recent Years,” *Ethiopia Observer*, 5:1 (1961), p. 61. The breakdown was as follows: 972 schools (includes mission, private and
those schools run by the Ethiopian Church), 6,511 teachers; 5,938 classrooms; 224,934 students, 51,439 of whom were girls. Whereas 181,163 pupils were enrolled in government schools, the remaining 44,771 students were the responsibility of mission, church and private corporate bodies.

18. For a description of the colonial textbooks used in Eritrea, see Tekeste Negash, *Italian Colonialism*, pp. 66–91.


25. I regret that I did not have access to the final report of the Long Term Planning Committee. The report is discussed, however, by several authors, for example, Teshome Wagaw, *Education in Ethiopia*, Ann Arbor, 1979, pp. 10507; George Lipsky, *Ethiopia*, p. 91. For an even more detailed commentary see Ole-Christian Bjerkanko, *Plans, Targets and Trends in Ethiopian Education*, 1972, pp. 110–116.

26. The recommendation for the introduction of community schools led to the establishment of the first and only school of its kind at Debre Berhan until the post-Imperial era. Although since 1975 there has been a growing awareness of the need for community schools, both funds and enthusiasm have yet to be secured.


31. Mulugeta Wedajo, “Post-war Reform in Ethiopian Education,” *Comparative Education Review*, 2:3 (1959) 2630, p. 27. Concerning the curriculum the author wrote: “This is in a sense to be expected since many of the teachers above fourth grade are foreigners and almost all textbooks are from abroad.”


33. The idea of a conference originated at UNESCO’s eleventh General Conference. With UNESCO’s logistical and technical support the African Ministers of Education approved a target where universal primary enrolment was to be achieved by 1980.

34. Ole-Christian Bjerkanko, *Plans, Targets and Trends in Ethiopian Education*, p. 126. According to the conference resolution Ethiopia was expected to provide universal primary education by 1981. The country was expected to provide secondary schools places for 23 per cent of the 15 to 19 year age group. For further details, see Ole-Christian Bjerkanko, p. 125. The objectives of the Addis Ababa plan were based on two assumptions. The first was an implicit recognition of the marginal attention paid by the former colonial powers to education. The second assumption was the belief that rapid expansion of universal education was conducive for development.

35. From 1963 onwards the budget for education fell below 10 per cent of the total expenditure. See Ole-Christian Bjerkanko, *Plans, Targets and Trends in Ethiopian Education*, p. 150.

World Bank loans began in 1966. The First Education Project signed in 1966 and completed in 1972, assisted in the expansion of secondary, technical and teacher education, and in the diversification of curricula at various levels. The Second Education Project signed in 1971 and completed in 1979, helped teacher and agricultural education, with a modest expansion of secondary education to improve geographical distribution and quality. The Third Education Project, signed in 1973 and completed in 1980, provided assistance to rural education, science facilities at Addis Ababa University, and production of textbooks and instructional materials. The Fourth Education Project, signed in 1978 and completed in 1981, assisted in the expan-
sion of basic and non-formal education, the training of specialized rural development personnel and the consolidation of social science facilities at Addis Ababa University. The Fifth Education Project, signed in 1981 and completed in 1986, provided for basic and secondary education facilities, improved quality and relevance of education, and the training of higher level manpower in veterinary medicine. The Sixth Education Project signed in 1984 was designed to improve quality and equity in the education system, particularly at the primary and secondary levels, and in teacher training. The Seventh Education Project was being negotiated in the beginning of 1988. In all nearly two hundred million US dollars have been invested by the World Bank in Ethiopian education since 1966.


38. Prior to 1963 there was no uniformity regarding the medium of instruction. In private and mission schools all subjects except Amharic were taught in English or French from grade four; from grade five in government schools. See Edward Jandy, “The New Ethiopia and Socio-Educational Problems,” p. 120. See also George Lipsky, Ethiopia, p. 93.

39. The change of the structure as well as the introduction of a new curriculum was a result of a pilot project initiated in 1958. For a detailed description of the project and the origins of the curriculum, see Maaza Bekele, A Study of Modern Education in Ethiopia, pp. 206–211.

40. The major problems dealt with the shortage of teaching materials. Some subjects had no textbooks at all, not even a teacher’s manual, while for other subjects there was an extreme shortage of textbooks. See Teshome Wagaw, Education in Ethiopia, p. 158.

41. In 1965 it was estimated that out of 1070 secondary teachers only 424 were Ethiopians. The rest were foreigners of whom ca. 300 were Peace Corps volunteers from the United States. Most of the Ethiopians were engaged in teaching sports, home economics and handicrafts. See Teshome Wagaw, Education in Ethiopia, p. 163.


44. For a discussion on the attitudes of Addis Ababa University students towards their country, see Chapter three. See also the remarkable study by Beyene Negewo, The Impact of University Education on the Formation of Political Attitudes of Ethiopia, PhD. dissertation, Stanford University, 1977.

45. The World Bank agreed in 1971 to finance the carrying out of the sector review as well as for the supply of the required expertise. The Education Sector Review is summarized and interpreted with a good deal of nostalgia by one of its members, Teshome Wagaw in his book Education in Ethiopia, pp. 184 195.


47. Alternative two envisaged the establishment of a non-formal educational network for dropouts and to some extent for adults. It also envisaged great changes in the curriculum.

48. Only 65 per cent of the primary school age population would attend school if alternative one were to be implemented.

49. Teshome Wagaw wrote that the final Education Sector Review document was classified as secret and that teachers and parents were hardly informed about it. See his Education in Ethiopia, p. 194.


54. This problem has been pointed out in a Canadian study completed in 1988 but unpublished.


56. *Ibid.*, vol. 5, p. 2

57 The extent to which the planners within the Ministry of Education were detached from reality can be seen from the fact that by 1988 only 20 per cent of the primary school age population attended school. The country has no financial resources to provide eight years of primary education for every child in the primary school age group. The study by Dawit Getachew shows clearly that the economic base could at best provide primary education for about 20 per cent of this age group. See Dawit Getachew, “Population Growth and the Demand for Education in Ethiopia,” Paper read to the National Conference on Population Issues in Ethiopia’s National Development, Addis Ababa, July, 1989.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


Blaug, M. (1985) "Where are we now with the economics of education?". Economics of Education Review, 1:1.


Lillis, K. et al. (1988) *Vocationalizing Education.*


