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ABSTRACT

Leaders and decision makers in Africa and nations of African diaspora must face a number of challenges in their attempts to further development through literacy: (1) reinvent a concept of African development that is a product of the native genius of Africa and that is rooted in the matrix of indigenous cultural values, realities, and possibilities; (2) recommit to the essential role of education, and especially literacy, in African development, and augment this commitment with the political will and material resources needed for a near universally literate Africa; and (3) mobilize intellectuals, administrators, and the common peoples to become social activists working for their own social transformation. An examination of the history of policies instituted in Africa since the 1960s reveals that, although significant progress has been made in such areas as reducing infant mortality, increasing life expectancy, and increasing literacy, economic growth has been slow. Despite the economic problems existing in Africa, policymakers must not forget the value of investing in literacy education. The model adopted for African development must not be based on attempts to "catch up" with the West but must be an "authentic" African model that emphasizes communicative action through oral communication and literacy. (Contains 43 references.) (MN)

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POLICY CHALLENGES OF LITERACY FOR DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA: BUILDING PILLARS OF PROSPERITY, PYRAMIDS OF PEACE*

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POLICY CHALLENGES OF LITERACY FOR DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA: BUILDING PILLARS OF PROSPERITY, PYRAMIDS OF PEACE*

I

Introduction

Pillars of prosperity and pyramids of peace are not merely material projects built with stone and steel. These are, first and foremost, products of utopian imagination. Utopian imagination as well as cultural action are unique to human beings, the only creatures on earth who are able to "make symbolic transformations of reality" (Langer 1942), that is, they are able to experience reality and then are able to abstract it in symbols to communicate it to others. Thereby, human beings have formed "reason, rite and art" (Langer 1942), acquired history, and developed culture (Goody 1968).

Symbolic transformations of reality using shared symbols -- that is, languages -- are what made culture-making possible. Until some 5000 years ago, speech was the only tool of symbolic transformations. Today, writing, and thereby literacy, has added a second dimension to this uniquely human potential for making symbolic transformations of reality. Within the present-day context of an all-encompassing print culture that covers the whole world, literacy has come to be the soul of our civilizations, and the breath of our cultural beings.

Thus we can truly say, that "we are all a conversation," perpetually created and recreated with the words we learn and choose to speak and write and the words that are spoken and written to and about us. In the total, many-splendored process of culture-making, we only deal in and with words -- words heard and spoken, and words read and written. And all of us today, men and women, great and small, presidents and ministers, priests and professors, generals, engineers, industrialists and agriculturists, traders and sales-persons, and doctors and nurses, we are all literacy workers, practicing and peddling our specialized literacies.

Purpose of this Presentation

In this paper, I seek to bring to the attention of leaders and decision makers in Africa and in the nations of African diaspora some crucial policy challenges of development, and of the role of literacy in development. There are three basic challenges. First, is the challenge to re-invent a concept of African development that is a product of the native genius of Africa, a concept rooted in the matrix of indigenous cultural values,

realities and possibilities. Second, is the need for policy makers of African nations to be re-committed to the essential role of education, and particularly literacy, in African development and to join this commitment with the political will and the material resources needed for the near-universalization of literacy in African societies. Third, is the challenge to mobilize intellectuals, administrators, and the common peoples, intellectuals -- that they may put their moral philosophies, social theories, and understandings about participative processes at the service of their societies; administrators -- that they may not merely issue orders and impose regulations but become social activists on behalf of the people, enabling them to do things they would not be able to do without help from the state; and the common peoples -- that they may dare to hope, act and participate, and not remain mere spectators to their own social transformations (1).

II

Development, and Literacy for Development: The African Experience

As freedom was breaking out in Africa, the leaders of independence movements in various parts of the continent already knew what the chorus of development theorists, educators and sundry experts would tell them later: that development to be authentic would have to be development of the people, validated by the people through their willing participation in the processes of development; that this participation to be meaningful would require an educated citizenry; and that to most of the African peoples, bypassed by the formal educational systems, education could only be adult education and adult literacy, delivered in out-of-school settings in rural and urban communities.

Development Vision and Reality

In the idealistic 1960s, Sekou Toure of Guinea; Leopold Sedar Senghor of Senegal; Kwame Nkrumah and K.A. Busia of Ghana; Jomo Kenyatta, Tom Mboya and Oginga Odinga of Kenya, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, and Nelson Mandela of South Africa, to name just a few of the African leaders, were all dreaming the same dream and suffering from the same pain. They were expressing the very deep hurts inflicted on the African soul and soil under colonial experience; they were swearing to be vigilant, intransigent and severe in rejecting and removing the vestiges of colonialism from Africa; and they were promising to uproot selfish individualism, mediocrity, and inferiority that Africans had been conditioned to accept (Sigmund 1972).

They promised to generate a cultural revival to reclaim the African heritage and build upon the democratic processes traditionally practiced in African communities. They promised their people not only a better life in material terms but they also freedom, equality, justice, the inalienable right to control their own destiny, and the right to criticize their new leaders. They talked of brotherhood and solidarity that would transcend ethnic and national boundaries, leading to Pan-Africanism, and indeed to universalism (Sigmund 1972).

It is now known, from the hindsight of history, that African socialism did not take root or flower. It did not connect with the institutional arrangement of collaboration and communal responsibility existing at the grassroots, and it did not remove poverty -- in fact its practice exacerbated disparities. The experiment with African Humanism did not fare any better. The One-Party state became a dictatorship of the party in power. Corruption became endemic. Democratic centralism could not maintain a balance between local initiative and guidance from the center. Citizens were excluded from participation. The "African Personality" was badly wounded by the arrows of individualism, consumerism, materialism, capitalism and neo-colonialism. Tribal strife, ethnic violence and civil war spread. Ujamaa -- familihood -- did not work. Nor did Pan-Africanism.

Educational Agendas and Experiences

Education was always placed at the core of the development ideology in Africa. Too often, the emphasis was on formal education, where impressive gains were indeed made in expanding access. Quite a few African leaders had the foresight to understand the necessity of adult education and adult literacy delivered in nonformal settings for disseminating development knowledge to adult men and women bypassed by the colonial school systems. Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana pointed to the necessity of mass literacy to attack ignorance, apathy, prejudice, poverty, disease, and isolation (Nkrumah 1946, Haizel 1991); Houephouet Boigny of Cote d'Ivoire saw the need of literacy (Cote d'Ivoire 1975) and Mathieu Kerekou of Benin (Benin 1979) promised literacy in maternal languages to bring about people's awakening and participation; Agostino Neto of Angola (Mozambique, Angola and Guinea Information Center 1979) and Samora Machel of Mozambique (LSM Information Center 1975) considered literacy essential for decolonization of their countries and for raising the cultural and technological levels of their peoples.

In the meantime, Unesco had continued consistently to serve the interest of adult literacy around the world and had kept literacy high on its own agenda. Unesco established a pilot

program that brought literacy programs for the first time to some African countries (Unesco/UNDP 1976). A Unesco-sponsored, "Regional Conference of Ministers of Education and Those Responsible for Economic Planning in African Member States," held in Harare, Zimbabwe, June 28 to July 3, 1982, unanimously adopted the Harare Declaration -- a seminal policy statement on basic education and literacy in Africa -- which, in turn, led to the establishment of a regional program for the eradication of illiteracy in Africa by the end of the century. By 1983, 31 states of the region had expressed their desire to take part in this regional program (Haidara 1990, Unesco 1983).

Programmatic Response to Policy Declarations

However, as African leaders after independence sought to govern, they encountered many problems. Problems of hunger, ill-health, and violence demanded more immediate attention than education and literacy. Old institutions required maintenance and support before new ones could be established and pressed into service. The immediate present stole attention from the long-term future, and the never-ending crises crowded out proactive policy initiatives. Commitments to education and literacy were forgotten; passion was gone. New foreign advisors from abroad did not help, as they gave African leaders confusing advice, telling them that they needed primary education more than adult literacy. Others intoned: Why not use media for dissemination of development information, especially when illiterate adults, both men and women, themselves were unwilling to come to learn to read? The policy arena of adult literacy and nonformal education ended up being muddled and confused (Bhola 1990c).

Nevertheless, it is a pleasant surprise that African nations should have yet responded and undertaken some of the most impressive literacy campaigns, program and projects during the last thirty years. At least half of the African nations implemented some adult literacy or functional literacy projects however small. Tanzania, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Guinea-Bissau, and some others, launched large-scale literacy programs and campaigns (Bhola, 1984, 1990a, 1992, Bhola et al. 1983, Ouane 1990). In sum, according to figures from Unesco sources published in 1990, there were 139 million illiterates in Africa, 52.7% of its adult population 15 years and older and 14% of the world's total (Nascimento 1990:4).

Table 1 shows selected indices from the UNDP's Human Development Index (HDI) for countries of Sub-Sahara Africa.

INSERT TABLE 1 HERE

The figures in the table do not present a hopeful picture. Development, literacy, health and freedom all seem to be languishing in Africa. Except for a few countries of Africa that have considerable mineral resources, Africa is a continent of the poor, and, according to the latest alert issued by the World Bank, it is likely to be poorer by the year 2000. According to UN standards, thirty-seven countries of Sub-Sahara are low income countries -- with per capita income of a dollar a day. Life expectancy at birth remains low and infant mortality remains high as compared to world averages. Food production is growing at half the rate of population growth. Adult literacy is nowhere near universal. In the aftermath of the revolutions of 1989 and 1990 in Eastern Europe, several African countries have attempted democratic reforms but with few successes so far.

To put the above in a historical frame, it should be said that since 1960 infant mortality rate in Africa has fallen by 37 percent, and life expectancy has increased from 40 years to 52 years. Adult literacy increased by two-thirds between 1970 and 1985. But economic growth has been slow in the 1980s as population rose by 3.2 percent annually, and GNP per capita fell by an average of 2.2 per year during the last ten years (UNDP 1991).

What Failed -- Literacy?

Too many are too often prone to ask: In a situation such as the one prevailing in Africa, does it make sense to waste resources on education and literacy? The answer is a resounding "Yes"! National resources spent on agricultural extension, on primary health care and on literacy may have been the best investments in every country of Africa, without exception; and resources spent on literacy may have improved returns on national expenditures on health and agriculture manifold.

Literacy although still below the 50 percent mark in Africa, it may yet have made important contributions both at the levels of individuals and structures. The case of Tanzania is instructive in this regard. While its GNP per capita was sliding downward, the grim figures of infant mortality were decreasing over the years of the literacy campaign and post-literacy work. Literacy may have strengthened Tanzania's subsistence economy and may have helped people fight hunger, even though the effects of literacy did not show up in the GNP -- which is reflective, basically, of the

performance of the formal economy. Literacy may have helped also in the emergence of a political culture that enabled Tanzania to survive the series of crises that the country has had to face without internal strife.

Africa Through Western Eyes Today

The West after an impetuous love-affair with Africa from the early 1960s and into the 1970s, seems now to have written it off and is more than willing to leave it to its "inevitable fate" (Baker 1993). The Economist of London in its January 1988 issue trivialized Africa as a continent that in population is less than half of India and claims merely 4% of the trade with the West; it then unabashedly suggests that the West move to greener pastures. "Typical attitude toward Africa is now either 'liberal' disappointment and despair, or diehard cynical dismissal as the inevitable consequence of an inability on the part of Africans to govern themselves (Baker 1993)." The way things are unfolding, Africa cannot expect anything much by way of development assistance from the West and may receive only minimal humanitarian aid to fight its frequent droughts, famines and other crises.

As the world moves towards the new millennium, Africa must resolve to help itself by an exercise of imagination, will, perseverance, discipline and sacrifice.

III

Re-Inventing Africa: A Model of Authentic Development

Models of purposive action (2) always include a mix of the normative and the theoretical-empirical. Values cannot be separated from facts, though both values and facts must be warranted. The model of authentic development presented here reflects an evolution of the concept of development itself (Illich 1971, Korten 1984, Max-Neef at al. 1989, UNDP 1991, Unesco 1982). It is, of course, an idealized model rooted in a particular set of values. It assumes national leadership that fits the mode of philosopher-kings -- leaders with vision and morality, with universalistic values and genuine intentions to lead social action on behalf of their people. The theoretical assumptions of the model are laid bare in the two components of the larger model, asserting that for authentic development, a society needs both prosperity and peace and that the two exist in a dialectical relationship of mutual reinforcement. Without peace at home prosperity is impossible, and without prosperity, peace is fragile. The two interrelated models of peace and of prosperity are nested

within a larger framework defined by utopian imagination of the leadership and shared with the people through "communicative action" (Ulrich 1988) on the wings of orality and literacy. It is by no means a model of instant development. A time frame of 25 to 30 years is projected for such a model to actualize and bear fruit.

INSERT THE MODEL OF AUTHENTIC DEVELOPMENT HERE

We begin first with the framework of the model:

Utopian Imagination for Re-inventing Development

Policy making in its essence is an exercise of utopian imagination -- imagining bold new social futures for peoples that are not only desirable but also feasible. The challenge for African leaders is to invent a new definition of development and then to engrave this new image of development on the conscience of their peoples. This is a challenge of both imagining and educating.

What Development Cannot, and Should Not Be

After decades of experience with development, it is quite clear that development in Africa cannot be a game of "catching-up" with the West when the West continues to consume 4/5th of the world's wealth. Africa cannot develop material infrastructures on the Western scale nor bring to their people the levels of material consumption enjoyed by the West. Under the catch-up scenario, there simply are not enough resources to go around.

What seems impossible to achieve is also not worth achieving. Western development has denuded forests, destroyed land, polluted waters and air, destroyed the sense of community, ravaged families, and savaged children. People have become alien to contentment as they thirst perpetually for thrills of violence and highs of drugs. The Third World should take hold of itself, and on no account repeat the Western experience of reckless exploitation of the planet and its peoples. The new development scenario should not include the patterns of organization of production and of human relationships that have been necessitated by the manic desire to consume more and more -- in a vacuum of social responsibility, disassociated from the contemplative and the spiritual.

What African Development Should be Like

I am, of course, not suggesting a vow of poverty for Africans, or perpetual political, social and economic marginality for African nations. What I am suggesting is that the concept of African development should be scripted by Africans themselves and that this scripting should not be based on mimicry but on a new dialectic between the endogenous and the exogenous. This dialectic should be rooted in the African heritage, informed by the native genius of the people of Africa. This conception of development should conform to a definition of "moral being" and of "good life" in African terms.

A son of Africa, Yoloye has stated that "in counteracting the underdeveloping process ... the first barriers to tackle are mainly psychological ones -- finding the inner strength and deliberately fighting its inferiority complex (Yoloye 1980)." Other African commentators have made the same point that Western solutions have not and will not fulfil the needs of African societies steeped in their values and traditions (Nwagwu et al., 1989). After reclaiming both confidence and culture, Africans must seek development that is holistic and participatory with "the logic of place, people, and resources bound into locally, self-sustaining human ecological systems (Korten 1984)." While the development objectives and processes are situated in the communities, African governments and regional institutions should play inspirational, integrative and enabling roles.

In Africa, as in many other developing areas, the invisible informal economy must become both visible and viable, and food production will have to be at the core of all development. From this starting point, Africa should work towards a new balance between the informal economy and the formal economy, and between agriculture and industrialization. Industrialization, in the near future, will have to be based on an intermediate technology, developed and implemented by Africans themselves. Africans must not be hypnotized by the new drumbeat of "market knows best!" The invisible hand of the so-called free market forces must not be allowed to steal from the disadvantaged classes all chances of a good life (world Bank 1988). Socialism is not dead, it is totalitarianism that is supposed to have died. Socialist gains, wherever made in Africa, must be protected. In the name of the free markets and structural adjustment, Africa should not throw its poor to the wolves. Mixed economies -- neither socialist nor wholly free market -- may be the solution in most of the Third World.

Social aspirations in regard to home, work, play, and worship, and social institutions governing social relations between

genders and age-sets will have to be built around an African core. There will have to be focus on cooperation and communitarianism rather than on individualism; and on altruism and contentment rather than greed and the never-ending search for more. Political institutions will have to be invented that incorporate human rights and human freedoms, and yet are not necessarily codified in the language of Western constitutions.

The structures of international relationships will need to be re-arranged. One does not have to be a revolutionary, or a militant radical, or a believer in some theory of conspiracy to see that the existing relationships of dependency need a critical look and need to be transformed into genuine interdependence among nations. At the moment, international relations between the developed and the underdeveloped nations are grossly unequal transactions. Indeed, the redefinition of development proposed, may not be permitted by the international system without a fight. Inside the various African nations, the vested interests will support and subvert change in the same breath. In this connection, the African Americans and friends of Africa in America and in the West also need to realize that they should not view the African future in the image of the future of the African American.

Communicative Action Through Orality and Literacy

The other concept woven in the framework of the model of authentic development (See Figure) is "communicative action" through orality and literacy. The products of utopian imagination should not be fabricated by the elite in grand isolation from the common people. These products should be tested and validated in the process of communicative action (Ulrich 1988) -- a dialog between leaders and peoples, in speech and print.

Orality-literacy symbiosis. In justifying policies for literacy in African development, we are not by any means discounting orality -- how could we? -- or trivializing the great oral traditions of cultures, or implying that face-to-face communication and the use of electronic media in education and extension should be ended. Nor are we suggesting that literacy is necessary and by itself sufficient, and that the role of literacy in development is thus deterministic or magical; or that the content of literacy is somehow irrelevant; or that those who teach literacy will never misuse it to serve their own selfish purposes. What we are suggesting is that we should understand the inevitability of the emerging symbioses between orality and literacy in the everyday lives of ordinary peoples, and that we should self-consciously work toward promoting multiple symbioses, in varied settings within social systems.

Literacy -- the second definitional event in the human evolution. At the beginning of the paper, we characterized literacy as the second culmination in the uniquely human capacity of making symbolic transformations of reality. Thus construed, literacy is not a mere additive -- the skill of reading and writing added to an existing repertoire of human skills, but is a truly transformational process that is ontological in nature. Becoming literate is the ontological remaking of the human individual, as testified by new literates themselves as they describe their process of becoming literate as being reborn, coming out of the darkness, feeling free. This ontological remaking of the individual can be induced through conscientization so necessary for engaging in the human vocation called praxis (Freire 1972). If development is to be authentic, individual men and women must go through the experience of conscientization. Without literacy, conscientization will be partial. Reading the word and reading the world have come to be congruent.

Literacy in the practical world. What we have called the ontological remaking of the newly literate individuals has manifestations at the concrete level of lived social reality. The new capacities to make symbolic transformations of reality give the individual a new generalized potential that enables him or her to make more effective transactions with all aspects of the environment -- economic, social, political, educational and cultural. The literate fare better in economic competition. They are better able to make use of the educational and extension services already being provided by governments. Literacy of mothers is associated with low fertility, low infant mortality, more regular attendance of their children at school and better health status of the family. The literate are better able to avoid exploitation by the money lender, the middle man and the corrupt bureaucrat. The literate fare better at the police station and in the court. Only the literate are now able to acquire and hold new political positions that are emerging in developing countries in cooperatives and in village and town councils. The literate are more likely to survive even in natural disasters of drought, famine, flood and earthquake, and under conditions of war and violence. Equally important is the fact that literacy leads to higher productivity because of "positive externalities" because literate individuals enhance the productivity of others around them. Ironically, literacy today permits the oral cultural traditions to be renewed and saved as part of newly emerging cultural traditions (Bhola 1990b)

Limits of development without literacy in a print culture. We are today at a historical moment around the globe when both the literate and the illiterate have been engulfed by the print culture. Both New York, N.Y., and the village of Kang in the midst

of the Kalahari desert are inside the print culture. The literate today is both the subject and the object of the print culture. The illiterate is merely the object of print. The illiterate neither codes nor decodes, he or she merely reacts and obeys. Today, there is no institution, sacred or secular, that is not premised on literacy. The illiterate is, therefore, by definition, disadvantaged. At the structural level, the limits of development without literacy have long since been reached. In most Third World countries, literacy is the peoples' pathway to developmental knowledge for people bypassed by formal education and neglected by the media institutions. In sum, literacy has become a "merit good," and it is generally agreed that everyone should have some of it.

I am not, of course, so absurd as to suggest that we should make literacy the sole medium of communication in development -- disassociating ourselves from folk media, suspending oral discourse, and banishing radio and television from our lives! Nor am I suggesting that literacy should always precede development actions in food production, health care, family planning and environmental protection. What I am suggesting is that within the proactive policy development and planning process, literacy should become central though not necessarily primary to the strategy of development communication, if we are indeed committed to enabling people to become independent producers and consumers of information, and active participants in their own development.

Moving Within the Framework: The Prosperity and Peace Connection

The model of authentic development under discussion is composed of two component models: a model for building material prosperity and a model for securing peace with justice. The material and the moral are seen to exist in a dialectical relationship. As the UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali said in An Agenda for Peace (1993), the deepest causes of conflict in the world are "economic despair, social injustice and political oppression." There is no prosperity without real and genuine peace. Violent people don't help or heal, they hurt and kill; they do not plough and plant, they rape, loot and plunder; they do not build, they burn and blow up what others have constructed. On the other hand, there is no peace without prosperity. Under conditions of scarcity, people compete for the basic necessities of life. Acute deprivations makes predators out of common people. Old animosities among communities come to the surface; new hurts are invented; values evaporate, blood rains, fires rage. Scarcities, in today's world are hardly ever natural, these are imposed through maldistribution of power within societies, resulting in the maldistribution of economic and social goods. Prosperity is thus more than a matter of improved productivity on the farms and in the

factories, it is also a matter of economic democracy and political democratization.

The Component Model of Prosperity

The foundations of prosperity will have to be laid in the bedrock of African cultural-historical realities, using blueprints that are products of authentic African vision -- built brick by brick by Africans themselves and not imported as pre-fabricated structures from the outside. In other words, Africa (and indeed the Third World in general) has to define development in endogenous terms. People should not be labelled poor because they are not engaged in the same level of profligate consumption as people in the West. This is not to say, of course, that in Africa we can simply wish poverty away and declare ourselves prosperous. Rising above subsistence agriculture and craft production to produce surpluses is absolutely essential, as is the just distribution of what is produced.

The various elements of the model of prosperity need comments:

People as Producers

Producers should include all those willing and able to produce, including adult men and women and, when appropriate, children. Production should cover material goods as well as services to deliver education and childcare, social and cultural amenities and environmental protection. All citizens without distinction should have the right to work within the economy. The economy should be conceptualized to include both formal and informal sectors. Thus the concept of work should be expanded to include work outside the wage economy. Work done at and around home, typically by women, must be accounted for and somehow compensated. Thus defined, there can be and should be "work for all."

Questions of employment and of productivity are linked with population variables and with the education and health of the workforce. It has now become a cliche among development workers in the Third World that development gains painfully made by nations are easily dissipated by high population growths. Demography has become destiny for many peoples of the world. Responsible family planning policies will have to be developed and instituted. Basic education will have to be universalized using both formal and nonformal institutional structures. The availability of primary health care will have to be assured.

Technological Processes and Patterns

Technological processes used in production will have to be labor intensive for a considerable period so as to keep all the people working. This will often mean use of intermediate technology. Use of land, water and air resources will have to be made within the expectation of sustainability. The management processes of production and organization of work will be democratic, allowing for maximum self-management commensurate with accountability. The processes of entrepreneurship and innovation will have to be rooted in social responsibility rather than in rugged individualism.

Goods Produced

A subsistence economy in and of itself cannot engender development, however defined. Surpluses have to be produced. The product of primary importance for Africa in the 1990s and during the next few decades is food. Sub-Sahara Africa at independence at the beginning of the 1960s, was a moderate net exporter of food to Europe. Currently, it is importing 3/4th of all wheat consumed and around $600 million worth of rice every year. For genuine freedom from hunger, food should be produced by Africa's smallholders so that food production can also absorb most of the labor force in the rural areas. Food surpluses must once again be exports to prime the engine of all development (Eicher 1993).

Agro-industries deserve priority over heavy industry. Other industries may be established as needs arise within the country and the region. Africa should produce for the masses not only for the urban elite. It should design not for obsolescence but for multiple functions, convertibility, longevity, easy repair and recyclability.

Physical Environment

We know that while engaged in the so-called "material production," we do not really produce anything; we only convert materials. In converting trees into wood, and wood into furniture or fuel, we transform the forest into fields or into degraded soil -- and sometimes, over the years, into deserts. In producing metal goods, petroleum products, and other consumer items, we transform also our land, water and air resources. That does not mean that we need to stop all production but that we need to organize porduction within limits set by sustainability. With assumption of "no limits to growth," there are ecological disasters. There is loss of biological diversity, there is soil erosion, and degradation of surface and ground water, creating problems that can destroy whole communities and ultimately whole societies and nations. Now with

international trade, we also have the international waste-trade that is dumping toxic waste in Third World countries. We must protect the lands and waters and air from poisons. In many places in the Third World, there is already the urgent need to let the earth heal.

The Component Model of Peace

Peace with justice has both material and non-material roots. An economy of scarcity brings with it a morality of scarcity. Social idealism evaporates. Misuse of power and corruption in public life take root. A certain level of prosperity in the present, and a sense of hope for the future, are necessary for guarding against people's alienation from their own society. In terms of non-material conditions for peace, the challenge is ideological and educational. To borrow from the preamble to Unesco's constitution, defenses for peace must be built in the minds of men and women. Benedict Anderson (1991) has talked of "imagined communities" which can vary in size from the now defunct Austro-Hungarian empire down to the size of a small tribe of a few thousand people in the forests of Papua New Guinea. We have to learn to imagine communities that are inclusive rather than exclusive. We must expand the boundaries of human solidarity.

People as Participants

All citizens -- men and women of all races, colors and creeds -- should be participants in the social, political and cultural processes. Children should not have to wait to reach an artificially set age of adulthood to participate in the management and recreation of institutions in which they are indeed already participants. Participation should not become a set of meaningless rituals such as voting in referendums. Participation should be a genuine coming together of people to engage in dialogic action.

Ideological Processes and Participative Patterns

The ideological processes for creating peace with justice are essentially educational and organizational. First and foremost, there is the need to create political patterns that make democratic decision making and choice a reality for all citizens. Engaged in the process of participative decision making, people must learn to clarify their own values and test and validate them within groups and assemblies of peers in a variety of social and cultural settings. These new values may relate to the role of women in societies from which they had been excluded for too long. (Lind 1990, Ntiri 1982). The new ideologues must rise above nepotism and tribalism, harmonizing interests of all groups and fully integrating them within the mainstream. At another level,

the unique "Paradigm of African Society" should be put in the service of Pan-Africanism (Abraham 1962, Bhola 1988).

Production of Cultural Goods

The initial cultural products will be institutions -- economic, social, political and cultural. In turn, these various institutions will produce cultural goods varying from rites, rituals, books, films, plans, to manifestoes and constitutions.

Cultural Environment

Cultural production and cultural environments shape one another. Good cultural production will create a cultural environment in which social, economic and political institutions can come about and flourish to bring, for the peoples and nations, both prosperity and peace.

IV

Policy Challenges of Literacy in Africa: Linguistic Code, and Literacy Content

Elsewhere in this paper, I have already talked about the role of literacy as a tool of the ontological remaking of man and woman and as an instrument of development. Now we will discuss the policy implications of literacy along two lines: the linguistic code and the content of the literacy curriculum.

Linguistic Code: The Language of Literacy

Both conventional wisdom and social science favor the teaching of literacy in the mother tongue, and then its transfer, if necessary, to literacy in a national or an official language Unesco 1953). It is, of course, realized that teaching literacy in the mother tongue makes both ideological and pedagogical sense. Mother tongue literacy gives cultural reinforcement and personal self-esteem.
At the same time it makes pedagogical sense. People learn to read and do not at the same time have to carry the additional burden of learning a new language.

The World of Languages

The world of languages that we have to deal with does not, however, present a simple situation to the literacy worker. There are today over 6000 languages spoken in the world. About 50% of these languages are moribund -- that is, they are likely to die out

within a lifetime; an additional 40% are endangered languages -- that is, they are spoken by less than 100,000 speakers and are not supported by the state; and only 10 % are safe languages -- that is, they are likely to survive well into the future. Out of some 600 safe languages, only 300 languages have developed orthographies; only 100 have a significant body of literature; while only four of them -- English, French, Spanish and Arabic -- together are official languages in half the countries of the world (Michael Krauss quoted in Barton, in press). The African situation is similar and maybe even more acute than at the world level. There are some 1400 languages in Africa, many of them recently written down by missionaries. No African language is understood all over Africa, much less outside Africa. On the other hand, the colonial experience has allocated to English, French, Portuguese, German and Afrikaans the high status of languages of politics and economy as well as of international trade and diplomacy. These languages are fully entrenched within African societies (Westley 1992).

The Political Economy of Language Choice

The problem lies in the fact that in the multinational context of many African countries, it is not always possible to marshall resources to do all the development and pedagogical work required in writing down all unwritten languages, to prepare sets of teaching-learning materials and follow-up books in each of those languages, to ensure their functional uses outside homes and local groups and provide transfer to literacy in a second or third language. Even if it were economically possible, it is seen as politically infeasible since it would reinforce existing ethnic definitions and divisions and dilute the sense of nationhood so necessary for many of these new countries to survive. Indeed, it is ethnic pride that has brought policy paralysis to several countries in Africa in regard to the choice of official languages; and has allowed the continuation of English, French or Portuguese as languages of politics, economy and instruction in schools and universities. There are some other contradictions involved as well. Mother tongue can be motivational, but sometimes people do not want to learn in their mother tongue because they know that mother tongue literacy will not take them very far in life.

Preserving Indigenous Languages

There are several international interests in preserving the indigenous languages in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Christian missionaries from the very beginning of their work in Africa (and elsewhere in the colonized world) had wanted to teach the word of God to the natives in their indigenous languages. Where these languages were not written, they committed them to writing and then

translated portions of the Bible in those languages for the local people to read. The Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) has done this work for almost forty years and has committed some 800 unwritten languages to writing. They are highly committed to continuing this work. Many other literacy workers, especially those trained as anthropologists and socio-linguistics, are committed to local literacies, typically, in mother tongue languages as evidenced in a recent seminar, Sustaining Local Literacies: People, Language, and Power held at Reading University, U.K. (3).

In the meantime, global historical forces and cultural processes are leading to the merging and emerging among languages of the world. Local languages spoken by small communities are disappearing at an alarming rate. This is because of assimilatory education and the bombardment from electronic media, particularly television. Ironically, when missionary groups have tried to slow down this process, they have only half succeeded. By christianizing the vocabulary and ignoring other meanings they have saved some indigenous languages but may not have saved the cultures embodied in them (Barton 1993). Belanger in a paper presented at the seminar in Reading was both insightful and incisive when he pointed out to the seminar that the state's involvement need not always be seen as control and domination; that community-based literacies need not always be emancipatory; and that we would neglect national and supra-national contexts of languages of literacy at our peril (Belanger 1993).

A Policy Position

Leadership responsible for policies of language and literacy have to bite the bullet. They need to develop overall national communication policies that assume a symbiotic relationship among and between folk media, electronic media and print media. They have to develop a language policy that assigns special roles -- cultural, political, economic, scientific and educational -- to a set of languages including the mother tongue, a lingua franca and a metropolitan language.

While the state may actively promote a language to fill a particular communicative role, it need not prohibit or actively inhibit any language from competing for an expanded role through overall cultural processes. In other words, the resources of the state should go into the development of materials in a mother tongue only at the preliminary level to teach literacy, and then the state should leave the further development of mother tongues to the interested publics. State resources should then be spent on developing an appropriate lingua franca which is capable of absorbing and renewing indigenous knowledge and facilitating

discussion in social, physical and biological sciences as part of a "modern" scientific discourse. The state should develop a publication program in the lingua franca being developed as well as undertake a well designed publication program in the metropolitan language of international communication and commerce.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1986) writing about Africa during the colonial period says: "The peasantry saw no contradiction between belonging to their immediate nationality, to their multinational state along the Berlin-drawn boundaries, and to Africa as a whole. These people happily spoke Wolof, Hausa, Yoruba, Ibo, Arabic, Amharic, Kiswahili, Gikuyu, Luo, Luhya, Shona, Ndebele, Kimbundu, Zulu or Lingala without this fact tearing the multinational states apart." Thus one of the languages such as Swahili, Bemba, Lingala, Kongo, Hausa, and Mandingo that has become the lingua franca of a region could be one language of literacy, and a local or a regional language another. Not all but some could acquire a third literacy in one of the metropolitan languages. Such language policies could lead to both national development and Pan-Africanism.

Curricular Content of Literacy Programs

One does not just read, one always reads something. The text that is read as part of learning to read should be of utmost importance. Unfortunately, the significance of deliberate choice of content for literacy curricula and literacy materials does not receive due attention from policy makers and curriculum developers.

Forgotten Content of Curriculum

Too often in the past, curriculum developers working on literacy materials had focussed their attention on the structure of the language of literacy, on the frequency of use of words, their length and difficulty of recognition, and not on their meanings. Even today, except in the context of some well known innovative programs, the choice of meanings to be communicated through literacy materials seems to occur by default. Writers of materials seem to choose words and content that would not anger the people in power, nor hurt the cultural or religious sensitivities of readers. Relevance is often sacrificed at the altar of instructional necessity. Functional knowledge may sometimes be taught, but critical knowledge leading to conscientization is seldom offered. Objectives of human solidarity, Pan-Africanism, gender equality, ethnic harmony, democratization, ethics of frugality, and sustainability may all be accepted and used in policy documents circulating at upper levels of the policy making culture but are forgotten when it comes to designing development programs and writing literacy materials for use with adult groups.

Consequently, literacy fails to play the progressive role that it ideally could in the processes of social transformations.

Reclaiming Indigenous Knowledge

There is another important point to keep in mind. Literacy work, even when indifferently done, does bring some developmental knowledge to adult learners in Third World countries. Since no conscious effort is made by curriculum developers to relate and connect this so-called new modern knowledge with indigenous knowledge already with the people in communities, the new knowledge is often seen as superior to old knowledge. Much of well-tried, highly useful indigenous knowledge gets devalued and discounted at the individual level and discouraged at the institutional level. It is important that institutions of education and development extension self-consciously and systematically generate processes and patterns for the testing and renewal of indigenous knowledge of science and technology and that program organizers and curriculum developers do actually plan for the teaching of new knowledge and old knowledge in symbiosis as part of the literacy curriculum (Bhola 1989).

Unities and Connections

Curriculum developers should ensure that curriculum for a literacy program arises directly from the model of development as adopted and contextualized in a particular society. The words and the knowledge those words carry should be carefully selected for use in primers, graded books and follow-up materials. Curriculum should include teaching of both the ideology of development and the technology of material production. It should cover teaching of knowledge, attitudes, and performance skills. The curriculum should be based on a symbiosis between orality and literacy. At a higher level, print media should be complemented, on the one hand, with folk media, and, on the other hand, with electronic media. The total delivery of the curriculum need not be monopolized by literacy workers. Literacy workers should establish linkages with the extension services of agriculture, health and family life, but should support those extension services, not seek to supplant them.

V

Organizing Education for All

To succeed, policies have often to be coordinated with or nested in other policies. In turn, policies have always to be appropriately situated in institutions, already existing or built anew, for such policies to be implemented at all. Any policy of

universal adult literacy (UAL) today will have to be coordinated with a policy of universal primary education (UPE). One can not succeed without the other. Again, these policies of UAL and UPE have to be duly institutionalized for implementation. While UPE has the advantage of having a well established institutional home in a ministry of education or a directorate of education in almost all countries of the world, the same is not true of UAL. Suitable institutions have to be invented for the delivery of adult literacy.

A seminar jointly sponsored by Unesco and the Osaka University of Economics and Law, held in Osaka, July 1-6, 1991 focussed its attention on questions of organizational and institutional arrangements for the delivery of adult education and adult literacy (Bhola 1991). The Osaka seminar accepted the necessity of the role of leadership by the state in promoting adult education and adult literacy in most Third World countries but urged that this role be responsive, enabling -- not controlling -- and that it be implemented by community groups and voluntary associations of people seeking to serve the adult education and adult literacy needs of peoples. National emphasis should be on networking and coordination and providing those inputs and technical services that voluntary local efforts cannot generate or organize on their own.

The idealized organizational arrangement proposed below sums up the discussions in Osaka:

INSERT THE ORGANIZATIONAL MODEL HERE

The proposed organizational mechanism is suitable for adaptation to various political cultures and is suitable for launching both programs and campaigns. In both programs and campaigns, the basic organizational structure as proposed will be required, though the style of mobilization will be somewhat different.

Concluding Comments

We wish to conclude this policy analysis with reflections on its possible utilization. Policy analysis has been aptly described as a forensic social science -- forensic because it is often rhetorical and argumentative, seeking to persuade; and social scientific because assertions made as part of policy analysis should be warranted by the best in related theory and research.

Persuasion, of course, works well with the already inclined, the pre-disposed, and the already persuaded. Persuasion embedded in policy analyses has little chance to succeed with politicians, policy makers, practitioners, academics, intellectuals or informed citizens who are already convinced otherwise and who may have a vested interest in the way things are.

Like all policy analyses, this too is rooted in certain theoretical and value assumptions. It does not assume that the state is, by definition, anti-people and in fact challenges the political leadership in power to assume and discharge their moral duty to lead. It assumes a model of development which is truly endogenous and continuously validated in participation with the peoples; which renews its culture and collective wisdom as it borrows from the outside; and which responds to the new world of limited material goods and unlimited moral horizons. It promotes a model of planned change, that accommodates participative decision-making within groups and within institutions, and collaborative networks between and among governmental and non-governmental voluntary associations. It promotes mobilization of peoples' strengths and material resources that is educational not manipulative. It opts for bloodless, but not gutless, change strategies -- learning to stick one's neck out, but not wringing the necks of those who argue and do not quickly follow. We look at literacy not merely as a utilitarian skill of coding and decoding but as an ontological remaking of peoples, as testified by the newly literate in metaphors of rebirth, freedom and light.

This policy analysis, therefore, could be easily neglected or rejected by those with different theoretical and value assumptions. The definition of development presented above may be rejected as a lowering of aspirations, an act lacking in courage, an invitation to collective drowning in despair. The model of change may be dismissed as being too trusting of the state and its bureaucrats. Some may talk of realpolitik and of blood, sweat and tears. They may not ask for literacy classes -- once described contemptuously by one such planner to me as "kindergartens for adults." Instead, they may ask for underground cells to organize the struggle.

On those with drastically different values perspectives, this analysis will work no magic. In the minds of some others it may introduce some "cognitive dissonance" and some rethinking. In either case, as a student of literacy and development, I will have done my Dharma.

NOTES

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1. Given the vastly different natural resources, endowments and institutional arrangements within the economy, society and polity among the nations and geographic sub-regions of Africa, generalized policy advice on development priorities and strategies offered below will, of course, need to be contextualized by local policy makers and stake holders.

2. Our way of modelling African reality is not the only, nor necessarily the best, way of doing so. A recent conference, Critical Issues for Africa: Food, Environment, Population and Health, organized at Indiana University, Bloomington, March 26-28, 1993, saw the African problem complex to consist of population increase, food imports, unavailability of health services and degradation of the environment.

3. This is a reference to the recent seminar, Sustaining Local Literacies: People, Language, and Power, held at Reading University, March 19-21, 1993.

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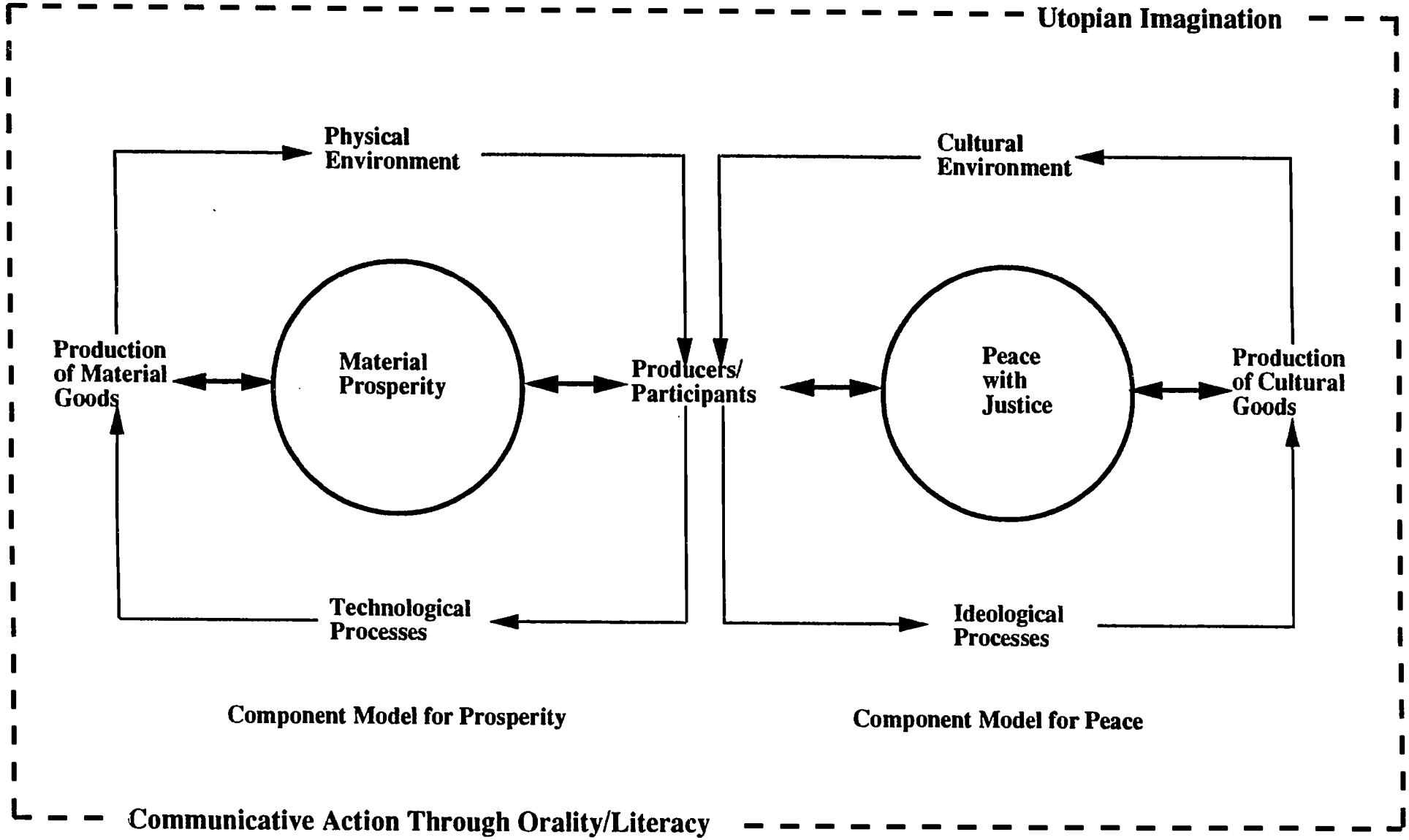
Table 1

The State of Human Development in Sub-Saharan Africa

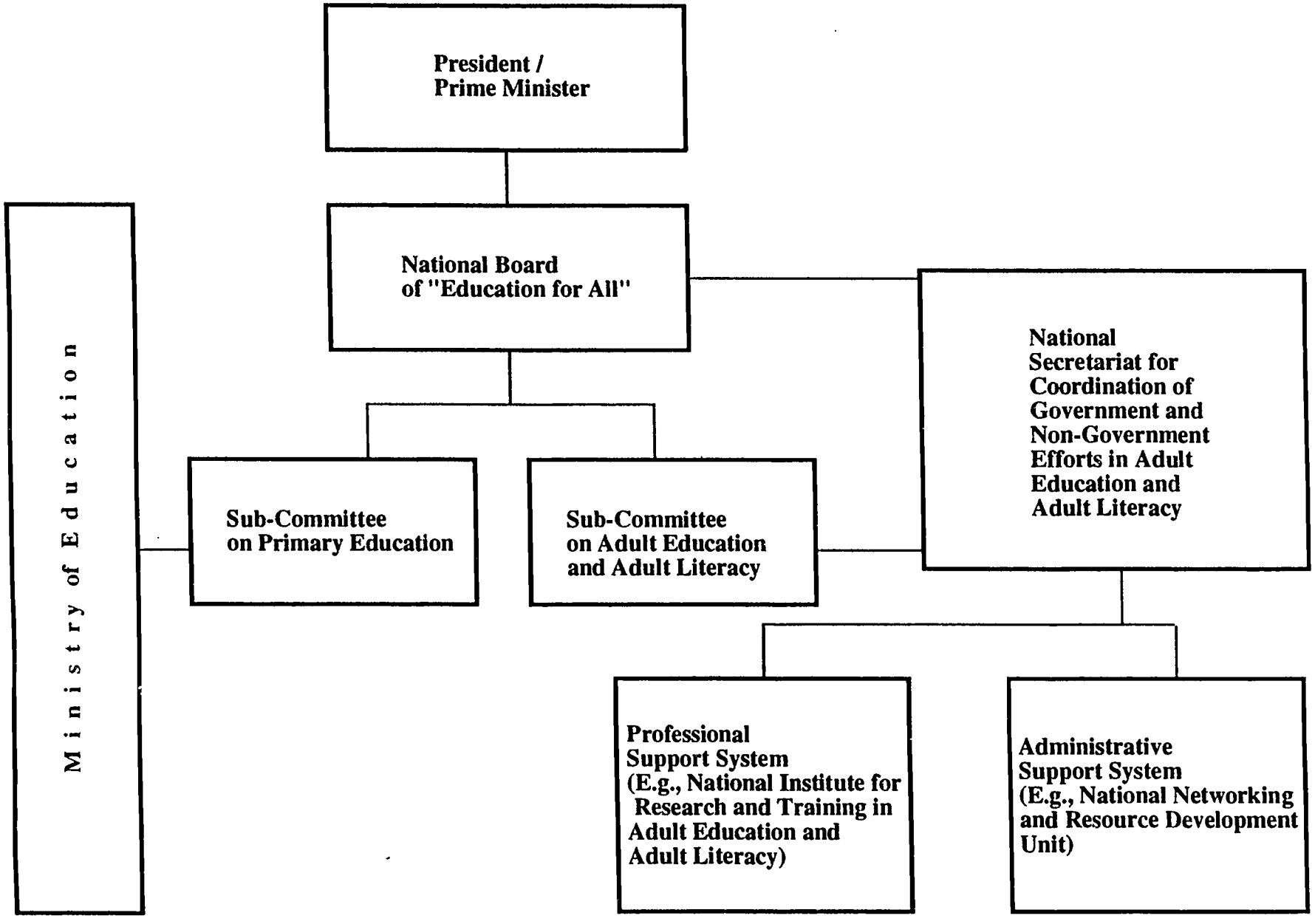
(Countries Listed According to UNDP's Human Development Index (HDI) Ranking)

	Life Expectancy at Birth (Years) 1990	Children Dying Before Age Five 1990	Adult Literacy Rate (Years-15+) Total 1985	Male 1985	Female 1985	GNP Per Capita (US$) 1988	HDI Value 1990	HDI Rank 1990	Human Freedom Index Scale 1-40 1985
1 Mauritius	69.6	0.00	83	89	77	1,800	0.831	47	..
2 South Africa	61.7	0.10	..	..	..	2,290	0.766	57	3
3 Seychelles	70.0	..	60	91	85	3,800	0.752	63	..
4 Botswana	59.8	0.01	70	82	60	1,010	0.524	95	26
5 Gabon	52.5	0.01	56	70	43	2,970	0.510	97	..
6 Swaziland	56.8	0.01	68	70	66	810	0.462	104	..
7 Namibia	57.5	0.01	..	..	..	1,250	0.440	105	..
8 Lesotho	57.3	0.01	72	62	84	420	0.432	107	..
9 Cape Verde	67.0	0.00	50	57	37	680	0.428	109	..
10 Zimbabwe	59.6	0.04	62	70	55	650	0.413	111	8
11 Sao Tome	65.5	..	50	79	38	490	0.399	112	..
12 Kenya	59.7	0.13	65	77	53	370	0.399	113	8
13 Congo	53.7	0.01	52	66	38	910	0.374	115	..
14 Madagascar	54.5	0.10	77	86	68	190	0.371	116	..
15 Zambia	54.4	0.05	67	77	59	290	0.351	118	9
16 Cameroon	53.7	0.08	48	61	36	1,010	0.328	119	8
17 Ghana	55.0	0.10	53	63	42	400	0.311	121	11
18 Côte d'Ivoire	53.4	0.08	49	63	34	770	0.311	122	..
19 Zaïre	53.0	0.21	66	79	53	170	0.299	124	5
20 Tanzania	54.0	0.24	..	..	..	160	0.226	127	10
21 Nigeria	51.5	0.88	43	55	31	290	0.242	129	13
22 Togo	54.0	0.02	38	51	25	370	0.225	131	..
23 Liberia	54.2	0.03	32	43	21	450	0.220	132	7
24 Rwanda	49.5	0.07	45	59	32	320	0.213	133	..
25 Uganda	52.0	0.16	43	57	29	280	0.204	134	..
26 Sénégal	48.3	0.06	32	45	19	650	0.189	135	23
27 Equitorial Guinea	47.0	0.00	45	59	31	410	0.186	137	..
28 Malawi	48.1	0.13	42	52	31	170	0.179	138	..
29 Burundi	48.5	0.05	42	53	32	240	0.177	139	..
30 Ethiopia	45.5	0.54	..	..	..	120	0.166	141	2
31 Central African Rep	49.5	0.03	32	45	19	380	0.166	142	..
32 Sudan	50.8	0.19	24	39	10	480	0.164	143	..
33 Mozambique	47.5	0.21	28	39	16	100	0.155	146	6
34 Angola	45.5	0.14	36	50	23	870	0.150	147	..
35 Mauritania	47.0	0.02	28	40	16	480	0.140	148	..
36 Somalia	46.1	0.08	17	27	9	170	0.118	149	..
37 Benin	47.0	0.03	19	26	12	390	0.114	150	13
38 Guinea Bissau	42.5	0.01	30	43	18	190	0.088	151	..
39 Chad	46.5	0.05	23	34	13	160	0.087	152	..
40 Djibouti	48.0	0.00	14	18	13	480	0.083	153	
41 Burkina Faso	48.2	0.10	15	23	6	210	0.081	154	..
42 Niger	45.5	0.09	22	32	11	300	0.079	155	
43 Mali	45.0	0.14	23	31	15	230	0.072	156	..
44 Guinea	43.5	0.07	17	26	8	430	0.066	158	
45 Gambia	44.0	0.01	20	30	11	200	0.064	159	..
46 Sierra Leone	42.0	0.05	13	21	6	300	0.048	160	..

Source: *Human Development Report*, United Nations Development Programme. Oxford University Press, 1991.



A Model of Authentic Development.



An Organizational Model to Plan and Deliver "Education for All."