CHAPTER 3

Other Forms of Training

While placing primary emphasis on training young people for rural development, the seminar also considered the related problems of other young people, in particular the needs of young people in urban areas, the relationship of the work of the formal school with the problems and opportunities of out-of-school youth, the organisation of activities to involve young people in secondary school and universities in work of national development, the role of youth programmes in the rehabilitation of young offenders, and the special requirements of young women.

Programmes for urban youth

In any discussion of the training needs of young people in urban areas, there must be a clear understanding of the fact, indicated by intensive research in various cities in different parts of Africa, that the majority of young people seeking employment in these areas at any one time are of rural origin and usually retain strong family ties with the rural areas. Many of them return to the rural areas once they realise that the cities have much less to offer in the way of employment than their earlier expectations led them to believe. Programmes for young people in cities should aim at the hardcore of truly urbanised young people, as yet only a small proportion of the whole, who live their lives in the towns. Above all, it is vital to avoid accentuating existing differences between urban and rural areas by establishing distinctive training in the towns; this aggravates the existing situation whereby there are two kinds of education, a superior kind in the cities and an inferior kind in the rural areas. Similarly with youth training, the needs of young people out of school should be considered in totality. Rural development on a broad front, and the

involvement of young people in this, offers the most promising avenue for tackling the problems of large-scale unemployment among young people in the cities. By attacking the problem at the source, rural development can be expected to reduce the flow of young people into the urban areas and avert the need for remedial measures to absorb frustrated young people in the towns.

There remain, however, the needs of the fully urbanised nucleus who are facing the most depressed employment stituation and the gravest social dislocation. For these young people, programmes should be devised which will provide skills training for the modern industrial sector, for service occupations and for "intermediate" crafts and trades. The needs of urbanised youth for social training are more acute than those of young people in the rural areas, because urban youth have little or no contact with traditional education and culture. Therefore, non-vocational elements in urban training programmes have a special significance, in particular civic education, health education and training in home economics.

Skills training can be approached in a variety of ways; again, there are no fixed formulae. The main possibilities are apprenticeships, more extended craft training in technical and vocational training institutes, and short training courses for limited skills at "operative" level either in institutions, or on-the-job, or a combination of both.

The generally accepted view in the seminar was that the basic and primary approach to sound development is to study what already exists and to seek to build on this base before looking for alien institutions which might be transplanted. Therefore attention should be given to the traditional craft training system which exists in many African cities, particularly in West Africa. Apprenticeship is functioning in these cities and has, in certain occupations, functioned for centuries. It has shown a remarkable capacity to evolve and adopt itself to more modern categories of employment, for example vehicle repairs. As a first step in helping numbers of young people to obtain usable skills in the urban areas, interested agencies, both governmental and non-governmental, should intervene to up-grade the skills and improve the working facilities of the existing entrepreneurs. By assisting this natural process and advancing the work of adults in the community, the interests of youth will also be served. The training offered within the established system is strictly relevant to the employment

situation and thus the chances of the trainee either obtaining employment with an established entrepreneur, or of setting up his own small business, can be expected to be considerably greater.

Formal institutional training in certain specialised crafts and skills is necessary, despite the very high cost of technical training institutes and the grave difficulties in obtaining staff with the necessary qualifications to teach in them. Because of this, formal training of this nature should be confined to particularly specialised occupations which cannot be catered for within the existing industrial and commercial structure. It is important that governments should establish a working association with the modern industrial sector and induce commerce and industry to accept a substantial share in the provision of industrial training, whether directly within the industry itself or indirectly by bearing some of the costs of establishing formal training facilities. Kenya's recent decision to establish an industrial levy on large firms to be used to offset some at least of the costs of technical training is an important step forward. Technical training in which commerce and industry is directly involved, and related to proven manpower needs, is less likely to overproduce skilled personnel, a major danger of institutional training establishments.

Industry should be "educated" in other respects. Particularly, industrialists should be required to examine the structure of their operations to consider how the maximum employment can be incorporated into the production processes. There are major implications in this for the level of technology used in industry. The seminar generally sympathised with the "intermediate technology" approach and commended the efforts of the Philips Electrical Company which had recently erected, in addition to its highly modernised and labour-saving production line at Eindhoven in Holland, a labour intensive factory at Utrecht for the production of radios as a model for what can be done in developing countries which are rich in labour but whose capital resources are low.

It was admitted that urban-based industry will not be able to absorb more than a small proportion of the young people likely to seek employment in the cities. If the frustration and disillusionment of young people seeking such employment is to be mitigated, emergency programmes must be provided at least

to absorb their energies, cater for their social needs, and possibly even provide simple accommodation for those with no homes.

Social programmes in urban areas have a long tradition throughout Africa and are the starting-point for most youth work in African countries. Such activities have been in the past initiated and organised by various voluntary agencies although recently some governments have taken a greater interest whether through involvement in the co-ordinating arrangements of the national youth councils or by direct intervention in setting up governmental programmes. Social activities for young people in the towns must be duly commended. More can, however, be done to increase the pertinence of such activities to employment and development possibilities. The example of the Sierra Leone Boys' Society was studied. In this case a voluntary organisation has grouped together unemployed young people out of school initially for social activities but has subsequently broadened its programme to include a voluntary work component. So successful did this become that, progressively, small opportunities for paid employment gradually emerged, suggesting that even in the most depressed employment conditions, the provision of leadership and organisation, and bringing together young people in groups, can produce what is, in a small way, an employable work-force. Such an approach is, of course, essentially a temporary palliative in relation to massive unemployment among young people in the cities. Nevertheless, it represents a valuable contribution towards restoring the morale of young people which protracted exposure to urban conditions can easily erode.

The role of the formal school

The impact of formal schooling, particularly the rural primary school, on out-of-school youth, and the problems it poses for out-of-school education and training, lies in the aspirations that the primary school arouses. Young people leaving such schools, especially those who have been able to complete the full primary course, often have fixed ideas concerning their status as "educated" people and the type of employment which they should now acquire. Their schooling has been regarded both by them and by their parents as an opportunity to escape from rural life. Having undergone the modernising process of schooling, the young primary school leaver must seek an employment outlet for his newly acquired modernity. This means emigration to the city where appropriate

employment is reputedly found. This broad stereotype is still mainly applicable in most countries.

Not much can be done within the primary school to deal with this situation. Parental ambitions and the aspirations of the young people themselves demand that the schools provide an opportunity, however tenuous, for every child who enters them to make his way forward to secondary school. This strong motivation has defeated several attempts over many years to introduce an element into the curriculum of rural primary schools which might stimulate a sympathy towards rural life. Nevertheless curriculum change along these lines is still to be desired. For example, the local rural environment may be drawn upon to the maximum as a useful source of teaching material for a variety of 'subjects'. Simple rural science may be taught and possibly even, in the upper primary school, some elementary vocational subjects introduced, although reservations were expressed on the last suggestion. However, the efficacy of such measures in bringing about real changes in the aspirations and attitudes of primary school leavers either towards the land or towards manual labour is doubtful. The necessary prerequisite for such changes is that there should be something approaching revolution in the complete pattern of rural living and especially in the system of rewards associated with farming. If the rewards from the modern urban sector and the "traditional" agricultural sector are harmonised, the present image of agriculture as a dismal, depressed and poverty-ridden occupation will be erased. Once young people about to leave school can see the economic and social potential of rural life then they are likely to respond to changes in the school curriculum.

At secondary school level, the problems are very different. Most secondary school leavers can still expect to find employment in administrative and supervisory posts in government, commerce and industry, although, with the rapid expansion of secondary schools in recent years, even secondary school graduates may in the not too distant future be faced with employment difficulties. Within the structure and organisation of secondary schools, provision should be made for activities which will promote in the future leaders an understanding of and a sympathy with the problems of the mass of the community, particularly with the problems of the rural areas. The effect of protracted exposure to purely academic and verbal educational experiences, in the exclusive environment provided by many secondary schools throughout Africa is to erect barriers of mis-

understanding between secondary school students, the ruling elite of the future, and the rural masses.

Various ways of attacking this problem were reviewed. Courses can be included within the regular academic curriculum, and without any dilution in academic content, which acquaint students with development problems. This may either be done through a reorientation of existing social studies courses or through the introduction of a new course, along lines already successfully pioneered in Botswana, called Development Studies.

Initiatives of this type can be accommodated within the orthodox academic tradition of the secondary schools. The curriculum should be reorganised, however, to include a positive element of community service, with students carrying out direct tasks aimed at community improvement. There was much sympathy with this proposal, but very often it is not easy in rural areas to find suitable tasks and often particularly difficult to avoid the pit-fall of working for rather than with the community surrounding the school. Despite these difficulties, it is essential that secondary schools should tackle the problem of community service and seek to break down the isolation that often exists between the schools and the rural population.

Equally, secondary school students can undertake vacation projects which may positively assist the work of development. For example, secondary school students can be a valuable resource for essential data-gathering for social and economic research, an area where their verbal skills may be particularly useful. Reservations were, however, expressed on the utility of another of the popular vacation tasks for secondary school students - involvement in adult literacy work. The "each one, teach one" approach has little continuing effect, and the modern concept of work-oriented functional literacy demands trained instructors who themselves possess the technical skills which the literacy programme is seeking to communicate.

The seminar stressed the high costs of secondary schooling, particularly of fully residential schools, the usual pattern in most countries except in urban areas. Possibilities were suggested which can bring costs down to some degree. The experience of Swaneng Hill and Shashi River schools in Botswana again has relevance for other countries. In these schools, recurrent costs have been reduced by students carrying out chores such as cooking, cleaning and contributing to food requirements from their own agricultural work.

At Swaneng, it has also been shown that it is possible for students to be directly engaged in capital works, in building school facilities such as classrooms, dormitories, the assembly hall, provided that student labour is supplemented by technically skilled manpower for specialised tasks.

Apart from their monetary value, such activities also play an important part in building healthy attitudes towards manual labour.

Teacher Training

Changes along these lines both at primary and secondary school level will also involve new approaches to teacher training and major retraining of teachers already in service. The isolated teacher in the typical small rural primary school, himself possessing often little more than primary schooling, is already hard-pressed, faced with swelling enrolments and rudimentary teaching facilities, to attain the basic objective of elementary schooling - to ensure literacy and numeracy. If additional burdens are placed upon him arising from major curriculum changes and requiring an outward-going attitude to the community, it is doubtful whether he will have the capacity to make any real contribution. At secondary level also there are problems largely centring on the attitudes of academically-trained and oriented teachers who often see their role as confined largely to their particular discipline. Changes may be possible through in-service training and some restructuring of pre-service training. If on the other hand the conventional curriculum is to be supplemented by courses involving practical community service, together with training to develop a sense of community responsibility and the practical capacity to do something about this, then specially trained staff must be provided to concern themselves with these additional activities.

The idea of the Community School or Village College was commended. Such schools provide conventional classroom teaching for children of various levels and also accept a role in direct service to the community during the very considerable periods of time when classroom and other facilities are not in normal use. The schools can provide a community meeting place and offer facilities for social gatherings, women's clubs, activities such as "4 H" clubs and adult literacy classes. The community and the school overlap to a substantial degree and it is desirable that representatives of the out-of-school community

should have some share in the management of those activities which concern them.

Involvement of university students

Much of the general comment on the contribution of secondary school students to the needs of the local and national community applies equally, if not more, to university students.

Involvement of universities, students and staff, can be approached in two ways. First, existing courses of study can be carefully examined so that when, for example, practical field work is carried out as an aspect of the normal requirements of a particular course, this is as far as possible related to community needs. Certain courses of study with an obvious practical element, for example medicine or agriculture, can be easily oriented in this way. There are greater difficulties with courses of study of a more theoretical nature. For such courses there is a need for a practical element, possibly within the actual degree structure, equivalent to the compulsory practical examinations for, for example, doctors, veterinarians and chemists. With ingenuity and fresh thinking, it may be feasible to include a component of practical field work, possibly from within the general area of social or community service, for all students. The existing practice in African universities within several subject areas on the Arts and Social Science side was examined. Geographers have a particularly good record in tackling problems of concern to the mass of the community. Sociologists have also been active in basic social research, first degree students in sociology being frequently required to carry out a field project as an essential component in their course. In general, there can be no longer any excuses for any of the social sciences not to be fully committed to projects of direct relevance to community needs. This would not mean dilution of course content.

A further possibility is direct action in community and rural development work either by groups of students and staff or by individual students. Teams of university students and staff are particularly valuable in that they are likely to be composed of young people of the widest range of ethnic origins and therefore may be expected to contribute distinctively to national and social development. The effective operation of such teams can be assisted by the existence of a central organisation to set up suitable projects and liaise with local community organisations and the departments of government concerned with development

work. Again it is not always easy to find really appropriate work projects. Projects selected must involve the university team actually working alongside village people so that each side of the educational gulf that divides most African societies comes to some understanding of the other. As a general rule the more such projects involve physical labour by the students, the easier it becomes to build bridges across the rift in society and break down the popular feeling that "educated" young people do not soil their hands.

A further development is the introduction of a year of social service after the completion of university (or equivalent) training. There was some disagreement over whether such service should be organised on a voluntary basis or whether it should be a compulsory requirement. The experience of Tanzanian National Service, the Ethiopian University Service and the Iranian Army of Knowledge is relevant.

Youth programmes and the rehabilitation of young offenders

Before any definite decision can be made on the types of rehabilitation procedures that can be applied to young offenders, it is necessary to assemble basic data on the young people concerned, particularly on the type of offence they have committed, their origins (whether rural or urban), age and family situation. The form of rehabilitation procedure appropriate for a young person from the rural areas temporarily adrift in the city is necessarily different from that for homeless urban youth with few, if any, family connections.

The vast majority of offences committed by juveniles occur in the urban areas. Juvenile crime is increasing steadily in most cities both quantitatively and in the degree of sophistication exhibited. The root cause of this, in the majority of cases, is believed to be unemployment, poverty and demoralisation due to severance of contact with traditional social ethics and morality. The obvious solution in the majority of cases is to reintegrate the young person into his home environment. This usually implies repatriation to the rural areas. Repatriation in itself, however, is not a solution. There is already evidence available in Kenya which shows that repatriation can occur repeatedly. After some time in the rural environment, the basic causes which induced the young person to migrate to the town in the first place again operate and he again gravitates townwards. If it is to succeed, repatriation has to be coupled with some kind of follow-up of the young person whereby contact is

maintained with him after his return, his problems listened to and his reacceptance into his own community facilitated. Ideally this work should be carried out by a probation service. In fact, this is not usually possible due to scarcity of resources in cash and manpower. Informal follow-up procedures in the rural areas can sometimes be arranged. The experience of the Starehe Boys Centre, which repatriated more than 90% of the young people coming into contact with its Rescue Centre in Nairobi, suggests that valuable informal arrangements can be made with sympathetic individuals in the rural areas who may be willing discreetly to maintain contact with the young person after his return. A young person who has committed an offence in the cities can be expected to be rather disillusioned with the supposed appeal of these areas and more willing to consider seriously what the rural areas can offer him. If repatriation can be combined with inclusion in some form of training programme, then the likelihood of success is even greater.

There remains the problem of the urbanised minority which will presumably include within it an element of habitual offenders. Their central problems are insecurity, lack of a home background, possibly even lack of food and clothing. For these young people, institutional programmes have a crucial part to play. They provide a substitute home and social training in the broadest sense. The costliness of the necessary facilities means that they can accommodate only a few of the most serious cases of need. In addition, many young people who are potential offenders do not wish to give up the "independence" that they enjoy in the cities. They resent any attempt to group them or organise them. Institutionalisation necessarily means this. New approaches to social work with young people may, however, be tried in African urban contexts, approaches which have shown encouraging results in other countries. Street corner youth workers who go out to find young people in need rather than wait until the needy come to them, can play a useful role. The establishment of many more "rescue centres" or shelters should be considered to which young people alone in the cities can come for a place to sleep, a simple meal, conversation, without committing themselves to participation in any particular programme. Such shelters need not be in any way impressive structures. Indeed the more imposing their appearance, the less likely they are to achieve their objectives.

The crux of the problem, whether in the urban or the rural areas, is employment. Therefore, training leading to employment is likely to be the most rewarding policy for

tackling the problem of growing juvenile crime. Programmes for young offenders should therefore not be detached from the overall problem of youth training, rural development and the generation of employment.

Programmes for young women

Two main areas of need were examined:-

(a) training for productive employment;

(b) training for domestic life.

In the first category, it was strongly felt that there should be no special distinction made between men and women, that women are equally capable of being trained in what are often regarded as male vocations and, if they have the aptitude and inclination, should be allowed access to training. In many African societies, however, women often show an aptitude for and inclination towards handicrafts including pottery, weaving, dyeing, basketwork, etc., and training programmes should be devised to accommodate this. In one particular area, agricultural training, there should be absolute parity of access to training in view of the importance of women in traditional agriculture. Training on-the-job and short courses are again generally favoured. A careful consideration of employment possibilities after training must, clearly, dictate course content and the provision, where necessary, of the means of establishing trainees in independent employment.

Examples were examined from Botswana of an autonomous group of female textile workers - weavers, dyers and dressmakers - who established an independent co-operative after training and, from the highlands of southern Tanzania, of a women's group set up within an existing village community which established a small woollen industry using locally produced wool and, as far as possible, local dyes and designs.

Training for domestic life constitutes a distinct need and should be approached in two main ways. Where young women are already engaged on a programme of skills training, for example in a national youth service, home economics, health, hygiene, child care, etc. should be included in their programme. Similar provision should be made for women outside formally constituted programmes through, for example, locally organised clubs or, in the case of slightly more specialised

courses, at rural training centres.

Young women who complete primary school but are unable to continue into further training have special needs. Migration to the cities is much less frequent among girl primary school leavers than among boys, family constraints on girls presumably being stronger. Yet having had several years of education, such young women find reassimilation into the family community very difficult. Often tensions develop within the family, for example between "traditional" mother and "modern" daughter. For this particular group, fundamentally altered by the effect of formal schooling yet closely tied to the family community, social programmes at village level are especially important. They provide an opportunity for the young girl to retain the skills acquired in school and possibly the opportunity through small-scale craft activities of some cash-earning. The role of this kind of programme is to provide for the young girl with some schooling a satisfying bridge between school and marriage. Obviously with the age of primary school enrolment steadily falling in most countries, and with the increase in the number of girls in school, programmes of this nature are of increasing importance.