

IFESH/Ethiopia Bulletin

**Papers Presented to the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia,
Ministry of Education**

&

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**at the IFESH/Ethiopia Mini-Conference
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

Edited by Maria Adegbola, PhD

IFESH/Ethiopia Deputy Country Representative

**IFESH/Ethiopia
Teachers for Africa Program**



Mini-Conference
12 June 1998

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"I FISH for development of minds and skills, third world initiatives, sustained development strategies cross-continental cooperation, eradication of hunger and poverty, improvements in education systems, improved access to basic health care, reduction of unemployment..."

The Rev. Leon H. Sullivan

Preface

The IFESH/Ethiopia Teachers for Africa Program in collaboration with the Ministry of Education have the following objectives for volunteer teachers in Ethiopia at Teacher Training Colleges and Health Institutes:

- work with Ethiopian teacher counterparts using interactive instructional methods and techniques;
- provide technical assistance to schools & departments to improve administrative capabilities, develop project proposals, and assist in resource mobilization;
- design improved, relevant curricula & teaching materials; and
- impact public policy at the national level

These objectives may seem ambitious and even unrealistic for TFAs working in some schools that lack the basics and given the short period of time that teacher volunteers serve. Even with these limitations most teachers are working on projects, assisting their colleagues in administrative tasks, and conducting research although facing professional and personal challenges.

The TFAs hoped the Mini-Conference would allow for information sharing and encourage discussion of the IFESH/TFA Program objectives for Ethiopia. The papers presented by TFAs dealt with various issues in the areas of: Distance Learning, Instructional Methods in Business and in Health, and Technology & Computers. The Bulletin begins with a study that examines the viability of the TFA Program in Ethiopia and explores the challenges for teachers to implement the program objectives. It concludes with a comparative study of the problems of the TFA Programs in Kenya (which was ended in 1997) and in Ethiopia. Recommendations are made to the IFESH Organization and to the Ministry of Education.

Dr. Maria Adeigbola,
IFESH/Ethiopia Deputy Country
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Program

Host: Dr. Maria Adeigbola, Deputy Country Representative

9:00 Introductory Remarks: Kevin Mullally, Chief, US-AID/Ethiopia

9:15 - 10:45 Presentations

**"Making a Difference in a World of Indifference:
The Future of Volunteerism in Africa"
Ethelbert Okoro, PhD**

**"The Challenges of Producing Educational Television Programming in Ethiopia:
Busting Gender Stereotypes"
Elizabeth Jackson, PhD**

10:45 - 11:00 Tea Break

11:00 - 1:00 Presentations cont.

**"The Challenges of a First Time Teacher"
Lisa Robinson, MBA**

**"Sustainable Development & Appropriate Technology"
Lawrence Abraham, PhD**

**"Establishing an Internet Computer Lab & Agricultural DataBase
at Ambo College of Agriculture"
Jeff Price (PhD Candidate)
*Not able to attend***

**"Continuing Education or Continuing Ignorance?"
Patricia Burns, MSc.**

1:00 - 2:30 LUNCH

**2:30 - 3:15 "TFAs: Agents of Change or Just Filling the Gaps?"
Maria Adeigbola, PhD**

3:15 - 4:00 Round Table Discussion: IFESH/TFA Objectives

4:00 - 4:15 Tea Break

4:15 - 5:00 Discussion cont.

5:00 - 5:15 Closing Remarks: Dr. Adane Taye, IFESH/Ethiopia Country Representative

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TFAs: Agents of Change or Just Filling the Gaps?

By Maria Adeigbola, PhD

Abstract

As Teachers for Africa volunteers, teachers work in collaboration with their Ethiopian colleagues in tertiary level institutions carrying out the objectives of the program which include introducing innovative instructional methods, designing new and relevant curricula, and giving technical assistance. In order to assess if the TFAs are fulfilling their objectives, a 50 item self-report questionnaire was administered to twelve (12) teachers. Document reviews and semi-structured interviews provided supporting evidence. The results demonstrated that most TFAs report that they are completing at least one or more of the objectives but face major professional and personal challenges. Recommendations are offered.

Introduction

In 1992, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) awarded the International Foundation for Education and Self-Help (IFESH) a grant to assist African nations in achieving economic self-sufficiency. The Teachers for Africa (TFA) Program was created to provide training to African teachers and to help strengthen educational systems of developing nations.

Many of the teachers that are selected to participate in the program are regarded as scholars in their field and are expected to contribute their wide range of skills and abilities to developing initiatives. The volunteers work interactively with government ministries, education systems, and the indigenous populations to achieve agreed upon objectives.

The IFESH/TFA Program in collaboration with the Ministry of Education (MOE) in Ethiopia have the following objectives for volunteer teachers:

- work with Ethiopian teacher counterparts using interactive instructional methods and techniques
- provide technical assistance to schools & departments to improve administrative capabilities, develop project proposals, and assist in resource mobilization
- design improved, relevant curricula & teaching materials
- impact public policy at the national level

These objectives may seem ambitious and at times unrealistic for TFAs working in some schools that lack the basics and given the short period of time that teacher volunteers serve—one year. Even with these limitations most teachers are working on projects, writing curricula, assisting their colleagues in administrative tasks, and conducting research.

Data collected from teacher questionnaires, documents, as well as several semi-structured interviews are used to assess what TFAs are doing at their schools. This study confines itself to the first three objectives that are more easily measurable and which can be assessed within the year time period. Major challenges to achieving the program objectives are explored and recommendations made.

Purpose of the Study

The goal of the Teachers for Africa Program is to provide technical assistance to boost the quality of academic institutions and curricula in developing African countries. As TFA volunteers, teachers work in collaboration with their colleagues in an academic environment carrying out as many of the objectives as possible in order to impact public policy.

This is the second year for the IFESH/Ethiopia TFA Program. Many of the volunteer teachers come to Ethiopia with years of teaching/work experience, having conducted research in their fields, and working in various areas of educational development. Most of the TFAs especially the returning teachers, have assisted in redesigning curriculum, initiated community projects, assumed administrative duties, given technical assistance, and conducted collaborative research at their colleges in addition to their teaching assignments. Much of what the TFAs accomplish may never be realized outside of their departments and schools nor will their impact and effectiveness be properly evaluated. Therefore, a process is necessary to gather data and assess exactly what TFAs are doing. Secondly, the study hopes to stimulate discussion on the relevancy and “do-ability” of the TFA Program objectives here in Ethiopia in relation to the goals of the Ministry of Education.

To impact policy at the national level, IFESH must be able to collaborate with various departments of the Ministry of Education as well as work with educators and administrators at the college level. Our objectives must be

consistent with the new national education policy. The activities and accomplishments of the TFAs should not only be examined within the context of their particular schools but also in meeting the objectives of the TFA Program and within the context of the Education Sector Development Program (ESDP) in Ethiopia and the identified priorities and goals of the Ministry of Education. Only then can we jointly begin the evaluation process as it is the second year of the TFA Program in Ethiopia and we are beginning the second phase of the program to extend for five additional years.

Program evaluation is an essential component of any program and necessary for its sustainability. IFESH/TFA objectives are general to all missions in Africa and so must be made relevant to the specific country. IFESH needs to know if the TFA Program is impacting the quality of education in each of the countries, how, and will it be lasting. The Ministry of Education in Ethiopia needs to know if the TFA Program is impacting the quality of education, on what levels, and what the direct and long-term benefits are. If not, why not? If the primary benefit is to have volunteer teachers from the United States "fill the gaps", is it sufficient and cost-effective to continue the program if the other objectives are not being fully met? First, we must identify exactly what TFAs have done and what some are continuing to do at their respective schools.

This study has the following objectives:

1. assess what TFAs are doing at their schools/community in relation to their objectives,
2. stimulate discussion on the "do-ability" of TFA objectives and their relevancy to the new educational policy, and
3. explore what the challenges are to meeting those objectives and give recommendations.

Statement of the Problem

It is, to date, known that our country's education is entangled with complex problems with regard to relevance, quality and distribution. The objectives of education do not take cognizance of the society's needs and does not adequately indicate future direction. The absence of interrelated contents and mode of presentation that can develop students' knowledge and behavioral change by level to adequately enrich problem solving ability and attitude are some of the major problems of our educational system.

The other problem is related to its implementation. Essential educational inputs are in limited supply, the quality of teaching-learning process is poor, its organization and management are centralized and of low professional profile. (Ministry of Education, 1993, I-ii)

The TFA Program began in Ethiopia in 1996 in the midst of educational reforms by the new democratic government. Educational policies in Ethiopia are rooted in a bureaucratic and inefficient social service system. The TFAs face many challenges to completing their objectives here—personal as well as professional: lack of resources—even the "basics"; gender inequities; problems with the language(s); cultural differences, etc. In developing countries like Ethiopia, the problems are multi-faceted and systemic. Creation of equitable and appropriate standards for education depends on limited available resources and appropriate capacity-building, and must be based on the assessed needs of all segments of the population. The rural population (85%) is too often neglected. The poor quality of schools is due to the lack of adequate teaching materials and texts, especially those sensitive to cultural, gender and language differences; a curriculum that is not relevant nor prepares students for jobs; inadequately trained and poorly motivated teachers; and too few schools that are overcrowded with many unsafe and in disrepair.

Strategies are in place to address these problems and to enhance sector quality and equity with the new education policy of the recently formed Federal Democratic Government of Ethiopia (FDGE) by decentralizing the system, increasing the number of schools, improving the quality of the curriculum at all levels, training more teachers, and providing increased opportunities for female participation while addressing regional imbalances.

Most developing countries contend that the primary purpose of education is to promote economic development and the national interest (George, 1995; 13). National development is dependent on producing skilled manpower where there are shortages of qualified workers. Higher education must produce government officials, administrators, managers, entrepreneurs, as well as other teachers. Consequently, expatriates are often sought to teach and "fill gaps" until sufficient number of new teachers are trained. Also, these expatriates are expected to introduce to the students "modern" methods of instruction that emphasize problem-solving and democratic principles as well as lend their technical assistance as scholars and experts to the institutions. The objectives for TFAs attempt to meet these needs and are consistent with the new education policy and implementation strategies of Ethiopia (Ministry of Education, 1995).

Although, the role of education as key to national development and as an instrument for social and economic change in Ethiopia has been challenged. Negash (1990) pointed out in his now classic study, *The Crisis of Ethiopian Education: Some Implications for Nation-Building*, that "African states are far from evolving political strategies that could result in the restructuring of the educational system" in order to bring meaningful change and affect social inequality. Education does play a major role in preserving and transferring traditional values and in the reproduction of nationalism, which is ideological, rather than act as a facilitator of social and economic development. He also makes the case that the evolution of educational policy of Ethiopia in the past has mostly been done "behind closed doors" and without the participation of the major stakeholders—teachers and parents (I may also add students). Negash warns against what he terms "the lack of participatory tradition" in Ethiopia which has been historically ruled by a centralized and authoritarian government: "I think it is realistic to expect the educational sector to play a decisive role in the renovation and reconstruction of the country but only when the state and society create a conducive environment under which the sector can operate." Only a substantially reformed education sector can be the "foundation" for what he terms the "dynamic development" of the Ethiopian society. The educational system is currently in the midst of reform and decentralization, but behavioral changes take time.

Methodology

Data collection was accomplished using field techniques that included: self-report questionnaires, document reviews, and semi-structured interviews of selected TFAs.

Participants

Twelve teacher volunteers that were placed throughout colleges in Ethiopia were asked to participate. Ages ranged from 28 through 55. One has a BA, 7 have Master degrees, 1 is a PhD candidate, and 5 have PhDs. Five of the TFAs are returnees for a second year. There are 8 males and 4 female volunteers.

Procedure

A self-report teacher questionnaire was sent to all TFAs in teaching positions in December 1997. It consisted of 50 close-ended and open-ended items. The advantage of using such a questionnaire was that it could be completed quickly and analyzed with less effort than a completely open-ended questionnaire. To probe further, I selected two TFAs (one male and one female) to interview which provided more insights into their perceptions. I chose specific questions at random from the questionnaire for them to elaborate on.

Documentary information consisted of reports, minutes (and recommendations) of the Mid-year Conference, proposals, evaluations, lists, and papers. This information provided additional support for the data gathered in the teacher questionnaires and interviews.

Data Analysis

Utilizing triangulation of data strategies when possible, multiple sources of information collected from the questionnaires, interviews, and documents revealed patterns and logical linkages. I organized the results based on the three objectives.

Discussion & Recommendations

Results of the teacher questionnaires, with supporting evidence from interviews, and document reviews, demonstrate that most of the TFAs (83%) report they have completed at least one of the program objectives. Most TFAs (67% reported that they have introduced interactive, student-centered, teaching methods in their classrooms in addition to lecturing (100%). (Refer to Table 1.)

Two TFAs have assumed the duties of Acting Department Head. Over half have given technical assistance especially in the area of technology/computers. Most of the TFAs (67%) have conducted workshops and conferences at their schools on gender issues, computer use, research methods, and legal issues. Most of the TFAs have contributed materials and books to their colleges and/or were able to get additional technical books and journals even at personal expense. Half of the TFAs have written course outlines and materials for their classes. Over half of the TFAs have written project/research proposals for their colleges and two even found external funding. Some TFAs have worked on department committees (25%) and school-wide committees (42%), including Research and Publication, the Scholarship Committee, the Year Book Committee, and the Academic Commission. One third have designed new curricula in their particular area (Refer to Table 2.)

Most of the teachers consider themselves as role models primarily for the students. They believe that their greatest assets are their expertise in an area, as an English-speaking role model, as a resource to the college, and advising the students. All of the teachers reported that they enjoyed teaching their students, who they considered eager to learn and respectful but lacking in English and writing skills as well as problem-solving abilities. Two thirds of the TFAs stated that they would like to return for a second (or third) year, one third had other commitments or were undecided at the time. (Refer to Table 3.)

Table 1

Objective: Work with Ethiopian teacher counterparts using interactive instructional methods and techniques.	
1. How many credit hours are you teaching Semester I?	Ave. hrs/wk 8.6; Range: 3 to 18
3. Are you teaching any courses out of field?	1 yes. Freshman English
4. Do you teach "common" course(s)?	5 No 7 yes Freshman English, Acct., Eco
5. Have you taught at a college before?	4 yes. Similar courses? 3 yes
10. Do you have course outline(s)?	8 Yes 67 % Did you help prepare? 8 No 67 %
24. What teaching methods do you use most often to teach your courses?	
	10 lecture 6 demonstration 8 discussions 4 Q/A
	2 study groups 2 lab 3 cooperative groupings 3 games/simulations
	5 tutorials 0 portfolios 7 handouts 2 field trips
26. What is the average size of your class(es)?	64 Range: From 14 to 100
28. Do you have an office?	2 no 83% yes; Do you keep office hours? Yes Range 2 - 6 hrs/wk
29. What is the average % of girls in your class(es)?	0 - 10%
30. What do your students call you?	By title not name as often
31. Do you like teaching your students? respectful, fun, like teaching	12 (100%) yes. Why? Eager to learn,
33. Describe your relationship with your students.	5 formal 8 courteous 6 friendly 4 casual
34. Do your students cheat?	Most said "I don't know!"
35. What do your students complain about most?	Accent, pronunciation, speak too fast
36. Do you consider yourself a role model for your students?	8 yes. (66.67%) 2 Don't know Explain. Women for female students, as English speaker, as an American
37. What academic skills do you think that your students need most? (please prioritise and list)	
	1. English proficiency 2. Problem-solving & Study skills 3. Writing
41. Do you team teach?	7 no 5 yes
42. Do you think that you are influencing the teaching of your colleagues? How? Share ideas, field trips, visit class, help young instructors, group study, methods, technical help	8 (66.67%) yes.

Table 2

Objective: Provide technical assistance to schools & departments to improve administrative capabilities, develop project proposals, and assist in resource mobilization.	
Objective: Design improved, relevant curricula & teaching materials.	
6. Are you (Acting) Department Head?	<u>2</u> yes. What dept? Laboratory Sciences, Engineering
7. Do you meet with department colleagues regularly?	58% yes informally
11. Are you preparing course outline(s)/materials for other courses?	4 yes.
12. What department committees are you on?	2 yes 1 Chair
13. What other department duties do you have?	2 yes (Lab, upgrade hospital)
14. What college committees are you on? Academic Commission, Research & Pub, Scholarship, Year Book	5 yes Co-Chair? 1
17. Do you have administrative duties?	10 (83%)no <u>2</u> yes. What? Department Heads
18. What other college duties do you have?	Dept Head, provide technical assist, project proposals
19. Did you/will you conduct workshop(s)?	10 (83%) yes. What? Computers, Gender, Legal Issues, Res.
20. Are you writing a project/research proposal?	6 (50%)yes.
21. Are you working on a community project? English club	8 (66%) no; 4(34%) yes what? Women's Issues,
23. Do you provide any technical assistance? equipment, Lab	7 (58%) yes. What? Computers, A-V
27. Do you make up your own tests?	11 (92%) yes, class tests

Challenges & Recommendations

TFAs reported that they faced major challenges in achieving program objectives (see Table 3, Q. 45). They can be grouped into four broad categories:

- | | |
|--|--------|
| 1. difficulties in communicating | 50% |
| 2. lack of supports, materials, resources, and even the "basics" | 16.67% |
| 3. clash of cultural/gender differences—values and expectations | 16.67% |
| 4. functioning effectively as volunteers while dealing with traditional and bureaucratic ways of behavior and resistance to change | 16.67% |

Communication Difficulties

Each of the TFAs dealt with this problem on an individual basis depending on their placement. Communication problems usually lessen as the teachers, their colleagues, and the students become more familiar with each other over time. TFAs identified this area as one in which the IFESI-/Ethiopia Office can assist them better. Language training was requested by the TFAs.

Recommendations: In-country training must be modified based on the suggestions of the TFAs to include **more intensive Amharic lessons**. English is considered the language of instruction at the colleges, but we now understand that students and even the instructors and administrators may have different abilities of English language proficiency.

Lack of Supports & Materials

The volunteers have learned to cope under the most difficult of circumstances in very creative ways. Shortages are part of everyday life in Ethiopia. Teaching practical survival skills is important. TFAs identified several ways in which the IFESI-/Ethiopia office can assist them better: inspect housing and insure basic needs are met, provide

Table 3

Challenges:

7. What language is primarily used in meetings? 50% english 33% amharric Tigrai/Oromo 17%
9. Are there women teachers at your school? Don't know (Resp.Invalid)
15. Is your College Dean supportive? 6 (50%) yes Explain. "He asks me regularly about my well-being."
6 (50%) no "I've never seen him." "We met for a few minutes."
16. Is your Department Head (or Supervisor) supportive? 83% yes. Explain. Gives advice, supports
22. Are there College/Dept. "Rules and Regulations" that you do not support?
What? Most don't know what they are. (Evaluations are in Amharic)
25. What resources/materials are available for you to use?
(Overhead, transparencies, ref. Books, computer, TV?VCR)
32. Do you have secretarial support? 83% yes. 17% don't use, secretary has limited English
38. Is your housing part of a college compound? 2 no 10 (83%) yes
39. Do you socialise with other instructors away from school? 2 no 10 (83%) yes. How?
At staff lounge, play games, at their house, bar & restaurant How often? Often
40. Do you live better than the other Ethiopian teachers on the same educational level? 6(50%) no 3 (25%) yes. 3 (25%) don't know Is it a problem? 8 no, 0 yes 4 No resp.
43. Do you feel your Ethiopian colleagues respect you professionally? 1.5 no 10.5 yes
If not, is this a problem? All males said yes. 1/2 females said no
44. Do you have (an) Ethiopian Teacher counterpart(s) or someone you work closely with? 4 no 8 (66.67%) yes, How? Provides info, team teaches, share ideas, write exams & do class projects, research
45. What is/are the most important educational challenge(s) that you are experiencing teaching in Ethiopia?
communication 6 (50%)
lack of resources, supports 2 (16.67%)
cultural/gender 2 (16.67%)
traditional/bureaucratic 2 (16.67%)
46. What is/are the most important asset(s) that you feel you are contributing to the college & educational system here in Ethiopia? English skills, Teaching methods, technical assistance, and advising students
48. What additional educational problem(s) or issue(s) are you experiencing at work that IFESH may be able to help you with?
Inspect housing, provide more materials
49. Please discuss in what ways IFESH/Ethiopia can assist in better preparing TFAs for teaching at a college in Ethiopia. Please be specific.
Language instruction
inspect housing & basic needs before placement
training - survival & practical skills
emergency procedures in place
no out of field placements
47. Do you feel that you are fulfilling (most of) the objectives of the TFA program (refer to Handbook or TFA News for objectives) 2 no, 10 (83%) yes Explain.
50. Do you want to extend for another year? 8 (66.67%) yes 2 (16.67%) no 2 (16.67%) Und.

training in survival and practical information; make sure emergency procedures are in place; and insist there are no out of field placements at schools. (Refer to Table 3, Q.49.)

Recommendations: Therefore, increasing support in the future from the **IFESH/Ethiopia Office** is necessary to insure that **each TFA is a good "fit"** at their school. This year only one TFA reported teaching a course out of field. Last year this was a major problem. Volunteers must have **adequate housing and basic needs** taken care of upon arrival, and that there is **better communication** between TFAs, IFESH/Ethiopia, MOE, & IFESH/AZ. Some supports were initiated this year. Using returning TFAs as a resource for the new volunteers as well as the creation of the Deputy Country Representative's post to act as an "advocate" for the Americans and a "liaison" between IFESH/Ethiopia and other C/O and N/O organizations were seen as helpful. A closer working relationship with USAID is being sought. An Inter-Agency Volunteer Council has been formed which IFESH/Ethiopia is a member of to discuss and find solutions for the common problems volunteers face in Ethiopia. Both agencies can assist IFESH in **formulating emergency procedures**. The American Embassy has been very supportive of the program and has made services available to TFAs. In addition, a **revised handbook on Ethiopia** has been compiled including a list of what TFAs should bring with them is now part of the pre-departure package. The Peace Corps **handbooks on survival and safety, and medical information for Ethiopia** have also been distributed.

Cultural/Gender Differences

From the moment TFAs arrive in Ethiopia at the airport, they experience extreme stress at having their personal property pulled apart and even taken away. A long process begins to get back what is theirs from customs. There are irrational and inconsistent demands for letters, signatures, and fees. Some items are even considered too "dangerous" to enter Ethiopia (i.e. fax machine). TFAs are then besieged by taxi drivers, beggars and thieves that believe all "ferengis" are rich; administrators and colleagues that hope to "exploit the ferengi"; students that want Americans to help them get to the USA (via DV); and even parents that offer their children. Soon "You, You!" are ready to accept what everyone tells you—"don't trust anybody!" You conclude that the people are too backward, that the women are treated as servants and are too passive—it is a society that blindly accepts authority when authority is present. But anyone can tell you if you visit the Post Office or are driving, when no symbol of authority is there, the people go for it—opportunism and at times chaos reigns. It is a society where the people hide what they have behind high walls not from thieves but from envious neighbors; that expects their officials to be corrupt, and where being forced fed is a sign of hospitality. It is one country made up of 80 ethnicities and languages. It is a people that seem without hope but who continue to name their first born sons "Tesfay" (I-Hope). On the other hand, Americans seem too loud, too boastful, too generous, and too open for Ethiopia. The American women are free and masculine in their behavior. (One female TFA stated that her junior colleagues told her at a staff meeting that: "We don't think of you as a woman. We think of you as a man or we couldn't work with you!") Nothing prepares you for the poverty. We are constantly reminded that Ethiopians have over 3000 years of tradition, and the Americans have so little—we will only corrupt them with our "modern" ways. For it is democracy, they believe, that has brought ethnic rivalry to Ethiopia.

Some Ethiopians still romanticize about "Haile Salassie, Ras Tafari" and believe he is alive (but then we have Americans that believe Elvis is alive!). It is a country where everyone lies about their age, and where student cheating is normal. It is a country that responds to situations with "Cheggar yellum!" ("No problem!"). And sure enough, you know, you have a problem. But if we continue to delve deeper, we learn about the "wax and gold"—nothing is as it seems. There is "surface" meaning and "deep" meaning. (Listening for over 3 hours to a faculty meeting conducted in Amharic and trying to understand what was being discussed, a TFA asked an Ethiopian colleague in frustration: "What did they say?" He replied, "It's not what they said, it's what they didn't say!") It is a country of endless patience, deep thought, and people who like to "play".

Pamela George (1995) in her book, **College Teaching Abroad: A Handbook for Strategies for successful Cross-cultural Exchanges**, recognizes that American college teachers face profound challenges—professional and personal—when teaching abroad. She suggests that American teachers should not just attempt to transplant their strategies without considering traditional and cultural contexts:

- University teaching strategies cannot be implemented on their intrinsic merit alone. Teachers must modify their methods to fit a cultural context.
- We tend to use US pedagogic and business traditions instead of seeking more culturally appropriate alternatives.
- Reflection, patience, and flexibility are required for effective teaching especially in cross-cultural settings.

Recommendations: So, we Americans must learn to "play". Much is resolved over a cup of tea. Keep a sense of humor. Reflect deeply on what is being said and what is happening; be flexible when confronted with what seems unpredictable behavior and unreasonable demands; and learn to love the pride and strength of these people who have never been colonized and who are in the midst of great change. Not all teachers are cut out for the job. The selection process and orientation program are very important tools for determining the best candidates for TFAs—not just those with the best credentials but with the correct mental attitudes as well as common sense coping skills. **IFESH/AZ must choose the most "qualified" people**—academically, physically, and mentally—to send to Ethiopia. Also, the four stages of adjustment that volunteers experience must be discussed during the In-country Training so that TFAs are prepared for the culture shock

Bureaucratic Rigidity

With no doubt, we are all experiencing a paradigm shift that requires a re-examination of our values and behaviors. A growing global economy, increased technology, flatter organizational hierarchies, and decentralization of responsibilities necessitate changes in the way corporations do business and even how people relate in the world today. This creates the demand for changes in the educational system. The skills students/workers need today require different curricula and methods of instruction. They must be able to communicate effectively, problem-solve and make decisions, work in teams, and adapt quickly to changes. These skills also prepare the people for life challenges resulting in a feeling of general well-being leading to a better quality of life as well as increasing production efficiency. Education should empower people. The teachers and administrators must be willing and able to model these new behaviors. Is Ethiopia ready for such a radical shift in attitudes and behaviors? Is it willing to do what is necessary to bring the society out of extreme poverty and ethnocentrism? Can the education sector bring meaningful change to the society without going through substantial changes itself? Bringing American (especially African-American) teachers to Ethiopia to help implement reform and act as "change agents" is a positive step. But we must have supports at all levels of the government, especially in the Ministry of Education, and from participating institutions to fully accomplish our objectives in Ethiopia or we are just "filling the gaps."

Recommendations: Therefore, we ask the Ministry of Education to be more proactive in initiating reforms in the education sector, continuing decentralization efforts and providing in-service training. Supports for the Teachers for Africa Program must be provided in order for us to be more effective and productive in fulfilling our objectives. We make the following recommendations:

- Assist TFA Program in getting **NGO status**. We consider this top-priority.
- MOE can assist IFESH with the **customs process**—first, by assigning a "protocol" person to assist us at the airport to allow us to bring in our personal items without having to go through the lengthy process of reclaiming items. Our program would like to have a "special volunteer status" that exempts TFAs from fees and stamp taxes that are added on duty free items. Terms such as "personal items" and "duty free" should be defined as specifically as possible.
- **Visas:** IFESH/Ethiopia staff and TFAs should be able to have multiple entrance/exit visas that last the year. TFAs should not have to pay a fee for a work visa. We come as volunteers.
- Create a simpler process by which TFAs can **ship books**, equipment, supplies, etc. in advance of their arrival that are personal and make donations under IFESH/Ethiopia auspices.
- MOE can appoint a "**liaison**" that can work with the IFESH/Ethiopia Office to clarify the Ministry's educational goals, who can coordinate activities involving the Deans and Department Heads at the participating colleges, and who can assist in developing joint program evaluation procedures. This person can also be MOE's representative to the IFESH Mid-year Conference and end-of-the-year Mini-Conference.
- MOE can redefine the role of **TFA as an educator-consultant** to the colleges with specific IFESH objectives and who works in collaboration with MOE to implement the new educational sector strategies to insure that the TFA is not just filling the gap. The process by which colleges request TFAs should stress this special role, the objectives should be explained and necessary supports should be required from each institution.
- A **letter of "Thank you"** would be very appreciated by the TFA volunteers at the end of their service in Ethiopia signed by the Minister of Education. Each TFA would cherish such a document.

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"The Challenges of Producing Educational Television Programming in Ethiopia: Busting Gender Stereotypes"

by **Elizabeth Jackson, PhD.**

**Ethiopian Educational Radio and Television:
A Brief History**

Educational Media Agency: The Venue of Operation

In 1960-61, the former Ministry of Education and Fine Arts established an audio-visual center in cooperation with USAID, then called Four Point, in Mexico. The purpose of the center was to provide schools and government agencies with photographs, films, charts, and posters.

When television broadcasting was launched in Addis Ababa in 1971, the government adopted the British mandate for broadcasting: to educate, inform, and entertain. Accordingly, the Ministry of Education drew up plans to harness the new medium to the service of education. Television transmissions began for high schools in 1972. In 1986, the organization changed its name to Educational Media Agency.

The objectives of the Agency included:

1. To improve, develop, and implement the new educational curriculum
2. To introduce modern teaching methods
3. To extend the vocational training programs, distance and adult education, rural development training, and literacy programs
4. To increase the skills of professionals and offer qualitative education
5. To teach the working language and to utilize and develop the languages of other nationalities
6. To popularise science and technology among the broad masses.

At the Central level (Addis Ababa), the facilities include:

1. two radio stations
2. one TV studio
3. book, audio-visual, and film library
4. one central maintenance workshop
5. small storage for items and spare parts

In 1988-89, which was the last time any assessment has been done on utilization, it was estimated that radio was used in approximately 7,254 schools throughout Ethiopia, and served 2,669,531 students. Television was used in 302 schools, with an estimated 176,079 students. Because Educational Television now makes use of Ethiopian Television transmitters, estimated to have the *potential* to serve 75% of the population of the country, suggests that in the far future a possibility exists for educational coverage in Ethiopia's remote areas.

Radio

Educational radio in Ethiopia preceded television. The first radio lessons for schools were broadcast in the first semester of 1969. These lessons were heard in 50 elementary schools in the Menagesha Awrada. The lessons were devised and produced by the Educational Mass Media Center, a division of the Ministry of Education and Fine Arts.

The goal of educational radio was to support classroom teaching and to assist other development areas such as Agricultural Extension, Community Development, and Literacy.

In Hedar, in 1969, programs were developed for the nation's Senior Secondary Schools. Three hundred radio were purchased and distributed in all of the schools in the region, and the broadcast lessons were developed to support the teaching of Amharic, English, History, Geography, and Science.

From the years 1972-80, eleven radio stations (one for each province, two for the Amhara region) were built for the Educational Broadcasting Network. Each of the 11 stations were broadcasting at one Kilowatt, and later upgraded to 10 Kilowatts. Radio receivers were distributed to elementary, junior secondary schools, and some development projects through the government Ministries.

In the years 1969-70, a total of 24 original radio programs were produced for elementary, secondary, adult, and teacher education. The largest number of these programs were produced for elementary, secondary, adult, and teacher education (18), with two programs for the aforementioned sectors. Because broadcasts were live, and the schools, did not have the capability to record programs, most of the transmissions were repeated within the day or week to cover all students who were studying the same unit. The programs averaged 20 minutes in length per broadcast.

One year later (1970-71), thirty seven (37) additional radio programs were created and broadcast, with the heaviest emphasis on secondary education (20 programs), and elementary education (10 programs). Two (2) programs were provided for adult education and five (5) for teacher training.

The transmissions were disseminated in a 24 week school broadcasting year. In the first year there were 528 transmissions: ninety-six (96) to elementary schools; Three hundred thirty six (336) to senior secondary schools; forty-eight (48) to adults (community development and farm forum; and 48 to teacher training program, occupying a total of fifty-two hours of broadcasting time.

Radio Format and Support Materials

All Senior Secondary, elementary, teacher programs, and adult programs were planned in a series, each series having a defined educational aim and target audience. Most series continued throughout the two semesters of the school year.

As a supplement to the radio programs, support materials were prepared and distributed to the schools. These materials included a "Teacher's Guide," with instructions on what preparation teachers should take before, during, and after the presentation of a program, as well as schedules and timetables as to when various programs would be aired. The Teacher's Guides were structured in such a way that the entire lesson, inclusive of program plus prepared curriculum, would take about one (classroom) hour.

Ethiopian Educational Television

Ethiopian Educational Television (E.T.T.) started as a pilot project with 15 schools in Addis Ababa in October of 1972. This was carried out in collaboration with the Ministry of Information using their studio and transmitter.

Later, with help from British and American technical and monetary aid, E.T.T. built its own studio at the Ministry of Education Mass Media Center in Mexico Square, Addis Ababa, where this production facility is currently located.

E.T.T. Facilitating

Television sets (dominated by the Americans, British, and Japanese) were placed in a room or hall designated for viewing and classes came to watch the programs. The E.T.T. schedule was designed to fall in the middle of the class period so as to allow teachers 10-15 minutes pre-telecast motivation periods and 10-15 minutes post-telecast follow-up activities.

Today, E.T.T. transmits eight (8) programs per day, repeating three (3). The programs include: English for grades 7 and 8, Math for grades 7 and 8, and one productive technology (drawing, metal work, measurements) program for grades 7 and 8. Occasionally, other outside (and usually foreign produced) programs are used as additional educational material, and as a bridge between programs. These foreign produced shorts may include topics like health, cartoons, music, and drama.

This year, the Ministry of Education issued a new curriculum, which subsequently called for the production of new instructional programs in math, chemistry, and English. Ideally, the Ministry of Education has called for 20 new programs annually in each of the three categories. These new programs would be produced for grades 9-12, heretofore not receiving educational instructional television. Because the programs are to be broadcast in a series, the new round of shows has been targeted to begin broadcasting in the year 2,000.

All educational television programs also come with the aforementioned requisite "Teacher's Guide".

THE ROLE OF THE IFESH MEDIA PRODUCTION ADVISOR

Initially, the role of the advisor included the producing, directing, hosting, and writing of the new 9th grade English language television programming, incorporating the new curriculum handed down from the Ministry of Education in September of 1997. The advisor also prepared the "Teacher's Guides" as supplemental material to help prepare teachers and their students for the upcoming programs. In addition, the 1997 responsibilities included the advising of content and grammar of all English language radio programs produced and aired last year in English, Chemistry, Math, and Distance Education for teachers. Due to the relative ease of radio production, the 20 programs per category criteria were fulfilled last year, freeing up time this year to experiment with and produce test programs incorporating interactive radio (for which an outside advisor and expert in this area was flown in from the United States to provide three months of intensive training for the radio producers.)

This year, while the advisor still maintains the aforementioned roles associated with television, she is also serving as a trainer for the new English language television producer hired in August of 1997.

CHALLENGES

Year One

In the first year (1996-97), the advisor faced three major challenges in the workplace: the unavailability of additional trained staff and production crew; the ill repair and lack of availability of production equipment; and the advisor's lack of fluidity in Amharic (which may have aided in the expedition of needed information). Last year, the television studio had only one poorly turned television camera. In addition, the studio lacked a floor manager (person who helps with props and communicates the wishes of the director to the crew and cast.) The crew member whose assigned job at Educational Media Agency (EMA) was that of cameraman, also served as a lighting person, talent, and floor manager. One person served as graphic designer due for three television producers, and as a result the sets often lacked background or graphic design due to the delay in the turnaround time. As the facility had no modern touches such as character generators or TelePrompTers, all narration for characters and hosts had to be hand written on cue-cards, as did the captions for the question and answer section of the program. Responsibility for the production of these materials also falls under the realm of the graphics designer, which again greatly delayed the expedient production of the program.

Year Two

In September of 1997, the agency purchased three new television cameras, employed a floor manager, and two additional graphics designers, effectively solving our problem of limited personnel and poor camera equipment.

(Case Study: Problem)

As mentioned above, a new television producer trainee joined the team. His background was as an English teacher for the last ten years, but because he had an *interest* in television, EMA hired him as a new 9th grade English language TV producer. I would be leaving in July of 1998, and a new producer had to be trained and phased in.

The major challenge facing me from December of 1997 had to do with the cultural/sociological/interpersonal challenge of an outside expert operating in an almost exclusively male-dominated environment. This had never served as a problem the first year. In fact, much to the contrary, both radio and television producers, all men, besieged me with questions and rushed to implement my recommendations. However, the dynamics changed with the introduction of the new male onto our team.

Though he had never produced a television program, he announced that I was no longer the producer, he was now my boss (and I his subordinate, to report all of my activities to him) and that his first request was that I reshoot and restructure my programs, as they were not heavy on grammatical drills for students.

On my annual leave, and in my absence, he “hired” a White, British, female host to serve as television instructor for the upcoming 20 programs. I expressed to him my reasons for strongly opposing the selection of his new host. Firstly, the Minister of Education, W/ro Genet Zewdie, had initiated a policy to increase the number of women who would be eligible to receive higher education at the university level. With less than 10% of all college educated persons in the country women, I suggested to him that we needed to place a female, Ethiopian as television instructor. I also spoke about studies in the United States that looked at gender, race, image and television, explaining that underrepresented groups who found themselves in a leadership role on television, tended to emulate such behaviors, our selection of an Ethiopian would then help bolster and support W/ro Genet’s policies, and begin to help build the self-esteem of the nation’s women. It would also, I suggested, help to make men aware of the fact that women could serve as experts, professors, and intellectual leaders.

He responded that race had nothing to do with it, and besides, I had been hosting the program last year, and people in Ethiopia would believe me “to be white.” He further explained to me that everyone knew that the only perfect pronunciation of the English language could only be done by the British, and therefore, the woman would stay.

The Solution

Rather than risk a “no” from Ato “S’s” boss (Ato “D”), I bulked the chain of authority and went directly to the Minister of Education, W/ro Genet. After explaining my reasons for adamantly opposing the new host, she immediately called Ato “D”, and said that she wanted nothing other than a female Ethiopian host to serve as the new television instructor.

As for the proclamation that he (Ato “M”) was *my* boss and that I was now to report to *him* and seek *his* approval for decisions made in subsequent productions, a conflict-management session was required in which *his* boss (Ato “S”) served as mediator. Ato “S” suggested that while Ato “M” was hired because they felt him to be a good candidate, perhaps it would be in EMAs best interest for us to work together and collaborate on projects, since Ato “M” had been at the agency only about 5 months, and Dr. Elizabeth had been brought to EMA for her expertise and 20 years experience in the broadcasting field.

Cultural Observations

Before the introduction of a new, male producer-trainee for English language TV, all of the men in positions of authority at the agency deferred to my suggestions for program modifications, directed questions to me, and requested, when time permitted, my hands-on participation in the programs they were producing. This changed markedly with the introduction of Ato “M”.

Because Ato “M” was a male, and believed himself to be my superior, others in the agency seemed to have stopped deferring to me in order to help “save face” for Ato “M”, and to perhaps keep him from feeling further threatened by my expertise. In what seemed a fraternal bond, even persons in authority began to side with his “declarations”, no matter how ill-conceived. In one instance, he suggested to me that no one, other than Ethiopians, should have speaking parts in scripts—as the accents of “others” would confuse the students. I then explained to Ato “M’s” boss that: firstly, Ethiopian people primarily spoke Amharic or other indigenous languages to one another—never English; secondly, that the most important reason students took English was that they could one day converse with and *understand* a *native* English speaker; and thirdly, that native English speakers all over the world, depending on the region they came from, had different accents (and in some cases pronunciations), but that did not matter as long as the usage was *grammatically correct*. It therefore seemed to me that the limiting of characters to strictly Ethiopian accents would defeat the purpose of language training, limit their exposure to persons outside their culture, and do the students an injustice. I also reminded him that as the

former programs with the British host had now been formally retired, and in its place were English programs produced by USAID, the students would for the next two years become attuned to an “American” accent.

Despite the differing opinions, I continued to incorporate characters of “other” into my scripts, including a Nigerian merchant (Dr. Okoro), a Caribbean poet (Shindy Jones), an American instructor (myself), a German thief, and a British salesperson.

I have noted that although I have ignore their rationale, I have not been addressed by the men who sided with Ato “M”. In this too, it is my belief that the male fraternity must support the opinions of males, and must not disregard nor counter the opinions of other males, no matter how ill-informed, especially in the presence of a woman with a different opinion. Paternalism and sexism have been strongly noted by former female IFESH volunteers in Ethiopia, and especially as they have expressed their opinions counter to males in open forums.

The reality is that with so few women here in higher levels of decision making, carrying intellectual authority, or as technical experts, the male populace is initially poised to reject their ideas and relegate them to their traditional roles.

Future IFESH volunteers should be aware that these challenges do and will continue to exist in their respective workplaces, and must therefore be sensitive to the evolving nature of the culture, but also continue to question and pose alternatives to the boundaries.

Accomplishments and Contributions

Over the past two years, the following accomplishments have been made:

1. The production of four television programs
2. The scripting of five instructional television scripts
3. The production of five “Teacher’s Guides”
4. The reviewing and modification of 50 English language radio scripts for English, Math, Chemistry, and Teacher Distance Education
5. The training and advising of the new English language TV producer-trainee
6. The selection of a new female Ethiopian television instructor
7. An exhaustive compilation, donated to the library, of studies related to gender, image, and television.

Suggestions

The following suggestions are recommended:

- That a credible, knowledgeable, and credentialed female Ethiopian television instructor be selected to host the upcoming programs
- That the host be fairly compensated monetarily
- That more females be trained at EMA in positions of producers, writers, and directors
- That Workshops should be held on issues of gender sensitivity, race and image as related to television
- That Workshops be held on assertiveness training for women in the workplace
- That IFESH volunteers skilled in production continue to train employees of EMA and expose them to the techniques of “outside” productions

The Challenges of a First Time Teacher by Lisa Robinson, MBA

Prior to joining IFESH I was financial analyst in the private sector, with no previous teaching background. Joining IFESH was both a means to contribute to the development of Africa as well as change careers. I was totally unaware of the demands and challenges of teaching, let alone teaching in a developing country. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to discuss the challenges I encountered, the observations I witnessed, and the opportunities I have identified during my first year as an IFESH volunteer at Addis Ababa Commercial College.

First Semester

In the first semester, I naively requested to teach 18 hours. For those persons unfamiliar with teaching at the college level, the normal course load is 12 hours. My assigned courses were Secretarial Accounting and Introduction to Accounting. For the entire semester, I greeted each day with a renewed spirit. I thoroughly enjoyed my students and the required preparation to ensure each class was stimulating and challenging. However, during that period, teaching 18 hours, editing and assisting my colleagues with proposals was taking its toll on me physically and mentally, unknowingly. Nonetheless, I completed the semester successfully amidst the challenges and peculiarities enumerated below.

Teaching Methodology

Since I was assigned common courses to teach, course outlines were already developed when I arrived. And since instructors have little autonomy to deviate from course syllabi, I exercised my freedom with how my classes were conducted.

- Utilized in-class group assignments and in-class group contests
- Facilitated and introduced concepts. I created a learning environment in which my role was a facilitator while my students had to teach themselves the concepts. This was accomplished by limiting my lecture to 15-20 minutes a class and the remaining time used for question and answer, and problem workouts.
- Reinforcement learning. I would ask several questions at the beginning of each period to reinforce what was discussed in the previous class. I thought this was also a good technique since most of the students had never had a native English speaker. So this technique ensured that if they didn't understand me the first time, the second time was guaranteed.

My objective in utilizing the above mentioned techniques was to move my classroom from the chalk and talk mode of teaching to a more active and personable learning environment.

Instructional Technology Tools

- * Two overhead projectors in the Accounting Department. With classes held in separate buildings, it is inconvenient to carry the equipment from class to class. Therefore, the majority of the staff solely used the blackboards.
- * Shortage of textbooks. One per every 3 students for most common courses. Hence, the instructor has an inordinate amount of writing to do (i.e. major concepts, questions, and answers)
- * Inadequate equipment for faculty duplicating. The college is still using stencils for mass quantity productions. During exam period, teachers are relegated to manually collating and stapling.
- * Under-utilization of new textbooks. New textbooks arrived last semester that were donated by the Ethiopian Community Development Council (ECDC). This new arrival has increased the number of recent edition textbooks available for staff and student usage. However, the textbooks are not in circulation yet because of inadequate resources, library staff as well as instructor's time.

Colleagues' Attitudes

Concerning my colleagues' morale, I perceived a displeasure with staff opportunities as well as a disinterest in moving the college forward. Other observations included the faculty to be overworked with low pay. Many of the staff members work in either the extension program or a part-time job elsewhere in order to earn a decent wage. Furthermore, the staff members are requested to volunteer on committees with out pay, which can be extremely time consuming. Also the instructors are consumed with trying to obtain advanced degrees. So then, the question remains when does the staff have the time or energy level to redesign a progressive curriculum, revise their lesson plans to ensure an exciting learning environment, and to see what changes are essential in their workplace.

Unfortunately, I can't comment on the impact bureaucracy may play on my colleagues' morale.

Cultural Norms

- Archaic system of teaching, testing, and evaluating. Teachers cannot deviate from the course outline. They cannot give quizzes, presentation assignments or extra credit that other common course teachers have not given because the final grading will not be the same. All common course instructors must give the same exam and after grading the instructors must come together to determine the grading scale.

- Work ethic unlike progressive countries.
- Staff phobia toward the use of automation.

The end of the first semester was a welcoming sight for obvious reasons. In the second semester, I was allocated only 9 credit hours which was truly a blessing because intense culture shock had set in. The type of culture shock in which you begin criticizing every and anything about the host culture and you make incessant comparisons between your country and your host country. In addition to culture shock, mental and physical exhaustion became more apparent and the factors attributing to this exhaustion were twofold: work-related and living conditions. However, I limited my discussion solely to work-related factors. But keep in mind there are overwhelming living conditions in Ethiopia that affect a volunteers psyche and energy level. Luckily for me, these factors did not impede my teaching ability, just my desire to take on additional assignments.

Second Semester

In the second semester I requested to teach Financial Management, a course that I knew would be intensely challenging but beneficial in my professional development. One of the additional tasks requested of me by the Dean was to edit the college newspaper. Initially, I dreaded the assigned role of editor because I was aware that in addition to being editor, I would have to also be data collector, researcher, journalist, typist and teacher.

Fortunately, what I learned in the process was that this assignment was the “added value” I so eagerly sought in the first semester. Throughout the entire first semester, I kept questioning, “Why am I here?” and “What value am I adding with a staff of 10+ accounting instructors. Little did I know, that working on the newsletter would reveal those answers. The work required for the newsletter exposed me to both the challenges and the opportunities facing the college. And it became acutely obvious the areas in which I or another IFESH volunteer could contribute our expertise, in addition to teaching.

Challenges with Newsletter

- Lack of staff participation
- Intimidation by the staff to express their views candidly. I had staff members make statement for inclusion in the college newsletter, only for them to later retract the statements for fear of retaliation.
- The data collection for the newsletter was tedious b/c the college lacks the requisite automation
- Only 2 staff members elected to contribute articles.

Opportunities for Incoming IFESH Volunteer at AACC

I see the role of the next IFESH volunteer(s) at AACC as not only as teacher(s) but as consultant(s) with the following possible opportunities:

1. Assist JOCV (Japan’s) volunteer automate Registrar’s Office
2. Help Student Employment Office with increasing its employer database, developing a system to track graduates, and automating employer database
3. Provide assistance with the Colleges and Affiliations Program (CUAP) objectives, specifically in the establishment of small Business Assistance Center
4. Automate the External Examination Office. Numerous untapped opportunities
5. Assist Secretarial Department market the RSA certification to the public
6. Conduct various workshops, especially on innovative teaching methodology

Personal Accomplishments

- Adapting quickly to a teaching environment. This is extremely gratifying because it validates my theory that professionals in the private sector can make a difference in the classroom. Their focus is less on theory and more on practical applications.
- Creating and editing the college newsletter, *Contact*.
- Providing a unique, innovative, and well-received teaching methodology that increased my students’ learning
- Receiving positive feedback from my students both verbally and in writing
- Receiving above average evaluations, better than some of the faculty members in the department
- Compiling and summarizing data related to child labor in Ethiopia
- Editing staff proposals.

In closing, I would say I thoroughly enjoy teaching and my colleagues. I have met some wonderful friends and have adjusted to the culture quite nicely. More importantly, I will miss Ethiopia.

Sustainable Development and Appropriate Technology by Lawrence Abraham, PhD.

Clearly the theme of this paper invites a conceptual definition before its (theme) development. Conceptually, we make bold a leading definition of sustainable development as that enduring effort to make or keep strong the attempt to improve living conditions through technology. What then is technology? It is a means by which the natural circumstance of the human life is improved or alleviated. Central to this definition of technology is the development of the human person (Abraham, 1998). The emphasis on the "human person" as central to meaningful development encourages a holistic interpretation of that vague concept (development/sustainable development). It provides a necessary linkage to a notable deficiency in African education: the idea that workable or genuine technology has to be imported.

It is largely a measure of the potency of education—as a factor in development—that we are here assembled. It is therefore sub-thematically appropriate that the subject of this paper dwell on what I call differential education: this contemporary bias in African Education. This paper draws attention to the continuing relegation of African sustainable development that oft-repeated oxymoron namely, Technology Transfer. Attention is drawn to the fact that in order to achieve sustainable development, ideas such as technology transfer need to be addressed within the viability and acceptability of the prevailing socio-economic foundations of the political order. Essentially, what this means is that development—sustainable development—is not realizable without fundamental changes in institutional frameworks. These institutional frameworks, which per se must include educational institutions, have their stability and longevity in an enduring system whose goal is the free development of the human person. (For example, sustainable development through the improvement in education technology must provide options for the academically oriented students as well as the more vocationally oriented students). This of necessity, entails a demand for more flexibility which leads invariably to a discussion of "the introduction of a fully or partly modularised system" (Oliver, 1997).

These discussions are indeed beneficial to the development of the institutions, like the Polytechnic. The growth of the institutions require change. However, these changes must be accompanied by a continuous reassessment of development needs without the creation of loopholes. For example, there is a need for the establishment of collateral or complementary schools to take up the slack that would be generated when the Polytechnic phases out its diploma programmes. There is a need for an integrated programme that values the efficacy of these types of training for immediate availability of technical skills. That is why we are essentially grateful to USAID for its continual support of some of these programmes.

The symphony of sustainable development and appropriate Technology must revisit this technology transfer issue and the course of training. In the former issue, the concept may be said to be loaded. Nobody transfers technology. Teachers are exchanged. Books and skills are exchanged. There is no where in the world where the deliberate transfer of tools and equipments has created enduring development. Implicit in the concept of Technology transfer is the idea that somehow Technology may be brought and deposited from any country to another. This is not so. The considerations of Technology as a systemic entity bespeaks a normative assumption that its sustainability has to have a local basis. Experts and expertise may be relocated or transferred. However, an enduring Development Programme can only flourish where the learner is willing to learn, the teacher willing to teach and institutional frameworks are flexible and ready to change and grow.

What is essentially correct is that foreign experts help to develop home grown technology through their expertise. (Of what good is a snowmobile mechanic in Africa-as a viable expert in transportation). On the issue of training, even the Ministry of Education in Addis Ababa is aware that the "placement of students, contrary to their preferences had no impact" on students' probability to succeed (Erdaw, 1997). This is so because students' choice of careers normally reflect a perception of the job market. It is not necessity reflective of the long term development need of the country; unless the argument can be made that the immediate job outlook is indicative of the long term development needs of the country. This is a tenuous argument ...

When all is said and done, the issue of sustainable development does imply that there is an asset to sustain. And this is always correct. No matter how poor a country is, there exists an 'asset', a resource that can be developed, be it human or natural. The enhancement of that resource without its depletion; and indeed, strengthening its foundation is the bedrock of sustainable technology. TFA's (Teachers for Africa) role in this process largely emphasises human development through education. It goes beyond aid donation in the sense that the teachers are essentially working at the grassroot level with students, shaping minds and thoughts and influencing the future direction of a country by impact - in and outside the classroom. It is the ultimate charity work. (It is in line with the lesson of the feeding of the five thousand). It is therefore not surprising that it is hard work. Helping to develop sustainable technology invites a conscientious dedication to purpose over and against an often exaggerated sense of culture and nationalism on the part of the recipient of help. Affecting and even influencing the change of a mindset demands that those working in development have really to want to do this, for success. There in lies the rub...

**ESTABLISHING AN INTERNET COMPUTER LAB
& AGRICULTURAL DATABASE AT AMBO COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE**
by Jeff Price (PhD Candidate)

Introduction

Growth and development require access to and transfer of information. This is true for the development of institutions as well as individuals, especially in developing countries where information and telecommunication systems are lacking but sorely needed. The globalization of the world economy now affects all aspects of economic, social and political life. Rapid changes are occurring in communication and information technologies as timely, accurate information is needed to search for and compete in a wider range of markets. Computers and internet information access have led to substantial increases in labor productivity, job creation, and market access in the private sector and improved planning, control, and crisis aid in the public sector. This in turn has brought even higher standards of living for developed countries and widened the gap with less developed countries. The term "Information Age" was coined from the recognition that information is the fundamental basis to improvements in living standards around the world. Those with the ability to access and process more information have a comparative advantage in global markets.

Problem

Developing countries are at a significant disadvantage in receiving their share of the benefits of information technologies for several reasons: (1) the costs of acquiring and utilizing information technology have been too high; (2) adequate telecommunications infrastructure is not in place to take advantage of new technologies in information systems; and (3) personnel trained in the design, operation and maintenance of information systems is severely limited. The problem is so severe that many government agencies, policy makers, researchers, and administrators do not even have a clear idea what information systems are, much less how they can be used to improve the efficiency of their own operations and the lives of the people in their country.

Government agencies and higher learning institutions are gradually acquiring computers and internet access, but the pace is slow. In many cases this is due more to a lack of awareness of the potential uses of computer technology and internet information access, than to a lack of funding. Even information about organizations willing to fund or subsidize information system development programs is severely limited. And, as is not uncommon for anyone who encounters such new and different forms of technology, computers, and "the internet" are still met with fear and suspicion by many, which compounds the problem.

Democratic societies work best when the population is well informed about the issues and decisions affecting their lives. Of course most people still do not get all of their information, or even most of their information, from the internet. Television and radio broadcasts, and printed media are still the most circulated forms of news throughout the world. But most of these are now supported by computer information systems. However, computer information systems have permeated the African continent very little. In Ethiopia specifically, most information is received through printed material, radio broadcasts and word of mouth. For rural people, word of mouth is often the only means of news transmission.

As information infrastructure is improved and a greater variety of services become available to people, the need to develop information content and resources increases. Timely and reliable information is needed for planners, decision makers, business development, exchange of ideas and innovations, and to enhance the interaction between the various organizations involved in rural development and the rural communities they serve.

The more educated portion of the population will adopt these new technologies first, sifting through the useful and not so useful components. As this learning process continues, a greater and greater proportion of the population will also become familiar with, and begin adopting these technologies. But the adoption process only happens when the expected future benefits are "significant enough" to justify the cost of adopting (these costs include time and money). This is partly a function of the facts about the capabilities of the technology, as each potential adopter sees them, and each person's impressions or beliefs about the technology's capabilities. This is why it is critical that great efforts be taken, even at considerable expense, to teach the people of Africa about the operation and potential benefits of information systems technology.

Solutions

The African Information Society Initiative (AISII), a partnership between multi-lateral, bi-lateral, non-government and private sector organizations, has developed a framework on which to build Africa's information and communication infrastructure (ECA, 1996). The Vision, Strategic Objectives, Related Goals, Challenges and Opportunities are detailed by ECA's "Action Framework" (1996). However, the initiatives and policy recommendations outlined in this document are broadly defined and intended primarily as guidelines for the initiative. Each participating African country is to plan and implement a National Information and Communication Infrastructure (NICI) based on national needs and priorities. These plans, among other things, are to emphasize democratization of access by bringing information services to distant and disadvantaged communities through various programs. Specific system plans are to be designed for each sector of the economy. This process is currently underway in Ethiopia, but little progress has been made on finalizing or implementing national information system plans. The tendency to centralize all major areas of government is still strong; but runs completely contrary to the technological structure and the democratic philosophical basis on internet information access and content.

Since growth and technical change require investments in research and development, computer and internet use are typically adopted by the academic sector long before the business community and the general public begin to learn and make regular use of these technologies. Researchers and students learn quickly and make use of these technologies for access to information on the current literature, data, the activities of their professional associations, to communicate with colleagues, conduct research analysis, and to prepare publications. It stands to reason that in a country that previously had no access or experience with these technologies the academic sector should be the first place to introduce them.

Schools, especially higher learning institutions, are the biggest users of computer and internet technologies. They are also the place where training and dissemination of this information typically takes place. Although the computer business has developed rapidly in the United States, Europe and Japan, and employs a growing number of computer specialists, most computer training takes place in schools. Today, every student in these countries is expected to be a competent computer and internet user. More and more now the labor market requires these basic skills.

Higher learning institutions need to develop the capacity to train students in all fields of study in information systems and technology to prepare them for the changing work place they will soon enter. As this segment of the population makes greater and greater use of computer and internet technologies, they will in turn teach others about the uses. Government agencies and businesses can begin to use computers to cut operating costs and improve efficiency. As more people get their information through the internet, businesses will begin to see commercial advantages to internet advertising and marketing.

Establishing an internet computer lab and database at Ambo College of Agriculture will contribute significantly to many of the goals and recommended actions outlined in the "Components of an African Information Society Framework" of the ECA (1996) by:

- introducing computer technology and information systems technology to researchers, and students, and making it available to the community through an accessible facility in an academic environment—thus speeding the dissemination of awareness and use of this form of communication and information;
- establishing a source of locally based indigenous information and mechanism (web page) to disseminate it;
- meeting the basic computer training needs of students, government agencies, businesses, and the general public;
- contributing to national and international agency programs for information services, development, and access; and
- contributing to the development of the AISI partner countries by developing and improving awareness, access to and use of information services.

There would be several phases to the development of the lab and database. These are described in more detail below following the general objectives and justification. In the short-run the project would require outside funding for initial set-up and operating costs. The ultimate goal is that the lab and database be self-sufficient within the definition of normal school operations and MOE budgeting.

Objectives and Justification

The goals of the western Shoa Agricultural Database are to:

- Provide internet access to the faculty, staff, and students at Ambo College of Agriculture, and to the general community through a computer lab with multiple desktop computers accessible to the library, during regular library operating hours;
- Provide basic training in computer and information systems to students through the curriculum of the regular programs, to government and non-government agencies or professional organizations through specially arranged courses, and to the general community through continuing education courses;
- Develop a World Wide Web page for Ambo College of Agriculture and use it as a mechanism to increase data gathering activities and dissemination of information relevant to the agricultural, economic, demographic, and living conditions of people in the area;
- Meet the information needs of the college, as well as government agencies and NGOs operating in the area both in terms of their need to access national and international information and to disseminate local information collected and generated by them, through a world wide web page;
- Increase the interaction between researchers, extension agents and other development workers in the region with each other and with farmers and rural people in the Western Shoa area.

Researchers, extension agents and development organizations working in remote areas rely on information systems for access to current and timely information on professional activities, technical literature and news relevant to their area. The information system, whether it is a library of printed material or a computer with internet access is a critical tool in the development of the institution and the individual. It is very difficult to conduct meaningful research without maintaining contact with colleagues, professional organizations, and the current literature. With limited funds to travel it is also difficult to disseminate research results or progress of specific projects to other colleagues. The internet has become a low cost mechanism for doing both of these things.

Information management skills are becoming more and more important to nearly all areas of business and government. This is especially true for developing countries where the burden has increased tremendously on extension offices and agricultural researchers to collect and maintain agricultural data, as well as to gain access to and make use of research conducted in other areas. The training needs for the many regional and local offices of research and government agencies are not being met, and can not be met through a single central office. There is a need for higher learning institutions to develop the means to provide training in information systems design, operation, and maintenance to other government agencies and development workers in their area. This training should be incorporated into the curriculum of extension programs so that future extension agents will enter the work force already equipped to work with information systems.

Practical training in extension programs could then begin to incorporate data management experience with data gathering methodologies and activities. This would not only provide students with more relevant training and realistic preparation for future extension jobs, but would actually contribute to the database itself. Students would then work with researchers and instructors in the field collecting demographic, economic, agronomic, and market information from the region which would then be incorporated into the database.

Ambo, Ethiopia is located about 120 km west of Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia. Western Shoa is one of the more productive agricultural regions of the country. There are several institutions and organizations located in Ambo or nearby that are involved in agricultural and rural development; the regional and wereda office of the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA), the Phytopathology Research Center of the Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research (IAR), the Netherlands Development Corporation (SNV), the Sasawaka Global 2000 Project (SG 2000), Farm - Africa, the regional Crisis Prevention Center, and the German Technical Assistance Organization (GTZ). Each of these have their own mission and provide various services or conduct various activities and projects in the area.

Ambo College of Agriculture is the oldest agricultural college in Ethiopia. It offers a diploma in Agricultural Extension as well as Agricultural Education. There are currently approximately 420 regular (day) students, and 530 C.E.D. (evening) students. The college conducts various types of research, production and training in practical agriculture on the Ambo campus and Guder farm and in the surrounding area. The western Shoa Agricultural Database will collect and maintain information on the results of research and other achievements of each of these agencies and organizations operating in this portion of western Shoa, including:

- Basic information about the organization: name, administrators, address, phone number
- Duties and relationship to other agencies or organizations
- Specific projects and activities currently or recently involved in
- Publications or other documentation of research and other data that may be accessed by the public
- Planned or upcoming projects
- Progress reports

This data will be made available via a World Wide Web page, and through annual or more frequent publications. The data will also be accessible at the Ambo College of Agriculture Library, through printed material in the Library/Computer Lab.

Basic Structure of the Lab/Database

Fully achieving all of the goals outlined in this proposal will require a sequence of steps to be completed in phases. The final goal, in its complete form, will consist of both the physical components of the computer lab/database, and the services provided by it. Funding will be needed for the initial set-up costs and for 3 to 5 years of operating costs. After that time the computer lab and database should be fully incorporated into the normal operations of the college including class curricula. At that time that the computer facilities will be considered as essential to the normal operation of the college as pencils and paper and therefore, should be included in the annual operating budget. Fees collected for printouts on a per page basis for all users, and an hourly fee for internet access paid by walk-in users may cover some, but not all of the operating costs.

The college currently has seven desktop computers (386 and 486 processors), 4 dot matrix printers, and 2 laser jet printers. Three of the computers, two dot matrix and one laser jet printer are in administration offices, used by the secretarial staff. One of these also has a modem. The college currently has an e-mail and internet access account through PADIS and Ethio-net. The remaining four computers and three printers are in a computer lab used by the faculty.

The physical components of the proposed lab/database consist of:

- 30 desktop computers housed in the library and connected by a networking operating system to a central server (located elsewhere).
- Adequate tables, lighting and seating space
- 2 laser jet printers
- Computer software for word processing, spreadsheet and database management, programming languages, and an internet browser;
- Server software, modem, UPS and phoneline for internet access; and

- Miscellaneous office supplies for use only by the lab: paper, computer disks, etc.

The service components consist of:

- A full-time network manager for the maintenance of a Window NT network (or similar networking system such as UNIX) and web page;
- Full-time attendant to be present in the lab;
- A committee, with chairman, in charge of organizing and managing the information/web page content. This would include such responsibilities as data collection, selection, layout and input;
- Revised curriculum of regular program and CED courses (especially extension) to incorporate computer use and information gathering and input on the internet'
- Basic computer use courses tailored and offered to regular and CED program students, government and professional organizations, and the general public.

Work Plan

Phase 1 – already underway

- ⇒ Conduct an initial reconnaissance survey of the research and other activities at each of the institutions, agencies, and other organizations operating in Western Shoa, as well as their current information facilities, needs, and interest in participating, beginning with those located in the Ambo wereda;
- ⇒ Identify personnel for Phases 2 and 3;
- ⇒ Collect pricing information for equipment, training and other technical components;
- ⇒ Arrange housing and security for the computer equipment; and
- ⇒ Collect information on potential technical and financial partners.

Phase 2 – six month following funding approval

- ⇒ Compile information from the initial reconnaissance survey for presentation to participating agencies and organizations;
- ⇒ Meet of confer with participating parties to design the organization of the database and layout of web page based on the information collected from the reconnaissance survey and the needs of participating agencies and organizations identified in Phase 1;
- ⇒ Develop agreements with participating agencies and organizations covering rights and responsibilities regarding publication of information;
- ⇒ Develop procedures and guidelines for routine user access to the database at Ambo College, including the electronic and printed material;
- ⇒ Purchase and install equipment; and
- ⇒ Train/hire personnel responsible for lab/database management. This should be a person competent in Windows NT or a similar network system.

Phase 3 – completion in three to five years

- ⇒ Create the database web page and enter initial information;
- ⇒ Initialize web page account;
- ⇒ Begin regular use of the database; and
- ⇒ Develop training workshops to be made available for personnel from agencies and organizations operating in the region, including developing procedures and securing appropriate facilities for workshops;
- ⇒ Develop and incorporate information systems design, operation and maintenance into the curriculum of students at Ambo College of Agriculture. Incorporate these activities into the practicals associated with extension classes.

CONTINUING EDUCATION OR CONTINUING IGNORANCE?

By Patricia Burns, MSc

Introduction

The need for more efficient and effective health professionals to provide community-based health care (CBHC) in Ethiopia is overwhelming. In order to promote CBHC services, we need to learn how to improve our basic skills such as communicating, managing, and especially training.

To do any job requires a mixture of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. In theory, health workers acquire all the knowledge, skills, and attitudes they need during basic training. They then "Qualify" and are expected to remember everything they have learned in basic training for the rest of their professional lives. In practice, however, things are quite different.

Since it cannot be denied that large numbers of health workers are at risk of developing continuing ignorance which increases with time, it becomes essential to improve their knowledge, attitude, and skills to close the performance gap between irrelevant and inadequate training, to assure satisfactory performance, and to provide quality CBHC services to the nation.

It is believed that training can reduce, if not eliminate, this gap between actual performance and expected performance, thus positively influencing the delivery of service. Training accomplishes this by changing the behaviour of individuals by giving them whatever additional elements of knowledge, skill and/or attitude they need to perform up to the specified standard.

Problem Statement:

It is clear that basic training by itself is not enough. If the health professional is to do his/her job effectively, the learning process must be life-long since it is through learning that we are able to change. Learning should not stop with the attainment of qualification. Thus, "continuing education" is the part of a person's education that begins where basic training ends.

Health professionals in the rural areas may have fewer colleagues to talk to and are often visited only once a month or even once in six months by supervisory staff. Also, they have fewer books, journals, etc. to read and very seldom have opportunity to attend scientific meetings or visit a library. As a result, not everyone works at the standard performance level for the job that he/she holds or may not consistently produce and/or measure up to these standards. As time passes, forgetting both theory and skills accelerates and then exhibits itself through signs of deficient work performance. Unfortunately, a relatively large number of health workers are at risk of continuing ignorance that increases proportionally with time after qualification and with professional isolation making them ineffective and even dangerous to those they serve. Additionally, while the health workers are working in health services, many changes are taking place in science, technology health systems, policies and practices. Unless they learn about these changes in an organized way, they will not be able to function as well as they should.

However, it should be recognized that continuing ignorance is a preventable affliction. Continuing education should be given as much importance as basic/pre-service education since health personnel usually spend a few years in their first training, but may then work for a number of years without going back to school full-time. This being the case, it will be useful to consider the application of promotive and preventive measures against continuing ignorance.

Proposed Solution(s):

Since every health professional is important in health care, it is essential that all staff are valued and given opportunities to improve their abilities to serve the clients and members of the community. In this regard, training has acquired an important role in public and private sector health development organizations seeking to meet the need as effective agents of change.

It should be noted that human resources are a vital component in the delivery of health services. The need for an expanded and more efficient health professional capability in Ethiopia is overwhelming. Thus training programs should be designed and planned to meet the needs and guide the development of health issues and to help build and sustain the national, regional, zonal, and local capacities for health system management and health care service delivery implementation. Appropriate training strategies need to be developed to strengthen the capacity and capability of local health staff to achieve the intended goal, define and co-ordinate the development of a basic set of training materials for a defined target group, and describe the entry competence or entry characteristics of the target group, as well as the expected outcome behavior, including skills and attitudes.

Training and development are among the basic personnel/human resource management activities to retain professionals. The training should involve changing behaviour and expanding the employees' knowledge and skills through an organized process by which employees learn the skills, abilities, and attitudes needed to perform their work better.

Health management development is a way to increase the capabilities of health professional and managers "beyond a narrow range of skills to a more holistically prepared person." The development should focus on general health care service management skills including leadership, motivation, communication, and problem solving. The challenge of continuing education is complex because of the large number of personnel who need continuous up-grading. Hence, training plays a very important role within the health care system. It must be seriously and systematically undertaken if it is to fulfil its roles. Every effort must be made to develop training activities that are relevant and appropriate the needs of the community and its health workers.

The proposed program will identify the needs of the health workers using a health service survey, a self-administered questionnaire for local health officials and health workers, Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with local officials, community leaders, and beneficiaries, observation by participants and non-participants, analysis of priorities, and design and planning of a continuing education program, specifically a refresher course program. While refresher course programs can involve a number of methods, the proposed program will observe "learner-centered training" that gives top priority to design learning so that the needs, experience, and interests of each individual learner are understood and accommodated. Thus, all efforts will be made to conduct combined training strategies/approaches where particular emphasis will be given to learner-centered training.

In this plan, the training will employ a participatory, experiential methodology based on the principles of adult learning, i.e., a form of training based on the community development approach such as LePSA (Learner-centered Problem-Solving, and Action-Oriented) which is used extensively in East Africa. Individual participants will be encouraged to manage their own learning and share responsibility with the trainers. This modality of training draws on the participants, experiences and encourages active problem-solving, as well as critical and analytical thinking. Each session will follow a pattern of evolving understanding.

As inter-active, learner-centered approach is the basis for the research of human resource development. It is believed that adult learners want to participate in the learning process, to learn from their experiences, to be challenged, and to draw their own conclusions from learning experiences. The premise is that adults generally assimilate only what they find useful and that they want to be able to apply their new knowledge and skills. Because every training situation is different, each training program will address the special needs of its participants. Thus, trainers will be encouraged to assess the learners' needs and then adapt the sessions accordingly. Each session will follow the experiential learning cycle so that participants can effectively internalize learning.

First, participants will be engaged in specific learning experiences related to health and health-related issues. Then, they will reflect on their experiences and on personal and socio-cultural values, expectations, perceptions, and attitudes related to health development activities. Next, they will draw out key concepts and lessons and will develop generalizations about the lessons learned. Finally, they will learn how to apply the new materials in practical ways. As participants work through the sessions they will gain an appreciation for the wide-range of health development issues that may arise in personal, inter-personal, institutional, and community contexts. They will also learn to develop practical and concrete plans of action for dealing with these issues in ways that preserve the integrity of health service care delivery and realize the potential and real contributions of all members of society.

Therefore, the refresher course program will consider the major and relevant factors of learner-related, subject matter related, and teaching environment-related issues in order to dedicate its training activities to increasing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of participants, thus empowering them to be full partners and facilitators of the health development of their communities.

EXPECTED RESULTS

- I. Deficiencies in knowledge, attitudes, and skills of the health workers of the region improved.
- II. Health workers empowered to provide strengthened and improved integrated health care service for the communities of the region.
- III. Targeted participants equipped with the necessary knowledge, skills, and dynamics of learning and teaching to develop competent groups of health workers of the SNNPR.
- IV. Improved motivation and morale of the health workers towards self-learning and professional performance.
- V. Decreased level of the main prevalent diseases in the communities by more effective health promotion, prevention, and essential curative services.
- VI. Acquired knowledge and skill in community needs assessment, planning, organization, monitoring, and evaluation of CBHC programs.
- VII. Trained participants able to provide technical and managerial support to CBHC activities in the region.

Making a Difference in A World of Indifference: The Future of Volunteerism in Africa by Ethelbert Okoro, PhD.*

Introduction:

Africa "has its detractors and its apologists." A continent of abundant resources, complexities and hope, Africa "encompasses a rich mosaic of peoples, cultures, ecological settings and historical experiences."¹ Its politics are not "only as vibrant as they are diverse" but also "constitutes a microcosm of political forms and contexts, experiences and patterns, trends and prospects."² This fluidity in Africa's cultural, economic, political and social life prompted the American Secretary of State, Madeline K. Albright as she observed in her speech to the Organization of African Unity (OAU) recently, "the region's natural and human resources as well as its strategic location make it either a catalyst or a stumbling block to African unity. Central Africa can steady or destabilise half a continent."³ Albright was referring to the need for a stable central Africa in a united Africa.

Keith B. Richburg in **Out of America: A Blackman Confronts Africa**,⁴ did not only write about how Africa "chewed him up" but also about the "insanity of Africa"⁵ and its countless miseries, killings, horror images, civil wars and tribal clashes.⁶ Richburg did not only condemn Africa to death but sees no future in a continent that he termed a "dark spot on the globe" and a "continent of endless mind-boggling rules and regulations - sometimes contradictory, often based on no reasonable, modern day foundation, or at least none that I could ever discern."⁷

Though there are some truths to some of Richburg's assertions, this writer makes no excuses on Africa's historical predicaments. Africa indeed has some problems - big problems. Some of these problems are inherent in its historical settings; others are externally designed and imposed. Interestingly, Africa's survival so far has baffled many Africanists and political pundits and observers of African life, who had in the past ruled Africa out in the global geo-politics. Realistically, one wonders how Mother Africa has survived in view of all these "miseries". Africa's problems include: debt, refugeeism, political leadership, AIDS, brain-drain, ethnicity or tribalism, wars, and of course, crisis in Higher Education. Despite these overwhelming problems, the continent has made a remarkable stride in her efforts to addressing some of these problems. In others, the continent has received enormous assistance from friends of Africa and humanitarian organizations.

In the education sector for example, International Non-Governmental Humanitarian Organizations have been instrumental in assisting Mother Africa in dealing with her education sector crisis through the use of teacher volunteers. The case in point here is the "Teachers for Africa Program," a program initiative of the International Foundation for Education and Self-Help (IFESH). This paper looks at the concept of voluntarism from the Non-Governmental Organizations' perspective, especially as it relates to the Teachers for Africa Program (TFA). The paper examines some of the impacts of the TFA Program in Africa's education sector, specifically as it pertains to Kenya and Ethiopia. In addition, the paper examines some of the educational issues, challenges, and constraints facing the TFA and its volunteers and their host governments. Finally, the writer makes some suggestions and recommendations as for the prospects and future of the program and volunteerism in Africa.

Volunteer Work: What is it?

The history of volunteerism dates back in time. One school of thought traces its origin to the days of the Quakers in the 17th century. Voluntary organizations emerged as a result of social and economic disparities between the poor and the rich. It was this social and economic imbalance that motivated the "well-meaning philanthropic and Christian people" to help alleviate the sorry situation of the poor. Other pioneers were also driven by the fear or "concern to maintain the social order and avoid unrest and conflict."

Today, the nature of volunteerism has taken a new dimension. Humanitarian concern is in a conflict with political motives. Despite these conflicting objectives, many voluntary organizations have remained focused and true to their objectives. IFESH is a case in point. The concept of volunteerism is faced with numerous interpretations. There is a raging debate of what the concept actually is. From the writer's perspective, volunteer work is about sewing the seeds; a serious business that requires a tremendous sacrifice. Volunteer work is not about a safari or picnic but about empowerment, giving hope; giving knowledge and receiving knowledge; an adventure, challenges and commitments; it is about discoveries, love, dependability and survivability. And as a former TFA Volunteer, Michelle Githens puts it, "it is a pilgrimage." A volunteer is not only an individual who works for free and whose work "benefits somebody else" but also an individual whose worth is not sometimes fully appreciated or recognised by the host. Tossell and Webb look at a volunteer as "someone who, without pay or compulsion does something which will usually be of benefit to somebody else."⁸

Why Volunteer?

There are several reasons why individuals become volunteers: desire to meet people, make new friends, find a husband or wife, the love and honour of a country and/or continent, a stress related situation, espionage, "love and passion of the less fortunate", "curiosity," learn about other's culture and language; take leave from domestic problems; research, love for humanity and of course, safari. Today, there are thousands of Voluntary Organizations scattered throughout the African continent and assisting in various developmental and education sector strategies.

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Africa's Education Crisis: Volunteers to the Rescue

Education and educational systems in Africa, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa has reached a dire stage. Historically, education in Sub-Saharan African nations "has been shaped by a mix of influences among them indigenous cultures, Christianity, Islam, and a network of Western-type schools set up by missionaries and colonial governments."⁹

In the Higher Education system, for example, some institutions of higher or tertiary learning have virtually ceased to exist; many are on the brink of collapse while others are struggling from the administrative rigidity, outdated colonial initiated curriculum and virtual control by the governments in power. Aggravating these problems is the plight in Africa's human resources sector. Over the years, Africa has lost a great deal of human resources/manpower to North America and Europe, among others. It is estimated that more than 90,000 African scholars and professionals have left the continent for lucrative appointments in Europe and America.¹⁰ Ironically, Africa "spends more than \$4 billion - 35 percent of its budget to pay foreign expatriates while cries from hundreds of African scientists for better terms go unheard."¹¹ What a tragedy!

In his analysis of "The Crisis in Higher Education in Africa," Atteh¹² painstakingly detailed several factors that impinge on Africa's Higher Education System, especially those in Sub-Saharan Africa. Atteh attributes forces such as lack of resources, failing quality of teaching, low wages, lack of democracy, high population, lack of political leadership, deteriorating infrastructures, university closures, and students' unrest among others as the problems.

Realistically, the impact of these problems has been enormous. These problems have drastically affected the economic, political, and social life of many of these countries and their ability to embark on their quest for a national developmental strategy. So far, men and women of good-will have come to the aid of many African countries on humanitarian grounds. The case in point is IFESH and its program initiative--Teachers for Africa (TFA). This type of gesture, however, has been in existence since time immemorial¹³--the case of the Quakers on the issue of slavery during the 17th century.¹⁴

The Teachers for Africa Program in Kenya and Ethiopia: Problems and Prospects

Teachers for Africa (TFA) is a program initiative of the International Foundation for Education and Self-Help (IFESH). The program emerged as a developmental strategy by the IFESH founder, Dr. Leon H. Sullivan and is geared towards improving educational standards in many African countries,¹⁵ utilising volunteer teachers. TFA programs have taken root in several African countries namely, Kenya, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Gabon, Gambia, Nigeria, Ghana, and others.

Kenya

The TFA program in Kenya started in 1993 with a handful of volunteer teachers. Within four years, the program became a formidable force in itself. In the 1996-97 session, for example, Kenya received more than sixty teachers, the biggest contingent ever sent to a single country in Africa by the program. Interestingly, this writer was among this "cream of the crop" - the "pioneers in the movement to empower people all over the globe" as Rev. Dr. Sullivan calls them. Ironically, the Kenyan program was cut in 1997 by USAID. The impact of the Kenyan Program within this space of time was immense. Overall, the total number of teachers sent to Kenya in this short period stood at one hundred and fifty.¹⁶ IFESH/TFA estimates that these 150 American teachers sent to Kenya benefited more than 757,500¹⁷ Kenyans (see Table 1).

The Teachers for Africa Program in Kenya took three dimensions: provision of teacher volunteers, books, and community work. First - provision of teacher volunteers was one of the major functions or goals of the Teachers for Africa Program in Kenya. This exercise benefited several primary and secondary schools, as well as colleges, and universities throughout the country. In the 1996-97 session alone, Kenya benefited from more than sixty volunteer teachers. Those volunteers with their divergent experiences and skills were a boost to Kenya, a country where shortages of manpower in many key areas have paralysed several institutional departments. In addition to teaching in the classrooms, these teachers designed research proposals and carried out some organised workshops and seminars. These services were a further boost to the quality of education in the country.

The Kenyan government also saved tremendously from the cost as per salaries or wages that would have been paid to regular teachers. It is estimated that provinces like Nairobi received 22 teachers, Rift Valley Province 28, Western 2, Nyanza 2, Eastern 4, while Coast, North-Eastern, and Central Provinces received none.¹⁸

Second, provision of books to schools was another TFA project in Kenya. This particular project was headed by the Country Representative, Dr. Lillian K. Beam and benefited more than 130 schools in the country.¹⁹ From March through November 1996, the project donated an estimated 50,000 books to schools and libraries in the country.²⁰ And from March-June, 1997, another 40,000 textbooks were distributed.²¹ This exercise again was a tremendous boost for Kenya--a country experiencing shortages in school materials. The question whether many of these books address the need of some of these schools is debated. For example, many schools received books that have nothing to do with their curriculum or that are more advanced or in other subject areas. This point, IFESH must address.

Finally, community service was the third innovative idea of the Teachers for Africa Program in Kenya. In this exercise, teachers participated in charity events, fund-raising or Harambees, in the building of libraries, the construction of dams as witnessed in Sotik, in Bomet District, and in the building of a foot bridge in Kangundo in Machakos District. Community service was in essence an avenue for teachers to directly interact with the members of the larger community outside the classroom experience. This exercise truly gave the teachers a feeling of

TABLE I

Participatory Countries	Total Number of American Teachers Assigned to Participating African Countries	Assuming that each American Trained Average of 50 African Teachers	Total Number of African Teachers Trained by American Teachers in Each Country	Total Number of African Learners trained by African Teachers (Multiplied Column 4 x 100 learners)	Total Number of beneficiaries in Each of the participating African Countries add column 4 and
Kenya	150	50 x 50	7,500	750,000	757,500
Uganda	1	50 x 1	50	5,000	5,050
Cote D'Ivoire	1	50 x 1	50	5,000	5,050
Zimbabwe	1	50 x 1	50	5,000	5,050
Gabon	67	50 x 67	3,350	335,000	338,350
Gambia	56	50 x 56	2,800	280,000	282,800
Nigeria	41	50 x 41	2,050	205,000	207,050
Benin	51	50 x 51	2,550	250,000	257,250
Ghana	34	50 x 34	1,700	170,000	171,700
Ethiopia	16	50 x 16	800	80,000	80,8000
Total	418	500 x 418	20,900	2,090,000	2,110,600

Source: Samuel Atteh, "Estimated Number of African Beneficiaries in the Teachers for Africa Program (1992-1997) in IFESH Update, Vol. II, Newsletter, No. 1, Summer 1997, P4.

directly making an impact on the general public that is tangible, unlike the classroom teaching that invariably is a long term investment.

Ethiopia

The Teachers for Africa Program in Ethiopia is a very new undertaking. The program started in 1996 with 16 teachers, and 15 in 1997. Unlike Kenya, the Ethiopia program by design or sheer political motive is only concentrated to colleges and universities and is very much controlled by the Ministry of Education (MOE). In Kenya, TFA because of its non-governmental organizational status literally sent teachers to schools and worked directly with these schools and communities. A unique prospectus that addressed the issues of needs of schools rather than wants. This situation is not applicable in Ethiopia.

Ethiopia, as in Kenya, however, paid much attention to teaching, training of civil servants, research and organization of workshops and seminars. These efforts by the teacher volunteers have been a great boost for Ethiopia, a country that has been handicapped by lack of manpower resources. There has also been some minor problems facing TFAs, especially in areas of assignment and teacher specialization. Despite all these positive impacts by the IFESH/TFA program, the future of the program is debated. So far the TFA programs in Kenya and Ethiopia were and are faced with numerous problems or constraints. These constraints if not addressed will seriously impinge on the noble goal and mission of Reverend Leon Sullivan and IFESH on helping Africa to "build bridges."

PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

There were serious constraints or problems that faced the Teachers for Africa program in Kenya and is currently facing the program in Ethiopia. Some of these problems are: the impact of politics, administrative rigidity, lack of clarity of policy between TFA/IFESH and host governments as regards to the international agreement, lack of Non-Governmental Organization status (NGO) for IFESH in host country, problems of assignments or postings of teacher volunteers, selection of volunteers, cultural impediments, administrative problems on the part of IFESH-in-country offices among others.

First, politics. The overall impact of politics on the TFA/IFESH program has been overwhelming. Politics in fact play dual roles in the TFA programs in host countries, especially in Kenya and Ethiopia. One of the roles of politics is as a helping agent and the other, as a hindering agent. As Lasswell puts it, politics is "who gets what, when, how."²² A process that Lawson sees as a "means of seeking and using power of the state to make allocations of scarce resources throughout a given polity."²³

In Kenya and Ethiopia for example, the role of politics as a helping agent has been great. Politicians and political heavy-weights have been instrumental in assisting TFA and IFESH meet several administrative problems instituted by governments. In most cases, direct intervention by powerful politicians have helped in reducing unnecessary governments administrative and legal requirements which would have taken months or years to affect.

In Kenya for example, TFA was able to address the contentious and resource draining Visa procedure by the Kenya Immigration through the assistance of politicians that resulted that a Gratis (one year permit) visa provision that allowed TFAs entrance and exit at will for a year was granted rather than the tedious and resource consuming process of single entry and exit visa that required that volunteers pay thirty five Dollars each time they leave the country.

Further, the influence of some politicians in Kenya and Ethiopia also helped many teacher volunteers in resolving or addressing some of their individual personal problems. These assistance have in effect helped in boosting both the **morale** of the teachers and their will to make more sacrifice and in feeling appreciated. In spite of these positive impacts, politics has remained a serious problem to TFA/IFESH programs. And lack of cognisance or understanding of Africa's political realities, interplays and intrigues by IFESH have aggravated this situation.

As a hindering agent, politics and politicians have remained a thorn in TFA/IFESH noble programs. In Kenya for example, powerful politicians literally and with impunity intervened in a TFA program agenda. In fact, it was a total manipulation on the part of Kenyan government officials, especially those with ministerial positions. TFA posting or assignment of teachers was constantly manipulated. Teachers were frequently changed from one assignment to another on the whim of powerful politicians.

Most visible politicians out of sheer trickery manipulated the TFA Representative and got teachers placed at schools in their local communities, thus defying the TFA action plan. Exacerbating this situation was the fact that most of these politicians in Kenya represented mainly their own ethnic interests. As a result, many Provinces that were without political actors or heavy-weights ended up not benefiting from IFESH's noble cause. For example, a tiny community of Keringet dominated by Kalenjin (Kipsigis) ethnic group received two TFA teachers due to manipulation by Minister Kones while larger surrounding communities with opposition ties like Molo, in Nakuru District received no teachers.

Also, the Rift Valley Province, in President Moi “country,” and that of most powerful government officials received a total of 28 teachers while other needy Provinces like Coast, North Eastern, Central among others received no teachers. Table 2 is a list of teacher allocations in Kenya.

Table 2
Eight Provinces in Kenya and Distribution of Teacher Volunteers 1996/97

Provinces	Number of TFA Teachers	Politically Connected (yes)	Politically Connected (No)
Nairobi	22	yes	
Rift Valley	28	yes	
Eastern	4	yes	
Western	2	yes	
Nyanza	2	yes	
Coast	0		No
North - Eastern	0		No
Central	0		No

Source: Data derived from Teachers For Africa - Kenya, ‘Teachers’ Assignment List 1996/97. (Sept. 26,1996)

NOTE: High allocation of Teachers to a Province indicate level of political influence. (A KANU ZONE)

Administrative rigidity is another problem that faced the TFA Program in Kenya and currently in Ethiopia. Most high level government officials in both countries are anti-change and reform. Suggestions are not their buzz word; and they are not interested in seeing a mzungu or forengi (foreigner) telling them what to do. Thus, innovative suggestions and ideas are easily wasted or lost on arrival; this behaviour impacts greatly on programs. Research proposals undertaken by many teacher volunteers and submitted to administrators received no response. Sometimes, excuses such as “national interest” or “security” and topics being “very sensitive” were advanced by these administrators.

Ironically, these administrators are mainly Western educated Africans who have relapsed to the rigid ways of the African life. Administrative rigidity is anti-progress that results in frustration and stagnation. The phenomenon is inherent in the system itself. And any attempt to dislodge it must emanate within the system. In Ethiopia for example, decision-making in educational issues for instance is very much concentrated at the top—specifically the Ministry of Education and with Department Heads, Deans, and managers as merely rubber stamps. Every response must emanate from Addis Ababa and until there is a response, nothing happens. This practice has affected both productivity, morale and, invariably, development.

Further impacting on the TFA/IFESH Program is a lack of clarity of policy between IFESH and host governments as regard to the “International Agreement or Contract”. Ethiopia, specifically is the case in point. The Agreement between IFESH and the Ethiopian government here has remained a contentious issue. Duties and responsibilities of teachers and IFESH has remained a matter of interpretation and reinterpretation. Subject areas as “duty free” of volunteers has been bogged down to reinterpretation. Teacher volunteers and their “personal effects” have been subject to lengthy and unnecessary government delays. Few teachers with access to vehicles have gone through hell processing the papers and the process does not seem to be over yet. The Ministry of Education is confused about what constitutes a “duty free” item and the “International Agreement” does not make it any easier. This situation affects teacher volunteers directly as most of their personal items are withheld by the customs or other government agencies.

On the issue of Visas for volunteers, the “International Contract” did not make it easier for volunteers. Charging visa fees for volunteers on every exit is in fact an additional burden to an individual living or staying afloat on a stipend and in a country with a high standard of living. Clarification and easing of this visa requirement for volunteers and of this policy area will be of benefit to all parties that are involved in this volunteer exercise. IFESH should in fact request work permits for TFA volunteers without fees from respective governments receiving TFAs. This will resolve the Visa problem encountered by volunteers.

Aggravating the problems of TFA is the lack of Non-Governmental Organizational status (NGO), especially in Ethiopia. Either by design, oversight or political astuteness, the Ethiopian government has not granted the IFESH Organization an NGO Status. This is a very big problem that has affected the way IFESH does business in Ethiopia. The situation also affects teacher volunteers as most of their privileges have remained debatable and questionable. Lack of an NGO status has also weakened the ability of IFESH to operate independently, thus making it subject to the decisions of the Ministry of Education.

Problems in teachers’ assignments and postings have also affected the TFA program as many teachers have been wrongfully matched in areas not related to their expertise. This invariably has impacted on productivity and on the image of TFA. This situation, however, is the responsibility of the IFESH in-country offices; this problem must be seriously addressed.

Furthermore, selection of volunteers by IFESH have had dual results. Good selection has resulted in quality performance and output while bad selections has resulted in high attrition rate and an image problem for TFA program. Though many of these problems as per the behaviour or attitude of a would-be teacher might not be easily dictated during the selection, it is important for interviewers to watch for a tell-tale sign of a possible problem. Dictating this early sign will save IFESH time, money and image.

The last but not the least of the problems is that of culture. Cultural impediments in a host country has become a big challenging factor for TFA program. Cultural and historical experiences in most of these countries have remained and will continue to be a stumbling block. Many countries genuinely want help from organizations such as IFESH but are faced with the dilemma of being dominated by foreign influence. This has been the dilemma in Ethiopia; a country that has a long history of wars, repressive regimes and a mixture of foreign influences. Thus, outsiders are viewed with scepticism. This situation has resulted in that some of the efforts or help offered by many organizations here are either accepted with restrictions or ignored totally.

Conclusion And Recommendations

Do IFESH and Volunteerism have a future in Africa? Of course, yes. Continuous funding by USAID is necessary. However, some of these above impinging forces must be addressed. It is paramount that one in solving any problem must initially attempt to define it. The contributions of TFA/IFESH in Africa's developmental process cannot be overemphasized. The problems facing the TFA program in some of the Africa countries like Kenya and Ethiopia have been identified. The solution on how to resolve the problems, however, remains to be seen. In this section, the writer recommends the following for improving the TFA program and the host governments' policy in the future.

To the TFA/IFESH Organization

1. The problem of politics on the TFA Program has made it difficult for the organization to effectively carry out its objectives in some host countries.

Recommendation: It is noted that every human interaction involves politics. It is also difficult to divorce politics from the TFA programs in Africa. Reconciling these dilemma is our concern here. The TFA cannot operate outside this political parameters. Thus, it is important that the TFA to get along must go along. Therefore, the TFA must be cognisant with the political intrigues and realities of the African life. This will enable the organization to deal effectively with host countries and powerful politicians in their pursuit of self-interest or selfish interest. In addition, the IFESH TFA must be astute and use politically correct individuals in their dealings. This will give the organization more leverage in dealing with some of these governments and their officials.

2. Lack of clarity of Policy on "International Agreement or Contract" has created confusions and has impacted heavily on the effectiveness of IFESH programs. In addition, this lack of clarity has also impacted on the morale of the "field marines" or volunteers who have gone to great lengths to find solutions to their "personal problems" (duty free).

Recommendation: A clear and simple working agreement is preferable than the ambiguous ones that creates confusion and loses its meaning during the interpretation process. Languages such as "personal effects" among others must be specified. IFESH and hosts must define duties, responsibilities and privileges of volunteers prior to sending these "marines" on the field.

3. Lack of an NGO status in Ethiopia has weakened IFESH program and raised issues as whether volunteers are only "filling the gap".

Recommendation: IFESH must from the outset negotiate for an NGO status and receive a commitment to that effect prior to doing business in these countries. These have tremendous benefits as a non-NGO status renders an organization a second class citizen sort of status. And being negated in many policy issues of the government. Also, an NGO status gives an organization a leverage in their execution of goals and objectives and less control by the host government.

4. Problems of selection and assignment of teachers must be adequately and carefully evaluated. These situations have resulted in many problems—image among others.

Recommendation: The IFESH Selection Committee must be advised on the realities on the ground as per individuals that are relevant in African life. A non-role model individual are definitely a problem here. Also, image of the individuals are important as many of these countries are looking up to these volunteers for knowledge, expertise and as examples for their citizens.

On the postings and assignments, IFESH-In Country officials must review credentials of teachers as per their expertise prior to sending them to their respective schools. This is good for image, expertise and performance, as teachers would be knowledgeable about their subject areas and will perform confidently.

To the Host Government - Kenya/Ethiopia

1. The problem of administrative rigidity has far-reaching implications on the host government and must be aggressively dealt with.

Recommendation: Change for the sake of change is counter-productive. It is also important that to affect change, African administrators must adopt change and reforms when they see one; and must refrain from their “rigid” postures or stances. Development conscious individuals must be recruited and used in key sectors of the economy. This is important for both policy implementation and in accomplishing some governments’ developmental strategies. Training is also paramount in dislodging rigid oriented individuals and bringing them aboard in an administrative rigid free environment.

2. Lack of clarity of Policy on “International Agreement or Contract” has created confusions and has impacted heavily on the effectiveness of IFESH programs. In addition, this lack of clarity has also impacted on the morale of the “field marines” or volunteers who have gone to great lengths to find solutions to their “personal problems” (duty free).

Recommendation: A clear and simple working agreement is preferable than the ambiguous ones that create confusion and lose meaning during the interpretation process. Language such as “personal effects” among others must be specified. IFESH and hosts must define duties, responsibilities and privileges of volunteers prior to sending these “marines” on the field.

3. Inability or refusal by host governments to grant NGO status to genuine volunteer organizations is counter-productive.

Recommendation: African governments hosting TFA Programs must show “pacta sunt servanda” (good faith) and grant an NGO status to the TFA Program. This is good for Africa and development. Frustrating this noble work of Rev. Sullivan is un-African and counter-productive.

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