

## **Development Aid to the Education Sector in Africa : Lessons of Experience**

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### **What type of experience?**

The lessons of experience focussed on in this paper take as their starting point *my lessons* of experience from working in the education sector in Africa. I feel totally comfortable building on my own experiences, not only because my Japanese hosts have asked me to do so, but also because when the World Bank writes on lessons of experience e.g. in the publication *Higher Education: The Lessons of Experience* (World Bank 1994), it is *their* lessons of experience they are writing about <sup>1)</sup>. The difference between me and the World Bank is that I from the outset explicitly *state* that I am writing from *my* experience. From the reflections I shall give on my experience in the following pages, I shall try to come up with some more generalized lessons. This experience covers a fifteen year period (1987 - 2002). The first five years of this period were mostly spent in Tanzania where I worked as a professor at the University of Dar es Salaam (from the summer of 1989 until the summer of 1991 as Head of Department of Educational Psychology) through a creative arrangement worked out by the University of Oslo, the University of Dar es Salaam and NORAD, the Norwegian Agency for Development (see page ix of the preface of Brock-Utne 2000). The first ten years of this period I was also frequently used by NORAD <sup>2)</sup> and the Norwegian Foreign Ministry <sup>3)</sup> as a consultant, both within higher education and basic education in Africa. I think I did a valuable job in these assignments, giving some critical inputs into project review reports and drafts of documents like NORAD's Education Strategies (NORAD, 1995).

These consultancies were also instrumental in building up my own competency on education in Africa. They enriched my experiences and made me a better teacher for the many students in my classes on *Education in Africa* <sup>4)</sup> and *later Education and Development* <sup>5)</sup> at the University of Oslo. In 1997, however, NORAD decided to build up a center for international education at Oslo Teacher College, LINS, and both the Foreign Ministry and NORAD have since given all evaluation studies, project appraisals, desk studies and reviews to this center - sometimes in co-operation with a small consultancy firm. This arrangement has had consequences for the type of expertise hired on such jobs as well for the critical appraisal of projects. Since its inception in 1997 LINS has, according to its own web-page, carried out 251 assignments. <sup>6)</sup> The web-page notes that "*most of our assignments are not public*" (italics added). For the 20% of Norwegian development aid to the education sector that is administered through the Foreign Ministry, (most of it being channelled to a large project on basic education targeting the girl child in thirty African countries with UNICEF as the lead agency) there does not seem to be any professional and critical follow-up any more. <sup>7)</sup>

Apart from working for the Norwegian development agency, I have also worked for UNESCO, for the Norwegian Namibia Association (a Norwegian NGO), for the Namibian government, the German development agency DSE (Deutsche Stiftung für Entwicklung) building up research competence at the historical black universities in South Africa (Brock-Utne 1999). My last consultancy was for DANIDA (the Danish development agency)<sup>8)</sup>.

The last couple of years I have been the project leader of three research projects within education in Africa, all three involving primary schools for the majority population of South Africa and two involving secondary schools in Tanzania. In all of the projects I am working in co-operation with project leaders in the African countries. One of the projects will be going on until 2007. Apart from this, I am also the project leader of NETREED - a network organizing and keeping track of Norwegian based researchers and evaluators working in the field of development and education (see the NETREED home-page: <http://www.pfi.uio.no/forskning/netreed>).

### **Experience from different positions**

My experiences from the education sector in Africa have, as the reader will have seen, come from five different positions:

- \* From the position of an ordinary faculty member at an African university for almost five years. I participated, like my colleagues, in the student teacher supervision of our students who conducted trial lessons in secondary schools in Tanzania. I was a founding member of the research network WED (Women, Education and Development) and conducted research in secondary schools in Tanzania together with a close female colleague (Brock-Utne and Possi, 1991). In my two years as Head of Department, I was also on the Board of the Faculty of Education; I was a member of the Research and Publication Committee of the Faculty of Education, a member of the Senate and of the Higher Degrees Committees both of the Faculty and the Senate.
- \* From the position of a consultant from a donor country writing reviews, evaluations and appraisals that could determine the further direction as well as the amount of funding for the project in question.
- \* From the position of a facilitator helping with professional development in my field of expertise but paid by a donor agency (the DSE/South African experience)
- \* From the position of a researcher coming from the outside. Here I am on the point of building up two kinds of experiences, one of coming with a Norwegian project and being the only project leader but with an assistant from Norway, and the one I have just embarked on this year, being a co-operative partner with partners in the South on a NUFU<sup>9)</sup> project.
- \* From the position of a tutor of African students in the US and in Norway. In the last couple of years several of the students, who have come from Tanzania, have worked on my research project. I have given them rather intensive tutoring, but they have also provided valuable research assistance for me.

Working in the education sector in Africa on the basis of one of these five different positions gives one quite different experiences. Each of them could be described at length<sup>10)</sup> and they can

also be compared. They can be compared on the basis of how useful the person in question is for the local population and national governments (this also calls for an external evaluation from a recipient perspective). This, to my mind, is the most important, but maybe also the most difficult evaluation to make. By way of summarizing lessons drawn from my experience at the end of the paper, I shall return to this point. The positions can further be compared on the basis of how materially comfortable they are to be in, on the basis of how much can be learnt in each of the positions and what can be learnt further about research and debate on education in developing countries of my experiences from all the five positions, the materially most but intellectually least comfortable position is the one of consultant, as an extension of a donor agency. The by far least materially comfortable but intellectually more satisfying position to be in is the one as a researcher coming from the outside. I shall here compare these two positions along three dimensions.

- \* **Personal comfort and discomfort.** As a consultant one is comfortably taken care of, lives in nice hotels, frequently travels business class, often has a car at disposal, has an agenda put up by an international donor or the national government beforehand. One is invited to nice meals, treated hospitably in every way. One is also handsomely paid for the work. As an independent researcher one has to find some cheap accommodation oneself and one frequently has severe transport problems. The researcher does not experience any topping up of the normal university salary like the consultant does and always travels on the cheapest economy basis to save money for the project.
- \* **Access to information.** As a consultant sent by a donor agency, one has access to a wealth of information and important documents that national researchers do not get their hands on. All doors are open and one gets to meet the most important people in the host country including the directors and the ministers. The researcher frequently has to apply for research permit, which can take up to a year to get, and may go day after day attempting to meet some education officers who just do not have time to talk to a researcher. Information that gets generously handed to the consultant is kept away from the researcher
- \* **The right to publish the findings.** Here lies the great and important difference between consultancy and research. While the results that the consultant comes up with belong to whatever agency paid the consultancy, which may or may not use them at their discretion, research results belong to the research community and are to be available to anybody and subjected to open and critical peer reviewing. While consultancy reports often are written in an impersonal tone, the names of the writers of the report are sometimes not even mentioned, and assertions made not documented through proper referencing, research reports will attempt to document any assertions made and use a cautious language. As a consultant I have on several occasions had to sign a contract restricting my right to publish data or information gathered through the consultancy work. This issue also became a bone of contention between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and my Institute at the University of Oslo when the Foreign Ministry in 1996 bought part of my teaching time and agreed to my proposal of using six master degree students as research assistants on the project I was to follow up. The Ministry wanted, however, that the institute should sign a contract stating that any data gathered

belonged to the Ministry and would not be open to public scrutiny. The Institute was not willing to do this, claiming that such censorship of data was contrary to the whole university idea of free and critical research<sup>11)</sup>.

### **The most valuable experience**

There is no doubt that for me the most valuable experience I have had in Africa was connected to my work at the University of Dar es Salaam during my five year long stay in Tanzania. These were the years when I learnt an African language, became part of an African faculty, built up solidarity to my Tanzanian colleagues, started seeing the donors through their eyes, learnt to appreciate another culture, in many ways very different from my own, and developed life-time friendships to a group of Tanzanians.

I also think that it was from this position I was of most value for Africans, not so much because of my lectures, tutoring, committee work but for being able to voice their criticism of the donors openly. I remember an engaging task I got from the NORAD agency back home in Norway in my early days of working at the University of Dar es Salaam. The World Bank had just sent out their draft of Educational Policies for Sub-Saharan Africa. (World Bank 1988) and NORAD wanted me to write a review of it. I decided that I could not do this without the help of my colleagues. Together with some of them I arranged a student-staff seminar on the 28<sup>th</sup> of January 1988 to discuss the World Bank report. Several of them had got the report in its full text and I had seen to it that everyone had a summary of the report. The discussion was very lively. Most of my colleagues voiced strong criticism of the report. They were annoyed at the audacity of the World Bank to write education policies *for* Sub-Saharan Africa, asking me if the World Bank would write education policies *for* Norway. Certainly not. The question was well placed. They were annoyed at the suggestions from the World Bank of cutting back on higher education, on theoretical perspectives within teacher training and paying teachers even less (my colleagues could at that time not live from the salaries they had at the University). I listened well to their critique and built my report to NORAD entirely on what my colleagues had said. A group of them read my report critically before it was sent. I remember one of them said: "It is a wonderful analysis and critique of that World Bank report, Birgit. You have captured everything we said but none of us would have dared to have written that report." The others nodded. They were dependent on donor consultancies to top up their meagre salaries. The World Bank paid the best. I had my salary from home and was not dependent on consultancies. But it was no nice experience to present a paper built on this report to a NASEDEC<sup>12)</sup> meeting in Oslo in 1988 including a fierce World Bank representative who seemed to feel personally attacked.

I remember one of my colleagues in Dar es Salaam coming into my office one day with a fax from Washington DC. He had been invited to a meeting in the World Bank headquarters. The fax also mentioned the per diem he was going to get and it was going to be paid also for the days he was travelling business class back and forth and staying for free in the Sheraton airport hotel in Frankfurt. He asked me: "How can I possibly refuse this offer? Just the per diems are more than I make in half a year as a university professor here. And how critical can I be without risking that

I am not invited back? I would like more of these trips."

He is touching upon the most difficult question there is in the relationship between research and aid agencies. Does the research contain criticism that for instance the World Bank would listen to? Is there criticism with the potential of changing the policies of the World Bank or of bilateral donors? Who can voice this criticism? Who can do it without being dismissed, not given any more consultancies, not invited back or without being marginalized? I remember that at the CIES conference in Washington DC in March 2001, there was an excellent presentation by a World Bank employee on the language situation in Papua New Guinea (Klaus 2001). In the discussion after his paper I voiced my strong approval of the message of his paper, but said that I could not quite understand that he could hold such views because they were far from those of the World Bank. He admitted that he certainly had in-house fights to get some acceptance on his views and felt rather marginalized.

In a book review of *Whose Education for All? The Recolonization of the African Mind* (Brock-Utne 2000), Rosemary Preston (2002: 552) from the University of Warwick writes :

She is aware that those of us who are able to critique without fear of repercussion are necessarily in a position of privilege. This we have an obligation to use. In her critique, Brock-Utne is driven by the need to write from an African perspective to give voice to the inequities being perpetrated in the name of human development and international educational assistance from economically rich to economically poor states.

But there are repercussions. In the spring of 1992, I had taken unpaid leave both from the University of Oslo and the University of Dar es Salaam and accepted a position as Visiting Professor at the University of Antioch in the US, teaching a course on "Education in Africa" and another course called "Education for Peace". That job started in the beginning of March, so I had a couple of months in Tanzania before leaving for the US. I decided that I would do something I had wanted to do for a long time, that was to solicit the opinions of educational administrators in the Ministry of Education, the programme officer for education in the CCM<sup>13)</sup> office and the director and curriculum workers in the Institute for Curriculum Development on Nordic aid to the education sector. There is little knowledge on how development aid is perceived by the recipient. At that time I spoke Kiswahili and could have all my interviews with the officials in Kiswahili. I also knew many of them from conferences I had attended, and several had been external examiners at the University, so we had been on the same examination committees. This personal knowledge and trust the respondents felt about me, I think, was the main reason why they spared their valuable time to answer me so frankly. Several of them also welcomed this opportunity to tell someone about the frustrations they experienced with the Nordic donors. The information I got from them about the Swedish pressure to privatize the school book sector and downsize the Institute for Curriculum Development, and about the Norwegian Educational Trust Fund (NETF), was news for me of an unexpected and rather shocking nature. When I began interviewing these high officials within the education sector in Tanzania, I had expected to find some negative attitudes toward the former colonial masters and the World Bank. This I also

found. I had also expected that some bilateral donors, especially the Nordic countries, would be regarded with much higher esteem. This expectation was not fulfilled. Over and over again officials told me that at earlier times the Nordic countries would come to their rescue when the World Bank and the IMF wanted them to accept tough conditionalities like reintroducing school fees or privatizing the secondary school sector. But since about 1984 - 85 this had changed.

I later learned that in 1983 a conference had been held with participation from all the Nordic governments and the government of Tanzania about the relationship between Tanzania and the Nordic countries. The results from this conference were mentioned in a Government White Paper to the Norwegian government (St. meld. nr. 74, 1984-85). In this paper we read:

The Nordic countries insisted that an agreement with the IMF (International Monetary Fund) had to be reached if Tanzania should get any external resources whatsoever in order to be able to turn the negative trend of their economic development and that *any extra support from the Nordic countries without such an agreement would not be given.* (St. meld. nr. 74., 1984-85: 27) (italics added, my translation)

It is an astonishing fact that there was no debate about this paragraph of the White Paper when it was presented to the Norwegian Parliament. All the donors, including the Nordic countries, seemed to agree to have their policies coordinated and decided by the thinking of the World Bank.

Japan does not partake in this donor-cooperation and is, as far as my reading so far has assured me, somewhat more recipient oriented ( Sawamura, 2002; Nagao, 2001).<sup>14)</sup> Norihiro Kuroda, (2001) found through two surveys he made on professional expertise in Japan for International Development Cooperation that his respondents thought it was more important for an expert to have thorough knowledge of the educational system and the educational past in the developing country the expert would be working in than of the Japanese educational system. This is an interesting result. Interpreted in a positive light it may show the recipient orientation of Japanese experts. One may also interpret their answer as a perceived need, because most of these so-called experts have not been to developing countries and really know very little about them.

I had not been asked by anyone to make this round of interviews, nobody paid me for them, and no-one owned my data. My interviewees were assured of full confidentiality and anonymity. I wrote a paper for a conference on the basis of the interviews, which read and approved by many of my interviewees before I presented it. I sent a copy of the paper, just for information, to the NORAD office in Oslo.

The programme officer there faxed a copy of the paper to the programme officer for education at the SIDA office in Dar and her counterpart in the NORAD office in Dar. None of the programme officers listened to the critique that came forward from my interviews. The NORAD programme officer wrote: "How sad that Birgit should be so critical when we had just thought of using her for a consultancy". *That* was the repercussion. NORAD in Dar in the spring of 1992 did not make any effort to listen to the critique that came forward from my interviews, a critique showing that the NETF (National Education Trust Fund) was not sustainable without donor support, would

increase regional inequalities and had a policy that went against the official policy of the government of Tanzania since NETF was meant to be used for private schools only.

It should be added here that NORAD missions in our main partner countries operate rather independently from the NORAD office at the headquarters in Oslo. NORAD has an understaffed<sup>15)</sup> but very competent unit for Education, Research and Culture in Oslo with special responsibility for education. In a paper on Educational Assistance from Norway Theo Koritzinsky (2001:9) mentions that this technical unit for Education, Research and Culture has an advisory function. He does not mention, however, that the NORAD offices abroad may choose whether they want to seek the advice of this office or not. In the case of the NETF, the education office at Headquarters was *not* consulted. There is reason to believe that had they had more of a say, the NETF project might not have been started at all or stopped at an earlier stage.

The SIDA programme officer wrote a long comment on the paper in an extremely condescending and aggressive tone, claiming e.g. that this was not research, since my respondents had not been named! But I had assured them of confidentiality. The NORAD office in Oslo was far more willing to listen to criticism, but admitted that, after that paper of mine, it would be impossible to suggest me as an evaluator of the Norwegian Educational Trust Fund.

In my book *Whose Education for All?* (Brock-Utne, 2000:86-94), I use some pages to describe the birth and organization of the National Education Trust Fund (NETF) which was a donor initiative, conceptualized by the World Bank and successfully sold to NORAD. NETF should be used to rehabilitate private secondary schools. On advice from the World Bank NORAD decided that NETF should be organized as an NGO (non-governmental organization). One of my interviewees in the Ministry of Education told me:

Donors seem to be very fond of establishing NGOs. They do not seem to trust us in the government and do not want the Ministry to be in charge of the money. But if we shall have no control, no say, why should we see the money at all? Now NORAD in Oslo pays the money to the World Bank in Washington, which pays the money to the Treasury which pays it to the Ministry of Education, which then hands over the money to the Education Trust Fund. I don't like this system. We here in the Ministry have absolutely no control over the money. The Ministry has a good and yearly auditing system for the money it deals with, but this money is just being passed on. We have told NORAD and the World Bank that we do not want to sit here shuffling money that we have no control over.

In an article discussing the role of the NGOs on the development scene, Stellan Bäcklund and Anders Närman (1993) warn against bypassing the state. They also warn against the support NGOs may give to the African elite against its own people. Likewise Kenneth King, discussing the important aid metaphor "capacity building," asks the timely question: "Does it build analytic capacity in the Ministry if for every major aid project a separate project implementation unit is set up that effectively by-passes regular Ministry channels?" (King, 1992: 259).

So I was not asked to evaluate the NETF, but a maybe even better choice of consultant was made. This was one of the few occasions that I have seen that a donor agency used a consultancy

team made up solely of local consultants. Two colleagues of mine (Galabawa and Alphonse, 1993) wrote a frank consultancy report for NORAD on the FUND. Here they write: "There is lack of local support for the FUND. The FUND is designed for dependency on donor support. Whatever local support that exists is loaned from the Government. Thus without donor support the FUND would be non-existent "(Galabawa and Alphonse, 1993: 3).

Data from NETF (1994) show that of the total money disbursed between 1992 when the fund was started and 1994, three of the better off regions in Tanzania that already had plenty of secondary schools (Kilimanjaro, Ruvuma, and Arusha) received more than 50% of the funds disbursed by NETF. Kigoma region, which has very few secondary schools, received no NETF funds during the period. The largest recipients of NETF funds were schools run by Christian missionaries. They received almost 40% of funds disbursed by NETF. Not a single school managed by Muslims received any funds. My colleague Suleman Sumra (1996: 222) is on safe grounds when, after an analysis of how NETF works, he concludes: "NETF funds are therefore used to increase the regional and religious inequalities that exist in access to secondary education in the country."

Through NETF the relatively better off regions get further developed while the poor regions are left to stay even further behind. This is in contrast to Norway's expressed aim in development aid, that of poverty alleviation and help to the most needed. Sumra's paper, which was given at the NASEDEC conference in Norway in June 1995, predates an evaluation of the National Education Trust Fund undertaken by a Norwegian consultancy firm and a local consultant in September 1995 (Samset and Katunzi, 1995).<sup>16)</sup> In the summary of this report. Samset and Katunzi (1995: 3) also note that about 70% of the beneficiary schools are in the three more advantaged zones in the country: "the project is therefore reinforcing regional imbalances regarding access to secondary level education."<sup>17)</sup>

Samset and Katunzi further conclude that some of the main problems in this project are associated with the way the National Education Trust Fund has been designed and operationalized: "Instead of cooperating with and drawing upon the resources of the parent organisations at national and district level, it approaches their schools directly without consulting with their organisations" (Samset and Katunzi, 1995: 2). When it comes to the impact of this Norwegian-funded project (U.S.\$8 million or 60 million Norwegian kroner) on the quality of instruction, the evaluation mission states: "There is no evidence from the field that there has been improvement in learning or increased enrolment of girls" (Samset and Katunzi, 1995: 34).

So repercussions there indeed are. I have to experience that my expertise is not being used by donor agencies I have openly criticized. It is to the detriment to projects that might have needed a critical appraisal. But I am not dependent on consultancies unlike many of my colleagues in Africa who were so and still partly so. Consultants and evaluators working in consultancy firms, most of which are in the north, are totally dependent on good relations to donor agencies and are certainly not in a position where they can criticize openly and freely if they want to stay in business. Having several times been in consultancy teams with professional consultants, I have learnt about the tight rope they have to walk. They are asked to appraise, evaluate, review, but strictly within the terms of reference set by the donor. I know of consultants who have voiced a more fundamental criticism of a project than the donor agency felt that the terms of reference



gave an opening for and have been blacklisted for years (meaning no more consultancies from that development agency). Those living totally on consultancies quickly learn to be cautious.

Before I discuss the difficulties involved in being an expert on education in the vast continent of Africa, I shall give some thought to the concept of an expert.

### **The role of an expert**

The Tanzanians have a saying: *Mtaalam ni mtu ambaye anakuja nyumbani kwako na kukuazima saa yako na kukuambia ni saa ngapi* (an expert is someone who comes to your house, borrows your watch and then tells you what time it is). The saying shows well the uselessness of an expert coming from the outside. The expert has to get the most important knowledge from the local people, and normally s/he is of little help. Yet most projects funded by donors bring experts from the donor country along. The local people have to put up with the expert, if they want the funds the expert brings with him or her. They have to experience that the "expert" gets much better housing and higher salary than themselves, even though s/he knows less about the local circumstances and is often not able to communicate with the local people.

The so-called "experts" and also university people from the North go to Africa to teach, to "transfer" knowledge. In reality many of us from so-called developed countries have more to learn from Africans than they have from us. The fact that we are "experts" in our own countries, for instance, in competitive sports of a Western kind, women's law in Norway, AIDS prevention in the North, or commercial forestry or fishery in the North Sea, does not make us experts on the use of the body in Africa, women's law in Africa, the spreading of AIDS in Africa, sexual norms among various African groups, African agro-forestry, or tropical multi-species fishery in shallow waters.<sup>18)</sup> Whenever there is a review of a department at an African university receiving donor support, one should ask questions like: How much has the support been given as a help to self-help, as a possibility for Africans to do research on their own culture, and how much has it been another "transfer of knowledge" project? How much do we from the industrialized countries come to learn: language, culture, traditional law, and traditional medicine? How much do we listen and learn to appreciate the indigenous knowledge?

The support that universities in Africa normally get, comes in the form of link arrangements between universities in the North and South. "Experts" mostly from Europe and the US coming to teach and distribute the Western curricula are normally part of the link phenomenon. So are books written in the West, computers from the West, and scholarships for master's and Ph.D. students to go to the West to study the curricula offered there. Rarely are provisions made for students from the North to study in the South or for professors in the South to be visiting professors teaching in the North. No wonder then that many academics in the South become westernized in outlook. Staf Callewaert, who has done extensive research in Namibia, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau, tries to explain why one seldom finds African researchers questioning Western schooling as such: "As a rule you cannot expect the educated African to use much energy to reconstruct and problematize the break, by which he or she became exactly what they are: educated in a modern Western sense of the word" (Callewaert, 1994: 108).

In an interesting criticism of a Norwegian white paper on North/South policy, the Indian researcher Sanjit Bunker Roy (1993: 10), director of the Society for Work and Resources Centre in Tilonia, points to lessons drawn from his experiences in the South. They coincide very much with the lessons I draw from my experiences. This is the list he gives of some priority areas for Norwegian South/North policy in sustainable development.

- \* Stop sending "experts" to the South and wasting resources. Instead the strategy should be to build local capacity. It should not be seen as an opportunity to provide jobs to Norwegians in the South. This is not "untied" aid.
- \* Put more time and energy into developing people to people projects and exchanges.
- \* Identify successes in approaches, methods, and implementation as a result of development aid that could be duplicated elsewhere in other countries in the South.
- \* Promote low-cost, community-based innovations.
- \* Stop training engineers, doctors, and professionals in Norway. They become misfits in their own country.
- \* Top priority should be given to strengthening indigenous local institutions.

### **An expert on education in Africa**

My experiences in Africa have taught me that in order to do a good job as a researcher or consultant from the North, one has to have lived several years (more than two) in an African country, learnt an African language, become part of an African culture - as far as that is possible for someone from the outside. But this is certainly not enough. Experiences gathered in *one* African country may not easily transfer to another African country. Africans are as different as Europeans or Asians. There are vast differences not only between the different languages spoken in Africa, but also in the mentality of Africans in one country and Africans in another country, between people living in rural areas and those in the cities, between the African elites (most of whom are rather westernized) and the masses of Africans.

There are vast differences between being a Setswana speaking pupil in one of the first grades (taught in Setswana) in a school in Gabarone living at home in a relatively well to do family and being one of the Basarwa children in the Kalahari desert living in a crowded hostel away from family, getting a completely inadequate diet and being taught through two languages - Setswana and English - that one does not understand (Brock-Utne 1997; Holtan, 1999).

Asked by the German development agency DSE in 1996 to be one of six facilitators in a programme building up research capacity at historically black universities (HBU) in South Africa, I had no second thoughts when I realized that I would be the only white person in the programme. All the participants were black academics at the HBUs and of the other five facilitators four were black South Africans (paid by South Africa) and one was a black Kenyan (who like me was paid by DSE). I was used to being the only white person in all meetings at the University of Dar es Salaam and having only colleagues and friends who were black Africans. Since I did not see myself, I sometimes in Tanzania completely forgot that I have another skin colour. In South Africa I was reminded of this fact daily. Not only in daily life but also among the people I worked

with.

I remember on my first trip to South Africa in 1995 that I wanted to change some dollars into Rand in the small bank in the airport in Johannesburg. The cashier was a black woman and she was serving a black customer. There were three other customers in a line behind the first one, all three black. When I came in, the cashier asked me what I wanted and I said I wanted to change some money. She asked what currency I had and was prepared to serve me at once, interrupting the transaction she was in and letting me by-pass the other customers. I took my place at the end of the line and said I would wait until it was my turn. The other customers turned and looked at me, wondering what strange creature I was who would not take the privilege offered to me. That episode could not have taken place in a bank in Tanzania. If you come in as number five, you are number five in the cue no matter what skin colour you have.

It also happened in my work among the other facilitators, who all were lovely people, that my skin colour was made an issue. I remember that I once politely asked a facilitator from South Africa if one of the participants and I, who came late to a group meeting because we both had got a flue and had to go to a drug store to buy some medicine, could be filled in on what conclusion the group had reached in the fifteen minutes we had been absent. The other facilitator said that since we were late, we had no right to know what they had discussed, they could not repeat something because we did not keep time. I explained why we were late and said we did not need a lengthy repetition but just to know the conclusion they had reached on the renaming of the research proposal the group was discussing. Without this information it was difficult for us to participate in the discussion. And then the other facilitator said: "Now you are behaving like a typical white, wanting to impose your view on us." I was struck by that comment because I found it unfair. I could not see that my skin colour had anything to do with a very reasonable request. At another occasion I wanted to take some pictures of participants and facilitators in tutorial situations to include in a report DSE had asked me to make. One of the South African facilitators remarked: "Running around with that camera you look like one of the white Missionaries." I did not take any more pictures after that, and the report came out without any photos of participants or facilitators (Brock-Utne,1999). I also learnt to be rather low key in the facilitators' meeting and not argue so forcefully against for instance ways of writing research reports that I would have done in another setting either with colleagues at the University of Dar es Salaam or at the University of Oslo. I was afraid of hearing that I behaved like a white. It is absolutely a very different experience to be a white person in South Africa or Namibia (in both countries I prefer to be in the north) from being a white person in Tanzania. The apartheid era is not easily forgotten and plays a part in the minds of South Africans in a way I had not realized before working there<sup>19</sup>.

### **Yet there are similarities between African countries**

There *are* similarities between African countries not only through the fact that most of them have a colonial past and are now being subjected to the structural adjustment policies of the World Bank/IMF (see Brock-Utne,2000), but also through many common cultural features.

Through the years of organizing the seminar "Education in Africa", first at the University of

Antioch in the US in the spring of 1992 and later at the University of Oslo from the fall of 1992, I have often been struck by the fact that my students coming from many different African countries <sup>20)</sup> tell me that they know very little about the history and life in other African countries. They know more about the history and life in the countries of their former colonial masters. I cannot count the times one African student has exclaimed: "Is that a custom/belief in your country as well? I thought that was just typical for us." I shall mention a couple of these customs/beliefs here because we who are working in Africa and with Africans need to know them.

### ***The greeting ceremonies***

It is common in many African countries that when people meet there is a whole ceremony of greetings exchanged. In the NORAD office in Dar I sometimes heard programme officers remark that they were tired of these greeting ceremonies because they took so much time. It was much better with the quick "hei" that we Norwegians use. The Tanzanians would start by asking: *Habari yako?* (what are your news?) and if you were older than the person who asked he would first show his respect for you by saying: *Shikamo* (literally: I want to wash your feet) and you were supposed to answer: *Marahaba* (do it seven times). To the *Habari yako* question you would answer *Nzuri* (good). But that was not enough because then he would ask for the news of your wife/husband, children, news from your travel if you had been travelling, news from your work. The greetings take time and time is something people from industrialized and efficient countries feel they do not have. The time concept is still different in Africa, especially in rural Africa and most of Africa is rural. Time does not go, time comes. There is no expression in Kiswahili for "I don't have time" (*Sina nafasi* means I don't have space - which is something different) The pace is slower. It can be difficult for highly efficient people from donor countries to get used to this. And it is often difficult for Africans to be what we call "on time".<sup>21)</sup>

But the greetings are not just time consuming. They also serve a function. Through the exchange of greetings you establish rapport, you find out what sort of mood the other person is in, whether it for instance is the right day to ask for a favour or not. We might remember that not too long ago in Norwegian country-sides we also had greeting ceremonies that served the same function. My mother, who comes from a big city in Germany and always has been very organized and efficient, lived at the end of the second world war, with my sister and me in the small village of Utne in the west of Norway, where my father's family comes from.

She wanted to dress me on festive occasions in the national costume of Utne. She knew of a woman who had specialized in sowing these costumes. She went to her and asked her if she could sew the costume for me. The woman said no and my mother was very disappointed. She went back to a friend she had found in the local community and said that she did not understand why the other woman had refused. Is that because I am a German? she asked, even though everybody in Utne knew that she was very much against the Nazis and on the Norwegian side. Her friend did not think so, but started asking her how she had approached the other woman. Had she asked her about the son who was at sea and the mother worried about, had she asked about the cow that had been sick or about the yield from the cherry trees. No, my mother admitted, she

had not. She was taught a lesson there and then. A week later she came back to the seamstress and just inquired about the son, the cow and the cherries. She was invited in for coffee and cookies and the two women had had a good conversation and become really friendly. When my mother was in the door-way ready to go, the other woman said: "By the way I shall sew that costume for Birgit".

It is my conviction that a lot of the conflicts among people in the different workplaces in the highly industrialized countries could have been avoided, had we revived some of the old greeting ceremonies from older times, greeting ceremonies that still live on in Africa and serve a function.

### ***Politeness - avoidance of confrontations***

What my many years of living in Africa and my constant communication with Africans have also taught me is the calmness by which they treat interpersonal conflicts and their dislike of open confrontations and direct criticism. There were several occasions when I worked at the University of Dar es Salaam that a colleague and myself, I felt, had been unfairly treated. When I once wanted to take this up directly with the Dean, as I felt really provoked, my colleague said: "Don't do that. It will just make him feel bad. It makes him lose face. He won't like it. In the end you will also lose from it." I argued against this, saying that I was really provoked, and he needed to hear it and I felt that direct speech was better than beating around the bush. My colleague answered: "That is how many westerners think. We do not see it that way. We think harsh words can destroy much. He probably already knows what you think. You do not need to hammer it in. You should try to avoid direct statements that may be seen as confrontational. You will just create an enemy". I was taught a lesson - a lesson I am aware of and try to follow up when in Africa but easily forget at home.

A lesson I seem to have learnt from my four months in Japan is that though the Japanese are just as much (or even more) on time and hard working as we westerners are, they may have more in common with Africans when it comes to avoidance of directness. As far as I understand it seems that directness will here easily be looked at negatively, counterproductive and sometimes even as vulgar. The Japanese, like Africans, prefer to feel their way through a situation when dealing with others. There is an expression for this, *haragei*, which literally means the art of the stomach, where both sides tentatively edge around an issue, feeling out the other's point of view until it is clear what direction negotiations can go. The Japanese, according to a book on Japanese customs first published by Japan Culture Institute, regard *haragei* as the highest form of interpersonal communication (Discover Japan, 1983). A person with a problem or in need of a favour from a friend will merely drop suggestions, and the greater the favour, the more allusive the suggestions. The friend, meanwhile, does not feel the need to press for a direct explanation, but relies on his powers of intuition.

In my class in Japanese language and culture I have learnt that the Japanese do not like to say a direct "no" to a polite request and will answer "chotto" - a little. Somebody might ask you if you want to see a movie - *eiga o mimaska?* . If you do not want to, you do not say "no" (iiee) but you answer *eiga wa chotto* - which literally means "just a little movie". If you are invited for an

ice cream - *aiskurimu o tabemasuka?*, you again do not just say "no" or "no thanks" if you do not want one, but rather *aiskurimu wa chotto* (just a little ice cream). The other person understands that you are politely refusing his offer.

My experience from having spent time with Asians from Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan, Japan and China and with Latin-Americans from Chile, Peru, Columbia and Mexico as well as with Africans from many African nations is that when it comes to confrontational directness, it is we westerners from western Europe and the US who have a minority behaviour compared to behaviour in most other countries. And we have a tendency to think that our behaviour is the normal one.

### ***An Education in Africa built on African roots***

In an article on African Education in the Twenty-first Century, the Kenyan professor Daniel Sifuna (2001) argues for an education that places emphasis on knowledge, skills and values that are based on the African environment in which the learners will live and work.

Joseph Ki-Zerbo (1990) of Burkina Faso argues for the need to return to much of the content transmitted in the pre-colonial period. He claims that colonial domination introducing formal systems of classroom education has led to the breakup of the African educational system. For Ki-Zerbo "education" comprises both the socialization process, learning by doing and apprenticeship, learning through oral literature, riddles and rites, and the "formal system of classroom education" or schooling. However, the problem has been that "education," also among Africans, has come to only mean "schooling," a system of Western formal education imported into Africa. "He has high education" means to many Africans that the person in question has gone through many years of formal schooling. This limited view of education was what professional African educators were taught by the colonialists. The faculties of education, even in Africa, are faculties of western schooling. The ministries of education are ministries of western schooling. African curriculum developers, often working in institutes of education or institutes of curriculum development, have looked more to how curricula in the same subjects were constructed in other countries, mostly overseas, than to the indigenous learning and knowledge systems of Africa. Or they have had to accept curriculum packages to be introduced into African schools but being developed abroad, packages in life skills, aids prevention and family education.

The powerful money-lenders and donors to education in Africa have the power to define not only the type of schooling they see fit for African children but also the concept of "education" itself. This is witnessed by a statement made in an article by two World Bank education officers: "Logic dictates that if the poor cannot afford schooling, then by definition they are less educated" (Burnett and Patrinos, 1996: 275). To these authors education and schooling mean exactly the same. This statement should be contrasted to a passage from Nyerere's *Education for Self-Reliance*:

The fact that pre-colonial Africa did not have "schools" - except for short periods of initiation in some tribes - did not mean that the children were not educated. They learned by living and doing. In the homes and on the farms they were taught the skills of the society and the behaviour expected by its members...Education was thus "informal"; every adult was a

teacher to a greater or lesser degree. But this lack of formality did not mean that there was no education, nor did it affect its importance to the society. Indeed, it may have made the education more directly relevant to the society in which the child was growing up (Nyerere, 1982: 236).

The statement of the World Bank writers equating schooling with education begs the question; Whose logic are they talking about? Whose education? Built on whose frame of reference? It is a mistake to think that the many drop-outs of over-crowded class-rooms in Africa are not educated. Most likely the informal education they get at home is of much greater value to them than the western knowledge found in schools transmitted in a language children do not understand (Brock-Utne, 2002).

In many ways the basic African consciousness of life is fundamentally different from the European or Arabic, however much Christianity or Islam may have proselytized in Africa. In the African tradition knowledge is experientially and socially based rather than propositionally derived. As Avenstrup (1997: 4) points out:

There could hardly be a greater contrast than between Decartes' context-less mentalist individualism in *Cogito, ergo sum* (I think, therefore I am) and the African contextually pregnant, social constructivist relationalism of *umuntu umuntu babantu* (I am because you are).

Likewise Catherine Odora (1994: 84) of Uganda stresses the communal character of African life. She is concerned about the way Western schooling destroys the communal character of African indigenous education. Odora (1994: 84) notes:

The moment children go to school, they learn to talk about "my chair, my homework, my position.." and less and less about "our" , "we". The risks of alienation get more profound the higher one climbs up the ladder in search for the elusive certificate.

It is the European encyclopedic tradition (from Decartes via Diderot) that has underpinned curriculum development of formal schooling in Africa from colonial times. Before colonialism, education was an indispensable component of societies. The education given at that time was functional to the requirements of each given social unit. As Melber (1997: 66) argues:

This communication of knowledge, in contrast to what is understood by formal education and training in a European - and in the meantime a universal - context, did not primarily serve the distribution of positions of power. The transmission of knowledge was a necessity of life, and for this very reason not selective.

Melber wants people once again to decide on their own system of knowledge transmission and its content, in local units, corresponding to their particular conditions of life and their specific

social and cultural structures: "What I wish for is a universal redefinition of education by the people it claims to be for" (p.69).

Catherine Odora (1994) discusses the need for creating a space in contemporary education discourse that is more tolerant, more sensitive to realities *other than* the overwhelming Western one. She finds that discussing indigenous education today compels us to come to terms with the situation in which even the social construction of a people's reality is and has been constantly defined elsewhere. Discussing indigenous education, according to Odora, "is about *asking why the school building is always quadrangled even where the local setting around it has round huts*" (Odora, 1994: 62 - italics added).

Ki-Zerbo (1990) describes the injustice done to Africa by not rooting its education in African culture. It is easy to agree with him when he describes this injustice and also the disintegrating effects on African societies of the imported school curricula and imported languages of instruction, the "foreign cyst in the social body" (Ki-Zerbo, 1990: 12). His explanation for this sad state of affairs is, however, too simplistic. The colonialists may have designed an education system for Africa "to serve the overall aim of the subjugation of the continent to European needs" (Ki-Zerbo, 1990: 12). But the questions must be asked: Why have the foreign designed curricula continued after independence? And why has this continuation partly been applauded by well-known Africans (Fafunwa, 1990)?

The role of much of the African elite, the *wazungo waeusi* (black Europeans), the "coconuts" or "bounties"<sup>22)</sup> (as they are called in South Africa) has to be taken into account. They have gone through such a long period of schooling, much of it in the West, that they not only have become foreign to their own culture but also look down upon it.<sup>23)</sup>

Many ordinary Africans have also been so conditioned to equate western schooling even in languages of their former colonial masters (Brock-Utne, 2001) with education itself that it can be difficult for them to see that what children learn in their immediate environment is also education.

I am not arguing for a deschooling of Africa. On the contrary. School education pushed by an African state aided by external donors *may* be oppressive to local culture and vernacular traditions. But we should not forget the important function of school education in serving as an instrument for promoting social cohesion in a new state. I am criticizing *the content* of the schooling now given in most part of Africa. My point is that school education needs to be rooted in African knowledge systems and given in local languages. In the last part of my book *Whose Education for All?* (Brock-Utne, 2000), I am arguing against those who want to cut down on higher education in Africa. There is a strong need for Africans with high education, Africans who can be a counter-expertise to the expert from the west. They need to know western formal education but their knowledge must be based on African roots. They need a type of double qualification which we women who have been working with women studies (Brock-Utne, 1989) also have had to acquire. We could not just specialize in women studies; we also had to know the "general" curriculum made by men and where women were invisible. I am as worried as the donors about the fact that too little money is being spent on education in Africa and that children drop out of school. But unlike them my main concern is not getting children back into a school that alienates them, but giving them an education that is worthwhile. The quality of education is not measured through



tests where children memorize bits of information they do not understand, but by building on the knowledge they already possess. The educational principle: *From the known to the unknown* is an excellent educational principle that seems to be forgotten when it comes to education in Africa.

Clifford Fyle, former head of Linguistics and of the Department of Education at the University of Sierra Leone and later working at the UNESCO office in Senegal, sums up his chapter in the publication *Educational Research for Development in Africa* in these words: "In general it is best for Africa to look to herself for the development of her own curricula and teaching methods" (Fyle, 1993: 31). He claims that the best way by which Africa may look to herself is by an examination of the methods and techniques of traditional African education, for example, an examination of traditional practices for bringing up the young, for learning through play, for initiation into manhood or womanhood, for skills teaching, or for lifelong education. He assumes that such an examination may reveal practices that can be adopted directly or with little adaptation for use as part of African teaching methodology. Fyle comments:

One may perhaps mention the great emphasis on education through practice generally evident in traditional African societies, and which is in line with current demands for linking education with productive work. Other examples may be of intellectual development through tales, riddles, and proverbs as in Zaire, and even the string games and tricks of Sierra Leone children which could be of much value in mathematics, science, and craft teaching. The point of emphasis here is that traditional methods and techniques have not yet received the research attention they duly deserve. (Fyle, 1993: 31).

There is a need not only to record this education as part of research studies and historical records, but also to consider how it can be used to reconstruct a curriculum of and for Africa.

In my teaching of social psychology at the University of Dar es Salaam, I explained to my students that they were in a much better position than I to understand the social psychology of Africa. I could help them with organizing their material and discuss it with them, but they were the ones who could understand their people and tap their learnings. When I first asked them to go into the villages and collect riddles, there were protests from several of the students because they did not see the educational value of the oral literature. They first just wanted me to lecture so that they could take notes, learn the notes and pass a test. They still went into their villages and made studies. They later claimed that their studies of indigenous education were really empowering, showing them how much value there is in the teachings of the village people, who were stamped by many as "uneducated" because many were illiterate. The students studied informal learnings around the fireplace, storytelling, joking relationships, and riddling activity.

One of the students in my social psychology class at master level J.M.R.Ishengoma (1988), himself a Mhaya <sup>24)</sup>, wrote an interesting term paper titled: *Riddles as an Agent of Socialization and Social Learning among the Haya Children*. Having collected a vast amount of riddles still in use in Bukoba, Ishengoma analyzed the riddles as to their educational value. He found that they could be meaningfully divided into the following categories:

- \* Riddles that instruct children to compare, contrast and distinguish objects
- \* Riddles that promote mastery of *Luhaya* and proper communication skills
- \* Riddles that teach cultural norms
- \* Riddles that are instructive about work, agriculture, and animal husbandry
- \* New riddles

He also found a category of riddles referring to sex organs. These riddles are, according to Ishengoma (1988), only asked in the company of friends or same-sex peers. Through his many examples he demonstrates what a useful tool riddles must have been, and partly still are, in the education of the young. He argues against Western social anthropologists such as Finnegan (1970), who looked at riddles as a form of entertainment and amusement for children. This is the way riddles are used in the west. Interpreting riddles through his western framework, Finnegan did not see that riddles have a quite different function in Africa. Ishengoma (1988) tells that Bahaya children, both boys and girls, are normally told riddles by their mothers or grandmothers.<sup>25)</sup> He found in his study that children coming from families where riddling was still a normal practice had a better developed vocabulary in *Luhaya* (*Kihaya*) and were more sensitized to the cultural norms of the *Bahaya* than children in families where the art of riddling had been ignored or abandoned, for example, in devout Christian families. He claims that in many Christian families the practice of riddling is looked at as heathen.

In my classes on "Education in Africa" and "Advanced Studies in Education and Development" at the University of Oslo, it has been delightful to see that Africans from many different African countries all know of the riddling activity in their own countries and acknowledge the educational value of this activity. They have, however, normally not thought of it as education - being used to reserve that concept for western schooling. There is a great need for studies recording educational practices like riddling activity still going on and also of studies making a reanalysis of the history of indigenous education in Africa. Works by Western missionaries, travelers, or social anthropologists should be used with caution; they are often biased and need to be reinterpreted. For instance, the European travelers whose reports are summarized by Theal (1910) have, according to Ocitti (1991), a tendency of viewing indigenous African education as a phenomenon which was confined to the puberty years and achieved mainly through the rites of circumcision. Ocitti mentions that one finds a lot of parochialism and prejudice toward Africans and their traditional systems of education in some of the writers from outside Africa. All this information seems to have been gathered more out of curiosity than out of any intention of using it as a point of departure for the construction of school curricula.

### ***Integrating Education into African Community Life***

An interesting educational program, known as the Village School Program, has been put in place for the Bushmen children in the Nyae Nyae area in the northeastern part of the Otjozondjupa region in Namibia. When parents in that area go hunting, the children have to go with them. The philosophy of the Village School Programme is that the teachers should also go with the hunters. The school should not separate children from parents. The older people are integrated in these

village schools, too. Religion is not taught in these schools since the learners receive their own religious instruction from home.

The educational program is geared to the culture of the learner. The Bushmen children are known not to attend school, but they attend the Village School Programme of the Nyae Nyae Foundation. The reason for this may be the cultural sensitivity of the programme. Part of the reason why the Bushmen have not wanted their children to attend school is that schools have practiced corporal punishment (such punishment has now been outlawed in Namibian schools). Corporal punishment is a practice which goes completely against the Bushman culture. In the Village School Programme such punishment has never been practiced. When the learners get fidgety or bored, the lessons are simply stopped. They then do something else or stop completely for the day.

According to personal communication from the Nyae Nyae Foundation, the 220 children in the Village School Programme are far ahead of other learners because they learn in their mother tongue and are exposed to culturally sensitive teaching material and teachers whom everyone respects (Brock-Utne, 1995a, 1995b). The production of teaching material is done within the program and great emphasis is placed on local curriculum development. The 220 school-children get food through the World Feeding Programme and are supplied with donkeys and donkey - carts as means of transportation.<sup>26)</sup>

The Japanese researcher Masafumi Nagao (2001:3) claims that : "A look to the East may help African educators lessen somewhat their apparent psychological and intellectual dependence on the West and restore some balance in their educational outlook". In a discussion with Professor Nagao about his quote where I maintained that his point would only be true if Japan behaves differently from other donors and builds on African culture, he answered that whether or not his point turns out to be true will depend less on how Japan behaves but more, and decisively so, on how the Africans find themselves in a context without external expertise and support. He claimed that good or bad, Western (white) experts coming from the North keep reminding the Africans of their past and present dependence, while though perhaps clumsy or not effective technically, Japanese assistance may have the virtue of exposing the Africans to a new and somewhat different context. Professor Nagao kept insisting, when it came to JICA's support to the South African math and science teacher retraining project, that the main Japanese contribution should be in terms of hosting study missions by the South African math and science teacher trainers and by the local educational administrators who work with them and that the only "permanent" presence in the field from the Japanese side should be a young project coordinator <sup>27)</sup>. In our discussion on development aid to the education sector in Africa, we agreed that Africa will not change unless and until the Africans start thinking for themselves and by themselves.

## **The lessons learnt**

The lessons I have learnt through my own experiences and through listening to people in the south are very similar to the ones the Indian researcher Roy comes up with, which were quoted earlier. To me the fundamental question is: In what position can I as someone from an industrialized,

a so-called donor country provide the best help to improvement of the education sector in the South? My answer is that maybe the best help I could give would be using my knowledge of what is going on within this sector in Africa to change the policies of my own government. Educators in Africa need friends and spokespeople in the north who freely can voice the criticism of the donors that they themselves are afraid to voice openly.

I have grown to become very sceptical of consultants and so-called "experts" coming from the north (or even from the industrialized east) seeing that the "expertise" they bring with them is often not the one required where they come. We should not be sending experts, but may of course give advice if that is sought for. But the questions must be formulated in the south. A demand for a certain type of knowledge or expertise must come from the developing country itself. I am not saying that we from the north should not go to developing countries. Indeed we should, but we should primarily go there to learn, to study, to get to know the people, their languages and their culture like they do when they come to us. It is important that especially young people get the opportunity to live and study for some time in a developing country. Actually the practice we started with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at my Institute in Oslo to have some master students writing their theses connected to education projects in Africa supported by Norway was a practice that should have been further developed instead of terminated. These students became true friends and defenders of Africa.

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## Notes

<sup>1)</sup> Of the 152 bibliographic references mentioned in the back of the 1994 World Bank paper Higher Education: The Lessons of Experience , only 32 (21%) are not World Bank publications or publications of Bank staff. This fact leads one to question whose experience is meant by the subtitle "The Lessons of Experience"? Fernando Reimers (1995) is struck by the fact that even UNESCO's 1993 policy paper Strategies for Change and Development in Higher Education is not mentioned as a publication from which to draw lessons of experience. Nor are any of the many important publications from the Eastern and Southern Africa University Research Project (ESAURP), written by African university people.

<sup>2)</sup> Consultancies in Tanzania, Zambia and Ethiopia

- <sup>3)</sup> Consultancies in Swaziland, Uganda, Botswana, Mali, Senegal, Niger and Guinea
- <sup>4)</sup> From the time I came back to my job at the Institute for Educational Research at the University of Oslo in the fall of 1992 until 1998, I held a weekly seminar on "Education in Africa" on Tuesday night. The seminar gathered students of international education also from fields like political science, social anthropology, social geography and sociology apart from educationists. It also gathered programme officers in the Foreign Ministry, NORAD and various NGOs (see Brock-Utne and Miettinen,1998). Once each term I also organized a week-end seminar around a specific theme. Several of the week-end seminars resulted in publications within the Education in Africa report series - a series within the regular report series of the Institute for Educational Research at the University of Oslo. (see e.g. Brock-Utne (ed),1994;1995;1997, Brock-Utne and Koloti (eds.),2000)
- <sup>5)</sup> In the fall of 1997 I took the initiative to build up a two year Master programme in international education. This programme started in a somewhat different form than originally planned in the fall of 1998 as the M.Phil. programme in Comparative and International Education and with two specialities, Educational Planning and Leadership taught by a colleague and Education and Development taught by me. Most of my students come from developing countries, both from Latin America, Asia and Africa. The programme has just welcomed the fifth co-hort of students.
- <sup>6)</sup> [www.hio.no/Lu/](http://www.hio.no/Lu/) accessed on 28 October 2002, The web-page claims that LINS uses 20 consultants from the Oslo College where it is located and has a data base of 200 other consultants from Norway and abroad. Who is in this data base and how the data base is being used is impossible to find out from the information provided. The web page on consultants says that it "contains names and addresses of consultants and is restricted to internal use only." (italics added) It can only be accessed through providing a password which is a secret to anyone who is not part of the internal LINS administration.
- <sup>7)</sup> In the years from 1996 to 1998, I was used by the Foreign Ministry as a consultant on this project together with Janne Lexow from the consultancy firm DECO. Six of my master students became connected to the follow-up through me and wrote their master theses connected to this follow-up. The local offices were very impressed by the work of the students. Several programme officers mentioned to me that the students had done better work than many consultants and the students did not get any pay for their work. The students themselves learnt a lot and got a valuable experience for life. Janne and I worked well together, wrote critical reports to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and were able to accumulate some valuable experience across projects. We had originally both been promised orally by Director Asbjorn Eidhammer in the Foreign Ministry that we would be asked to follow this project up at least for the three first years. A new written contract was drawn up yearly. In 1998 mine was terminated, however, and the new Director Inge Nordang told me that the Foreign Ministry would not use the university any more since LINS was now there and it was more convenient for them to channel all assignments through LINS. Convenience seems to be very important to some bureaucrats working with development aid.
- <sup>8)</sup> Though the team also evaluated work done in Ethiopia, that was done through a desk study while the four weeks of field work were in Mongolia.
- <sup>9)</sup> NUFU - Norwegian University Fund is administered by researchers at Norwegian universities for staff development in developing countries and research projects which are defined and planned together with partners in the South. The money for the NUFU cooperation comes from the budget for Norwegian development aid.
- <sup>10)</sup> I have on two occasions described my experiences in the first of these positions (Brock-Utne, 1993a:1993b)
- <sup>11)</sup> The Ministry at the end changed their position, probably seeing that the master theses the students wrote would not get a wide circulation. The discussion between the University and the Ministry on this occasion

may, however, have been one of the reasons why the Ministry finds it administratively more convenient to use the LINS center that has as a policy not to make the assignments they take on public.

- <sup>12)</sup> NASEDEC is an abbreviation for Nordic Association for the Study of Education in Developing Countries. The Association is more than 25 years old and organizes researchers, evaluators and administrators in the field of education and development in the Nordic Countries. NASEDEC normally holds an annual conference in one of the Nordic countries. The conferences are sponsored by the development agency in the host country. Most of the budget for the conference goes to bring researchers from the South to come to the conferences and present their experiences.
- <sup>13)</sup> CCM (Chama cha Mapinduzi - the Party of the Revolution) was the only legal party at the time I lived in Tanzania. After the multi-party system was reintroduced in 1992, CCM has continued to be the largest and the sole ruling party.
- <sup>14)</sup> I have later come to learn that the truth about the Japanese position regarding the World Bank is somewhat 'ambivalent'. The Foreign Ministry seems to feel that if Japan stays out of 'sector approaches', Japan will lose influence, so it is considering involvement. JICA does not necessarily like it, mostly because the implementation procedures of Japanese aid are so rigid that 'partnering' with other donors would be really cumbersome. Nevertheless, Japan has started to take part in the World Bank led initiatives like PRSP. Through my CICE colleagues I have learnt that Japan is taking part in a sector approach in the agricultural sector in Tanzania and is thinking of providing support to the Fast Track Initiative. Even though the recipient orientation may be just a slogan used in Japan's aid (like it also is in Norwegian aid), the existence of such a slogan makes it possible for 'conscientious' people like CICE staff to try to establish a technical cooperation model based on such a principle. But it seems like for the most part, the recipient-requested aid projects, especially big ones, are cooked up by Japanese consulting companies and JICA officials.
- <sup>15)</sup> In a debate between the Director of NORAD, Tove Strand and me, on development aid to education, the Director said that the education office in NORAD would be strengthened with at least one more full time member at a high level. This is far too little but even this strengthening has not taken place. The debate took place on Tuesday 23rd of September 1997 and was arranged by SAIH at the University of Oslo
- <sup>16)</sup> This evaluation reaches the same conclusion as my initial interviewing in 1992. Without wanting to sound self-righteous, I would like to mention that much damage could have been avoided had NORAD in Dar chosen to listen to my critique at that time.
- <sup>17)</sup> It is interesting to note that Samset and Katunzi, both coming from a Christian tradition, have not looked at how NETF is also reinforcing religious imbalances.
- <sup>18)</sup> For further discussion of the role of an "expert" from the outside coming to Africa, see Brock-Utne, 2000: 224-236.
- <sup>19)</sup> One of my CICE colleagues remarked when we discussed this point that it may also be that academics in other African countries have become more used to consultants, academics and donors coming from the outside and become afraid of criticizing them, wanting to get parts of the material rewards these people can provide. In South Africa such people coming as extensions of donor agencies are a rather recent phenomenon
- <sup>20)</sup> From Tanzania, South Africa, Kenya, Botswana, Uganda, the Gambia, Mali, Cameroun, Zambia, Ghana and Zimbabwe.
- <sup>21)</sup> While in Japan I have written some letters home to friends about my experiences here. One of my Ph.D. students Rosah Malmbo (e-mail 23.Sept.2002) from Zambia wrote me: Thanks for your circular letters. I find them very interesting and they remind me of the new things that I had to learn here in Oslo. Like I have tried to keep appointments on time. I sometimes just fail to do it. Looks like I am almost always late

for appointments and then I realise how everything here in Norway seems to be dictated by time. I am improving though.

- <sup>22)</sup> This name refers to the chocolate bar called "Bounty," which has brown chocolate on the outside (brown skin) but white coconut (white thoughts) on the inside.
- <sup>23)</sup> In their book *Education in the Far North*, Frank Darnell and Anton Hoem (1996) show that Norway, a country which most people do not see as an imperialist power, has treated their indigenous population in the Far North, the Saami people, much in the same way as Native Americans have been treated by settlers in the United States and Africans by the colonial powers. They quote Asta Balto, the director of the Saami Education Council, who did not learn to read and write her native Saami until age 30. She tells that from the 1870s until the last World War, the authorities tried to "Norwegianize" the Saami people in a very harsh way, and the Saami language was absolutely forbidden in school. In her own words: "The hundred years of convincing the Saami people that their language and culture were worthless have been effective. Many of the Saami parents are still believing that being Saami and speaking the Saami language is identical with defeat, poverty and contempt" (Balto, 1990, quoted in Darnell and Hoem, 1996: 188). When I read this, I was reminded of an incident which happened around 1970 in Kautokeino, where the Saami people live. There was a seminar on education in that area which I attended. About half of the participants were of Saami origin. In the Saami culture there is a beautiful way of chanting joik that is being used for all sorts of festivities. Joiks have been created to celebrate various people and events. When the missionaries came to this part of the country, they taught the Saami people that joiks were made by the devil and had to be abolished. When one of us Norwegians suggested that the joiks should be revived and introduced into the curriculum of the school, we were told by some of the Saami people that that could never be done because those songs were the songs of the devil! The colonization of the mind had really taken place.
- <sup>24)</sup> The Haya tribe, or the Wahaya (Mhaya in singular) in Kiswahili (Bahaya in their language), live in the Bukoba region of Tanzania. They speak Kihaya (called in their language Luhaya). The region was colonized early and had a lot of Christian missionary schools. Many of the highly schooled Tanzanians belong to the Wahaya people.
- <sup>25)</sup> Another student in one of my social psychology classes at master level at the University of Dar es Salaam Wycliffe Lugoe (1989), notes that among the Wajita in Mara region in Tanzania, the riddling activity ceases to be an activity where all children participate from the child's fifth year. After the child is five, boys and girls form different riddling groups. The Jita boy is taught his role at the evening assembly commonly called echoto (in Kijita). Each home prepares a cow dung fire whereby the males, both elder and youth ones, gather while the females are busy preparing the evening meal. At this gathering, stories, riddles and narrations of events of interest are all related to the growth of the boys. Most of the teachings are done by the grandfathers, as it is assumed that they have an accumulation of knowledge about the tribe. Also the grandfathers can say anything without hesitation or shyness.
- <sup>26)</sup> On my trip to the Kalahari desert in Botswana in the beginning of September 1997 (Brock-Utne, 1997), I again met a group of children of the San people, the Basarwa, and thought how much better it would have been for them to have had the teaching the Nyae Nyae Foundation of Namibia provided.
- <sup>27)</sup> This minimalist approach, according to him, is creating a situation in which the South African teacher trainers are now (after 3 years of joint work along with the University of Pretoria) talking about what to do after the departure of the external supporters

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