

# FROM CIVIC EDUCATION TO ANTI-CORRUPTION EDUCATION

## Building on the Experiences of South Africa and Tanzania

*From the African Community of Practice on Management for Development Results at the African Capacity Building Foundation*



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### SYNOPSIS

Corruption remains a major challenge for development in Africa. People worldwide perceive corruption as a widespread problem. Over the last two decades, anti-corruption and related education were almost absent from the development policy agenda, and only minimally included in discussions on the Millennium Development Goals and Sustainable Development Goals. Today, there is a growing demand from citizens for greater transparency and accountability leading to the importance of putting in place civic education programs. This paper seeks to put anti-corruption education on the main agenda of civic education in Africa.

**Key findings.** Colonial education system in general and civic education in particular in colonial South Africa and Tanzania were used to block dialogue between communities. Most education was thus based on local content, and young people were socialized to belonging to their communities. The aim was to suppress nationalism and promote ethnic chauvinism. The sum of this distortion was that, in both countries, Africans were taught that they were foreigners in their own countries.

**Key lessons.** African states need to understand that civic education is essential to sustain their constitutional calls for democracy. Democracies are sustained by citizens who have the requisite knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Absent a reasoned commitment on the part of its members to the fundamental values and principles of democracy, a free and open society cannot succeed. Civic education is very important and coordination is required at regional and continental levels to develop a common approach to its development and delivery.

**Key recommendations.** Research needs to be supported to identify models of civic education that work and those that have failed. Regional capacity building institutions are called upon to support African states to design and implement civic education programs that will make anti-corruption the main agenda of civic education in Africa.

### Introduction

During the precolonial period, what is now regarded as informal education was formal. It combined education about work, production, reproduction, and survival strategies. There was no separation between formal and informal education. The current separation is a constructed subordination of indigenous knowledge systems to the new and acquired systems of education.

Precolonial education systems were community based. Training on production began at household level with children being taught various production

and reproduction techniques and roles according to their gender-ascribed responsibilities. While this continued, at a certain age, youth were taken out of their households for training in seclusion about responsibilities of adulthood. Girls were given training on reproductive and household productive roles while men were trained on reproductive and productive roles, mainly outside the household domains, including defense.

In those systems, civic education was aimed at socializing citizens for their roles in society and making them accept the legitimacy of the ascribed status systems for each group. This seems to be the

main objective of civic education throughout the colonial period and indeed the contemporary era in Africa generally—and in South Africa and Tanzania, the focus of this study.

In the first decade of independence in Africa,<sup>1</sup> efforts were made to decolonize civic education and orient it to the emerging systems of power, production, distribution, and governance. Nationalism, patriotism, national unity, and knowledge about political and legal structures of governance were included in the civic education agenda.

Some countries leaning toward socialism, such as Mozambique, Tanzania, and Zambia, used civic education to inculcate values of egalitarianism and social solidarity. But for the majority it remained almost based totally on the frameworks established by the colonial regimes—socialization to structures of power, respect for authority and the rule of law, uncritical acceptance of the status quo, and total silence on corruption and transparency.

Hence civic education has not met the expectations of the majority of citizens, and has lost steam in many countries. Using the experiences of South Africa and Tanzania, through desk reviews this paper analyzes the causes, especially during the current period of multiparty politics, neoliberal reforms, regional integration, and globalization. The objective is to highlight the need to put back anti-corruption education on the main agenda of civic education in Africa.

The paper suggests that the assumptions that underlay the advance of civic education, such as acceptance of democracy, tolerance of different ideas, and respect for human rights, have been surpassed by individualism, by ethnic and class identities, and by a generalized lack of commitment to social justice and economic, social, and environmental rights.

It proposes taking civic education to a higher level, and recommends anti-corruption education, both

because it will strengthen civic education and because it is the overarching element in good governance, accountability, and socioeconomic development.

The main African institutions responsible for capacity development in the continent are therefore called on to support African states to redesign and implement civic education programs.

## Objectives

This paper seeks to put anti-corruption education on the main agenda of civic education in Africa. It is motivated by the realization that conventional civic education concentrates on socializing citizens to accept the status quo; it does not aim at enabling citizens to acquire the necessary critical and analytical skills to engage the state and make governments accountable.

It also seeks to use the experiences of South Africa and Tanzania to show the evolution of trends in civic education; why it is losing momentum; and how it can be revitalized through the inclusion of anti-corruption education, making it more relevant to the current political structures based on multiparty politics, multiple political identities and ideologies, and efforts to increase accountability and transparency in governance on the continent.

## Methodology

The study was based on desk reviews of publications in books and journals on civic education and anti-corruption education. These were supplemented by reports and policy documents related to civic education on the continent with specific reference to the two target countries.

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<sup>1</sup> From 1960 to 1970 for the majority of countries; 1980 to 1990 for Angola, Mozambique, and Namibia; and from 1994 to 2004 for South Africa.

### Civic education during the colonial period in South Africa and Tanzania

Formal civic education in the two countries had a false start. In South Africa it was shaped and influenced by apartheid policies. It was an extension of the system of education used to perpetuate segregated development between various racial groups. South Africa was ruled on lines of segregation between white and black people. Civics was used to legitimize the segregated models of citizenship and make each racial group accept its assumed superiority for whites and inferiority for blacks, and for whites to accept the inferiority of other races and for blacks to accept the superiority of whites (Seroto 2012: 174).

Similarly in Tanzania, formal civic education was introduced by the German colonial regimes within the short period in which it ruled the country (1894–1919). It was introduced in schools as political education but tailored in a way that taught young people to accept the authority of the state, to respect and accept the supremacy of white people, and to accept colonial rule (Millonzi 1975). According to Mushi (2011), documents on the systems introduced by the German administration in Tanzania indicate that their system of education was aimed at training the so-called natives to become obedient servants.

Thus in both countries, civic education was a tool for converting Africans into subservient subjects, and not into citizens at all.

In Tanzania, when the British took over the colony in 1919 they continued from where the Germans left off. They introduced more sophisticated methods of socializing Africans to their norms and rules. The government combined efforts with religious bodies to use religion to propagate rules about obedience to leaders and not to engage in protest, especially violent ones. In schools, discipline was introduced to ensure Africans were taught to obey authority in all walks of life. Sports and games were also used to make Africans play by rules laid down by systems of governance and to accept defeat. In boarding

schools, children were kept away from their communities and allowed to mingle with them only twice a year for very short periods, while on “leave.” Inside these enclosures, children were taught European culture and manners, including table manners, dress, and speech. By the time youth graduated from secondary school, they no longer identified with communities and were eager to move to urban areas for jobs and places to live. The school system was a long process of deracinating young people from their roots.

Building on this system of alienation and removal, civic education developed and delivered in schools by the British colonial system was tailored to projecting the power and invincibility of the queen and the British Empire. In South Africa and Tanzania, there were some parallels in the colonial education curriculum. History concentrated on migration of people. In colonial Tanzania (Tanganyika as it was) African people were told they migrated from other areas, mainly from the South, following the great Ngoni migrations. The Hamitic, Nilotic, and Nilo-Hamitic groups were told they migrated from the North. These accounts were true to some extent but they were calculated to prove that the majority of Africans in Tanganyika were not indigenes of that country and were therefore foreigners, like the European migrants.

Ironically in South Africa, the history curriculum reinforced by civics emphasized the arguments that black people were foreigners because they had migrated from the North and found early white settlers already established in South Africa (Seroto 2012: 84). Therefore, the same British colonial regime that developed history and civics curricula for people in the two countries was claiming that people in Tanganyika migrated from Southern Africa while telling people in South Africa that they had migrated from the North, meaning East and Central Africa.

The sum of this distortion was that in both countries, Africans were taught that they were foreigners in their own countries. In South Africa, they were told that they found the whites already settled there. In Tanganyika, the lie was that both whites and blacks

came at almost the same time and, by implication, had the same claims, with the right to rule belonging to the better organized group in terms of unified structures of governance and unified rules, which all had to obey.

The second similarity between the colonial education system in general and civic education in particular in colonial South Africa and Tanzania was that it was used to block dialogue between communities. The provision of education through the “indirect rule” adopted in Tanganyika localized most of the curriculum and promoted the idea that local space was the universe of the African child. Most education was thus based on local content, and young people were socialized to belonging to their communities. The aim was to suppress nationalism and promote ethnic chauvinism.

Likewise in South Africa, education systems were delivered through the decentralized system of Bantu Education, through which young people were socialized to belong primarily to their ethnic communities. In South Africa, this was crowned by treating each Bantustan as a separate nation and denying Africans living in those Bantustans South African citizenship. Each African was therefore a citizen of their own Bantustan and not a citizen of South Africa.

In both cases—South Africa and Tanzania—ethnocentrism was inculcated through civic education focusing on ethnic identities and reserving citizenship for white people, while Africans remained subjects. With two historical trajectories but shaped greatly by similar approaches, the colonial regimes in the two countries had similar results on citizenship and perceptions of people about nationhood and citizenship.

Yet although the two countries have had different histories and their post-independence profiles look very different, in both the negative effects of the colonial education system seem to remain. As we will see in the next section, each country has tried to reform civic education but the colonial ghost still hovers, over service providers and target groups.

## Postcolonial efforts to reform civic education in Tanzania and South Africa

### *Tanzania: From civics to political education and back*

Tanzania became independent in 1961. It had a very strongly nationalistic leadership under Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, who led the country to independence from 1961 to 1985. During his leadership, civics was replaced immediately after independence by political education, which was made compulsory in all education institutions from the basic to secondary and tertiary level.

Between 1967 and 1985, the official policy in Tanzania was based on socialism and self-reliance—and so was the political education curriculum. Youth were socialized to the creed of the ruling party, the Tanganyika African National Union, which in 1977 changed its name to Chama cha Mapinduzi, or Revolutionary Party. The creed committed all youth, especially members of the ruling party, to:

- Espouse belief in the universal solidarity of human beings.
- Commit to serve the country and its people.
- Apply all their efforts and skills in the fight against poverty, ignorance, and disease.
- Devote themselves to the fight against corruption and to refrain from using their office or power for personal gain.
- Pledge themselves to actively take part in nation building.
- Tell the truth always and refrain from bearing grudges against anybody.
- Remain faithful members of the ruling party and honest citizens of their country.
- Remain loyal to the President of the Republic.

In addition to the party creed, to which almost every Tanzanian ascribed, the government introduced education for self-reliance in the curriculum for primary and secondary schools. This was started with the aim of transforming the education system

by removing the colonial background (Nyerere 1967).

The system of political education was extended to adult education and delivered through the Institute of Adult Education, which also offered courses in other skills. For leaders in government and mass movements such as those for youth, women, and workers—all of which were affiliated to the ruling party—long-term certificate courses on political education were also offered at the Kivukoni College, established in 1961 by the Tanganyika Education Foundation. It later became a ruling party institute. To qualify for leadership in the ruling party and key departments of government, professionals had to undergo training at this college.

Political education for workers was provided by the Department of Workers' Education in the Ministry of Labour, a well-resourced department working closely with the University of Dar Es Salaam, which offered courses to members of workers' councils and workers' committees. Workers' councils were formed in all state-owned organizations, and workers' committees in all government departments and private enterprises. The processes of worker participation were based on the practices of co-management and co-determination (Mihyo 1981). In rural areas, folk development colleges were established, and trained primary school leavers in agriculture, business development, and other skills related to activities in their area. In those colleges in all districts, compulsory political education was offered.

This system of organized political education continued from 1967 to 1985 but began losing momentum after the end of one-party rule (Komba 1996). The political system in Tanzania changed in 1985 when the first constitutional review watered down the dominance of such ideology and, in 1990, there was a complete change when a Presidential Commission on Multiparty Politics recommended to end one-party rule, buttressed by the process of introducing competitive politics, which created a vacuum in civic education and almost made it inoperative for some time.

The political changes that began in 1990 led to a crisis of identity for civics in the country. There was a lack of interest between 1985 and 2002, although the same party remained in power it could not continue propagating ideology peculiar to its own policies. In any case, beginning 1985 the same party had abandoned the policy of socialism and self-reliance and embraced market-oriented policies.

In 2002 and 2005, reforms were undertaken and civic education modified. The label of political education was removed, as were all references to socialism, self-reliance, and the ruling party; it was relabeled civic education. It went back to its roots as a non-critical, non-analytical course on government structures with some components of human rights in general terms, international cooperation, civic duties, life skills, and responsible citizenship (Mushi 2011: 39). From 2005 to 2011, civic education had no clear orientation. But before we move beyond 2011 in Tanzania, let us go back to South Africa and see what happened after the end of apartheid.

#### ***South Africa: Post-apartheid civic education***

Unlike Tanzania, where one party dominated the development of civic education for more than three decades and had the opportunity to give it a new alignment, South Africa got its independence within the framework of multiparty politics. There was therefore no time or opportunity for the party that took power in 1994 to dictate the shape and path of civic education along the lines of political education or its dominant ideology. Civic education retained most of its colonial characteristics and any reforms were within the realm of education reforms as a whole.

Adult civic education became a domain of civil society organizations, such as Street Law, while in schools it remained confined to non-controversial issues related to the structures of governance and power and to civic responsibilities, rights, and duties. It also touched on political participation, democratic values, and rights to service delivery. A study by Finkel and Stumbras (2000), which sought to



discover under what conditions in South Africa civic education would be effective, found that:

- Civic education was having more impact on political participation than on democratic values.
- School-based civic education was essentially ineffective as it did not change the behavior of learners toward democratic values.
- Modes of delivery were non-participatory in most schools and, as they did not allow classroom discussion, they did not prepare learners to challenge authority outside the school system.
- Civic education was less effective for peoples' knowledge of politics, averagely effective on knowledge of political and other institutions, and more effective on peoples' knowledge of their rights.
- In some areas, civic education had more effect on men than women.
- Civic education was generally more effective on people already exposed to new values (Finkel and Stumbras 2000: 1–2).

In a subsequent study (Finkel and Ernst 2005), the findings did not differ substantially. This study found that civic education seminars, classes organized by the Centre for Legal Studies at the University of Natal and by Street Law, another CSO on human rights, democracy, elections and citizens' participation made a huge difference on people trained in comparison to those who were not trained at all. They also found that training by these two CSOs was having more impact than training in some schools.

In spite of the positive findings in the second study it seems from other research that civic education in South Africa lost momentum after the end of apartheid and lost direction, as happened in Tanzania. This was confirmed by Mattes, Denmark, and Niemi (2012). They found that the end of apartheid was generated by the failure of the apartheid regime to adjust its policies to the aspirations of its people and they believed that the mere fact that apartheid ended did not in itself mean that South Africans were ready to adopt values that

would make democracy work. They contended that apartheid fell because its norms of racial segregation and white superiority were rejected by the majority.

The authors also argued that there was evidence to show that the majority of South Africans had not fully embraced the values of liberal democracy, assigning this failure to the type of education inculcated during the apartheid period. They argued that "While increasing levels of education are routinely found to be one of the most important predictors of support for democracy, South Africa is the only country in Africa in which education does not increase demand for democracy" (Mattes, Denmark, and Niemi 2012: 2).

The rise and fall of the civic movement in South Africa has been attributed to the same type of identity crisis as in Tanzania after the end of one-party rule. During the apartheid regime there was one enemy for those in the movement—now that clarity is lacking. In Tanzania during the era of socialism, the enemy was the capitalism system. Now this system has been embraced by both countries, South Africa and Tanzania and most of the leaders who were at the core of the civic movement have joined the ranks of political parties and government. This has removed the earlier leadership, which has not been replaced by leaders with a new alternative ideology. In both Tanzania and South Africa, corporate interests have found a way into mainstream politics, making it difficult to get governments to support old-style activism and, as Mayekiso (1997) has pointed out, the South African civics movement is no longer at a crossroads—for it has crossed the road into unchartered territory from which it will take time to emerge.

#### ***Anti-corruption education as a strategy for civic education***

In 2011, Tanzania's government passed the draft National Strategy for Civic Education (Mushi 2011). This was after in-depth research and interviews throughout the country. The interviews covered all the critical social groups including actual and

potential service providers of civic education. The report indicated that:

- The majority of interviewees saw the objectives of civic education as knowledge about the rights of citizens, responsibility of citizens, democracy, and economic and political empowerment.
- More women than men preferred education that enabled learners to raise critical questions and that instilled solidarity rather than individualism.
- The majority of interviewees stressed national unity, peace, and good governance.
- The majority wanted education to address good leadership and good governance.
- All **interviewees** recommended the formation of a central body to develop civic education courses and deliver them across the whole country.

The report gave details on each of the desired components and put great emphasis on political and civil rights. It was weaker on social, economic, and environmental rights. Although it mentioned accountability, it was conspicuously quiet on corruption and transparency. Still, in spite of its shortcomings, Tanzania's policy provides a good framework that could be replicated over the continent.

### Overall outcome and assessment

Today, there is growing demand by citizens for greater transparency and accountability, with near-universal ratification of the United Nations Convention against Corruption bolstering the global anti-corruption movement. But despite real progress, corruption remains a major challenge for development. According to a recent study by Gallup, people in countries worldwide perceive corruption as widespread. This includes countries with a free

press—an indicator of good governance and development—and those where media freedom is limited.<sup>2</sup>

In many countries, the political will to fight corruption is very weak and the capacity to enforce new laws remains a work in progress, including the oversight and enforcement capacity of anti-corruption agencies. There is also a need to move the transparency agenda toward an increased focus on accountability. For example, significant progress has been made in demanding more transparency from governments—such as Publish What You Pay, the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, the Public Expenditure Tracking Survey, and asset declaration laws—but much more needs to be done to enforce them and to ensure greater accountability. There is also a need for more guidance and knowledge tools that both show good practices and approaches to integrate transparency, accountability, and integrity in development processes, including the reform of the public service delivery sectors; and that mitigate and manage corruption risks in various economic sectors.

African states need to understand that civic education is essential to sustain their constitutional calls for democracy. Habits of the mind, as well as habits of the heart—the dispositions that inform the democratic character—are not inherited. One of the points that Alexis de Tocqueville wanted to convey in his book "Democracy in America" (1835), was that each new generation is a new people that must acquire the knowledge, learn the skills, and develop the dispositions or traits of private and public character that undergird a constitutional democracy. Those dispositions must be fostered and nurtured by word and study and by the power of example. Democracy is not a "machine that would go by itself," but must be consciously reproduced, one generation after another (ibid).

Civic education in short is—or should be—a prime concern. There is no more important task than the

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.gallup.com/poll/165476/government-corruption-viewed-pervasive-worldwide.aspx?utm\\_source=alert&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=syndication&utm\\_content=morelink&utm\\_term=All%20Gallup%20](http://www.gallup.com/poll/165476/government-corruption-viewed-pervasive-worldwide.aspx?utm_source=alert&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=syndication&utm_content=morelink&utm_term=All%20Gallup%20) (accessed March 20, 2016).

m\_content=morelink&utm\_term=All%20Gallup%20 (accessed March 20, 2016).

development of an informed, effective, and responsible citizenry. Democracies are sustained by citizens who have the requisite knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Absent a reasoned commitment on the part of its citizens to the fundamental values and principles of democracy, a free and open society cannot succeed. It is imperative, therefore, that educators, policymakers, and members of civil society make the case and ask for the support of civic education from all segments of society and from the widest range of institutions and governments.

It is relatively easy for a society to produce technically competent people. But the kind of society African countries need and want to live in and the kind of government they want to have require effort and commitment on the part of their citizens. Africans want African societies and governments in which human rights are respected, the individual's dignity and worth are acknowledged, the rule of law is observed, people willingly fulfill their responsibilities, and the common good is the concern of all. Making that kind of society and government a reality is the most important challenge African governments face, and the most important task they can undertake.

### Conclusions and policy recommendations

African societies have long had an interest in the ways in which their young are prepared for citizenship and in how they learn to take part in civic life. Today that interest might better be described as a growing concern, particularly as Africa advances its democratic societies. In spite of shortcomings, the Tanzania policy provides a good framework for the continent. This paper therefore strongly recommends that:

- No longer capable of attracting learners' interest, the old-style civic education courses concentrating on the structure of the state should be reviewed and replaced by courses that touch on critical issues of

good governance, transparency, and integrity systems.

- Civic education is very important and coordination is required at regional and continental levels to develop a common approach to its development and delivery.
- Research needs to be supported to identify models of civic education that work and those that have failed. Regional institutions like the African Capacity Building Foundation and the African Union are called on to support African states in this area.
- International exchange of information on anti-corruption education needs to be encouraged and supported through research.
- The main African institutions responsible for capacity development in the continent are also called on to support African states to redesign and implement civic education programs that will make anti-corruption the main agenda of civic education in Africa.

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