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GWYNETH HENDERSON:

In this week's 'University Report' - adult education in the Sudan and in Zambia - Zambia's Sudanese Director of Extra-Mural Studies talks about his work in both countries. Mr. Abdul Wahid Yousif arrived in Lusaka last March on secondment from the University of Khartoum to take over the Department of Extra-Mural Studies at the University of Zambia. His predecessor in Lusaka was, of course, Professor Lalage Bown who is now at Ahmadu Bello University in Nigeria. You know it seems to me that there is much more staff mobility between departments of adult education in Africa than in any other discipline. It does seem that in adult education cross-fertilisation happens more easily. I wonder if this means that there is a more cohesive view of adult education, what it should be doing, and so on. Well Mr. Yousif can answer the question for the Sudan and Zambia and in Lusaka Graham Mytton asked him how he would compare his work in the two countries.

MR. A.W. YOUSIF:

Well I think it is very interesting to compare the two situations. Let me first say that as far as Sudan and Zambia are concerned the basic problems of development are the same. But probably the situation is more difficult in the Sudan, geographically speaking, that is, because the country is so vast: 1 million square miles, the population well over 16 million people, while in Zambia you have a smaller geographical area and smaller population. Now this makes the work in Zambia, physically speaking, probably more easy than it is in the Sudan. But there is one other difference and that is in the Sudan people have had the experience of working in a University which is nearly 60 years old, and we were lucky to have achieved our independence as early as January 1956. And we have made some progress by way of education and economic development and national development

MR. A.W. YOUSIF:
(CONT'D.)

in general. In Sudan, again, the University has got a very high proportion of Nationals. There are more than 75%, I think, members of staff who are Sudanese. Again the language is generally of help there, because nearly everybody spoke Arabic, nearly everybody in the University. And most of our programmes are done in Arabic, which is the official language, while here in Zambia the work is done in English. But the Extra-Mural programme in Zambia is much larger than the programme in the Sudan and that is because in the Sudan we operate mainly in the three towns that are the capitals, Khartoum, Khartoum North and Omdurman. We have no regional centres, regional offices, while in Zambia there is a regional office in nearly every province. Now we have got resident tutors in six provinces out of the eight provinces of Zambia. And very soon now we are going to have a resident tutor in the seventh province. We have not got this arrangement in the Sudan. We only service the regions in the Sudan by sending members of the University staff during the vacations, the summer vacations, the winter vacations. They give courses of lectures, they participate in seminars and discussions but there is no organised provision, no systematic extra-mural work in the provinces in the Sudan. Again this is a very interesting, I think, comparison between the two. Otherwise I have found the work here equally interesting and very challenging indeed.

GWYNETH HENDERSON:

So the Sudan, in fact, has a completely different system to Zambia. You know, although it may be rather a truism, I can't help saying that I think one secondment like Mr. Yousif's to Zambia is worth more to both countries than any number of expensive, lavish conferences. The depth of understanding and communication achieved will be permanent. And on communication - 'University Report's' man in Lusaka, Graham Mytton, is in fact working on communications research there, and it was in the direction of communication that Graham moved with his next question to Mr. Yousif.

GRAHAM MYTTON:

One of the problems of adult education in Africa is the one of communication. The fact that many people live in remote areas and even in Zambia, isn't it true that although you have tutors in a number of provinces now, they are at the provincial headquarters. And your teachers are from secondary schools very often, or from departments of government, people who have done degrees, but who are, generally speaking, in centres, even though those centres are in the

GRAHAM MYTTON:
(CONT'D.)

rural areas. Would it be true to say that you are still not able to get out into the very remote areas of the country?

MR. A.W. YOUSIF:

I think it is true to say that - but on the other hand it is also true to say that we are making genuine attempts to reach almost everybody in Zambia and that is through our radio programmes. As you know we run a very successful, I think, series of radio programmes under the title of 'University of the Air'. Now we are expanding this radio unit by recruiting another senior member of staff who is experienced in radio work in adult education. And we hope to have a proper radio unit in our department, run by two senior members of the academic staff, then we can put more emphasis on the radio programmes and by so doing it will be possible for us to cover a much wider area than we are doing today. As for our part-time teachers - you know in Zambia the teaching profession either in the University or in secondary schools - the majority of the teachers are foreigners, who operate in the provinces and we depend almost entirely in the provinces on the assistance given by secondary school teachers, who are graduates, as you said, and I must say that we never recruit anybody as a part-time tutor unless he has got the minimum of an upper second honours degree for all classes. But we don't think that is sufficient and that is why we mount a training programme for our part-time tutors. Every year we go round the provinces and hold weekend conferences, seminars and workshops in which we try to meet the tutors and indeed some representatives of the students, and talk about the problems of teaching. And we try to help them because we think adult education is becoming a profession now with its special techniques and special methodology, and this I think has been a very useful experiment indeed.

GRAHAM MYTTON:

The radio courses you mention under the title of 'University of the Air' provide teaching, lectures on the radio in economics and similar subjects. As you know I have been doing research here in Zambia into some of these programmes and others and the effectiveness of them. You have one programme called 'Economics for the Common Man' which was obviously intended in the first place to reach the common man with information and education about economic problems in Zambia but in fact this programme is pitched at a rather high level and reaches, I would think, only a minority or at least only a minority can understand it. Now this is a

GRAHAM MYTTON:
(CONT'D.)

problem - as you say in Sudan you can teach in Arabic which everybody understands, and presumably you choose your language very carefully you can put over ideas to some relatively unsophisticated people. Whereas here in Zambia if you are wanting to teach a course in economics or national development, politics or sociology to people who have not had a very high education, you have a problem immediately because of the lack of the knowledge of English at the same time. How do you think you can get round this, is it possible to use simple English or do you think it might be got round by using Zambians who have, for example, got degrees in economics, who can explain the complexities of economics in their own vernacular or how?

MR. A.W. YOUSIF:

This, as you said, is a real problem, but we are hoping to get round it in two ways - two different ways. The first one, which is the long-term plan, is that we are getting a number of University under-graduates, Zambians, we are getting a number of them interested in adult education, and we run in fact a course in training the University Undergraduates. And this has been a very popular course among many under-graduates here in this University. And the idea is we want to introduce them to adult education at this stage. We give them some training in methods and principles of adult education and national development and we give them an opportunity to practice in teaching some adult classes and we hope, in the long run as I said, these people, when they are posted out in the rural areas or anywhere in Zambia can be called upon by our Extra-Mural department to help in teaching our extra-mural classes. Now whether it would be possible for them to teach in the vernacular or not that is something of the future, I can't say, but we do hope that some of them can at least put across some of the ideas in the vernacular to the people in the areas in which they work. This is one way of going about it. The other way is through the radio, and I mentioned that we are getting another senior member of our staff to work on the radio programmes, and we hope that this person would be able to develop some radio programmes in vernaculars. I say this because I know he speaks several Zambian languages and this is Mr. Kittermaster, the former Director of ZBS, who lived in Zambia for many, many years and we do hope that his presence here will help to start off this kind of programme.

GRAHAM MYTTON: Now nearly all your courses don't have examinations, you just provide lectures in certain subjects for anyone to take, and at the end you give a certificate of attendance, but you don't have any actual examination for the students competence in the subject after taking the course. This I think is probably sensible, and exams can be an awful nuisance and not really be very satisfactory especially in adult education. But the problem of course is that you don't have any assessment of your success or failure in the field of adult education. How do you get round this problem.

MR. A.W. YOUSIF: We are trying to get some scientific assessment of what we have been doing at least over the last two years. And we have got now a full-time research fellow, member of the academic staff, who is doing research into the area of extra-mural provision over the last two years as I said. And by so doing we hope to find out whether our Department has had any impact on Zambian society. She is doing this by tracing some of our ex-students. She is hoping to see whether these people, having attended our classes have improved either professionally or whether they find themselves doing better service now their communities. She is trying to take a 25% sample of the students who attended our classes over the last two years and this is something like 2,700 students in all the provinces. Of course, this is going to take some time. But we do hope that once the result of this are made known to us this will give us a guide. Because, I mean, the process is more complicated than this. We are hoping to find out what sort of things these people studied, what sort of things they would like us to organise for them, what they thought was relevant to Zambia, what they thought was irrelevant, and so on and so forth. So the result of this research I think will help as a guide for the future provision in extra-mural classes.

GWYNETH HENDERSON: Mr. Abdul Wahid Yousif, who's currently on secondment to the University of Zambia as Director of Extra-Mural Studies from his home University - Khartoum, and he was talking there to Graham Mytton. And that's all from 'University Report' for this week.

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