

# Milestones of Adult Education since Independence in Tanzania: Policy Changes and Implications

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## Abstract

*Adult education (AE) has widely been offered by nations to capacitate their labour force and attain national developments. Being among the nations, Tanzania ever since independence in 1961, has been steadily focusing on providing AE as a strategy to build the capacity of its labour force for immediate and future socio-economic returns. To this end, various initiatives have been put in place both in policy and practice. Consequently, tremendous achievements on AE were attained during the 1980's. Nonetheless, the country faced a relapse into adult illiteracy in the later years, a situation that has been associated with various socio-economic and political dynamics. Thus, this desk study reviewed various AE policy documents and the related literature to examine the developments of AE in Tanzania by chronologically tracing their notable milestones since independence to date. The findings revealed several achievements and challenges over each era of adult education development. However, a notable challenge is the missing standalone adult education policy which has consequently compromised its practices in the sub-sector. Thus, the study recommends for a more improved and standalone AE policy, collective efforts by stakeholders, deliberate political will and commitment of the central administrative system to join efforts of reviving the sub-sector which has proven to have a direct and immediate impact on the national development.*

**Keywords:** *adult education, policy, development.*

## Introduction

Nations all over the world have been investing in educating their citizens so as to enhance labour productivity for their economic growth. Various forms and typologies of education have been applied by those nations, in which adult education forms a significant component in achieving the development goal (Msoroka, 2015; Mushi, 2014; White & King, 2017). Thus, adult education has been widely used by the nations as a means to capacitate their labour force and generate knowledge through different deliberate efforts. These efforts include direct intervention in the education sector and creation of good environment which

stimulate education providers to expand learning opportunities through adult education (Johnson, Nystrom & Sunden, 1983).

Adult education in Tanzania has been interpreted variously depending on a specific era and the purpose it served. For instance, after independence in 1961, about 85% of the population most of them being adults, did not know how to read, write and do arithmetic (Mushi, 2016). This led to the emergent need for adult education that equips adult learners with the basic literacy skills. Even though the introduction of functional adult education for workers came later, the conceptualization of adult education was still on equipping adults with skills of reading, writing and doing some arithmetic (Heisel, 1979; Mushi, 2016). However, economic liberalisation in 1980s led to structural changes in various sectors including education sector. Thus, the definition began to hold emphasis as any learning activity that engages adults. This view interpreted adult education as a kind of education in which adult learners are engaged so as to solve their immediate challenges and meet their contemporary needs. As supported by URT (2012), adult education fosters professional development, capacity building, development of literacy, vocational and life skills to the targeted adult learners. Although adult education targets adult learners, the integration of basic literacy skills for out-of-school youth (11-- 18 years) still prevails in adult education in Tanzania (URT, 2017).

Tanzania recognised the need to invest in education through adult learning since independence in 1961 and different policies and practices have been put in place to that effect. Thus, knowing the immediate impact of adult education to the economy, particularly in preparing the immediately required labour force, Tanzania introduced various initiatives to effect positively the provision of adult education (Mushi, 2014). Among others were work-oriented adult education programmes, national literacy campaigns, rural libraries, radio education programme, film education and post-literacy programmes (Mbogoma, 2018). These practices were guided by different policy statements over time, and resulted in very promising achievements at a point in time, particularly on the literacy rate which increased significantly from 15% in 1961 to 81% in early 1980s (Johnson, Nystrom & Sunden, 1983). These notable achievements were also influenced by the deliberate political will and national commitment (Bhalalusesa, 2020), which have been however, changing from time to time. Due to those changing aspects, a relapse into adult illiteracy has recently been a prevalent challenge, evident through the literacy rate of 78.1% by the year 2012 (World Bank, 2021), a

bit contrary to 71.8% literacy rate in the same year by the National Bureau of Statistics in Tanzania (URT, 2020). Although disparity in these figures is subjected to questioning, yet they give a reflection of the broad picture of the current adult education status in Tanzania.

In addition, other meaningful educational programmes that help youth and adults improve their abilities and increase their livelihoods have recently also demonstrated unimpressive performance. Enrolment in the Complementary Basic Education Programme (COBET) for example, has drastically dropped off since 2017, while in basic, functional and post-functional literacy programmes, the same decline in enrolment has been noted since 2017, particularly in life skills, vocational skills, as well as income - generating programmes (Bhalalusesa, 2020). Such a relapse amidst the global efforts of ensuring universal basic education and lifelong learning has prompted the motive for this study, with the intent to explore the policy dynamics and developments made since independence, so as to determine the possible future trends of adult education in Tanzania.

## **Methodology**

This qualitative study was solely based on documentary review in getting in-depth information and establishing credible evidence regarding the topic under discussion. It was more advantageous than other data collection methods because the study demanded the researchers to trace and access data along different episodes of adult education development in Tanzania. The documents included: official documents including official reports from supranational institutions such as UNESCO, and government documents from the United Republic of Tanzania; and various published documents such as books and journal articles. For the purpose of making sure that the documents selected offered dependable data, the researchers adhered to four conditions for managing documentary reviews, which are representativeness, credibility, meaning and authenticity.

## **Research Findings**

### **The post-independence period from 1961 to early 1980s**

After independence in 1961, Tanzania (by then Tanganyika) took control of education provision. Thus, there was an immediate need to repeal and replace the colonial education policies. At the time of independence, the majority of Tanzanians were illiterates. This

problem was compounded by widespread abject poverty, diseases and hunger, which were then classified as major enemies of development inherited from the colonial government. Subsequently, the government passed the Education Act of 1962 to regulate education provision in the country and address the enemies as well as abolish racial discrimination in education for a system based on egalitarian principles to evolve (Kahembe & Jackson, 2020; URT, 1995). In this period, adult education activities under the rubric of ‘community education’ such as self-help projects were organised by the Ministry of Community Development (Mushi, 2012). Despite the new policy measures, no remarkable changes were experienced in all forms of education. In this regard, adult education activities under implementation could not have adequate impact on socio-economic development in the absence of a viable policy. Indeed, up to 1969 there was no proper national policy that could govern the organisation and provision of adult education across various institutions (Mushi, 2012; URT, 1995).

In the fight against poverty, ignorance, and diseases as the main enemies of, Tanzania embarked on the *First Five-Year Development Plan (1964 -1969)*. In this plan, the role of the adult population was considered to be one of transforming the existing socio-economic conditions. Thus, the plan underscored the need to equip adults with knowledge and skills for immediate impact to be realised and this was supposed to go parallel with long-term plans of educating children (Mushi, 2012). In this regard, civic education was provided to familiarise people with the objectives and content of the plan. The literacy skills were integrated into the economic and social activities of the people as a strategy towards achieving the goals of this five-year development plan.

Due to several shortfalls in the colonial education which could not serve the country’s education purposes and interests, as well as the insignificant impact evidenced from the earliest education efforts after independence, the country was compelled to adopt the philosophy of *Education for Self-Reliance (ESR)* which was introduced in 1967 as a new education policy directive. The ESR policy was designed to guide the planning and practices of education in the country under the new socialist ideology – “*ujamaa*”<sup>1</sup> adopted in the

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<sup>1</sup> This is a Swahili term for an African brand of *socialism* based on traditional communal values as a strategy for development and a means for eliminating poverty, diseases, ignorance and miserable living conditions.

same year under Arusha Declaration. The ideology was based on egalitarian principles. The ideology of socialism and the ESR policy influenced the objectives of adult education in the country, with the emphasis being placed on mass education and functional literacy as a means for understanding and attaining the principles and objectives of “*ujamaa*” (Bwatwa, 1982; Lema et al., 2004; Mushi, 2012). Another notable policy implication was the introduction of workers’ education, distance education, and post-literacy programmes to provide knowledge and skills that could alleviate socio-economic constraints inherited from colonial government. Adult education practices gained a great turning point in the 1970s following the introduction of the *Second Five-Year Development Plan (1969-1974)* which underlined the empowering potential of adult education in promoting social, political and economic change and the pronouncement of *Adult Education Year – 1970* (Mnjagila, 2011), aimed at eradicating ignorance. The plans introduced new strategies such as making all primary schools adult education centres to take care of the educational needs of out-of-school youth and adults in a parallel way. Also, correspondence institutions were established to serve the literate ones from remote areas, accompanied by rural libraries to provide further education that could fill the gaps left by the existed education programmes.

In all the policies adopted up to that stage, one key feature that characterised efforts in the provision of adult education was lack a specific custodian, its management and coordination oscillated among different authorities. To ensure that the post-independence adult education policy and practice initiatives were expanded and sustained, the Tanzania government enacted the *Parliament Act No. 12 of 1975* which placed all adult and non-formal education (ANFE) practices in the country under the Institute of Adult Education (URT, 1975). In the framework of this Act, the IAE is charged with multiple roles and functions, *inter alia*, to establish ANFE centres, develop ANFE programmes, curriculum and syllabi, coordinate and supervise all stakeholders and other agencies engaged in providing literacy, adult, non-formal and continuing education for quality assurance and control (URT, 1975). Since then, the IAE has been carrying out various ANFE activities in a range of modalities – mass education, open and distance learning (ODL) and full-time programmes (IAE, 2006).

Empirical evidence suggests that ANFE policy initiatives since independence up to the early 1980s had registered significant and commendable achievements in most of the literacy programmes as the government managed to reduce illiteracy from 85 percent in 1961 to 21 percent in early 1980s (Mushi, 2012). Consequently, Tanzania was also able to easily provide

health education to the population through mass campaigns both in rural and urban areas and became exemplar for effective disease prevention. Indeed, these remarkable achievements made Tanzania a case study area in Africa for eradicating ignorance and diseases. A thorough examination of the policies, however, shows that much more attention was paid to the literacy campaigns than to other adult education programmes as it was a critical problem by then.

### ***Critical challenges in the provision of adult education from 1961 to early 1980s***

Literature reveals that following the economic crises of the late 1970s to early 1980s, the provision of education in all forms was adversely affected and the gross primary enrollment rates slumped, thus increasing illiteracy rates that had significantly dropped (Macpherson, 2007). Such an economic depression was due to Kagera war in 1979 to 1980 and spill over effects from global economic crisis at the time, coupled with a withdrawal of Development Partners such as SIDA (Swedish International Development Agency) and UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) (Mushi, 2012; Kahembe & Jackson, 2020). The dire situation led to budget cuts which had adverse effect to funding adult education in Tanzania. Again, due to post war effects, adult learners had to stop schooling and engage in economic activities so as to sustain themselves socially and economically (Dismas, 1995). All these had negative consequences to the achievements of the introduced adult education programmes, and a relapse in their progress became real.

The introduction of Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) in 1982 made another great setback to adult education provision. SAPs were introduced with the aim of recovering the damaged economy from Kagera war (Buchert, 1994). SAPs came with the ideas of privatization and the cost sharing policy in provision of social services so as to remove the burden in running the government. Thus, adult education was not free anymore, as every adult learner had to pay fee to acquire such education. Given the fact that most Tanzanians were peasants, who could not afford basic social services such as health and education, adult education started becoming of less importance and a second priority to many (Kanukisya, 2008). This also led to the dramatic drop outs and lowered enrolment in adult education programmes.

### **The economic liberalization period from 1980s to early 1990s**

The major aim of introducing adult education in Tanzania soon after independence was for liberation and total transformation of an individual socially, economically, ideologically, and politically (Heisel, 1979). Being much important for liberation and transformation, adult education had however, experienced significant policy changes and development from economic liberalization era in 1980s to 1990s. Due to the revealed economic crises of the late 1970s and the consequences of SAPs in early 1980s, coupled with a new country administration in 1985, adult education programmes were consequently insignificant in their implementation from mid 1980s to the early 1990s. Thus, no significant adult education developments in terms of policy and practice can be systematically traced during this period.

### **Adult education policy changes from the mid-1990s to the present**

The desires for lifelong learning and challenges of today's socio-economic developments have spurred the need for adult education. Thus, various adult education and non-formal educational programmes have been developed in response to such needs. As a consequence of SAPs in Tanzania, liberalization of education started to gain momentum in 1995 after the introduction of Education and Training Policy which embraced those features. Since then, Tanzania has implemented a number of policy frameworks which have been impacting on adult education provision in different ways. Those policies are not only our own developed rather, influenced and shaped also by the global level policies such as Education for all goals (EFA), Millennium development goals (MDGs) and recently the Sustainable development goals (SDGs). Thus, the internally developed policy frameworks include national development vision 2025, national strategy for growth and reduction of poverty, Education and Training policy 1995 which was later repealed and replaced by the Education and Training policy 2014, Education Sector Development Plans (ESDP) of 1997 which is currently replaced by the ESDP 2017, and several related adult and non-formal education development plans. All these policy frameworks focus mainly on addressing issues of quality, accesses and quantity of education provision – specifically to adult education (Mushi, 2014; URT, 2012). Thus, in this view, the ultimate goal for all these policy frameworks is to prepare adults with the capacity to develop themselves and society around them.

*The national development vision 2025* which was developed in 1999, among other things, focuses on making Tanzania a middle income country by 2025 (URT, 1999). The vision 2025 provides a number of goals to achieve such as having well trained manpower and knowledgeable society. The vision 2025 further envisaged to have labour force constituted with 12% of labour force with high level skills and 33.7% with medium level skills. Thus, to achieve this, education sector was made of priority through universalizing access to education. Again, with the goal to achieve 33.7% of working population with medium level skills, the government deliberately focused to expand access to basic education, and technical education and vocational education through AN/FE (URT, 2019). Thus, the vision 2025 is accompanied by different policies and strategies that reflect its implementation.

In line with the vision 2025, the current education sector policy (ETP) of 2014 within which adult education is subsumed guides practices of adult education. The ETP 2014 aims to have “system, structures and flexible procedures that will enable Tanzanians to continue learning using variety of pathways academically and professionally” and “giving access to various education and training opportunities” (JMT, 2014). The implementation of these objectives has direct impact on ANFE practices in the country, if well put into practice. The ETP is supported by the educational sector development plan (ESDP) for proper implementation.

*The new educational sector development plan 2016/17 – 2020/21* (ESDP) aims to put ETP 2014 into practice while realizing the Tanzania Development Vision 2025, in which among other objectives, it has invested in enhancing knowledge and vocational skills development (URT, 2017). ESDP further posits on the expansion of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) such that four fifth of school leavers in basic education are enrolled in TVET and the remained one fifth be enrolled in upper secondary. This implies policy shift from higher education to TVET and therefore, leading to the expansion of ANFE subsector.

### ***Adult education developments during the mid-1990s to the present***

As a result of implementation of adult education policy statements, several adult education programmes have been introduced and implemented in Tanzania since 1990s which include:

- i. *Literacy programmes* aimed at enhancing the provision of adult literacy in Tanzania such as the “Yes I Can” literacy programme.

- ii. *Basic and post-literacy programmes* are structured to provide knowledge, skills and attitudes required for social, economic and political participation, as well as consolidating the literacy skills obtained. These programmes link with various forms of life skills and income generating activities whereby learners participate in developing curricula and study materials under the framework of Integrated Community Based Adult Education (ICBAE).
- iii. *Basic education for out-of-school children and youth programmes* is aimed at providing education to all out-of-school children and youth as their basic right. A good example is the Complementary Basic Education in Tanzania (COBET) which provides primary education for those who missed it out.
- iv. *Continuing education* includes a range of programmes such as open and distance learning (ODL), and academic and professional courses offered by different public and private institutions. The ODL which is referred to in this study as NFSE programme targets offering secondary education to out-of-school children, youth and adults, as well as enhancing academic and professional skills for workers.

Among the aforementioned programmes, currently there are two major programmes - COBET and Integrated Community-Based Adult Education (ICBAE), which have been receiving somewhat significant government attention (URT, 2017). COBET covers out of school children aged 9 to 18 years while ICBAE targets adults aged 19+ years. Again, ICBAE includes literacy and post-literacy programmes, extension services courses, vocational training, basic literacy as well as income generation programmes (UNESCO, 2017; URT, 2016). Other programmes which are currently in operation although with little impetus are folk education offered by Folk Development Colleges (FDCs), Integrated Programme for Out of School Adolescents (IPOSAs) and Integrated Post-Primary Education (IPPE) (URT, 2019). These are some of adult education programmes which mark deliberate efforts made to educate adults in the country. In actuality, the impact of these programmes to the society and ultimately to national economy is subject to further discussion. Nevertheless, issues of quality and access to these programmes are limited by a number of challenges and enrolment into these programmes has been fluctuating overtime. Table 1 illustrates further:

Table 1: *Enrolment Trend for ANFE Programmes, 2018 - 2019*

Programme	Ownership	Total Enrolment 2018			Total Enrolment 2019			% change (2018-2019)
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	total	
COBET	Government	39,782	28,721	68,503	38,414	28,213	66,627	-2.7%
	Non-Gov.	258	188	446	214	221	435	-2.5%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>40,040</b>	<b>28,909</b>	<b>68,949</b>	<b>38,628</b>	<b>28,434</b>	<b>67,062</b>	<b>-2.7%</b>
ICBAE	Government	38,032	50,627	88,659	42,672	57,499	100,171	+13.0%
	Non-Gov.	135	331	466	441	731	1,172	+151.5%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>38,167</b>	<b>50,958</b>	<b>89,125</b>	<b>43,113</b>	<b>58,230</b>	<b>101,343</b>	<b>+13.7%</b>
IPPE	Government	7,545	5,767	13,312	8,974	5,107	14,081	+5.8%
	Non-Gov.	1,116	530	1,646	279	384	663	-59.7%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>8,661</b>	<b>6,297</b>	<b>14,958</b>	<b>9,253</b>	<b>5,491</b>	<b>14,744</b>	<b>-1.4%</b>
ODL	Government	1,801	2,351	4,152	1,546	2,116	3,662	-11.8%
	Non-Gov.	688	1,058	1,746	822	1,147	1,969	+12.8%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2,489</b>	<b>3,409</b>	<b>5,898</b>	<b>2,368</b>	<b>3,263</b>	<b>5,631</b>	<b>-4.5%</b>
IPOSA	Government				1,912	1,985	3,897	-
	Non-Gov.				4	16	20	-
	<b>Total</b>				<b>1,916</b>	<b>2,001</b>	<b>3,917</b>	<b>-</b>
FDC	Government	4,586	3,484	8,070	3,915	5,821	9,736	+20.6%
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>93,943</b>	<b>93,057</b>	<b>187,000</b>	<b>99,193</b>	<b>103,240</b>	<b>202,433</b>	<b>+8.3%</b>

Source: URT (2019).

A total number of COBET and ICBAE enrolled has dropped dramatically from 1.2 million in 2009 to 0.2 million in 2017 (URT, 2017). However, as shown in Table 1, the trend continued up to 0.19 million in 2018 and later back to 0.2 million in 2019. Nevertheless, the enrolment data for vocational education has shown massive increase of 86.8% between 2017/18 and 2018/19. This has mainly been influenced by the implementation of Educational Sector Development Plan (ESDP) with the aim of expanding enrolment to technical and vocational education. Again through fee-free education policy, enrolment has increased and survival rates at primary and lower secondary education which has led to significant reduction in dropouts and reducing stock of out-of-school children, thus dropping of enrolment in COBET programme by 2.7%.

Another notable development in this era is the increase in the number of ANFE centres. For instance, number of FDCs and VET centres has increased from 759 in 2011/2012 to 943 in 2014/2015 (URT, 2016). Again, with the goal of expanding vocational education and training, the government has continued with rehabilitation and construction of 20 FDCs, five regional vocational training and service centres and 12 vocational centres (URT, 2019). This indicates the government's deliberate actions in expanding access to school leavers in various ANFE programmes that equip them with necessary skills required in the labour market. Such efforts increase the number of school leavers with required skills for both formal and self-employment.

### ***Current challenges facing adult education***

Apart from the efforts of improving access, equity and quality of adult education in Tanzania, the future prospects of the ANFE sub-sector are less promising. Adult education is currently facing a number of challenges which may endanger its future growth. Research findings elicit challenges to adult education as mismatch between policy statements and practices and low status of adult education in Tanzania (Hendry, 2016; Kanukisya, 2008). In particular, adult education is facing a major challenge of lacking clear defined policy framework which could strengthen the status of adult education in the country. In the context of Tanzania, there has been a tendency of using interchangeably the educational plans, programmes, circulars and directives as guiding policies. However, strategies, plans, programmes, circulars and directives are features of a policy but not a policy itself. Adult education sub-sector has been relying on policy statements subsumed in the ETP, a policy document which somehow fails to encompass what constitutes adult education. Thus, the sub-sector needs to be empowered with its own policy as it will have its own agendas to address in broader perspective. The policy is vital in expanding coverage and providing detailed meaning to what composes adult and non-formal education.

In addition, adult education sub-sector financing is a dominant agenda among other challenges (Bhalalusesa, 2020; Kanukisya, 2008). URT (2012) supports that the challenges to adult education in Tanzania include lower allocation of funds, inadequate supply of teaching and learning materials and overdependence on untrained and voluntary facilitators who are lowly and irregularly paid. Table 2, for instance, shows projections of education cost for each education sub-sector from 2016/17 to 2020/2021.

Table 2: *Projected Costs for ANFE in Tanzania (2016/17-2020/21)*

*TZS billions*

Programme	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Total
<b>Recurrent Budget</b>						
Pre-primary education	115.7	120.7	143.3	180.0	223.2	782.8
Basic Education cycle 1 (Primary)	1,676.0	1,975.5	2,086.5	2,287.0	2,531.4	10,556.5
Basic Education cycle 2 (Lower Secondary)	819.5	976.5	1,008.4	1,047.1	1,166.8	5,018.3
Higher Secondary Education	76.5	90.1	86.1	88.4	97.2	438.3
Non-Formal and Adult Education	5.1	5.5	6.7	7.9	8.6	33.7
Non-Tertiary Technical & Vocational Education	38.9	26.8	30.2	36.7	45.8	178.5
Teacher Education	59.0	31.9	45.4	48.8	66.0	251.0
Universities	314.3	310.2	326.1	353.6	356.7	1,661.0
Tertiary Technical Education	18.2	19.9	23.6	32.2	39.2	133.0
General Administration	12.1	15.0	15.4	17.0	18.5	78.0
<b>Total Recurrent Budget</b>	<b>3,135.3</b>	<b>3,572.0</b>	<b>3,771.7</b>	<b>4,098.7</b>	<b>4,553.5</b>	<b>19,131.2</b>
<i>Of which Grants to LGAs</i>	<i>2,502.9</i>	<i>3,024.6</i>	<i>3,180.1</i>	<i>3,453.5</i>	<i>3,863.4</i>	<i>16,024.5</i>
<b>Development Budget / Operational Plan</b>						
1. Access and equity in basic & secondary education	401.814	614.7	686.5	855.8	980.1	3,538.9
2. Quality of basic and secondary education	2.875	30.8	143.0	141.1	136.7	454.5
3. Adult and non-formal education	0.0	11.4	14.6	9.7	9.2	44.8
4. TVET	21.1	51.6	101.6	157.5	117.3	449.0
5. Higher education	40.5	99.8	108.7	86.5	86.6	422.1
6. System structure, governance and management	0.0	2.0	4.5	2.4	1.3	10.2
<b>Total Operational Plan</b>	<b>466.3</b>	<b>810.3</b>	<b>1,058.9</b>	<b>1,253.0</b>	<b>1,331.2</b>	<b>4,919.6</b>
Student Loans	427.6	427.6	427.6	427.6	427.6	2,137.8
<b>Total Development Budget</b>	<b>893.8</b>	<b>1,237.8</b>	<b>1,486.4</b>	<b>1,680.5</b>	<b>1,758.7</b>	<b>7,057.3</b>
<b>Total ESDP Cost, Recurrent + Development</b>	<b>4,029.1</b>	<b>4,809.9</b>	<b>5,258.1</b>	<b>5,779.2</b>	<b>6,312.3</b>	<b>26,188.5</b>

Source: revised simulation model

Source: URT (2017).

Data from Table 2 suggests that only a small proportion of the budget has been planned to be allocated to ANFE, which is not even guaranteed when it comes to actual implementation. In addition, even the major adult education programmes of COBET and ICBAE which have government interest are not reflected in the budget speeches of the 2021 financial year from the two mother ministries (MoEST and PO-RALG) responsible for education (Bhalalusesa, 2020). In this view, adult education has been given little emphasis in resource allocation, and thus hindering the development of the sub-sector, which in turn limits its impact to community and national development.

Again, little commitment of stakeholders constrains development of adult education in Tanzania. Political leaders and other decision making bodies need to consider the need of adult education for our national development. Among the factors that led to development of ANFE in 1970s was political will and commitment. However, declining performance of the sub-sector is escalated by a number of reasons, one of which being political reason through decision making bodies. Consequently, adult learners' participation to several existing adult education programmes is limited.

Lastly, there has been insufficient integration of some ANFE programmes to the educational institutional framework. Although there is an established conventional ANFE organisational structure, ANFE programmes such as non-formal secondary education (NFSE) are faced with

insufficient incorporation to the country's institutional educational structures (Hendry, 2020). The existing centralized structure provides linear and inflexible coordination of ANFE programmes in the country. The dire situation results into conflicting roles and dilemma in adopting curriculum and study materials, insufficient monitoring and evaluation and thus, compromising teaching and learning.

## **Conclusion**

This study acknowledges a number of efforts and initiatives by the government, providers, learners, organizations – both domestic and foreign organisations and other stakeholders in promoting development of the ANFE sub-sector. However, this study has also identified a number of stumbling blocks hitting the sub-sector, including lack of a standalone policy to guide practices, poor financing, and inconsistency in managing adult education programmes and institutions, as well as weak commitment among stakeholders with specific reference to little political will to revive the sub-sector. These and other associated challenges have been causing a relapse into adult illiteracy in the country. Therefore, basing on the findings of this study, remarkable developments are expected to be made in the future if deliberate efforts can be collectively put to reignite the lost hope in the sub-sector.

## **Recommendations**

This study recommends for establishment of a standalone ANFE policy in the country with a collective commitment in its implementation through various ANFE plans and programmes towards achieving the overarching aims and objectives of education in the country. Again, management of ANFE programmes and institutions forms a crucial part in ensuring its coordination and sustainability. Due to the fact that ANFE programmes vary in terms of programme type, learning outcome, mode of delivery as well as providers, a more coherent, flexible and interactive organisational structure that promotes easy and effective management of ANFE programmes and institutions is highly recommended. Among others things, it will be vital to ensuring effective monitoring and evaluation and thus, managing quality of ANFE for its sustainability. Lastly, mass awareness is needed to all stakeholders. This is necessary for uplifting the status of adult education and enhancing stakeholders' engagement in ANFE.

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