

## **A Simulation Exercise**

British Association for Literacy in Development

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### 1. Notes on the Exercise

This simulation exercise will form the basis of study group work from the time you receive it to the end of the course. As we work through it together we will find that it will require us to consider, learn about and practise all those areas of skill, knowledge, understanding and attitude, which together form the subject of the course. In addition to demonstrating one particular teaching medium - a simulated case study - it provides opportunities for a wide range of other group methods of learning and teaching which we will be practising as we work through it. The purpose of embedding all this (and much more) content in an exercise such as this is five-fold:

1. To relate it intimately to the realities which you will face on your return to professional life (the intention is to draw upon as well as extend your experience).
2. To give an opportunity to learn actively by solving problems and practising methods in a simulation (i.e. a realistic but generalised working model) of actual working conditions.
3. To provide this opportunity in a safe context (i.e. although it is realistic, neither you nor anybody else will come to grief - just as pilots training in simulated cockpits expect, and can afford, to crash).
4. To provide this opportunity of working with the support of a co-operative group which can discuss and criticise creatively ways of tackling the problems. It therefore enables us to learn more from the experience than we can when we are alone with our responsibilities back in our own jobs.
5. To give us something more absorbing and less boring, and therefore more effective and certainly more fun, than a string of lectures which try to present theoretical answers.

To gain maximum benefit from the exercise we must obey a few simple rules;

- Steep yourself in all the details of our imaginary situation in Terra, until you have really mastered all the information. This information is inevitably incomplete. Just as in real life, most of the problems, resources, constraints and other significant information lie hidden in the context and have to be thought about and discovered by discussion with colleagues.
- If you should find that some really crucial element is missing or where the exercise invites you to do so, invent additions or changes of your own by agreement. However, having invented them, you must stick to them throughout.
- Above all become a citizen of Terra for the time being and involve yourself with as much passion as you would in your own country. But enjoy yourself as well!

### 2. Highlights of the Current Situation in Terra

### a) The Economy

With a gross domestic product defined in World Bank terms of almost US \$1 ,000 per capita, Terra has recently moved into the ‘lower middle income’ economic category used by the World Bank and other international aid agencies. It has resources (mineral, agricultural), an infrastructure sufficient to develop them (roads, power supplies etc.) and access to the sea through its port, Terraporto. In the early 1980s, it had a rapidly expanding economy, based partly on a growing domestic market, partly on the export of agricultural produce and manufactures to neighbouring countries and to the wider world market and partly on extensive borrowing in international capital markets. By the 90s the world economy had slowed down. Punitive trade quotas resulted in the closure of emerging manufacturing units and seriously affected export orientated produce. Despite this downturn, individual enterprise has enabled the I.T. Sector to secure slices of the global market

### b) Structural Adjustment

Over the last twenty years there has been a decline in living standards, especially in the urban areas, although this has not prevented a continued influx of rural people into the towns, seeking better life chances for themselves and their children. Moreover, because Terra is still richer than many of its neighbours, these town dwellers include an increasing number of in-corners from other countries, bringing with them different languages and ways of life. At times of economic growth, this cultural diversity might be seen as an enrichment, but at this moment of economic stagnation, the dangers of urban poverty and separate enclaves of slum housing for migrant foreigners has led to the assertion of ethnic/cultural identities and racism.

A World Bank Mission proposed that Terra’s economic difficulties should be dealt with by a structural adjustment programme. Thus in common with other similar countries, Terra has had to face substantial economic and social upheaval as the price to be paid for continued foreign loans and a renewed attempt to escape from indebtedness and dependence. International mobilisation efforts against debt have resulted in offers of debt relief with certain conditionalities. These include the diversion of resources to loan repayment from the development of civil society, poverty reduction, health and education programmes. The effects of these include a reduction in Government’s direct involvement in the economy, a cut in the number of civil servants, increased privatisation and a reduction in expenditure on social services, including health and education. There has also been pressure for the development of multi-party politics in a country where there has been only one party for the past 30 years.

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### c) Social Change

Associated with the decline of the economies of the metropolitan countries are:

- slower progress in women’s social and political development;
- major problems in the cost and accessibility of public health provision, including shortages of medicines and trained staff;
- a decline in enrolments in primary schools and growing early leaving (see section 6);

- with the beginnings of multi-party politics certain ethnic and linguistic groups are demanding more radical self-determination measures and there are fears that this may result in balkanisation.

However, within Terra as a whole there exist local economies which are independently sustainable. These are invisible to the World Bank and independent of national economic and political directives.

#### d) Basic Education for All In Terra

Following the World Conference on Education For All (EFA) (Jomtien, Thailand 1990), the Government announced that:

- the status and potential of women must be raised through a programme of basic education;
- the decline in the quality of education offered in primary schools must be reversed;
- basic education must be offered to adult women and men as well as children;
- wherever possible, basic education for women should be a part of all development projects, whatever these may be (e.g. water development, new health centres, new industrial plants).

The above commitments were re-affirmed by the government through its endorsement of the Dakar 2000 Framework (Senegal) — Education For All (EFA):

Meeting Our Collective Commitments.

#### e) Health

A number of governmental and non-governmental organisations have made attempts to provide basic health education. The population has increased by 25% and there is an urgent need for basic education on family planning.

Infant mortality in certain parts of Terra is between 15% and 20%. The maternal mortality rate is 500 (per 100,000 live births). Average life expectancy at birth is 55 years. A high proportion of newborn babies, children and adults are FIIV positive and the number of AIDS cases for 100,000 inhabitants is estimated at 150. However it is predicted that this figure will rise sharply.

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### 3. Terra, the Land and People

Terra is a country of some 30 million people. It lies within the tropics, where its coastal situation and mineral resources made it a target for exploitation during the colonial period. Colonial exploitation of the economy moved inland from the coastal settlements.

The previous President moved Government offices from the capital Terraporto (on the coast) to the new administrative capital at Urbano, some 400 kms away in the interior. This move makes some economic sense, in that the new city links together a number of small existing towns; these have grown up around the mining of tin and diamonds and the prevailing plantation agriculture (mainly pineapples, bananas and other export crops), which dominates the rural economy of the region. However, some groups are still voicing opposition to the move. There are still administrative problems arising from the location of Government offices in both Terraporto and Urbano.

The Blue Mountains, about 200 kms farther inland, straddle the frontier with Transmontana and form the last well-watered area before reaching the arid and semi arid continental plateau states of the interior. It is from these neighbouring countries that Terra attracts migrant labour to the mines and plantations around Urbano and also the industries of Terraporto.

Apart from the plantation agriculture around Urbano, the land is in the hands of small farmers. Below the Blue Mountains they practise mainly subsistence agriculture, and towards Terraporto, farmers operate in a largely cash economy. The land is intensively cultivated everywhere except towards the Blue Mountains.

Ethnic groups in Terra have maintained much of their own language and cultures. The Urbano urban complex now has an official population of more than two million while Terraporto has more than three million. The existence of large semi-urban shanty towns makes it certain that these figures give a false impression of the size of the urban population. The introduction of migrant labourers in both plantation and industrial situations has created a number of problems.

#### a) Languages

Of the local languages, one (Fremana) is closely associated with Central Province and another (Frnti), with Coast Province. Frnti has developed into a lingua franca for a wide area, based on its use as the language of local maritime trade. No local language is dominant in Mountain Province.

After much debate, it is now Government policy that Frnti shall eventually be the sole national language. However, Fremana still has its supporters, for whom its continuation may have political and economic advantages.

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English has not only survived, but has become dominant. It is the main medium for secondary and higher education; because of its social status and the access it gives to international commerce and to international higher education, it tends to be used as a lingua franca amongst the elite. It is still an official language (e.g. in Parliament). The private school system operates entirely in English. Moreover, some Fremana speakers use it in preference to Frnti, and there are those who favour the extension of its continued use in the interests of national unity.

In the village schools teaching is conducted in the local languages to begin with but replaced Frnti in the fourth year and then by English. Most of the primers and textbooks in primary schools are written in Frnti.

In the towns there is considerable demand for English, which is taught as a second (or third) language in the upper grades of primary schools. In all secondary and higher education, English is the main medium of instruction.

Some arguments suggest that it is only through the wider use of English that regional and related ethnic differences can be minimised; these same arguments point out that no one local language can ever be truly national. Needless to say, this view is hotly contested.

#### b) Statistics on Language

Table 1: Republic of Terra: First-Language Speakers

Frnti  
Fremana  
English  
Other  
Total  
Coast  
13,760,000  
410,000  
25,000  
546,000  
14,741,000  
Central  
601,200  
9,740,000  
4,500  
1,762,000  
±2  
Mountains  
490,000  
826,000  
200  
1,476,000  
2,792,200  
Total  
14,851,200  
10,976,000  
29,700  
3,784,000  
29,640,900

Souwe: Minisirj of Education 1998

4. IdeoLogy, Cultural and Social Factors  
a) Political Economy

The politics of Terra from the time of independence involved state planning of a modified ‘command economy’, some rather limited encouragement of foreign investment, and a one-party electoral system. There were half-hearted attempts to nationalise the mines and plantations but these were resisted by the multi-national companies, who still retain control. On the other hand, many people’s experience of the economy is through local and regional economic practices, small-scale workshops, informal services, particularly a thriving alternative market for goods in limited supply, in contrast to central economic structures.

Structural adjustment and other international pressure have now produced the privatisation of some State enterprises, a reduction of employment by Government and the beginning of a multi-party democracy. The latter has not so far produced any change of Government. Globalisation, and relative political stability have encouraged inward investment in local enterprise.

#### b) Religion

Terra has a variety of religions, including Christianity which is practised by most people in the central and coastal areas. There is a substantial Muslim minority group, and this is increasing with migration from neighbouring states. Some sections of the Muslim community have become quite vocal over the past five years leading to the formation of an Islamic Defence organisation. While defending their rights they are also advocating a return to orthodoxy. Similarly other religious groups including the Christians are reasserting their religious rights and practices. This has led to clashes between religious groups and fears of a divided society.

#### C) Social Factors

The status of women varies between regions and communities, but the literacy rates of women are half those of men. The promotion of equality of opportunity for women is sometimes seen as a ‘Western’ preoccupation and not part of Terran culture; this is used as a reason for dismissing it as an ‘imported’ idea. Religion is often used to provide an important moral and spiritual rationale for the existing male/female roles, but this is itself a matter of intra-religious controversy.

Women do the major part of the agricultural work, and the small-scale commercial (market) activities. Some women have succeeded in gaining higher educational qualifications and have obtained good positions in Government employment, particularly in health, education and the media, but not in the technical, agricultural

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and financial sectors. They are under-represented at the political level of Government (13 out of 100 delegates) and in Government working parties.

The villages are the social units for the bulk of the settled population. Most have co-operatives of some kind. The villages are governed by councils of eldei with elected headmen (usually the most prosperous farmers) who also act as the local representatives of Government. Where there are local religious leaders, their influence on decision-making is likely to be considerable. However, it is the towns which have experienced the most social change, some as a result of various development programmes. Labour migration with unplanned settlements has affected the process of urban development, leading to severe strains on the social and economic structures of

the towns. This has had a particularly severe effect on women, children and migrant workers in urban areas.

d) Environmental factors

Over the past 30 years Terra has experienced a substantial loss of bio-diversity through logging and clearing forests for plantation based agriculture. In the urban areas the dumping of untreated industrial waste by manufacturers has poisoned most of the rivers. In tandem the rising population of the towns and cities has put a severe strain on the water supply and the crumbling sewerage system. Illnesses and deaths related to respiratory and waterborne diseases have been increasing over the past fifteen years. Recently a number of academics, health workers and NGOs have been voicing concern at the government's lack of action in considering these issues.

e) The Position of Women

In some parts of Terra women have formed strong support networks amongst themselves for coping with domestic and life-time events, informally in the market place and in response to external change.

More formal organisations inciting social change stem from the National Independence movements of the 1950s. Since that time a number of women's organisations have formed mainly in urban areas. Some formed around credit unions or the organisation of communal gardens, others around ensuring the representation of women in local affairs. In most rural areas where communication is poor, the position of women has remained traditional and subservient. Recently a number of new tensions have emerged. In urban areas particularly, groups have started up inspired by the thinking of students and lecturers at the university. Their tendency is to take a much more developmental approach towards the position of women, and the new groups have a consciousness raising, popular education focus.

Their initiative is often confused with Western-influenced feminism, introduced through some of the more liberal NGOs and those women who have been to study in metropolitan countries. The former see the latter as potentially harmful and ignoring

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the power and influence traditionally held by women. They in turn are criticised for being too limited in their vision for change. Long-held female roles attracting power and respect such as traditional birth attendant, healer, market trader and spiritual leader are still in demand. However, it cannot be denied that some of these long-held powers are declining. More than a decade of intensive advertising around allopathic medicine has undermined the status of traditional birth attendants and healers. The growth of bigger private enterprises has ousted a large number of female market traders.

Over the past ten years, some of the infrastructure development projects have led to displacement of rural people from their own lands. Consequently rural women activists supported by NGOs are leading campaigns to reclaim lost lands.

A national organisation, The Terran Women's Organisation, was formed in Urbano in the 1980s. Although aiming to improve the position of women nationally, and calling for a women's literacy campaign, their influence is limited. They, have no direct association with the urban women's groups and no contact with rural women.

f) Population

1971 Census

1991 Census

Coast

12,386,200

14,718,500

Terraporto

2,110,000

2,814,400

Central

8,962,300

12,107,700

Urbano

140,300

1,326,800

Mountain

2,834,600

2,792,200

Total

26,433,400

33,759,600

Source: Soda/Statistics Unit, Minist,j of Finance 1998

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## 5. Administrative Structure

The three central Government offices involved in women's affairs and education are:

Social Development, Education and the Office of the President. The first two are traditional ministries with the usual line management structure. The Office of the President (which also controls internal security and local administration) has a responsibility for development co-ordination through the National, Provincial and District Development Committees.

The head office of the Ministry of Education is still located in Terraporto while the other two are in Urbano.

Administrative Structure Chart

Provincial

Development Committees

“Er

r District Commissioners

District

Development Committees

Source: Ministrj of Information (1998)

Office of the President

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National

+

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Ministry of Social Development &

L\_\_ Culture

Provincial Officers

Ministry of Education

Provincial Commissioners

District Officers

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Provincial Officers

District Officers]

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## 6. The Education System

The school system developed rapidly in the boom years of the late 1960s and early 1970s. There was a positive enthusiasm for education, and the acquisition of schooling for their children was associated in the minds of parents with rapid economic advancement. During the 1980s there was substantial disillusionment with the effects of education, as it was realised that the connection between education and economic advancement was, at best, indirect. Nevertheless, the gains of the 1970s have not been lost entirely as the following figures (for 1985) show:

### a) Gross School Enrolment Rates

Primary        Secondary

Male    Female    Male    Female

94%    76%    73%    52%

These gross figures obscure disparities between town and country, and between rich and poor areas. Enrolments are higher in the urban areas. Any moves toward greater equality must take account of regional/provincial disparities, as well as those based on social class, age or gender.

Since 1985 the gross enrolment rates have declined, there has been an increase in early leaving (especially for girls) and the gender gap reflected in the above figures for 1985 has increased.

Additionally there has been a decline in the quality of the teaching force, especially in primary education, as the most skilled teachers have moved to alternative employment, taken jobs in neighbouring countries or moved into the expanding secondary system.

The rapid rise in school enrolments in the 1970s, besides preserving the gender gap, has also increased the generation gap. The adult literacy rate is still only 45% with the literacy rate for women some 50% less than that for men.

The University of Terra, based in Urbano, is directly responsible for a small secondary teacher education programme and, indirectly, through the validation of local college courses, for primary teacher education. There are plans for the upgrading of primary teaching through the use of distance teaching, including interactive radio.

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#### b) Literacy Programmes In Terra

Before independence, Christian mission schools ran an education and literacy programme for children and adults in the Coastal and Central regions. Other NGOs also ran technical programmes with coastal fishermen/women. With independence these education programmes were merged into the state system. The schools became elite English-medium schools. Furthermore the state reduced subsidies in the secondary sector. Universal primary education has expanded as part of a mass literacy campaign in the sixties and seventies supported by various NGOs in rural areas beyond the Coastal and Central regions.

NGOs, in partnership with the Government, worked with existing village councils and co-operatives. Literacy campaigns were also run by religious groups and on plantations with Trade Union partnerships. There are many languages and literacies that are not given due recognition by the State.

During the interregnum between 1977 and 1986, when the Government was in the hands of various military/bureaucratic alliances, education like the rest of the economy declined. From 1986 pressure from the World Bank and donor countries led to the relaxation of centralised rule.

Liberalisation has led to inward investment and cultural changes in particular sectors of the economy: for instance private investors working with western partners have set up a number of institutions concentrating on Information and Communications Technology (IC1).

Although the National Literacy campaign planned in the wake of the Jorntien conference (1990) was quietly shelved, the government has recently renewed its 1990 commitment by re-affirming the Dakar Framework For Action (Senegal 2000).

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#### 7. The Commission

### a) Background

The Government aims to revitalise all development sectors in a determined effort to reverse the trends indicated in 2(b) above. However, its immediate concerns are:

- i. To ensure that women's participation and status in all development programmes is enhanced;
- ii. To prepare an urgent action plan for the improvement of Basic Education according to the demands raised as a result of the social changes outlined (in 2(c) above), and following the Guidelines of the Jomtien declaration (see Annex 1), the Mid-Decade Meeting (Annex 3) and the Dakar Framework For Action (Annex 4).

It has therefore established a Commission to look at issues related to Women and Basic Education.

### b) The Commission's Remit

1. The Commission has to make recommendations on structure and mechanisms to ensure women's full share of benefits from and effective participation in:
  - i. consultation, communication and administrative structures in all future development projects, including any new plans for Basic Education;
  - iii. measures to increase productivity in the subsistence economy and in agricultural production for the market;
  - iv. plans to reduce infant mortality and improve health and nutrition;
  - v. policies to improve education and training, including developing the literacy necessary to implement the recommendations.

The Commission will take account of the 'Ple4form ForAction' as agreed at the 'Fourth United Nations Conference For Women' Beijing, 1996. (See Annex 1).

2. The commission also has to make recommendations in line with the purposes outlined in Article 1 of the World Declaration on Education for All and the commitments to access and equality of Article 3. (See Annex 1).

In formulating its proposals the commission will as far as possible follow the guidelines of the Jomtien and Dakar Framework for Action. However, in taking account of the circumstances of Terra, the Commission will pay special attention to:

- i. the need for greater equity for women and girls;
- ii. the decline in teacher (and teaching) quality in Primary schools;
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- iii. the need to provide an Adult Literacy Campaign;
- iv. the need to integrate the Education of Adults with other sectors of development.
3. The Commission is advised that recommendations should be in line with the project framework required by financial donors. These include:
  - i. your overall aim

- ii. the main objectives of the project
- iii. inputs (i.e. resources for project activities)
- iv. planned project outcomes
- v. evaluation mechanisms (including observable indicators of success)
- vi. an indication of project time-scales
- vii. an outline of the budget

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## 8. The Task of the Study Groups

Study Groups are invited to form themselves into the Commission. As far as possible members should own expertise in playing this role. A member should be appointed Chair. The Commission/Study Group should now undertake the following tasks:

1. Collect, prepare and submit material and recommendations by 11 pm on Wednesday April 4. A written and fully developed report is not required, but evidence in the form of notes, diagrams, flip charts, maps, statistics etc. should be provided on which the recommendations are based and from which a more formal report could be prepared.
2. Prepare a visual/aural presentation illustrating aspects of the above for presentation to National Policy Conference on Thursday 5th April.

### Constraints

In their recommendations for future action the Commission Study Group needs to be aware that at present no additional resources are available apart from the following:

1. modest subventions to existing services and bodies to enable them to make some payments for part work;
2. food subsidies to enable existing institutions to be utilised for training purposes;
3. an increase in budgets to the communications media to allow for an increase of 1 hour per day radio broadcasting and 1/2 hour per day TV transmission.

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## 9. Methodology

The task of the Commission/Study group should centre around basic education with special emphasis on gender issues and women's participation.

In making their recommendations and in collecting, preparing and submitting their material the Commission/Study group should consider:

1. multi-party democracy;
- ii. the current contribution made to the development process;
- iii. existing barriers to women's effective participation;
- iv. how to identify existing and potential resources and expertise;

- v. the obstacles and constraints in the utilisation of these resources;
- vi. strategies to overcome these obstacles and constraints in respect of the areas indicated in the remit;
- vii. the literacy, education and training necessary for both men and women;
- viii. measures to raise awareness among the general public, the administrative staff and government personnel regarding the importance of basic education and of women's contribution to and participation in the development process.

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#### 10. Annexes

- 1. Education for All,Jomtien, 1990
  - 2. PJa 4 UN Conference for Women, Beijing 1996.
  - 3. Mid-Decade Meeting of International Consultative Forum,June 1996.
  - 4. Dakar Framework For Action: Meeting our Collective Commitments, Dakar, April 2000
- (These will be distributed separately)

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