

FACT SHEET NO. 3

PARLIAMENTARY CIVIC EDUCATION

The idea of undertaking the parliamentary Civic Education Programme is a result of the realization that the majority of the citizens were ignorant of the role and functions of the parliament. As a result, they were also ignorant which contribute to the ignorance of their civic rights and obligations as enshrined in the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania.

The aforesaid state of affairs could mainly attributed by the one part political system which has had dominated the Tanzania's political system since 1965. During the period, the ruling political party - Chama cha Mapinduzi, (CCM) enjoyed supremacy over the Parliament.

The introduction of multi-party parliamentary politics in 1992 followed the eighth amendment, which effected such historical changes, effectively restored the supremacy of the parliament, which had been lost in 1965. Article 63(2) of the Constitution clearly defines the supremacy of the Parliament as follows:

*The National Assembly shall be the principal organ
Of the United Republic which shall, on behalf of the
People, supervise and advise the Government of the
United Republic and all its institutions in the exercise
Of their functions in accordance to this Constitution.*

After restoring parliamentary supremacy and introduction of multi party political system, there arose an evident need for the Public to be enlightened on the roles and functions of the parliament.

In order to achieve the objective, the National Assembly embarked on a Civic Education Programme aimed at educating the public through media and other programmes. Other activities include publication of a quarterly parliamentary news magazine, called Bunge (parliament) News, brochures, carried out an outreach programme to learning institutions for lectures and Question and Answer sessions as well as organizing Youth Parliament Activity.

This programme is managed by the Clerk of the National Assembly and implemented by a co-ordinator of Civic Education.

Description of the Programme

The Civic Education Programme entails to enlighten the citizens in interesting ways and means on the roles and functions of the Parliament through various

mass media. Basically, aims at empowering the people with the knowledge on their civic rights and obligations regarding multiparty parliamentary democracy.

Programmes:

To build and enhance the capacity of the general public on matter of governance and constitution, the main focus is the general public, by providing different forums of gaining and exchanging information.

The following channels are used to achieve the goal.

Radio programmes. We have a 30-minute weekly radio programme, which is broadcast on Saturday at 1330 hours East African Time (+ 3 hrs GMT).

Bunge News, which is, published quarterly in a year to coincide with parliamentary sessions.

Seminars and Public Lectures. (Outreach programmes) to learning institutions in the country.

Youth Parliament activity.

Guided tours and visits to Parliament Buildings.

Radio Programmes:

The programmes are produced in a way of giving the opportunity to the cross section of the people to contribute their ideas in various topics related to parliamentary democracy. This is mainly done in discussion-guided dialogue of relaxed conversation on which involve Question and Answer sessions. From April 2001 to March 2002 the following programmes are intended to be conducted.

APRIL 2001

Programme one:

Theme: The Role of Parliament in enhancing democracy

Participants: Two Members of Parliament, two Lawyers and one Social Scientist.

Programme Two:

Theme: The Role of Parliament in Enhancing democracy

Participants: Selected five people from all Walks of life.

MAY 2001

Programme One:

Theme: Parliament and Human rights.

Participants: Two Members of Parliament, two Lawyers, and one Human Rights Activist.

Programme two:

Theme: Parliament and Human Rights

Participants: Common people (random interviews)

JUNE 2001

Programme One:

Theme: The Role of Opposition in Parliament

Participants: Opposition leader in Parliament, Chief Whip (ruling party).
Two members one from the ruling party and other from the opposition minority parties in the parliament.

Programme Two:

Theme: The Role of Opposition in Parliament (2)

Participants: Random interviews (reaction from the public).

JULY 2001

Programme One:

Theme: Parliament and Anti-Corruption strategies

Participants: One official from Anti-Corruption Bureau, two Members of Parliament, one Social Scientist and one Lawyer.

Programme Two:

Theme: Parliament and Anti-Corruption strategies: What people say. Random interviews.

AUGUST 2001

Programme one:

Theme: East Africa Assembly (To coincide with the Participant: Speaker of the Assembly (an interview)).

Programme Two:

Theme: East Africa Assembly - Expectations from Tanzania
Participants: Businessmen/women, Government Officials (Trade and Industries).

SEPTEMBER 2001

Programme One:
Participants: Official from Vice President's Office (Poverty alleviation), Two Members of Parliament and one Social Welfare activist.

Programme Two:
Theme: Poverty Alleviation strategies/ Activities in Tanzania.
Participants: Interview with selected common people.

OCTOBER 2001

Theme: Parliament and Media (responsible relationships).
Programme One:
Participants: Editors from selected (News) media, Official from Media Council, One Member of Parliament, and Parliamentary Information Officer.

NOVEMBER 2001

Programme One:
Theme: Women in Parliamentary Politics
Participants: Chairperson of Women Development and other Special Committee, two Women Members of Parliament, two Men Members of Parliament, two village Women.

Programme Two:
Theme: Women in Parliamentary Politics
Participants: Selected Women and Men (Interviews)

DECEMBER: 2001

Programme One:
Theme: Constitution and the people (1)

Participants: Attorney General, two lawyers from Mainland and Zanzibar, Chairperson of the Bunge Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs.

Programme Two:

Theme: Constitution and the people (2)

Participants: Cross-section interviews.

JANUARY 2002

Theme: Constitution and the people (3 & 4)

Reaction/response: Cross-section interviews

FEBRUARY: 2002

Programme One:

Theme: Is Democracy on the Track (In Tanzania)?

Participation: Four Members of Parliament from both Ruling and Opposition camps. Lawyers and Social Scientists.

Programme Two:

Theme: Is democracy on the Track

Views of the common people (1)

MARCH 2002

Programme One:

Theme: Is democracy on the Track

Views of the people (2)

Programme Two

Theme: Is democracy on the Track

Views of the People (3)

Youth Parliament:

The key objective of organizing Youth parliaments is to empower young Tanzanians to participate in promoting democracy of our country. Promoting Parliament, as a body of democratically elected representatives constitutes the

point of departure. Central to this process is how Parliament works and also how people can participate in its activities, thus, influencing governance of our country.

Motivation:

The general objectives of Youth parliament activity are;

- To inform young people about Parliament and help them understand how it works.
- To motivate them to get involved in building democracy and making it work.
- To gain an overall understanding of how our country is run.
- To promote the culture of democracy and human rights
- To enable them think seriously about their responsibilities toward others in the society.

One Youth Parliament was organised in March 1999. Plans are under way to organise another such activity for 2001/2002.

Guided Tours and Visits

Groups of students, workers etc. are encouraged to visit the Parliament Building to familiarise themselves with the main workings of the Parliament. The visits are mostly encouraged during parliamentary sessions so that the Visitors could see and hear Members of Parliament at work. This is done upon sending letters to:

Clerk of the National Assembly
P.O Box 9133
Dar es Salaam
Tanzania.

- If you have any comment, question or idea in relation to the Civic Education Programs, kindly communicate to the co-coordinator of Civics at: ernestzulu@yahoo.co.uk

Or at

Parliament Office
Shaaban Robert Street
P.O Box 9133,
Dar Es Salaam
Tanzania

Fax: (255 22) 2112538

YOU ARE MOST WELCOME