

**THE DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURAL AND CREATIVE ARTS EDUCATION FOR  
AFRICA CHILDREN: THE IMPACT OF TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMME**

**Idowu Kojusotito Olatunji, Ph.D**

TAI SOLARIN UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, IJAGUN

PMB 2118, IJEBU ODE, NIGERIA.

[facedetruth4@yahoo.com](mailto:facedetruth4@yahoo.com)

## **Abstract**

*Africans are heterogeneously endowed culturally. The introduction of western education has done a lot of disservice to these revered cultural heritages Africans are known for. If the process of African cultural extinction would stop, there is need to overhaul its educational development as against the perceived notion that it has become unpopular among today's younger generation. For these and other reasons, it has been observed that teacher training process in the name of development has been politically compromised since its value has been eroded for perceived selfish political gains. Curriculum development has undergone development without the input and contribution of teachers that are saddled with its implementation. This paper has based its argument on the philosophy of Wilhelm Viola who specializes in child art. . Because of her contribution to child development, this paper has collated some data that made it to solicit the power behind teacher education to step-up the training process of teachers in anchoring the challenge to reinstate the knowledge about cultural endowment inherent in Africa. By going into what teacher education was at the beginning, what it has developed into now and the implication on teaching-learning process of Cultural and Creative Arts will ascertain the need for redefinition. It finally goes ahead to suggest remedies for the menace.*

**KEYWORDS: Curriculum development, Political incursion, African Children, Teacher Education, and Cultural and Creative Art Education.**

## **Introduction**

Cultural and Creative Arts (CCA) subject and course across primary school, secondary level and tertiary institution are derived from the culture and arts of Africans. The development of CCA becomes noticeable very few years ago in Nigeria because of the recent status accorded the teaching of the subject in primary and junior secondary schools as one of the core subjects. In Nigeria, education is one of the social responsibilities of the government and United Nation Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) has been anchoring the progression attained in educational sector the world over. CCA is an integrated subject that comprises culture, visual and performing arts. Longman Dictionary (LD), (2007) defines visual arts as the art such as painting, sculpture, graphics, textile design, ceramics and craft that you look at, as opposed to literature or music. It defines performing arts as such art as dance, music or drama, but for an inclusive definition the same dictionary goes further to explain that performance art is a type of art that can combine acting, dance, painting, film (and others) to express an idea. From the definitions of visual and performance arts, it has been discovered that these are arts that appeal to sense of sight. They are better used to entertain, no wonder it is said that beauty is in the eyes of the beholder. This saying applied to art because several side attractions contribute to the success of these forms of art. Culture is the vehicle that carries all the mentioned form of arts. These arts emerged from the beliefs of people, for this reason culture is defined in LD as the beliefs, way of life, art, and customs that are shared and accepted by people in a particular society. This purports to indicate the attitude and beliefs about something that are shared by a particular group of people or in a particular organisation which include activities that are related to art, music and literature.

Art is generally perceived to have the ability to communicate without a known boundary. Many scholars have made effort to define art from their own perspective. Many definitions have been affected by what individual believes as art from their experience. No matter what people think about art, the fact still remains that it is a universal language that does not differentiate people no matter how varied their languages, the language boundaries are blurred to understand themselves without the employment of an interpreter. The language art speaks has the ability to appeal to psyche of the beholder. Art is an organized expression arranged as tools for communication which emanates from the purview of concept of an initiator in an attempt to disseminate an idea or intention. Art itself can be divided into liberal, visual and performing segments. Liberal art deals with literature, poetry, prose, play and sensational writing, visual art includes textile designing, graphic art, sculpture, ceramics,

painting and craft while performing art segment includes music, dance and theatre or what many called drama. From the foreground, it is clear that art is so encompassing in its rendition. Because of the generic role art plays in covering all different aspects of human endeavours, it is not appropriate anymore to train teachers of art a segment of it as it used to be but in other to achieve contemporary educational curriculum, training to teach art should be all inclusive. That is the reason why definition of art from time has been reflecting a segment or few combinations of these segments because art teachers are trained with jurisdictional boundaries. Art is people's life and goes ahead to reflect cultural entity of the people themselves.

Definition of art as mentioned to have been influenced by people's perception like the followings show:

Ekeada (1988) defines art as anything intentionally made by man either to express himself or to satisfy some material needs. Watchtower (2008) looks at art from a dictionary rendition as a skill that is attained by study, practice, or observation. Ifeta (2005) theorises that art is the product of ideas made visible through the use of different materials and techniques that cut across painting, graphics design, ceramics, textile and fashion designs as well as photography. Though there are other definitions from scholars like Okanlawon (2001), Talabi (1979), Nicholas Fry (1975) and Uzoagba (1973) which may not be mentioned but salient information of their definition extracted in the course of this paper buttress the creative art teacher training argument. The definitions in totality or in part reflect what art is and what art should be. The issue of conception or inner emotion cannot be removed from what connotes to become art in all of these contexts. The recognition of beautiful things has made people to qualify things with extra ordinary appearance of features as state of the art materials or products. No matter the area of affiliate of an artist the context of beauty and skill acquisition remain paramount in most of the ways people or artists look at art.

### **Contribution of Colonialists to Arts**

The colonialists came to Africa and introduced western education about 16<sup>th</sup> century. The education introduced included art that was classified as craft. Before the arrival of these colonialists, art has been practiced creditably in Africa. It was said to be crude but it was servicing the need of the people then. They derogatively tagged it *primitive art*. The art was fulfilling the need created by religion, entertainment, and society at large. The art practiced was also serving the aesthetic needs of the society. King palaces were decorated with art

works and it served as means to record the events of the society. Artists were commissioned to produce art work for the king and such king monopolized the artists to satisfy the royal taste for aesthetic curiosity and values. Ancient kings were honoured by other kings when such king could boast of unique and number of art works in his court. For example some art works were carted away during the British soldiers' expedition to Benin in 1897. Some of the art works carted away during this period were in decorative royal works, figures, plaque in high relief, bronze, wood and ivory works made by local artists who did not attend any formal school (Okunlola, Thompson, Apena, and Ajao, 2013 ). Some of these art works are still on display at many British museums till date.

Okunlola *et al* (2013) posit that art existed in Nigeria long before the contact with Europe. These ancient artworks which form Nigerian art culture were discovered at different locations in Nigeria. This contribution refutes the claim that Africans' continent was exposed to civilization at colonization and that no development or ground breaking achievement of any sort was noticeable before then. Record shows that the technological forgery made before colonisation became controversial to the extent that European masters argued that what they saw have gone beyond what would have been done by neither Africans who could not read nor write. It has gone beyond the colonials' notice that Africans from inception had knack to explore the personification of Supreme Being and this made them to end up in animate representation of the Supreme Being so as to have something to adore for the good they received from him despite not seeing him but since they can feel his presence. As mention above this quest for this unfathomable being made them to carve, mould and dance to show appreciation. Since these processes became incessant features, perfection became noticeable in their inventions, that resulted in what the colonial masters found on the ground of Africa with disbelief that such perfect works could ever come from stack illiterates who did not have what-with-all to produce better art-works than the literate countries. This is fit that could not be understood by colonialists till now about works of art in Africa hence they with aberration called it *Primitive Art*.

### **The Developmental Philosophy of Cultural and Creative Arts as a School Subject**

De Francesco (1958) quotes the philosophy of Wilhelm Viola when writing on *Art in the Elementary School* that:

Two generation ago nobody dreamt that every child is a born artist, which does not mean that every child should or could become an artist. The

discovery of Child Art is parallel with, or perhaps a consequence of the discovery of the child as a human being with his own personality and his own particular laws.

The philosophy of Wilhelm is outstandingly true about developing child's latent endowment through a follow-up teaching process that makes the endowment realizable and this is enshrined in the caliber of teachers injected into teaching field. Tailoring the education of a child towards the achievement of inherited potentials should be goal of a trained teacher which school is out to discover and compliment. Any attempt to force a child into any societal preconceived mold spells doom for future of such a child hence the need for well trained and qualified teacher in African schools. Perhaps there is no better way of beginning this consideration than pondering over the words of the mystic poet Gibran (1951) who says that:

Your children are not your children.  
They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself  
They come through you but not from you.  
And though they are with you yet they belong not to you.  
You may give them your love not your thoughts,  
For they have their own thoughts.  
You may house their bodies but not their souls.  
For their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow,  
Which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams.  
You may strive to be like them, but seek not to make them like you.....  
For life goes not backward nor tarries with yesterday.

The types of education developed and administered without adequate considering of a child's cultural environment and beliefs count against the affective domain of such child's education. Culture has been said to be the total way of people's life. The culture serves as boundary for different group of people and it differentiates them from each other. Jang (2014) looks at culture and comes up with this definition that it is the underground rivers of meaning-making, the places where we make choices about what matters and how it connects us to others in the groups to which one belongs. Culture shapes ideas of what is important, influences attitudes and values and goes further to animate people's behaviours. Culture operates below the surface because of its dynamism that set up a beginning in a peculiar way to promote a unique outlook away from other versa groups who are as well peculiar in their own approach to life issues. Many in Africa have and belong to multi-cultural experience

with transitional cultural boundaries, the development of African youths experienced from early age. Since culture is potent, it is vital to be conscious of its awareness. With the trend in the process of civilisation the world over, there is urgent need to overhaul the cultural transmission process. Many African cultures are going into extinction due to superimposition of foreign cultures on traditional African culture.

In Nigeria today, Cultural and Creative Arts has been introduced as one of core subjects to be taught in basic level of education. This basic education includes the first six years in primary school and three years in junior secondary school. It is assumed that this period should be used to teach and expose Nigerian children to varied culture and beliefs of the people. Cultural and Creative Arts (CCA) includes visual arts, music, theatre, dance, customs and tradition. All these are encapsulated to mean CCA that are expected to be taught in schools. In the preface written by former Minister for Education in Nigeria, Professor Ruqayyat Rufa’I in 2007, she opines that “it is our fervent hope that the teachers and learners for whom these curricula are produced would demonstrate commitment and assiduity in using these curricula. This is a proud legacy to leave for posterity.” It was good news when the curricula plan was announced by the planners but they forget to carry along the people that will implement the curricula. New CCA curriculum is designed to revamp what has been lost with regards to African inherited culture. On this premise, the education minister further adds that “we gladly recommend these curricula to all for the purpose of producing the best textual materials, the best in teaching performance, the best learning outcome, and most importantly, for attaining the goals we have set for ourselves in education in line with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGS) and in compliance with the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategies (NEEDS).

In this emerging curriculum for CCA among others, the implementation plans should dominate the process if the result will ever be formidable. In the preface written by the Executive Secretary of Nigerian Educational Research and Development council (NERDC), Professor Obioma (2007), he said that “since the curriculum represents the total experience to which all learners must be exposed, the contents, performance objectives, activities for both teacher and learners, teaching and learning materials and evaluation guide are provided”. The statement of the draft curricula was explicit and fine but it stopped at implementation stage. The teachers to implement were not trained while more teachers were not employed for the purpose of implementation. The curricula seemed too cumbersome for implementation, which necessitated a review to ascertain and remove the barriers. Rufa’i (2007) in her

submission on implementation discoveries says that “feedback received on the implementation of Basic Education Curriculum (BEC) called for an urgent need for the review of the 9-year BEC to achieve a reduction in subject overload in the context of the number of subjects offered at the Primary and Junior Secondary School”. When this problem surfaced nearly in all schools the curriculum was reviewed. She goes further and says that it was ‘a great privilege to present the reviewed 9-year Primary/JSS curriculum to all Nigerians for the use of our children now and the future’. The need for teacher training education cannot be overemphasized in the context of changing curricula and imposed civilisation.

### **Teacher Training Education**

It is believed that no quality of education can rise above its teacher. Teacher according to Encarta (2009) is defined as a person who teaches, imparts knowledge especially as a profession. Teacher education needs attention if education must continue to soar or have meaning to the society and the learner. That calls for progressive change in African teachers’ education system. Education could become unattractive prospect for learners and non-developmental vision, if it remains stagnant for longer period. Changes are needed to keep the continent on the developmental train bearing in mind ongoing global reconstruction as changes in science and technology become noticeable and unavoidable in humanity. It is therefore expected from government of various countries to attend to issues of teacher training education. According to Forje (2013), challenges facing the continent are summed up by African Union Ministers of Education as:

- i. Capacity building
- ii. Equity and access to education and eliminating disparities
- iii. Quality relevance and effective of education
- iv. Learning modalities and quality management
- v. Service delivery and appropriate utilization of human and natural resources

These challenges emanated from unidirectional educational system on practice since colonisation in Africa. The colonialists have left the continent under the pretext that the countries have gained independent. But it looks to me like donating a goat for sacrifice but the donor refused to let go the rope he/she used in bringing the goat to the shrine. This illustration shows that the donor despite giving out the goat he/she still want to have control



over it. This exposed the way African education runs, that is, education in Africa is still under the influence of colonialists despite the so called independent. The noise about overhauling Africans' education is more than enough, but intent without action has systematically glued the educational system down to the extent that the continent found the process to be obsolete to what will improve the continent. The synergy to fine-tune African education to improve lives should not be embarked upon without cognizance attention to teachers.

Teacher education in most African countries has been greeted with lip service. For instance in Nigeria, teaching profession is for those who want their reward in heaven. They are looked at as those who should live pauperized life in the name of educating other Africans for better life. Adequate attention has not been given to teachers' welfare not to talk about giving needed training which the profession required to function well. In retrospective look at what teacher education was before now, there was proper attention directed towards teacher education. The training then was segmented into training teachers for foundation education, training directed at teachers for secondary and tertiary. These training followed a systematic approach that dissolved into each other so far any teacher developed interest to move further on the ladder of professionalism. For instance the training directed towards teachers in elementary schools contained rudimental content analyses for all the subjects taught in elementary level. A teacher is trained then to teach all the subjects of his class. So during training such trainee must have gone through all what it takes to teach any class in the elementary school system. The foundation of education was laid without promoting mediocrity and thereby turning out first school leavers with adequate educational foundation that could carry them through attaining additional education aiming at what individual students determined to become in life.

It has been observed that policies have affected the gains of education in the continent. Forje (2013) reiterates that education in the country (Cameroon) has yielded both success and failure, which can be attributed to the kind of policies, put in place to achieve development goals. This contribution shows how negative policies can render a step taken in the right direction unproductive. He goes further to add that acknowledging the role and impact of education in the sustainable transformation of the country, not much is done, taking into consideration that the world is now a global village and constitutes the foundation for the global economy of this world. It has been proved beyond doubt that education that runs a nation to its achievement must be well planned and administered. Teacher education is no more what it used to be. Because many untrained individuals found teaching profession as the

last resort for joblessness, the emphasis laid on training teachers in the past has been down played.

Anfo (2013) observes that Ghana's education system was one of the most respected in sub-Saharan Africa. Establishment of schools in Ghana began with slave masters to educate their mulatto children which they had through cross-breeding with African native women. Record shows that in 1529 and 1644 schools were established by Portuguese and Dutch in that order to educate few Ghanaians to better their servitude with slave masters. After the exit of the colonial masters who doubled as slave traders, Ghana government made considerable achievement in education by making it available for all her citizens. For the development in education to be achieved, the Gold Coast Colony Education Department (GCCE) developed a syllabus to care for Early Childhood Education (ECE) after 1930 and children of interested parents were educated with some fees attached. Mission and private philanthropies followed this steps and made education available to people using the developed syllabus. As the schools continue to increase in number, trained teachers became inadequate. Anfo further comments that the number of trained teachers at pre-school level is woefully inadequate. The record shows that only 7.3% of such teachers were trained for that level. Problem of unavailable teachers began to affect the system intended well too.

As time went on the enrolment in schools skyrocketed to subsume the teachers in circulation. Enrolment became 32 pupils to 1 teacher and since the avenue for training more teachers was not created, untrained teachers were employed to substitute for unavailable trained teachers. After independent, steps were taken to overhaul Ghana education, Ghana Education Service was saddled with the responsibility of developing curriculum for basic schools. The curriculum was developed to cover: Language and Literacy, Mathematics, Psycho-social Creative Activities, Health, Nutrition and Safety (Amfo, 2013). Teacher education became so critical for the success of education in Ghana as the system of education develops. As at 2012, there was need for about 29, 817 teachers while only 8, 455 teachers were trained and about to graduate from teacher training institutions. When the vacancy became sporadic to control, Ghana government made a move to employ teachers with education diplomas and teachers who went on study leave without pay and approval were pardon as default to boost and reduce the vacancy in the classrooms. The statistic reveals that dearth of trained teaching personnel continues to soar every-day. Something should be done to douse the collapse tension, but solution seemed not to be in sight then.

With an interview conducted with Theresa Amu and Vida Dare on this issue, as they are both academic staff of University of Education, Winneba Ghana; revealed that most classrooms are crowded with over a hundred pupils with a teacher to teach them. This is ridiculous to move African education forward as proposed in Millennium Development Goal (MDG) for Africa. Presently in Ghana many urban schools lack necessary infrastructure for pupils to use. It is so pathetic to find some pupils sitting on the floor while in class. Theresa Amu decried the situation and called for quick resolution of the decadence.

After independent in Nigeria, the forward movement in education has witnessed a doldrums. Like in Ghana colonial master built the first school in Badagry Nigeria in 1849 with the goal of educating the indigenous children. The schools were championed by religious missions and it was tailored to fulfill the three 'R's, that is Reading, Writing and Arithmetic. These school graduates were meant to feature as interpreters and school teachers. The colonialists from inception trivialized the issue of teacher training education from the beginning. The foundation has been built upon till date and instead to follow the ideal the opposite continues to witch-hunt it. The Federal Republic of Nigeria Educational Data Bank (FRNEDB) reveals that that there were as many as 12, 721,087 enrolment of primary school pupils between 1989 and 1990, 13, 776, 854 between 1992 and 1992 while between 1993 and 1994 there were 15, 870, 280 pupils that registered. The data reveals further that between 1985 and 1990 the enrolment started to dwindle, by 2015 over 12 million children in Nigeria are out of school. This is a serious matter to be addressed, people everyday get married, work hard to remove stigma of childlessness and they end up bringing to life children without preparing for their education. This is African mentality that dominates how child birth is addressed. All these children both legitimate and illegitimate have right to be educated but no one prepares for their future. Teachers are in short supply in Nigeria. Some schools observed in Ilaro, Abeokuta, Lagos, Ibadan and Port Harcourt, Winneba in Ghana show the true picture of how schools are over populated with few teachers to teach is peculiar to both countries.

### **Teachers' Plight and Creative Arts**

Cultural and Creative Art (CCA) is the integration of peoples' way of life with visual and performing art as one subject to be taught in schools. The subject as it is in Nigeria is meant to be taught in basic 9 that is class 1 to 6 and Junior Secondary School (JSS) 1 to 3 while in Ghana it is called Psycho-Social Creative Activities. Like what was mentioned in the earlier part of this paper teaching in primary school needs a special pedagogical training. Teacher to

be trained for this segment of education should taught rudimental knowledge of all subjects that are taught in basic six because such teacher mans the whole class and teaches all the subjects. The old primary school teacher is expected to be master in all subjects of the primary school. Despite this herculean task these teachers are saddled with, they are not enough.

When I compared what goes on in primary education sectors in Nigeria and Ghana, I found that in few schools visited there are more pupils to the ratio of teacher. The policy on education stipulates that the number of pupil a teacher can adequately oversee should not exceed 35. In the observation a teacher is made to man a class of 70 pupils, 80 pupils and 100pupils depending on where such school is situated. The urban schools are worst hit by this trend. The infrastructural provisions are also overstretched, some students have no seat, no learning materials the learners were so disenchanted to a pitiable situation when one sees them learning under hatch condition that stifles learning from taking place. The chat below reveals what has been in operation for some decades in Nigeria’s public schools. This situation continues to witness a retrogressive approach as time progresses.

**Table1. Primary school enrolment at a glance over a decade ago**

ENROLMENT	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	PUPIL/TEACHER RATIO	% FEMALE TEACHER	% MALE TEACHER
1996-1999	13,776,854	11,721,087	25,497,941	34:1	57.6	42.4
2000-2006	2, 861,960	3,981,671	6,843,631	32:1	50.8	49.2
2006-2012	8,335,699	9,145,732	17,481,431	71:1	62.4	37.6

**This data was developed from Federal**

**Government of Nigeria Education Data**

Looking at all these analyses, we are convinced of the problem in schools. Nigeria and Ghana are used as test case in West Africa so as to get the true picture of school situations. The changing educational policy and curriculum has not brought any redefined attempt to revamp the education systems in most African countries. At this point I will like to narrow down the focus on teacher education to Nigeria. Teacher education received its boost in Nigeria between 1979 and 1985 when many teacher training colleges were established to cater for ever increasing enrolment of primary school pupils, the process of which I’m a product. Teachers were trained and posted to resume work immediately without any

application to remedy the ever growing enrolment. The orientation during training was superb to the extent that none of them thought of making attempt to jump the gun into another profession. The training prepared them to teach in primary school. They were taught rudimental knowledge of all the subjects found operating in Nigeria's primary schools. Teachers were adequately teaching even subjects that were considered to be for talented ones conveniently such art and craft. Though many teachers then may not be able to draw very well, but during the training we were all taught how to draw with the method needed to teach it in classroom. The primary school system was running well to mean that if that trend had been corroborated well the story would have been uhuru over from illiteracy.

The straw that broke the camel's back was made in 1986 when accelerated teacher training education was abrogated abruptly and many teacher training schools were short down, the existing student teachers who were still undergoing training were merged to complete their training. The then Grade II teacher education stopped and some of these regular institutions where the training takes place were turned into secondary schools while some were abandoned till now. Since this time, teacher education for primary school was proposed for Colleges of Education. This is where the problem started from. Minimum qualification for a teacher or would be teacher was pegged at certificate from college of education or what is nationally recognised as Nigeria Certificate of Education (NCE). All teachers were mandated to upgrade themselves from minimum grade II certificate expected of a teacher in primary school previously to NCE. This was done and camouflaged a boost in standard of teachers, but as the generations of teachers with initial grade II certificates are fading away into retirement the new entrants with NCE became maladjusted in their approach because the curriculum used to train them had secondary school as the teaching focus. This step resulted into bastardization of primary school system from what it used to be. The teacher who was trained as specialist in two courses is now made to teach all subjects for a class in primary school including Cultural and Creative Arts (CCA) that requires special skill training. This trend has been on for more than a decade but now the inadequacy of the policy begins to tell on the educational process of pupils in primary school. CCA is a skill oriented subject that must be taught by an expert not by using a text book by novice teachers. A CCA teacher does not see the teaching of the subject as an obligation for him/her but there must a developed ability to impart theory along with the skill. This therefore requires adequate content and skill acquisitions from the teacher. The skill in CCA involves drawing, making designs of different sort, molding, acting, dancing and exhibiting cultural lineal of Africans.

For this and other reasons, the teaching of CCA at foundation level should be addressed unequivocally so as to redeem the lost legacy of Africans and that the process of African identity can be indelibly etched in the mind of these upcoming generations who will automatically fade-in when this present generation fades-out.

## **Conclusion**

This paper has looked holistically at primary education and its process. Primary education in Ghana and Nigeria has been put in the test tube to ascertain their merit and areas needing adjustment. Education at foundation level has not been given proper attention now as it used to be few decades ago. This does not suggest that the standard is falling but the policy guiding the process has been defocused from the need thereby moribund the process. Regular calls for curriculum review at times when elementary education shows symptoms of ailment did not allow for the identification of the problem contending with its success. It is obvious that the policy stipulating the caliber of teachers and the process of teaching in elementary schools must be revisited to meet up with the extant demand of elementary education. The shaky foundation determines the look of the structure built on it. Revamping the process of education in elementary schools and the teaching staff can take a refined model of what took place years ago with technological enhancement. This requires retraining of teachers at regular intervals to forestall the expected quality that competes favourably with the larger world. The training should not be selective to the detriment of other subjects as it has been observed. The need for more qualified and licensed teachers cannot be over stretched by argument but it is a right step in the right direction. Education should be divorced from political promises but as an essential right to all. The fund earmarked for education and educational execution should be made to follow the recommendation of the United Nations Educational, Science and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) for developing nations like Nigeria, Ghana and other African countries. Teacher posted to primary school should be sure to have training that allows for competence. Government should fast-track and focus attention on infrastructural development of primary schools. Specialization teaching should be made compulsory now in primary school so as to better the administration of knowledge from what it is right now. What the primary education system feeds other higher systems will determine the trend and standard of education in Nigeria and elsewhere in Africa.

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