

# PART I

The Report of the Seminar

## SEMINAR WORKING PAPER

### Background

The 1969 Meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers instructed the Secretary-General to examine the feasibility of a series of studies on the problems of youth. As a result, surveys were conducted in Africa and in the Caribbean, and these were followed by regional seminars held in Nairobi and Port of Spain, the reports of which were widely distributed. At their Meeting in January 1971 the Commonwealth Heads of Government noted with approval the Secretariat's activities in the youth field and agreed that such activities be expanded; they further decided that a meeting of Ministers concerned with Youth matters be convened as early as possible, "to review the whole complex of youth problems, with particular reference to the problems of unemployment". Two weeks after the 1971 Heads of Government Meeting, Commonwealth Ministers of Education at the Fifth Commonwealth Education Conference recommended that the proposed meeting of Ministers concerned with youth matters should be preceded by a meeting of appropriate Commonwealth officials.

2. In August 1971 a regional seminar for Asia and the Pacific was organised, the report of which was published and distributed.

3. The meeting now proposed will complete the series and ensure that every Commonwealth country will have had the opportunity of discussing the problems of youth and development prior to the Meeting of Officials (to be held in London in June 1972) and the subsequent Meeting of Ministers (to be held in Zambia before the end of 1972).

## AGENDA ITEM 1: YOUTH IN SOCIETY

"Youth" problems, especially in the developing countries of the Commonwealth, rarely originate in factors intrinsic to young people. These problems, social, economic, educational and political, result from developments and changes which are taking place in countries with predominantly youthful populations. Problems of development and societal change have come to appear as problems predominantly concerning young people. In reviewing "the whole complex of youth problems", then, it is important to examine the relationship to young people of their societies.

2. Consideration should be given to a definition of "youth". Youth may be a matter more of status than of age; the point at which adulthood is achieved may be changing, or likely to change.

3. Societal attitudes towards youth should be examined, the status and ranking of young people, their mobility within their society, the restrictions placed upon them, differences between various groups of young people.

4. The changing patterns of society and resultant modifications in attitudes form an essential background to any discussion of policy for youth. Significant changes are taking place in population size, age distribution within populations, population distribution as between rural and urban areas.

5. Physical factors, too, affect young people comprehensively; the physical environment and nutrition mould attitudes as well as physique. The impact of "instant" communication can serve to raise aspirations and demonstrate unequivocally to the less privileged the extent of their deprivation.

6. The increasing uncertainty of older members of the community about their established mores transfers itself to their successors, contributing to the current problems of disillusion, disengagement and delinquency, manifested in destructive actions (such as drug-taking, violence to self and others) and mental illness.

7. Solutions may be sought in:

- (a) greater participation by young people in the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes

which will affect their future;

- (b) improved material conditions;
- (c) improved systems of education and training;
- (d) improved channels of communication, both vertically and horizontally within a society.

8. Means to achieve these solutions will probably start with:

- (a) the accumulation and analysis of data;
- (b) the undertaking of selected research;
- (c) the early demonstration of concern by the authorities on a scale commensurate with the problem.

## AGENDA ITEM II: EDUCATION AND TRAINING

### The formal system

In most member countries the formal school system absorbs a major proportion of the public revenue while occasioning increasing doubts about its effectiveness. Policy-makers need guidance in clarifying the purpose envisaged for formal education and the functions which formal education can, in fact, perform; whether, for example, the school is conceived as an institution for the general education of children, as a prevocational training unit or as a "community centre."

2. Upon these decisions, which are essentially political in their nature, will rest consequential considerations of staffing patterns, buildings, equipment, curriculum and financing.

3. Planning and administration must then also take into account strategies for implementing policies.

4. The most appropriate means of undertaking vocational and technical education (see also Agenda Item III) call for consideration, including the practicability of promoting rural occupations.

5. The effect of external influences on formal education (through the imposition of international "standards", or by

examining bodies) require assessment and policy decisions.

6. The quality, status and role of teachers should also be a matter of prime concern.

7. The role of the universities and other higher level institutions should also be considered. Their future pattern will vary according to the extent to which they seek to function as instruments of national development.

#### Out of school education

8. The broad area of out of school education (see also Agenda Items III and IV) has so far attracted least attention and hence least finance, yet it may be that the most effective means of improving education facilities lies in this direction.

9. Programmes directed to

adults,  
minority groups,  
those who have completed educational courses,  
the unschooled,  
school drop-outs

through non-formal educational structures may help to meet the demand for education and further education at realistic costs. Redeployment of resources within the overall field of education may be necessary.

#### Training

10. In the formal educational system institutions which provide some form of vocational training include

primary and secondary schools,  
universities,  
training colleges,  
commercial and technical schools,  
craft schools,

trade centres,  
technical institutes,  
polytechnics,  
rural training centres.

11. Provision outside the formal educational system includes apprenticeships in the traditional and modern sectors of the economy,  
industrial training schemes,  
in-service training,  
the armed services,  
settlement schemes,  
some youth services, clubs and associations, courses and the mass media,  
learning on the job.

12. Little co-ordination of this wide range of facilities yet exists in most countries, so that consideration of means to achieve maximum efficiency within the varied provision might be given high priority.

13. Improved systems of manpower planning would provide a valuable source of reference for educational planners, who would then be able to assess the precise role which each type of facility can play most efficiently.

14. Throughout the educational structure, effective means of selection, testing, measurement and prognosis for participants are essential to the optimum use of limited resources.

15. Reliable methods of programme evaluation could provide evidence on which revisions and further progress might be based. The development of appropriate means of assessment and of units for their development, validation and administration might be considered a priority undertaking in most areas.

### AGENDA ITEM III: EMPLOYMENT

The problem of unemployed school leavers was noted on

the international level as long ago as the Addis Ababa Conference in 1961, since when the scale of the difficulty has multiplied many times. Solutions, however, have proved singularly evasive.

2. Most developing countries are hindered by the existence of a dual economy for government and private employment; most are restricted in their flexibility by heavy reliance on a limited range of exports; all are subject to the forces of international trading patterns. Meanwhile the output from the educational systems grows as the result of increased facilities for an increasing population. Decreasing the rate of population growth has been accepted as a priority aim by many governments, but the effects of such programmes will be apparent only in the medium and long term.

3. Solutions depend on increasing the rate of economic growth and the rate of employment generation in both the modern and traditional sectors.

4. Economic growth may be helped by such factors as  
increased investments,  
diversification of production,  
a greater number of more accessible markets,  
training directly related to employment opportunities.

5. Increased absorption of labour might be assisted by such means as

the development of appropriate technology and efficient labour-intensive techniques,  
the subdivision of production to the maximum number of small-scale and individual enterprises,  
the encouragement of expansion in the service occupations,  
the employment of more people for shorter hours, (i.e. planned underemployment).

6. Some attention might well be given to  
the provision of vocational guidance,  
the means by which job-vacancies are made known,

procedures by which selections for employment are made.

7. For many countries the provision of employment in the rural areas presents a serious problem. The extent to which rural development is a realistic objective could usefully be discussed. The lack of appeal of rural occupations resulting from such factors as poor financial returns, low status and inadequate facilities, might be assessed. Attention might be given to the role of youth services, youth clubs (such as Young Farmers' Clubs) and settlement schemes in generating satisfying employment. Consideration might also be given to factors limiting the opportunities for young people in rural areas, such as land tenure systems, pressure on land, inadequate communications, poor storage and marketing facilities, and traditional attitudes towards young people.

8. Despite the general bias of new investment towards urban areas, the problem of urban unemployment continues to occasion concern to member countries for social, economic and political reasons. The development of apprenticeships, small-scale self-employment, service occupations, "urban settlement schemes" and voluntary co-operative activities should be considered, together with the desirability of governmental prices and wages policies weighted to encourage maximum labour absorption commensurate with efficiency.

9. Means might be considered for the improvement of manpower planning techniques and the development of appropriate means of evaluating the progress of programmes designed to generate employment opportunities.

10. The methods by which external assistance might best be used to advantage might be discussed.

#### AGENDA ITEM IV: YOUTH IN THE SERVICE OF COMMUNITIES

Young people need to feel that they are playing a purposeful role in a sympathetic and satisfying environment. Where there exist poor physical facilities and inadequate opportunities, the provision of opportunities for community service, as well as for recreation and leisure, may help to maintain young people's confidence in their society and restrain reactions leading to unrest.



2. In planning youth programmes, the needs and possibilities of particular groups of young people should be carefully assessed. Provision should be considered to meet the needs of clearly defined groups,

urban and rural,  
at various levels of education,  
employed and unemployed,  
with and without stable families,  
with and without problems of physical and mental health.

3. Community service includes voluntary service (including service to other groups of young people unable to help themselves) by both employed and unemployed young people. It also includes activities promoted by schools and other educational institutions. In addition to specific projects by organised groups, service can be rendered by individual or group participation in community activities.

4. Provision for recreation and leisure includes non-formal educational opportunities of a non-vocational character as well as sporting facilities and organised youth groups and societies. Such provision might be considered against the background of deprivation and disadvantage, especially in urban areas, and should include remedial and corrective training.

5. The recruitment, training and status of youth workers merits close attention, as does the development of a cadre of expert trainers to conduct courses for higher level youth workers and group and club leaders. The possibility of interdisciplinary training of youth workers and similar professionals in third-level institutions might be explored, as might the desirability of creating dual-function teacher/social workers who could promote closer liaison between institutions and communities.

#### AGENDA ITEM V: PROGRAMMES FOR ACTION

Youth problems have been subject to frequent definition and explanation; the overriding need now is to use this material as the basis for policy determination.

2. The scale of the problem and the limited resources available indicate the desirability of governments considering how best to accept general responsibility for all forms of formal and out of school education, in co-ordination with the other agencies involved.
3. Administrative machinery should be designed to cater to the needs of revised systems of policy formulation and implementation. Consideration should be given, for example, to the formation of inter-Ministerial links for the promotion of a common policy regarding youth problems; Ministries likely to be involved directly would include those responsible for Agriculture; Commerce; Trade and Industries; Culture; Youth and Sports; Economic Planning; Education; Health; Information; Labour; Local Government and Social Welfare.
4. Attention could usefully be paid to past experience, with an attempt to assess reasons for success and failure, especially in terms of maintaining the enthusiasm and confidence of those involved in programmes.
5. Priorities should be considered, including those with results only in the long term (such as family planning programmes) and those with short-term returns (such as youth services).
6. Priorities, too, should be established as to which groups of the population should be catered for, in what way and at what level. The relative merits need to be considered of, for example,
  - youth and adults,
  - schooled and unschooled,
  - rural and urban,
  - healthy and handicapped.
7. Similarly, priorities should be worked out as between
  - general education,
  - vocational education,
  - literacy,
  - initial training and retraining,
  - formal and non-formal provision.

8. Provision for remedial work and special attention to particular groups should be considered.

9. If only limited provision is currently possible, policy should be devised for the upward mobility of individuals through later developments in programmes.

10. Planning and evaluation of all programmes should be discussed. Such aspects as the degree of dependence on extra-national co-operation and the effects of aid on national education and employment programmes could usefully be considered, as could the identification of new sources of finance and incentives to self-help.

11. The need is frequently reaffirmed for much increased information exchange throughout the Commonwealth. This may be achieved through meetings, visits, exchanges, secondments and attachments, and occasional and regular publications.

12. Secondly, there is the need for assistance in the planning and evaluation of projects and programmes, in training and financing (including the preparation of applications for external help).

13. Thirdly, means might be discussed for increased mutual support among Commonwealth members in such fields as export market promotion and the presentation of matters of common interest in international circles.

14. Appropriate forms of co-operation in meeting the diversity of needs might be considered, including the role of the Commonwealth Secretariat as a direct participant and as a point of reference for countries developing bilateral and multilateral programmes.

## SUMMARY OF MAIN IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS

### YOUTH AND SOCIETY

1. The rate of social change in Cyprus is less rapid than that observed in many of the developing countries.
2. The nature of the society is patriarchal and close-knit; the influences of the family, religion, school and social sanctions continue to operate in a way which maintains the status quo.
3. Though young people are not vociferous in their demands for change, there is increasing concern on their part about their role in the society. Such concern is likely to lead to a re-evaluation of traditional values.
4. The greatest "threat" to the power of the family, the school and the Church as the major social influences is posed by the mass media. It was recommended that the media be controlled in such a way as to ensure propagation of "desirable" values only.

### From youth to adult

5. The adoption of a variety of criteria for ascribing adult status to young people leads to a schizo-phrenic self-image on the part of young people who, in one situation, might be expected to act with adult responsibility and in another might be treated as children.
6. Criteria used, alongside physiological and psychological factors, include entry into employment, marriage, national service, franchise and responsibility in law.
7. The prolongation of education to tertiary level has a delaying effect on the achievement of adult status since a student remains financially dependent on others during this period.
8. A young 'drop-out' who has entered employment may be considered an adult in some respects, particularly if he is in a position to contribute to the family budget.

## Social interaction

9. There exists a communication gap between the elders of the society and the young people. Since little doubt is felt by the elders about the desirability of and rationale for the mores transferred by them to their children, the need for assistance to be given to the parents to enable them to understand young people's outlook and vice-versa is evident.
10. If the elders and young people are brought together in the hope that mutual understanding and co-operation will ensue, a sound strategy for achieving this aim must be developed; confrontation might otherwise lead to nothing more than a hardening of positions.
11. In addition to joint activities between older and younger people, an expansion of the adult education programme might help to reduce the "knowledge gap" which constitutes a part of the generation gap.
12. Recreational facilities for young people are inadequate. In many areas, social interaction among young people is limited to activities taking place within the family, the Church and the school. Opportunities and facilities for young people to mix with others of the opposite sex are even more limited. The provision of more facilities, including youth clubs, is an urgent priority. Though ultimately mixed youth clubs are highly desirable, clubs might initially be mixed at least on a part-time basis.
13. Though responsibility for providing recreational facilities for young people lies with the Government, industry should be encouraged to assist.

## Participation

14. Though young people proved their willingness and ability to take an active part in the development of their country during the struggle for independence, young people today are not given responsibilities in decision-making, planning or implementation of policy either at the national level or at the village level.

15. The elders of the society should be made aware of the potential contribution of young people in community and national development.
16. In Cyprus as elsewhere the media tend to advertise the more negative and undesirable aspects of the life of young people. Efforts must be made to bring to the public's attention the more positive qualities of young people.

### Co-ordination

17. Lack of co-ordination among government departments, among voluntary organisations and between these two groups has led to duplication and overlapping of programmes for youth. The Government's proposal to establish a semi-official committee, with representation from interested Ministries and voluntary organisations, was welcomed.
18. It was hoped that, in addition to co-ordinating on-going activities, the Committee would also give attention to the planning, implementation and evaluation of programmes to meet those needs which are neglected at present.
19. Detailed studies of youth problems and needs are required if planning for youth and development is to be efficiently undertaken.

### Priority groups

20. Particular efforts should be made to study the problems of (a) young people living in villages; (b) young women and girls; (c) young people who do not enter secondary school. Special attention should be given to provision for these groups which are particularly "under-privileged".

### EDUCATION AND TRAINING

21. The school is regarded as an extension of the family in the socialisation process. In view of the strict authoritarianism of the traditional family way of life, it might be desirable for the school to play a complementary, compensatory role rather than to exert a further repressive influence.

22. The re-orientation of teachers, with particular reference to methodology, should be considered a priority need.
23. The gap between theory and practice as evidenced in the formal education system can only be rectified by a re-appraisal of the system and continuing revision thereafter.
24. Since society is dynamic, its education system should be dynamic, and should, moreover, take into account the fact that the education purveyed is intended to equip a youngster for life in a society which continues to change.
25. There is need for much better articulation between the different parts of the education system.
26. At the secondary level there is need for diversification of the curriculum so as to give greater emphasis to technical and vocational orientations.
27. There would appear to be need for re-orientation and training of classical graduates so as to enable them to become gainfully employed.
28. Greater provision should be made for career guidance at relevant stages of the education system.
29. The imbalance between formal and out-of-school education should be corrected by increased provision of the latter.
30. The introduction of the first phase of free secondary education for all was warmly approved.

### EMPLOYMENT

31. Though unemployment in Cyprus is not as widespread as in many other countries, a large proportion (42%) of those unemployed are under the age of 25. Certain factors have contributed to the unemployment problem:
  - (a) the formal education system has classical, non-vocational foundations;
  - (b) there is widespread prejudice against manual labour and unskilled work;

- (c) the employer is in a strong position to exploit the workers;
  - (d) the size of the employment market is small;
  - (e) the manpower and economic needs of the country are changing at a faster pace than training facilities can be provided;
  - (f) there is a lack of co-ordination among the different bodies involved in education, training, and employment;
  - (g) a 'closed shop' tendency is evident in some areas of employment.
32. The young unemployed include not only untrained and unqualified youngsters but also an increasing number of secondary school and university graduates. If a large proportion of young people continue to receive a general classical education the problems of absorption into employment will increase. Opportunities for re-training are therefore urgently required.
33. At the same time there exists a need for 11,000 manual and skilled workers in industry. The answer, however, is not simply the provision of training courses. There exists on the parts of both children and parents a deep-rooted prejudice towards manual and technical work.

#### Vocational guidance

34. There is an urgent need for the co-ordination and improvement of the vocational guidance services of the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Education. Such services should be linked to manpower planning.
35. The vocational guidance services should be expanded in order that all young people might be advised at an early stage as to the most appropriate direction their studies should take. Such guidance should be available at a stage in the school career at which changes are still possible.



36. On leaving school young people should receive further advice and guidance about available employment opportunities.
37. Vocational guidance and employment services should involve parents, employers and teachers as well as young people in an effort to change attitudes to certain types of work.
38. Greater co-ordination is necessary between educational planners, employers and economic planners.
39. The under-employment and seasonal unemployment of workers in agriculture is a cause for concern and should be studied with a view to matching employment needs to available labour supply.
40. Special attention should be given to the problem of female unemployment.

## YOUTH IN THE SERVICE OF COMMUNITIES

### Co-ordination and co-operation

41. Though overall responsibility for youth programmes should lie with the Government, there is also a role for voluntary organisations, the Church and the political parties.
42. The proposed co-ordinating committee would, it was hoped, be responsible for drawing up policy for youth, for encouraging youth participation in community development activities, for planning and evaluating programmes.

### Voluntary organisations

43. Government support should be given to the voluntary organisations. Such support should include finance, land, building permission, etc.

### Youth leaders

44. There is a lack of trained youth leaders to encourage young people to use their initiative in developing projects. Such training should preferably take place

in the home country, and appropriate training courses should be organised.

45. In view of the difficulties likely to be encountered in persuading the elders of the society to entrust the welfare of their young to a new kind of agency in the process of socialisation, it is essential that those selected for training should have a highly developed sensitivity to social change.

### Participation

46. There is a need for youth to be involved at national level to demonstrate their ability to other young people and to their elders. Status has to be won.
47. Youth should be involved in decision-making at all levels. In villages, where it is the practice for young people to perform only the "donkey work" in implementing ideas, an opportunity should be given to young people to serve on the village councils as equals.
48. The constructive activities of young people should be given greater publicity, if possible by giving youth an opportunity to make itself heard via the mass media. The establishment of a youth bulletin might give further support.
49. Youth associations and activities should be based on youth interests and preferences and should not be prescribed by the elders. Young people should be given more opportunity to plan and organise their own activities and programmes.