

PART I

The Report of the Seminar

THE ROLE OF YOUTH
IN THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

OBJECTIVES AND GUIDELINES FOR DISCUSSION

For the purpose of this Seminar "youth" was
understood to comprise the age-group
12 - 25 years

I. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Seminar were:

- (1) To bring together the thinking and experience of persons actively engaged in youth work in the Commonwealth countries of Asia and the Pacific and to produce for the guidance of policy-makers a report which will be of use:
 - (a) to encourage and assist governments in formulating or revising their policy for youth and in promoting long-term plans and immediate action in this field;
 - (b) to encourage non-governmental organisations active in the field of youth to further develop programmes which will seek to bring about a conscious involvement of young people in the development process and provide for the social needs of out-of-school youth;
 - (c) to foster the interest of commerce and industry in the education and training of out-of-school youth as a contributory factor in economic growth and the development of human resources.
- (2) To encourage co-operation in the field of youth activities through the exchange of information and expertise, by direct professional contacts, and by any other appropriate means.
- (3) To consider how Commonwealth countries might best co-operate in the youth field.

All Seminar groups were asked to determine the most appropriate action which may be taken at national, regional or international level as it related to any of the topics dealt with.

II. GUIDELINES FOR DISCUSSION

It was suggested that discussion should fall under three main heads:

- A. Basic considerations;
- B. The determination of policy;
- C. The implementation of programmes.

A. BASIC CONSIDERATIONS

Identification of the problems

1. What are the major problems affecting young people?
2. How far are the problems common to all, and in what ways are they different for:
 - (a) young people in urban areas, and
 - (b) young people in rural areas?

In considering these two groups, some attention should be given to young people who lack educational or health facilities as well as those whose alienation from their society results in anti-social activities (for example, delinquency) or self-destructive activities (for example, drug-addiction).

3. In general, what are the needs and aspirations of out-of-school youth in the countries of Asia and the Pacific?

Problems of opportunity and involvement

4. Are young people able to participate directly in national development programmes, at the level of decision-making as well as implementation? If not, how may this best be achieved?
5. To what extent is there a problem created by a lack of opportunity for the involvement of young people with adults in policy-making, planning and implementation of programmes for youth?

Restrictive factors

6. How far are development hopes in these regions restricted by the hard facts of economics, politics and sociology, and how far can these limiting factors be modified?

Employment

7. What are the employment opportunities for young people and how are young people affected by the employment situation?

Planning priorities

8. In planning for young people, should any specific sector of out-of-school youth receive priority?

Formal and informal education

9. What should be the relationship between the formal education system and out-of-school education and training?
10. What should be the relative priorities in expenditure on programmes for out-of-school youth and the formal educational system?

B. THE DETERMINATION OF POLICY

Social development of youth

11. What are the major resources in money, manpower and organisation for the support and social development of youth? From which sources can the needs best be met?
12. How can best use be made of the resources available for the support and social development of youth?

Employment of youth

13. What are the major resources in money, manpower and organisation for the creation of employment opportunities for youth in the countries of Asia and the Pacific? What are the most hopeful sources for the supply of these needs?
14. How can the employment prospects of the young be improved?
15. How far can the employment situation in each country be affected by training programmes of various kinds for young people?
16. How should the employment situation affect the content and objectives of these training programmes?
17. What can be done to enhance the status of rural occupations, especially farming?

Control and co-ordination of youth programmes

18. To whom should the overall administrative responsibility for youth programmes be entrusted?
19. What should be the respective roles of governmental and non-official agencies in youth programmes?
20. How best can co-ordination be achieved among youth programmes?

C. THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PROGRAMMES

(To be discussed with reference to youth in (a) urban and (b) rural areas)

Training needs

21. What are the training needs of young people? What forms of training and youth activities are most appropriate to these needs?
22. Where should training activities be located? In the work place? In purpose-built institutions?
23. What distinctive role can be served by a National Youth Service or similar systems, such as national youth camps, for extended intensive training?

Follow-up to programmes

24. What provision can be made for the follow-up which is essential after training?
25. What place should settlement schemes have in the follow-up to youth training programmes? In what circumstances are they appropriate and effective? What are the major administrative and sociological problems?

Content of training programmes

26. To what extent should training programmes take account of current employment opportunities and prospects?
27. What is the desirable balance between vocational and non-vocational elements in training activities?
28. What role is there for social youth programmes?

Programmes for women and girls

29. What special kinds of programmes should be devised to cater for the needs of young women and girls?

Youth workers

30. What contribution to the youth programme can be made by an effective system of selection, recruitment, training, assessment and deployment of youth workers, both full-time and voluntary?

Widening the appeal of youth programmes

31. How can the activities of youth workers be planned so as to reach those young people for whom conventional youth programmes have little appeal?

The young delinquent

32. How can youth programmes contribute to the rehabilitation of young offenders against the law?

Involving "educated" youth

33. How can activities be arranged to involve "educated" youth in upper secondary and higher education in youth activities which contribute to national community development as well as personal development?

SUMMARY OF MAIN IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS

BASIC CONSIDERATIONS

Identification of the problems

1. "Youth" problems are not essentially problems of youth, but problems of national development in countries with mainly youthful populations.
2. Despite the many differences among countries and between young people of varying backgrounds, certain major problems are common to all.
3. Rapid social change has left young people bereft of their traditional place and with few guides towards a new one.
4. Economic changes often result in inequity, declining standards for many, and disillusion for most.
5. Formal education as at present conceived prepares its pupils inefficiently, as well as for indefinite ends, and raises aspirations without providing the means by which they can be realised.
6. The potential political threat represented by youthful populations can best be met by providing opportunities for young people to participate in decision-making.

The needs and aspirations of out-of-school youth

7. The needs and aspirations of out-of-school youth differ among different groups. The common factor is an awareness of deprivation.
8. The concept of "youth" often relates more to low status than to chronological age.

Problems of opportunity and involvement

9. Identification of representative young people to speak and act on behalf of their fellows is relatively simple at levels up to that of the city, but much more difficult at national level.

10. "Token" representation is generally unsatisfactory, although holders of "token" posts frequently acquire considerable influence among their peers.

11. In many activities, social, political and economic factors inhibit the full participation of young people.

Planning priorities for out-of-school youth

12. When planning priorities for out-of-school youth the distinction must be drawn between priorities in terms of persons in urgent need and activities meriting attention.

13. Persons deserving priority include young people in need of basic care, schooling or employment; school drop-outs; women and girls; rural dwellers; urban immigrants; and members of specific ethnic or social groups.

14. Activities meriting attention include the compilation of a clear picture of the youth situation in each country, including problems, gaps in provision, and training and employment needs, followed by the creation of national short- and long-term policies.

15. Policies, to be fully implemented, will require the involvement of new sectors in the community, particularly commerce and industry.

16. Provision for youth should be an integral component of national development planning and should take into consideration more than merely economic factors.

17. In the absence of greatly increased allocations for youth programmes additional funds could be generated by increased efficiency in the use of the existing provision.

Formal and informal education

18. Changes in the formal educational structure depend primarily upon political feasibility.

19. To be meaningful, education should reach towards a defined objective, that of securing an informed and cohesive society willing to co-operate in controlled change.

20. Vocational training is inappropriate to first-level schools.

21. The school can revise its role and increase its effectiveness without losing its tradition by such means as more intensive use of school plant, a more enlightened use of professional and voluntary staff, and the involvement of industry, commerce and the community at large in its activities.

22. The discriminating use of educational technology is to be commended.

23. Educational provision for out-of-school youth should be widely promoted, redressing the present imbalance between formal and informal education.

Employment

24. The unemployed school leaver represents waste in educational provision, economic potential and social well-being.

25. Educational provision should not be linked solely to forecasts of employment opportunities.

26. The social and psychological effects of unemployment should not be underestimated.

27. Employment is more than having a job. The problems of providing suitable employment vary with social back-ground and attitudes.

THE DETERMINATION OF POLICY

28. Young people are often judged by double standards. This results in tension, confusion and deepened misunderstanding between older and younger people.

29. Social development may involve conceding to young people the right to influence society towards changes which their elders may find unacceptable.

30. The goals of social development are particular to each society.

31. Resources for social development of young people should be managed by one Ministry with guidance from an inter-Ministerial committee.

32. The effectiveness of programmes for youth depends on the quality of the teachers and youth workers. The declining status of teachers in some countries, therefore, is a matter for concern. Measures to reverse this trend should be given high priority.

33. The proposed Commonwealth Specialist Conference on teacher education was welcomed.

34. More effective methods of training youth workers should be devised, taking into account the need for follow-up and retraining at intervals.

Employment of youth

35. The development of many countries is hindered by current trends in the patterns of world trade. The solution may be in a more concerted approach by these countries. The potential role of the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation in the field of export promotion was welcomed.

36. Financial resources for the creation of employment opportunities cannot be exclusively a national responsibility.

37. The Seminar agreed in principle with the untying of aid within the limits of political feasibility.

38. The Seminar noted that few aid donors are able in any one year to commit all funds earmarked for this purpose.

39. Resources, in terms of money and personnel, for the promotion of employment opportunities should be sought from as wide a range as possible of potential contributors.

40. Local skills should be used for the creation of job opportunities through the participation of entrepreneurs, craftsmen and farmers.

41. While strategy remains the prerogative of central governments, policy implementation for employment promotion should involve public and voluntary organisations, trade and commercial bodies, and young people themselves.

42. The development of suitable technologies can help in increasing employment opportunities. Universities should help in the design and development of intermediate technology.

43. Self-employment should be encouraged. Entrepreneurial skills should be developed. The Commonwealth Secretariat should publicise instances of successful training and establishment of entrepreneurs. Management skills need to be improved.

44. The service occupations offer an area of potential employment unexplored by many countries.

45. The undertaking of training by industry is a social responsibility not to be avoided.

46. Tourism does not bring undivided benefits. The Commonwealth Secretariat report on the development of the tourist industry in member countries was noted.

47. Education and training for young people should not be planned on too short a time scale or related too inflexibly to manpower forecasts.

48. The Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation may provide a useful source for the organisation, evaluation and revision of manpower surveys.

49. Training programmes for youth should be devised on a more ambitious scale than hitherto as part of a comprehensive attack on unemployment.

50. Rural-based activities offer the most encouraging area for growth in employment opportunities.

51. The development of "market towns" could help to transform the rural situation through the provision of amenities outside the major cities and opportunities for self-employment and employment in occupations based on agriculture.

Enhancing the status of rural occupations

52. The status of rural occupations will rise only when the rewards can be equated with those obtainable elsewhere.

53. Status is increasingly related to income, and activities should be instituted to raise income levels. These might include better servicing of farmers' needs (agricultural and financial) and the rationalisation of land tenure.

54. Young Farmers' Clubs are commended as a useful avenue of direct participation by young people and a source of leadership and training.

55. Equality of formal educational opportunity for rural children is not necessarily best achieved by positive discrimination. Better quality staff and more appropriate textbooks could do much to raise standards.

56. The Seminar welcomed the possibility of the Commonwealth Secretariat undertaking research and organising meetings on the increasingly important topics of testing, selection and measurement with specific reference to children in disadvantaged situations.

Control and co-ordination of youth programmes

57. National governments should assume responsibility for general policy regarding youth programmes, although non-government organisations will have much to offer in terms of implementation.

58. A national machinery should be established to control and co-ordinate youth policies and programmes. Representatives of this body should have direct access to points of political power and decision-making.

59. Effective administration of programmes should be ensured at local and regional levels, where the organisation is most likely to break down.

60. The lack of material explaining suitable methods of evaluating youth programmes could be met by the Commonwealth Secretariat producing a basic, practical handbook on this subject.

61. Supervision of the implementation of national youth programmes can best be ensured through a genuinely representative and executive National Youth Council.

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PROGRAMMES

Training needs

62. Youth training programmes should help young people to develop into well-integrated and active participants in the life

of their societies through the development of skills, values and attitudes as well as knowledge.

63. Responsibility is best learned on the job.

64. Training should be directed at short-term goals set in the wider context of long-term national objectives.

65. Programmes should be directed towards: the development of the individual; counselling and guidance; vocational training; citizenship; the satisfying use of leisure.

66. Programmes should include elements of social, political and vocational training and should be concerned particularly to attract young people of urban origin; young urban migrants; rural youth with land; and rural youth without land. Suggestions were made for specific approaches to programmes for each group.

67. Planners should take into account social and environmental differences among young people by designing broad programmes permitting of flexible interpretation.

68. On-the-job training and work experience should be preferred to institutional training except in particular circumstances when the latter is relatively less costly and more effective.

69. Youth services should be developed with caution. Those designed to train for employment should have their programmes geared directly to the provision of job opportunities.

Follow-up to programmes

70. Effective follow-up to programmes is essential to efficiency.

71. Settlement schemes cannot cater for large numbers of unemployed young people but do serve certain important purposes.

72. Investigations into methods of selection and follow-up studies designed to determine the characteristics of successful trainees in settlements would be of wide interest.

73. Settlements tend to have problems arising from selection, the unbalanced nature of the community, high costs and planning on too short a time scale.

Content of training programmes

74. Training programmes should be designed to prepare young people for types of employment rather than detailed operations within those types of employment.

75. Research and evaluation should be associated with all programmes.

76. Techniques of vocational guidance should be developed relevant to each country.

77. Programmes should provide young people with a sound basis for exercising judgement and discrimination.

78. Social programmes should attempt to compensate for the uncertainties of changing social structures by bringing young people together informally and enabling them to contribute practically to the welfare of their communities.

79. The needs of women and girls should be met as far as possible through integration into programmes organised for mixed groups. Only where circumstances make this unsuitable should separate programmes be designed for women and girls.

Youth workers

80. A national policy of training for youth workers should be devised by government and non-official representatives working together and should be realistic in recognising the need to prepare young people for responsibility.

81. Top-level youth workers should be of the highest calibre. To ensure this, they will be at present often recruited from among adults; in the future they should emerge from within youth programmes.

82. Means should be sought of ensuring parity of status for youth workers with similar professionals. Inter-disciplinary training in third-level institutions may help to this end.

83. High-level youth workers should be trained to improve the training skills of group and club leaders.

84. Training for group and club leaders should be carried out on the job wherever possible.

85. Training should be a continuing and progressive process.

86. The deployment of youth workers to achieve the most impact should be assessed in the light of local priorities.

87. Less traditional deployment of youth workers - in peripatetic training teams or as detached workers - should be considered.

Reaching the "unclubbable"

88. The first stages in attracting "unclubbable" young people are to offer them what they want and hold out a challenge likely to appeal to them.

The young delinquents

89. Rehabilitation programmes should be flexible enough to deal with the many causes of delinquency and should be designed to reintegrate the young offender fully into his own community.

90. Youth workers have a preventive role to play by identifying incipient delinquents and attempting to bring them back into society.

Involving educated youth

91. The disorientation of educated young people can be redressed best by providing them with those opportunities to serve which are likely at the same time to enable them to resolve their own problems.

92. Among the educated unemployed means should be found to maintain morale by providing the opportunity for service to the community.

COMMONWEALTH CO-OPERATION

93. Commonwealth co-operation should be designed to make

a specific contribution avoiding duplication of the work of other agencies.

94. Commonwealth co-operation in the youth field should range beyond the immediate area of education and training and approach also the underlying problems of trade and aid.

The Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation

95. Both the technical assistance function and the education and training element of the newly constituted Commonwealth Fund of Technical Co-operation offer scope for help in resolving major problems relating to young people.

Exchanges of personnel

96. Exchanges should be promoted at various levels and should be designed to meet particular needs rather than merely the enlargement of personal experience.

Information exchange

97. The Commonwealth Secretariat should expand its service of providing information. Reports of on-going projects; a register of training facilities, organisations and personnel; the production of a Commonwealth youth journal should be considered for inclusion in the Secretariat's publication programme.

98. The Seminar commended Secretariat proposals for Commonwealth and regional meetings designed to explore in depth specific problems relating to youth.

Training

99. The establishment of a high-level training institution should be considered for specialised training which cannot be given on the job.

Other activities

100. The Commonwealth Secretariat should assist in the formulation of applications for aid in order to ensure the maximum utilisation of funds available for disbursement.

101. The Commonwealth Secretariat might play a useful role in the organisation of schemes to provide young teachers of

African and Asian languages in the more developed countries.

The Commonwealth Secretariat

102. The staff and financial resources of the Commonwealth Secretariat should be strengthened to enable it to carry out the operations suggested by the Seminar.