

FOREWORD

The study covers the independent developing countries of the Commonwealth and a number of dependencies.

The major types of handicap are described. For each, an attempt is made to assess the dimension of the problem, and estimated incidences are discussed. The causes of each type of handicap are listed and its manifestations described. Problems relating to handicap in developing countries, including difficulties of diagnosis and assessment and adverse public attitudes, are considered. Descriptions are given of educational provision in the developing countries for the major forms of handicap. Suggestions for future educational development are made.

Malnutrition is considered separately as a contributory factor to handicap.

The study then deals with some related questions, the provision of buildings and equipment for handicapped children, the promotion of positive attitudes towards handicap by the public at large, and the role of agencies other than national governments in the special education programme.

The final chapter suggests possible lines of development for special education in the low-income countries. A list of proposals derived from the body of the work concludes the study.

The study recognises the many claims on governments for educational funds and the unlikelihood of handicapped children being given high priority. The case is made for increased efficiency in the existing provision through greater co-ordination of effort, more effective staffing, and the concentration of effort in a limited range of projects commensurate with resources. It is suggested that governments might consider supporting a basic system of special education which can be expanded as resources become available. Such a system would be both modest in its demands on public funds and a valuable area for experimentation, the results of which could well benefit the education process as a whole.