

THE ROLE OF ORGANISATIONS OTHER THAN NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS

The extension of facilities for handicapped children in all developing countries will depend to a considerable extent on the effective supplement to national government provision by other organisations. Most developing countries at present look to agencies other than the national government to supply initiative, personnel and finance for special education. Increasingly, however, governments are displaying their readiness to support these activities, usually by some form of grant in aid, most often related to the salaries of trained teaching staff.

Organisations involved in work for handicapped children can be categorised in two ways, either by their origin or by their purpose. Origins include international governmental or intergovernmental bodies, churches and missions, medical and educational groups, charitable, social and service bodies, and charitable trusts and foundations. Categorisation by purpose emphasizes how many of these organisations are devoted to closely defined aspects of the care, education and training of the handicapped, pointing the need for the promotion of co-ordinating groups and information centres, capable of relating separate activities to the overall context. It is perhaps worth noting that few well-known bodies exist which have been established by handicapped individuals to promote their own cause, such as the Disablement Income Group or the Groupement des Intellectuels Handicapés Physiques, the latter based at Vandoeuvre in France and now working on the international scene through the Comité International pour la Réhabilitation des Intellectuels Handicapés Physiques.

International governmental activities

The United Nations Organisation and its specialised agencies have long been active in the field of the handicapped, although concentrating until recently upon prevention and rehabilitation rather than education. The appointment to the Unesco staff of an officer specialising in the education of the handicapped occurred within the last five years. Even now the budget for activities in this sphere remains extremely modest (1). Useful work has been undertaken in the production of surveys, the promotion of studies and the organisation of meetings, but the scale of activities has necessarily been extremely circumscribed. The special education directory published by Unesco in 1968, for example, contains information about only fourteen of the Commonwealth countries and three dependencies. The 1971 Unesco "Survey of the Present Situation of Special Education" lists only five Commonwealth countries (3). In both publications the entries relating to Commonwealth countries is fragmentary. Unesco may well be correct in deciding to move into this field with caution. The exploratory stage, however, should soon be drawn to a close, priorities for involvement established and a programme designed for maximum impact, possibly based on concentrated teacher-training courses and the support of "centres of excellence."

The International Bureau for Education, now taken over by Unesco, performs a useful role in publishing enrolment and staffing statistics relating to special education (extracts from which are included in Table 7) and recently devoted one issue of its Bulletin to a bibliography of special education (4). It is unfortunate, however, that in the annual returns sought from member governments the I.B.E. still lists special education as an "auxiliary service."

TABLE 7

SPECIAL EDUCATION: INSTITUTIONS, TEACHERS AND PUPILS*

(Based on International Yearbook of Education, Vol. XXXI - 1969, Unesco:1,B.E., Geneva)

*not including handicapped pupils in ordinary schools and colleges, or in units and annexes attached to ordinary schools.

Country	Total population (1)	School year beginning	Number of institutions	Teaching staff			Pupils enrolled		
				Total	Female	F%	Total	Female	F%
Barbados	254,000	1964	3	14	6	43	107	19	18
		1966	4	16	..	..	137	31	23
Ceylon	12.25m.	1965	8	62	28	45	840	252	30
		1966	8	64	30	47	909	264	29
		1970	24				1,324		
Cyprus	630,000	1966	5	40	14	35	223	59	26
		1967	6	43	14	35	264	74	28
		1969					278		
Fiji	506,000	1970	1	7			94		
Ghana	8.6m.	1966	4	41	7	17	356	126	35
		1967	6	61	9	15	482	169	35
		1970	18						
Guyana	742,000	1966	1	4	4	100	71	28	39
		1967	2	11	8	73	165	61	37
		1970	3	22			200		
India	533m.	1965	263	1,914	647	34	22,365	5,230	23
Jamaica	2m.	1964	3	15	..	..	237	..	..
		1965	3	23	..	..	253	119	47
		1971	6						
Kenya	10.5m.	1964	11	59	25	42	785	201	26
		1968	26	117	41	35	913	460	50
		1971		113			1,346		
Malawi	4.4m.	1965	2	15	1	7	106	24	23
		1967		23	3	13	128	31	24
Malaysia	10.6m.	1967	5	112	54	48	896	334	37
		1970	9	137			1,322		
Malta	323,000	1965	1	28	13	46	296	85	32
		1966	1	31	13	42	281	88	31
		1971	4						
Mauritius	825,000	1967	3	10	9	90	94	17	18
		1968	3	10	8	80	68	14	21
Nigeria	64m.	1970	12						
Sierra Leone	2.5m.	1963	3	..	..	..	52	16	31
		1964	3	5	3	60	43	17	40
		1970	3	6			52	16	30
Singapore	2m.	1966	6	27	23	85	300	122	41
		1967	6	36	25	69	453	169	37
		1970	13	90			938		
Tanzania	13m.	1964	2	46	..	..	184	..	..
		1965	3	10	..	..	140	..	..
		1970	13				250		
Trinidad & Tobago	1m.	1966	6	81	22	27	459	132	29
		1970	6						
Zambia	4.2m.	1964	14	47	8	17	692	245	35
		1965	10	30	4	13	594	205	35
		1967	26	78			1,061		
Nauru	6,000	1964	..	..	..	..	27	..	..
		1965	..	..	..	..	24	..	..

Note: (1) Population figures are those estimated for mid-1969 by the World Bank, except for Ghana (1970 census figure).

Some good might be achieved by the promotion of this heading to greater prominence. UNICEF contributes usefully to special education in the form of equipment and experts, but most of its work is concentrated on prevention, notably in conjunction with the World Health Organisation, the Food and Agriculture Organisation and the latter's World Food Programme. The Unesco Institute for Education in Hamburg has held useful seminars on deprivation and disadvantage (5), although these again concentrated more on nutrition and disease than on handicap in specific relation to education. The International Labour Organisation and the United Nations Economic and Social Council are heavily engaged in rehabilitation activities, some of which bring direct or indirect benefit to handicapped children (6). Their work could be of even more value to special education programmes were vocational training for handicapped school-leavers incorporated into every course, as at the Model School at Dehra Dun in India (7).

Churches and missions

Churches and mission bodies became involved at an early stage with special education in the developing countries. This was due in no small measure to their willingness to care for those unfortunate children rejected by their own communities. For many years, for example, religious groups alone worked in the field of leprosy. The Leprosy Mission and British Society for the Relief of Lepers (now Lepra) have probably more experience in this field than any other organisations. All Christian denominations are committed to work in special education. The Pope in 1969 donated \$50,000 towards the Iganga Training College for Teachers of the Blind in Uganda, while evangelical bodies at the other end of the denominational spectrum such as the Salvation Army, the Sudan Interior Mission and the Methodist Mission have established schools and workshops for the handicapped in many of the developing countries of the Commonwealth.

Medical organisations

The largest number of organisations working on behalf of the handicapped are those devoted primarily to the medical aspects of one or more handicaps. Of these the greatest single group comprises national and international groups combatting blindness. As has been indicated previously, this situation results from historical accident. Blindness has always been regarded as the most terrible of afflictions - an opinion not universally held by those affected by more than one handicap, notably Helen Keller - and has attracted the most sympathy and support. The many local national and local associations look to major international societies for co-ordination. Within the Commonwealth the Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind, although working only since the Second World War, is now active in all continents. The American Foundation for Overseas Blind operates particularly in Commonwealth Asia and has contributed much to planning and teacher training, while the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind offers a valuable means of consultation for organisations working for the blind in different countries.

The provision for the deaf is less comprehensive. The Commonwealth Society for the Deaf owes its existence largely to the initiative and continued enthusiasm of Lady Templer, and still works on a modest scale with very limited resources. Voluntary organisations can exist only by attracting freely given support, and deafness has little of the dramatic appeal of blindness. More people are affected by hearing defects than visual handicap, and a greater proportion of the deaf can be helped relatively cheaply, but funds do not flow to this work as they do to help the blind. The Common-

wealth Foundation has displayed welcome initiative and a realistic appreciation of the situation by making a grant of some £50,000 for the development of a school and treatment centre for deaf children, together with teacher training facilities, at Montfort College in Malawi. The same foundation has also supported professional workshops on deafness in India and regional seminars on deafness in Africa and the Caribbean. Such investments, however, come late to the international scene, well behind activities for the blind.

It has already been noted that mental handicap probably represents the greatest incidence among all handicaps, yet organisations working for those afflicted in this way are rare in the developing countries. The recent work towards the formation of a Caribbean Association on Mental Retardation demonstrates how the need may be met by practical measures. The World Federation for Mental Health co-ordinates numerous activities. Once again, the Commonwealth Foundation has injected funds to promote wider interest in an under-subscribed area by supporting workshops on mental health in Africa.

The International Bureau for Epilepsy operates under the additional incubus of public distaste towards this handicap, but continues to publicise its cause in selected areas. A projected Nigerian Association for Epilepsy, however, has experienced some difficulty and is not yet fully operative; no other developing Commonwealth country has even reached this stage.

Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation of the physically handicapped is undertaken by a number of strongly supported international organisations, for which Rehabilitation International, based on New York, acts as a point of central reference and information. Six developing Commonwealth countries (Cyprus, Hong Kong, India, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda) have organisations related to Rehabilitation International.

Social and service bodies

Organisations falling under this heading have originated in many different ways and are promoted on widely varying scales. Several of the best known groups have been stimulated by the need to arrange care for children for whom other provision was not available. Notable among these are Dr. Barnardo's Homes, now active in Commonwealth East Africa as well as in Britain, and the Cheshire Homes, established in a number of developing countries including Ceylon, India, Mauritius, Nigeria, Papua-New Guinea and Sierra Leone. Volunteer organisations such as Voluntary Service Overseas and the Peace Corps have arranged for skilled technicians and other professional staff to help handicapped children in several developing Commonwealth countries. Girl Guides and Boy Scouts frequently help in less skilled work in the own countries. The International Union of Child Welfare co-ordinates the activities of a number of national Save the Children Fund organisations. Throughout the world affiliated clubs of Rotary International and Lions International conduct projects in their own areas or sponsor them in other countries. The Lions take a particular interest in work for the blind while Rotary tends to be more comprehensive in its approach. Unfortunately, because each club in these two organisations operates as a separate unit and no regular reports are required by their international headquarters, it has not been possible to compile a comprehensive list of their activities. Those which have been identified are included in the Commonwealth Secretariat Directory (8).

Charitable trusts and foundations

Also included in the Directory under the listing for each country are recent grants from major trusts and foundations. Some of the work of the Commonwealth Foundation has been mentioned already. Other bodies which have contributed to work in developing Commonwealth countries include the Beit, Carnegie, Ciba, Dulverton, Ford, Gulbenkian, Nchima, Nuffield, Joseph Rowntree, Van Leer and Wolfson charities. Although their contributions have been substantial and generally well used, they have almost always been given in response to *ad hoc* requests by individual associations. The question must be asked as to how much more effective these grants would be if national co-ordinating bodies existed in developing countries to plan the development of special education and training for handicapped children.

Proposals concerning organisations other than national governments

Recognising that organisations other than national governments are at present providing or contributing substantially towards special educational facilities in developing Commonwealth countries, the primary needs are for the maximum degree of co-operation and co-ordination among these bodies, assisted by the greatest possible exchange of information. Table 8 indicates the various types of organisation known to exist at present in developing Commonwealth countries.

Some progress has been made in the exchange of information. In 1953, following two conferences convened by the United Nations of non-government organisations concerned with the handicapped, the Conference of World Organisation Interested in the Handicapped was formed to assist the United Nations and its specialised agencies to develop a well-co-ordinated international programme for rehabilitation of the handicapped and to act as a clearing-house of information. Its publications, however, are few and its membership is limited to those 24 organisations which are in consultative status with the United Nations. Its impact, therefore, is limited.

Although such co-ordination seems desirable to the outside observer it is not accepted unreservedly as such by the organisations themselves. A suggestion by the writer some two years ago that there might be some merit in a round-table meeting of organisations based in Britain but working on behalf of handicapped children in developing countries received only moderate support. The reasons are obvious. Voluntary organisations rely for financial support upon loyal members and a public predisposed to their cause. Many bodies feel that this support would drop away if it appeared that the organisation no longer controlled its own destiny but was merely one part of an impersonal conglomerate. Another reservation expressed by some representatives concerned the possibility that particular handicaps would not receive their due share of attention because they are "too difficult". Still others believed that different forms of handicap have little in common and doubted the value of concerted action. Finally, there was the fear that such a grouping would create an undesirable distinction between the normal and the handicapped, setting aside the latter as a separate community within society at large.

Despite these very real considerations it appears on balance that in the circumstances of the developing countries organisations representing the handicapped must co-operate if their work is to prosper. The formation within each country of a National Council for the Handicapped (with a Special Education Committee operating within it) would make possible a concerted

TABLE 8

DISTRIBUTION IN DEVELOPING COMMONWEALTH COUNTRIES
OF SOCIETIES AND ASSOCIATIONS RELATING TO
HANDICAPPED CHILDREN AND YOUNG PERSONS

COUNTRY	National Councils	Other General Associations	Blind	Deaf	Physically Handicapped	Epilepsy	Mentally Handicapped	Rehabilitation
Barbados			x	x			x	
Ceylon	x		x				x	
Cyprus			x					x
Fiji			x		x		x	x
Ghana			x	x	x		x	
Guyana		x	x					
India	x	x	x	x			x	x
Jamaica		x	x	x			x	x
Kenya	x	x	x	x	x			
Malaysia		x	x	x	x		x	x
Malta			x				x	
Mauritius		x	x	x			x	
Nigeria		x	x	x		(x)		
Sierra Leone	x		x	x	x			
Singapore			x	x	x		x	
Swaziland	x							
Tanzania		x	x					
Trinidad			x	x	x		x	x
Uganda			x	x	x		x	
Zambia			x				x	
Bahamas		x						
Bermuda			x					
Br. Solomon Is.		x						
Gibraltar		x	x					
Hong Kong		x	x	x	x		x	x
Montserrat		x						
Papua-New Guinea							x	
Caribbean Region			x				x	

approach to government bodies. This would be more effective than separate approaches by a number of groups each with special needs. It would also predispose governments to react favourably, responding to the voluntary organisations' demonstration of unity and efficiency in forming such a body. Beyond the National Councils there could be Regional Councils and a Commonwealth Council, modestly conceived, for the conduct of a continuing exchange of information. At each level, too, there might be Special Education Associations acting within the aegis of the Councils; a valuable service could be provided in the form of a Commonwealth Special Education Newsletter and a Journal of Special Education which would contain information about developments, abstracts of current research, and promote direct links between those working in related fields in different countries. The need is so great and the provision so modest that means need to be found whereby organisations other than national governments can best co-ordinate their activities at national and international level, so achieving efficiency in their operations and credibility in the eyes of those governments in whose territories they operate.

Notes and References

1. The approved Unesco budget for 1971-72 shows \$40,000 for studies under the regular programme, \$38,000 for assistance to member states under the regular programme, and up to \$100,000 available under UNDP Technical Assistance. This amounts to \$178,000 out of a total Unesco budget for education of \$52 million, or 0.003 per cent.
2. International Directories of Education: Special Education, Paris, Unesco, 1968.
3. A Study of the Present Situation of Special Education, ED/MD/16, Paris, Unesco, 15 March 1971.
4. Bulletin of the International Bureau of Education; Special Education, Year 44, 2nd and 3rd Quarters 1970, No. 175/176, Geneva.
5. Passow, A.H. (ed.) Deprivation and Disadvantage: Nature and Manifestations, International Studies in Education 21, Hamburg, Unesco Institute for Education, 1970; and Meeting of Experts on Deprivation and Disadvantage in Developing Countries held at the Unesco Institute for Education, Hamburg, November 1970 (documentation mimeo).
6. See, for example, the annual Summaries of Information on Projects and Activities in the Field of Rehabilitation of the Disabled, prepared by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations, New York.
7. Report to the Government of India on the Vocational Rehabilitation of the Blind, Geneva, International Labour Office, 1967.
8. Directory of Educational Provision for Handicapped Children in Developing Commonwealth Countries, London, Commonwealth Secretariat, 1971.