

SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

The role of governments

1. Governments should be encouraged to declare a formal commitment to the provision of special education, acknowledging the Declaration of Human Rights and the Declaration of the Rights of the Child.
2. National governments should co-ordinate and guide programmes of special education within the context of an overall development policy.
3. Responsibility for all aspects of special education should be vested in the Ministry of Education acting as co-ordinating authority for an inter-Ministerial Committee representative of all departments involved in the care, education and training of the handicapped.

Co-ordination for development

4. Non-government bodies representative of all forms of handicap and work for the handicapped should come together to form in each country a National Council for the Handicapped.
5. Inter-Ministerial Committees and National Councils for the Handicapped should be responsible for advising on policy and priorities, and recommending the disbursement of public moneys for special education.

Planning special education

6. Plans for special education should be framed realistically in the general context of development, with emphasis on the potential contribution of rehabilitated handicapped young people.
7. Financial provision from public funds for special education should be allocated according to a formula designed to provide an equitable distribution.

The role of voluntary organisations

8. Voluntary organisations should seek new areas for their involvement as governments increasingly assume responsibility for more aspects of the educational systems. This could include pioneering the advance of special education and vocational training for the handicapped. Voluntary funds will remain essential to the development of special educational provision.

The role of international agencies

9. The major international agencies should integrate their functions with regard to special education into their normal administration in order to avoid any suggestion that education of the handicapped is ancillary to other education rather than an essential part of the overall provision.

Ascertainment of handicapped children

10. Surveys, on a scale commensurate with possible provision, should be undertaken to establish the nature and incidence of handicap in each country. Teachers, student-teachers, students and schoolchildren can play a valuable role in these surveys.

11. "At risk" registers should be established wherever possible, probably by starting in large centres of population and working out towards the rural areas.

12. Early diagnosis, assessment and treatment should be the goal in every country, possibly through polyclinics, with the establishment of pre-school clinics and nursery groups an essential concomitant.

Education for handicapped children

13. Education for the handicapped child should be designed to develop his capacities to their fullest extent and provide him with as many as possible of the experiences available to his normal peers.

14. School provision for handicapped children should be associated as closely as possible with that for normal children. Residential schools should be limited to essential cases. Special units or annexes are preferred where full integration is not possible.

15. "Centres of excellence" should be used to set standards, conduct applied research and develop experimental units.

16. Research and evaluation should be undertaken as an essential part of the development of special education programmes. Particular attention should be paid to diagnostic and assessment tests, the follow-up of handicapped school-leavers and the place of the mass media in special education.

Buildings and equipment

17. Buildings for handicapped children should be flexible. Large institutions should be broken down administratively into "home units".

18. Modular and prefabricated buildings offer most in terms of efficiency and economy.

19. Mobile resource rooms and classrooms should be considered wherever practical.

20. Equipment should be locally produced by economic means when possible; imported materials should incur no taxes or duties.

Teachers and other staff

21. Teachers of quality need to be attracted to work in special education, preferably through the offering of a career service, national salary levels, extra payment for specialist qualifications, and an enhanced status in the profession. Continuous in-service and sandwich course provision should be available to enable teachers to keep up to date in professional matters.

22. All teachers during their training should become familiar with the manifestations and causes of the more frequent handicaps, and should learn how to deal with them educationally and give simple medical treatment.

23. Specialist teachers should be supported by paramedical and para-educational staff, both to increase efficiency and lower costs.

24. Local leaders, "animateurs", might be trained for work including the promotion of special education.

Parents

25. Parents should be encouraged to present their children for treatment. Such encouragement may sometimes take the form of evidence of successful treatment.

26. Parents should be involved as directly as possible with the education of their handicapped children, probably in conjunction with the mass media and correspondence schools.

27. When parents are so involved, help should be available to relieve them at regular intervals of their constant attention.

Provision for the older handicapped child

28. Handicapped school leavers may best find employment in an increasingly competitive situation in self-employment, sheltered workshops concentrating on the supply of material for special and other education, and in service occupations in rural areas.

29. Support for older handicapped children should be provided in the form of sheltered occupations, clubs and continuing educational facilities.

Public enlightenment

30. Public enlightenment campaigns should stress the basic normality of the handicapped and the ability of almost all handicapped persons to play a full part in the life of their community if not prevented by adverse public opinion.

31. The twofold role of the mass media is to encourage preventive measures and to stimulate acceptance of the handicapped through the dissemination of information and the promotion of informal activities involving handicapped and normal people.

Model systems

32. Small countries might establish model systems of special education. Larger countries might use special education as experimental groups from which findings of general relevance might be fed back into the mainstream of education.

Commonwealth co-operation

33. Arrangements should be made for information exchange on the widest possible scale. A Commonwealth clearing house for information, publishing a regular journal could probably best perform this function.

34. The Commonwealth Secretariat Clearing House Fund and the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation might assist by promoting the interchange of experience.