

INTRODUCTION

This Directory of Appropriate Technology Organisations in the Commonwealth has been prepared by the staff of the Food Production and Rural Development Division, Commonwealth Secretariat with initial assistance from the Intermediate Technology Development Group, London.

In deciding to produce the Directory, we were influenced by the fact that the last few years have seen a new awareness of the need for careful selection of technologies for developing countries, and increasing world-wide interest in 'appropriate' or 'intermediate' technologies. We felt that it would be useful to make available a directory which brought together information about some of the organisations in the Commonwealth which are working on the topic.

We have defined 'appropriate technology' as processes and products which are, on the whole, low-cost, small-scale, labour- rather than capital-intensive, which use a high proportion of local rather than imported materials, and which rely on renewable rather than non-renewable sources of energy. Because of the special interest of the Division of Food Production and Rural Development, the directory concentrates (though not exclusively) on organisations working in these fields.

The major problem facing the compiler of any directory is to find a balance between quantity and quality - between a simple catalogue of names and addresses which covers every organisation remotely involved, and a comprehensive report on the work of each agency, which includes a critical evaluation of its work. The first is cheap and quick, but of limited usefulness. The second is slow and expensive, and also, in the specific case of Appropriate Technology, is made more difficult by conflicting interpretations of what AT actually is and by the fact that AT Units, AT Centres and AT Cells are at present being created everywhere, each with their own interpretation.

We carefully considered what the demand for a directory like this would be, and decided quite deliberately to fall between the two stools; namely, to provide what information we could gather, in the time we allotted ourselves, on implements and processes being developed by each organisation, and some comments, where we thought desirable, on some of the organisations - but not to evaluate them, since such an exercise would require much more information than is currently available to us. We therefore hope that this directory will fill an immediate need for two groups of people.

The first group comprises those who are working on appropriate technologies, who we hope will be assisted by the directory to find out less laboriously who is doing what and where. To confine the entries to established organisations with major programmes of work would mean excluding a mass of work being done, sometimes by a single individual, in a number of large organisations. In order that it should be useful to people actually working on a particular technology, the directory thus includes references to various disparate workers, especially where it

appears that they are the only ones doing such work in a region.

The second group which we felt would make use of this directory are the 'travellers' of the development business, including officials of aid agencies, government officials who are visiting Commonwealth countries for conferences, academics, and others. If you are interested in the design, development and manufacture of ploughs, the potential of solar water-heaters or ways of keeping milk cool before it goes to market, and you find yourself in Bangladesh, Barbados or Botswana, this directory will, we hope, enable you to make contact with people who share your interest. Equally useful contacts can be made by correspondence.

The information in this directory was compiled from a first draft prepared by the Intermediate Technology Development Group using the information available to them in their files. This draft was greatly expanded and rewritten by Bruce MacKay, Consultant Editor to the Food Production and Rural Development Division, on the basis of the responses of various organisations to letters from us requesting additional information, and from the personal knowledge of individuals who have special expertise in this field. In addition the participants at the Rural Technology Meeting for East, Central and Southern African Commonwealth countries, organised by this Division of the Commonwealth Secretariat in Arusha, Tanzania, in September 1977, provided a great deal of useful information. The replies from some organisations specified whether their work was just in the planning stage, or whether they have fully developed and tested the technologies they describe. Others did not make this clear in their replies, and when we have not been able to discover from other sources the extent of an organisation's work, we have given them the benefit of the doubt and printed the details as sent to us. The length of an organisation's entry does not reflect the importance of its work, though in the comments attached to some entries we have tried, where possible, to give the reader some guidance as to the type and status of the organisation described.

The directory itself will, we hope, also encourage the supply of more information to us, and we would welcome comments from organisations which have been omitted, wrongly described, or feel they can supply additional information, since we intend to publish periodic revisions in the future. Comments and requests should be direct to:-

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