
ORGANISATION OF THE SEMINAR

BACKGROUND

Commonwealth Ministers of Education at the Seventh Commonwealth Education Conference held in Accra in 1977 recommended that the Commonwealth Secretariat should conduct a survey on progress towards Universal Primary Education and organise a series of regional meetings to help countries striving to achieve UPE. Particular attention was to be given to countries that were farthest from achieving it.

The survey was carried out in 1978 by Mr. R. L. Smith of the Department of Education in Developing Countries of the Institute of Education, University of London, and published by the Secretariat as a book in 1979. In the early part of 1979, the Government of the Kingdom of Lesotho, at the request of the Commonwealth Secretariat, agreed to host the Africa regional meeting, that for Asia and the Pacific being planned for Bangladesh in December 1979. Initial plans for the Africa regional meeting were worked out during a visit to Maseru by Mr. J. S. Farrant of the Commonwealth Secretariat in March 1979. The Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation made funds available to enable delegates from all 14 member countries in Africa to attend. In addition, observers from UNESCO and WCOTP were invited together with regional representatives from the Caribbean, Asia and Pacific regions of the Commonwealth. The Government of Lesotho made available the facilities of the Airport Hotel, Maseru, for the seminar sessions as well as the support services required by the meeting.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The theme chosen for the seminar was "Universal Primary Education and its implications for the future".

The objectives set for the seminar were as follows:

1. To gain an overview of current and planned action related to UPE in member countries.
2. To analyse the findings of the Commonwealth survey on progress towards UPE with respect to what countries mean by UPE, to examine constraints in its implementation and to suggest alternative strategies.
3. To draw conclusions as to the factors that hinder UPE and the means by which these can be overcome.
4. To ascertain what the future implications of UPE for national systems of education with respect to such matters as the provision of facilities for special education, secondary education and employment opportunities.
5. To examine how Commonwealth regional co-operation might assist progress towards UPE in Africa.

The five issues chosen for examination in the seminar agenda were:

1. Country reports (an overview of action related to UPE).
2. The Commonwealth UPE Survey: what the survey reveals in relation to countries in Africa.
3. Implementing UPE.
4. UPE and the future.
5. Commonwealth co-operation and UPE.

Two groups were formed to discuss at greater length the issues raised in the agenda and by the lead papers.

PROGRAMME

Monday 4 February

- 1700 - 1800 Official opening ceremony
- 1800 - 2200 Reception by the Honourable Minister of Education, Sports and Culture, followed by local cultural entertainment.

Tuesday 5 February

- 0930 - 1230 Plenary sessions for reports on progress towards UPE in member countries.
- 1400 - 1600 Continuation of reports.

Wednesday 6 February

- 0930 - 1230 Plenary sessions to introduce and discuss lead paper I: "Progress Towards UPE in Africa: What the Survey Reveals".
- 1400 - 1700 Group sessions on agenda item 2.

Thursday 7 February

- 0930 - 1230 Educational visits to:
- The Resource Centre for the Blind
 - St. James Primary School
 - Iketsetseng Primary School
 - The Lesotho National Teacher Training College
 - Pita Primary School
- 1400 - 1600 - Thaba-Khupa Ecumenical Project

Friday 8 February

0930 - 1230 Plenary sessions to introduce and discuss lead paper 2:
"Implementing Universal Primary Education".

1400 - 1700 Group sessions on agenda item 3.

Saturday 9 February

0830 - 1630 Educational and cultural visits to:

- Thaba-Bosiu
- Bushmen's Pass, God Help Me Pass, Blue Mountains Pass
- Molimo Nthuse
- National University of Lesotho

Sunday 10 February

Free All Day

Monday 11 February

0930 - 1230 Plenary Symposium to introduce and discuss agenda item 4:
"UPE and the Future".

1400 - 1700 Group sessions on agenda item 4.

Tuesday 12 February

0930 - 1230 Plenary sessions to introduce and discuss lead paper 4:
"Commonwealth Co-operation and UPE".

1400 - 1700 Special session of group leaders to draw up recommendations.

Wednesday 13 February

0930 - 1230 Plenary session to introduce and discuss observers' papers.

1400 - 1700 Audio visual programme on UPE.

Thursday 14 February

1100 - 1230 Visit to Opportunities Industrial Centre.

1600 - 1715 Plenary session to adopt the draft report.

1730 - 1800 Official closing of seminar

1830 - 1930 Secretariat reception