

INTRODUCTION

The Commonwealth Secretariat's Education Division has now completed the third seminar-workshop on Low-Cost Science Teaching Equipment conducted in the various regions of the Commonwealth. It is possible therefore to trace certain strands of common experience that have emerged. First, it is clear that the subject is one of general concern to educational authorities in all countries. Second, the problems encountered exist in all countries though to a more acute degree in some than in others. Third, it has emerged that the experience described in the workshops has been applicable and relevant to a very high degree in solving the problems identified. And throughout the series, the importance of relevance, especially in science education and the correlation of curricula with educational equipment have been repeatedly emphasized.

At each of the seminar-workshops participants have expressed a determination to move increasingly towards greater self-reliance in procurement of resources while recognizing the value of Commonwealth and international co-operation as a vital step in pursuit of that goal. It is encouraging to Commonwealth efforts so far that reports from member states indicate that some welcome changes have already begun to occur as a result, slowly though these may be appearing. The various items of equipment produced at the third workshop as well as two previous ones indicate, in some measure, the degree to which the immediate objectives of the series have been achieved.

Our plans to follow up these developments will be formulated on the basis of the very valuable information gathered from the series, as part of our clearing-house efforts in Commonwealth education.

The Commonwealth Secretariat wishes to acknowledge its gratitude to the Government of Papua New Guinea for its kind hospitality in hosting this workshop, and for the facilities it so generously provided through the University of Technology. Special thanks are due to the University for the hospitality and the resources it made available through the Department of Applied Physics. Our thanks are also due to the chairman and alternate chairman who steered the sessions so well; to the consultants for their invaluable contribution; to the Department of Education and University Co-ordinators; to the delegates for their hard work; to our observers of whom some played the part of resource persons; and finally to our rapporteurs and typists who often worked late into the night.

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Education Division
Commonwealth Secretariat