

INTRODUCTION

With the rapid expansion of education in many developing countries and the demands of new curricula and methods of teaching, the problem of providing a teaching profession suitable in quantity and quality for the task has become increasingly difficult by traditional patterns of teacher education. There is therefore an urgent need to consider ways and means of increasing the supply of teachers and renewing their training in such a way as to enable them to meet the challenge of changing needs. In-service teacher training in various forms would appear to offer a potential solution.

Many Commonwealth countries are still in the process of formulating their national educational policies, and as a result, teacher training has yet to be closely geared to the needs of the school. In addition, the various stages in teacher education - initial training, induction and in-service training - are still not well co-ordinated. In-service training is frequently organized on an ad hoc basis or allowed to become the first victim of financial cuts in training. The problem is very real and requires deliberate action in the form of policy decisions about educational objectives and ways in which these objectives can best be achieved.

Conventional methods of training teachers in monotechnic institutions tend to be relatively expensive and to attract teachers from a rather narrow section of the community. For this reason countries are considering alternative ways in which teachers can be trained, and means by which entry to the teaching profession may be broadened.

For example, many member countries especially of the Third World recognize the need to give priority to pre-vocational subjects in schools so that primary school-leavers can be fully or partly self-employed. Such education may require that teaching should depart from the over-emphasis on traditional methods of training in basic number and language skills and incorporate the development of vocational skills; these might include crafts and farming which apart from their intrinsic value can be used to reinforce basic number and language skills. The education of teachers themselves for this purpose should therefore take into account an appropriate orientation.

It is in recognition of these issues that recent Commonwealth Education Conferences have recommended a series of regional workshops on in-service teacher education throughout the Commonwealth. These workshops are aimed at helping member states to develop their in-service teacher education programmes in such a way as to meet their most urgent national requirements. With funds provided by the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation, the Secretariat, through this Division, has undertaken these workshops with these basic objectives in view. The Sri Lanka workshop was the second in the series and had as its theme "Educating Teachers for Changing Roles". The first was held in Barbados in April 1977. In the pages that follow, the proceedings and conclu-

sions of the Sri Lanka workshop are set out and it is hoped that member states will find among them measures which will assist the objectives for which these workshops were designed.

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