

Preface

The proliferation of inter-disciplinary studies and the emergence of new disciplines which stand in their own right are a phenomenon of the recent explosion of knowledge. Where such a discipline has an urgent practical value as well as a political dimension, its accession to the status of a separate discipline is often rapid. One such discipline which has mushroomed in universities all over the Commonwealth is "Development Studies".

In view of the relevance of a wide range of disciplines to courses in development studies, the subject exists in a variety of other disciplines ranging from Agriculture and Irrigation to Business Management and Technology. Yet even while its theoretical principles are still evolving, universities and research institutions are under pressure to extend the application of those principles to the stark realities of hunger and malnutrition, poverty and exploitation in a world where politicians and planners are frantically searching for solutions.

It was against this background that the recommendation to compile a Directory of Courses in Development Studies was made at the Eighth Commonwealth Education Conference held in Sri Lanka in August 1980. It arose from the discussions on the role of universities in development particularly in the context of Non-Formal Education which was the subject of a Pan-Commonwealth Specialist Conference in New Delhi in January 1979.

These discussions highlighted the lack of information on the newly established departments and courses in development studies in Commonwealth countries (with only a few exceptions) and the recommendation recognised this need as well as the potential value of such a publication not only to academics but also to planners and those responsible for training in all areas of development.

We are indebted to our consultant Mr Darrell Jackson of the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex, who compiled this Directory, and to the Institute for its co-operation in enabling Mr Jackson to undertake this assignment and for other forms of assistance to the Secretariat over this project. We also wish to acknowledge the assistance and advice given by Mr T W Gee, the Administrative Secretary of the Institute and Dr John Oxenham of the Staff of IDS.

The potential usefulness of the Directory also derives from the excellent responses we received to our questionnaire which was sent to all known Commonwealth universities and centres of research in this field. Our thanks are due to the many officers and staff who devoted time and effort to completing the questionnaires both for their co-operation and for the numerous publications and prospectuses which they sent in support of their returns.

The Directory is published in the hope that it will be a small but valuable contribution to Commonwealth co-operation in this important area and that it will facilitate the training of personnel for urgent development needs in Third World countries.

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