

Introduction

This Directory is designed for government departments, non-government organisations, training agencies and individuals requiring information on training programmes for youth and community workers in the Commonwealth. It will be especially useful to agencies wishing to send youth and community workers abroad for training.

Essential facts are provided about the scale and nature of the training agencies listed. In addition, particulars are given on the relevant courses offered by these agencies. There is considerable variation in the courses leading to a qualification in youth work. This note reviews patterns and trends in the training available for youth and community workers and should assist users to select courses.

Youth and Community Workers: Who are they?

The job title "youth and community worker" is not widely used in the Commonwealth, although it could be applied to a number of functionaries whose titles vary from "community development worker" to "adult educator". While the roles of these functionaries may differ in particular respects, certain tasks, procedures and approaches are common to their jobs. Training in community work, group work, youth work methodology and variants of these is widely regarded as necessary for the "youth and community worker". Consequently, courses have been included in the Directory that contain one or more of these elements.

Course descriptions in the Directory cover five kinds of training programmes for youth and community workers:

- (a) Development/community development-based programmes in which the political, economic and social setting of youth work is at the core of the curriculum.
- (b) Recreation-oriented programmes in which training is closely linked with youth club work and recreational activities.
- (c) "Social welfare" courses with training in casework and work with delinquents, young offenders, mentally and emotionally disturbed youth, etc.

(d) "Animateur" approach: in which emphasis is on political motivation and mobilisation.

(e) Leadership courses: which give basic group leadership skills to organised group and club leaders.

Most first-level training courses fit into one or more of these categories, so too do some post-graduate courses - most of which do not have field placements but concentrate instead on administrative skills and advanced professional training.

A Note on Social Work

In some Commonwealth countries there is a clear distinction between youth and community workers and social workers. For example, in Britain social workers have precise, legally-defined roles in the social welfare structure, while the work of youth and community workers varies widely with institutional settings and employers. In many other Commonwealth countries these distinctions are less clear, and qualified social workers often perform a wider range of tasks. Where a distinction exists the social worker is engaged in casework, which is client-oriented, while the youth and community worker is more concerned with groups in the community. In the Directory the only social work training courses included are those which feature group work and/or community work components.

A Note on Community Development

Many training courses for youth and community workers are directed towards community development and take as a starting point young people as members of the wider community. Thus, some youth workers are trained to prevent anti-social behavior in young people, others are trained to mobilise young people for community work, others become specialists in assisting young people to find their places in the economic, political and social life of the broader community. Some training courses produce graduates who can do all of these.

A Note on Youth Unemployment

Community development-based training for youth and community workers may not give graduates the skills to deal with particular youth problems. The problem of youth unemployment especially, threatens to overwhelm some agencies (and even disrupt whole societies). Some courses have been designed specifically to train facilitators of youth employment, though often the work of these

functionaries is frustrated by lack of finance, capital, and locally available experts to support economic projects.

Future Trends

A relatively new direction for youth programmes is economic self-motivation in which young people are encouraged to develop and even create their own employment opportunities. Training agencies could perhaps look in this direction for a new basis for youth worker training. This might mean that training agencies have to provide workers with management, training and negotiating skills that they can use on behalf of economically self-motivated young people. This, along with programmes to train facilitators of youth employment, is an area of particular concern to the Commonwealth Youth Programme.

Another new approach to training is suggested by the concept of enfranchisement that is being explored by the Youth Work Unit of the National Youth Bureau in Britain. Enfranchisement is the formal acquisition of legal rights by young people. In Britain it is completed by age 18, although, as the Youth Work Unit points out, fully enfranchised young people are rarely recognised as human beings with rights similar to their elders, because they are younger. If enfranchisement were to form the basis of training for youth and community workers, they could become agents in a social process in which the status of young people becomes more clearly defined, not just legally, but economically and politically as well.

Transferability of Training

Where training programmes are designed mainly for local or national trainees, courses are likely to be strongly influenced by such factors as the national and local social welfare structure (including the legislative and institutional framework in which youth workers operate); national youth policies; national development strategies; and national ideology. However, there are features common to most youth worker training programmes including group work, community work, and planning and administration which, though not necessarily universal, are certainly transferable from one job to another.

Some training agencies are openly sceptical about the usefulness of their training programmes for students from other countries. Some recruit trainees only from particular geographical areas. This reflects the conviction that training should be deeply rooted in the local community. Furthermore, it is argued that

youth workers co-operate very closely with particular organisations and agencies that may have no counterparts in other countries (this argument is sometimes used in relation to the relevance of training in developed countries for trainees from developing countries).

Some courses listed in the Directory are designed for particular functionaries in the community development or social welfare departments of the country in which the course is offered. In such cases the training agencies will often accept trainees from other countries. Directory entries indicate where this is the case.

Other courses are designated for workers with particular groups (e.g. national minorities, tribal groups, etc.) These courses do not usually admit trainees from other countries.

The Commonwealth Youth Programme

The Directory is designed for users to make direct contact with the training agencies which offer courses of interest to them. Nevertheless, for one reason or another users may wish to consult the CYP about training agencies and courses. Enquiries should be directed to:

**The Director
Commonwealth Youth Programme
Marlborough House
Pall Mall
London SW1Y 5HX
United Kingdom**