

Part 1

Planning and Organising In-Service Teacher Training

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PLANNING IN-SERVICE TEACHER TRAINING

National educational objectives

In recent years many developing countries have taken a fresh and more critical look at the role of education within the context of overall national development. New concepts of education have evolved, both formal and non-formal, and these have often been formulated in forthright terms, setting the goals for all - teachers, parents and others - concerned in education.

To take but one example, Kenya has stated its educational aims as being that

- (a) Education must serve the needs of national development.
- (b) Education must assist in fostering and promoting national unity.
- (c) Education must prepare and equip the youth of the country so that they play an effective role in the life of the nation, whilst ensuring that opportunities are provided for the full development of individual talents and personalities.
- (d) Education must assist in the promotion of social equality and train in social obligations and responsibilities.
- (e) The educational system must respect, foster and develop our rich and varied cultures.

New national goals such as these cannot be achieved by an educational system that has grown up in response to other objectives. Consequently, action is urgently needed to

help teachers adjust to the new directions that education is being asked to take.

It is immediately apparent that the quality of the teaching profession is a factor vital to the achievement of such aims, and further, that any plan for its upgrading cannot wait for the production of new and better qualified teachers from the colleges and the universities. The existing teaching force, which will set the standards for some years to come, must be helped to adapt to their new roles without delay for they will be the backbone of the teaching profession for the rest of this century.

Dr Beeby in his "The Quality of Education in Developing Countries" has suggested that there are four main stages through which most school systems have to pass and that it is very difficult, and even dangerous, to attempt to force a school system directly from, for example, Stage 2 ("Formalism") to Stage 4 ("Meaning"). In this situation the state of the teaching profession is crucial as indicated by the general level of teachers' education and training and thus their capacity for improvement; their status in the community; their morale; their stability within the profession and their continuity of service within the schools. In practice, at any one time a number of levels of education and professional competence is likely to exist and this will be reflected both in the provision for in-service training and in the priority given to any single aspect of it.

New tasks
for schools

The aims of the school system, as indicated earlier, have been stated in general terms; less frequently in more specific operational

terms. The importance of a clear definition of objectives is obvious in that it points to the kind of education desired and so to the knowledge, skills and attitudes the teacher will need in order to be fully effective. In such a situation the planning of an in-service programme becomes more meaningful and its execution more likely to be fruitful.

A good example of this process is to be seen in the case of Nigeria in Case Study 8. Here the national educational objectives, at both primary and secondary levels, were laid down at the 1969 National Curriculum Conference. Then, within the framework provided by this document, the 1971 Primary workshop at Ibadan worked to produce detailed, specific objectives and syllabus guidelines in six subject areas. It was then left to the Regions to take the next step and to translate these guidelines into experimental syllabuses with supporting materials for teachers and pupils.

New curricula

The innovations that have been introduced as a result of curriculum development have left many teachers ill-equipped to implement them without further training. But whether new or old, there are questions about the curriculum that will influence the nature of any training given.

Is it centrally devised and controlled, or is there some degree of local variation and initiative allowed or encouraged? Is it closely geared to prescribed pupils' and teachers' books? Is it in a stage of relative stability or one of major change and innovation? The answers to such questions will determine the content and methods of in-service training courses.

Physical facilities

The school buildings: Are they weather-proof? Secure? Is there storage space? What school

furniture is provided? Are there lockable cupboards for materials? Can children's work be displayed? Is there a reasonable supply of learning materials - number apparatus, card, paper, paint etc.? How large are the classes? Is group work practicable? Are the schools difficult of access - or inaccessible at times? These and many other matters vitally affect the ability of teachers to make good use of what they may learn on an in-service course, and will in some degree determine the nature of the course itself.

Competence
of training
staff

Professionally competent and experienced staff for in-service courses are an obvious prerequisite to success. But such people are in very short supply and, almost without exception, have full time jobs to do as teachers' college tutors, inspectors and the like. Planning must therefore take account of the staff resources likely to be available, which should not be over-stretched, and might consider the advisability of building up a nucleus of staff with full time in-service responsibility - whether as organizers or as the staff of specially created in-service centres or "extension" departments of teachers' colleges. (see Case Studies 6,7 and 8). Whatever the means employed, it is vital that the staffing aspect of any development be planned most carefully and that maximum use be made of all available talent.

Support from
educational
authorities

Few countries anywhere have yet built up an administrative support adequate to the development of a national in-service teacher training effort. And yet a programme well conceived and conducted professionally may fall down if it lacks the understanding and support of the educational administrators. This is particularly so at the post-course stage. Consequently in-service training for educational administrators is now seen as a vital element in educational development.

Finance

There was a time when in-service training of a limited kind could be carried out at no great expense by providing modest supplements to the budgets of local education officers and inspectors. This is no longer so in the conditions of today. Considerable provision on a national basis is necessary and even this, in the case of major programmes, has now often to be supplemented by outside, frequently international, agencies; as in the case, in varying degrees, of all the programmes described in the Case Studies in Part 2. Account also has to be taken of the longer-term financial implications of any major in-service training programme, where this includes an element of "upgrading".