

Part 3

Conclusions

SOME CONCLUSIONS

The needs
the case
studies
reveal

With needs and resources varying so much from country to country it might seem presumptuous to attempt to formulate any general conclusions on the organization and execution of in-service teacher training in the developing nations. Yet certain problems recur over and over; the basic issues would seem to be common to all in-service programmes and so it may well be that a brief summing up of the main lessons to be learnt thus far might serve a useful purpose. These may be stated under the following two main headings:

(1) Planning and organization

Coherent
policies
incorporating
all aspects of
teacher
education

In-service teacher training should be thought of and planned as an integral part of the whole business of teacher education and training. This implies recognition of it as a permanent, continuing feature of the educational scene rather than a number of limited "ad hoc" exercises.

Agreed
priorities

As this involves a considerable commitment, both of finance and staff, priorities have to be clearly determined and acted on. Everything cannot be done at once.

Adequate
support and
back-up

Any major in-service programme requires an adequate administrative back-up. Requirements, such as accommodation, staffing, materials and so forth must be identified in detail well in advance and provided at the appropriate time. Professional staff should not find themselves having to carry out

time-consuming administrative tasks at the expense of their proper jobs.

Realistic planning

Planning of in-service training must be realistic, both in relation to resources and participants. Educational planners, administrators and those professionally involved should be jointly concerned in such planning.

Co-ordination of agencies and resources

In-service planning should ensure the co-ordination of all available agencies and resources (including external aid) and avoid duplication of effort.

Adequate time for preparation

Major in-service training projects require a reasonable pre-course period of time for staff planning and preparation of materials.

Suitable staffing

The staffing of in-service programmes is of the greatest importance. Suitable staff, full or part-time, must be identified and made available for sufficiently long periods.

Controlled extension of pilot projects

The extension of pilot projects to large numbers of schools should only be undertaken as both materials and teachers are properly prepared and the means of adequate continuing supervision are available. This is vital in the case of any project concerned with curriculum change.

Participation by groups of staff in an institution rather than by individuals

The involvement of headteachers, heads and members of subject departments (in secondary schools), or whole school staffs (in primary schools) should be considered as potentially more effective modes of in-service training than the participation of individual teachers.

(2) Execution of in-service training programmes

Realistic objectives

In any in-service programme the objectives should be:

- carefully considered
- realistic
- stated clearly and precisely
- reflected in the course programme
- capable of modification in the light of experience

A common though understandable weakness, especially in short courses, is the tendency to attempt too much in the time available. It is a temptation to be resisted if the course is to be effective at classroom level.

Availability of materials

Particularly in courses or programmes concerned with curriculum change, it is essential that new materials for teachers and pupils be available when required (both on courses and in the schools). Delays can and do occur, but can be destructive of morale.

Varied and practical methods

Methods of work should be varied and should be such as to provide teachers with the requisite experience, as well as the knowledge, for successful application in their own teaching situations. This is especially so where, as is often the case, they are being asked, in effect, not simply to adopt a new technique but to change their whole conception of the nature and purpose of education. The change from Dr Beeby's Stage II to Stage III or IV is unlikely to be made without an extended period of training and supervision, and is in any case at first not likely to be applied in teaching

situations other than those for which training has been given.

Supervised follow-up

Close and helpful follow-up supervision is thus a "must" for almost all in-service projects, particularly those concerned with primary teachers and with curriculum change. Whenever possible this should be the responsibility of those, who have themselves participated in the course work as in the case of the Nigerian mobile teacher trainers. Such supervision, together with more formal methods, will provide the feed-back on the suitability and effectiveness of the in-service programmes and thus help in the process of revision as necessary.