Chapter 5

Skills for Survival: Technical and Vocational Education and Entrepreneurship

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1 Introduction

This chapter offers a survey of Commonwealth strategies and activities in Technical and Vocational Education (TVE) and entrepreneurship over the 40 years from 1959. The story told relates very closely to the discussion of science, technology and mathematics education in Chapter 4 and inevitably refers to some of the same conference recommendations and publications. It follows on from the discussions of science and technology education and opens up a whole new field of Commonwealth activity in education and training. It directly confronts policies and ideas linking education with the world of work.

a. Education and Employment

Education may be seen as a process which begins in our earliest years by the transfer from parents to children of the skills required for survival. Those skills, in the poorest communities, may simply be those required to produce food and shelter. As communities become more complicated and sophisticated, this education becomes institutionalised. The process then involves the transfer of a given culture pattern from one generation to the next, including patterns of behaviour and the training of society's leaders, as well as teaching the skills required for the future. These skills include earning, or making a living and, hopefully, improving the standard of living from one generation to the next. It is this latter function of education, i.e. making a living, which runs through this survey of the Commonwealth's policies and practice over the 40 years from 1959 to 1999.

b. The Role of Technical and Vocational Education and Entrepreneurship in the Commonwealth

The Commonwealth comprises nations with large numbers of people living in poverty and working in the informal economy, such as Bangladesh, Zambia and Mozambique; rapidly developing countries, such as Malaysia and Singapore; and highly developed countries, such as Australia and Canada.

Inevitably, therefore, this survey covers countries at every level of development, and with a wide range of cultures, religions, languages, populations, economies and skills. Throughout the 40-year period, the aims of member governments, especially those of developing countries, have been to alleviate poverty and sustain economic improvement through human resources development. The major challenge has been to enable Commonwealth citizens to acquire the skills necessary not only to survive but to improve their standard of living. In the twenty-first century a person without marketable skills is not only likely to be unemployed, but even unemployable. This survey leads to the conclusion that TVE, underpinned by entrepreneurship, is becoming the major arena for providing those skills and for achieving the aim of sustainable development.

c. The World Context

The entire survey needs to be considered within the context of a rapidly changing world. Over the 40-year period, the effects of changing economic structures caused changing demand for skilled employees, and that caused widespread changes in the provision (and the needs) of technical and vocational education and training. Such changes occurred in courses of study in the institutionalised provision of TVE in the developing countries as well. Perhaps the prime, widespread, example is that of the provision for motor vehicle servicing, which at the beginning of the period was a relatively straightforward engineering function and at the end was a highly sophisticated exercise in electronics. This is simply one example of the decline in courses in engineering, accompanied by a rise in courses in electronics.

Over the whole of this period, economic changes in the developed countries have led to a considerable reduction in demand for workers in basic industries, such as coal, shipping, steel and textiles. On the other hand, there has been a big increase in service industries. It was estimated that by 2000, 50–60% of all TVE courses in the developed countries of the Commonwealth were providing the skills needed in service industries. Examples include the rapid rise of business studies (management, accountancy, law, economics, statistical method); courses in travel and tourism, and hotel and catering, to meet the vast increase in holiday travel; the introduction and rapid extension of computer use and information technology; the strong demand for courses in English as a Foreign Language; and the growth of courses providing skills needed in the leisure industry.

Inevitably, the differing economic circumstances of the developing countries caused variation from this pattern. The high proportion of people living in rural

areas in these countries required the maximum feasible provision of courses for the improvement of agriculture and varied local industries. However, the influence of the TVE changes in developed countries affected provision in developing countries more rapidly after the political changes in Eastern Europe of 1989–90. Business studies, travel and tourism, and hotel and catering all found a place. Even additional English as a communication medium became a growing necessity for central, regional and local government administration, for growing import/export businesses and for providing skills to illiterate adults.

Organised courses were provided in different disciplines which were expected to reward success with certification. Within the Commonwealth, the UK played a pivotal role in satisfying this expectation. UK examination bodies provide certification which is widely accepted across many member countries. Such agencies as the City and Guilds of London Institute (CGLI), the Royal Society of Arts (RSA) and Pitmans' examinations offer certification for almost every technical and commercial subject. At the professional level, several UK bodies, such as the accountancy associations, the Institute of Bankers and the Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators have all opened their examinations to the world. The use of the English language has made these examinations particularly suitable for Commonwealth member countries. Many Commonwealth governments would prefer to offer, and some do offer, their own internal awards. But the portability and prestige of the UK-based awards still causes many thousands of overseas Commonwealth candidates to take UK-based examinations.

A further development in TVE over the period has been the growing interrelationship between institutional TVE and that provided as training within industry. The two systems were sharply contrasted. 'Technical education' was seen as located in one arena and 'training' as in another. However, co-operation between the two systems has steadily increased and the symbiosis was finally accepted in the UK by the formation from 1 April 2001 of the Learning and Skills Council. That body unites the organisation and funding for both technical education and training. Similar moves are beginning, or are under consideration, in many Commonwealth countries.

d. Outline of the Survey

This survey follows the developing roles of TVE and entrepreneurship from the first Commonwealth Education Conference held in 1959. That conference initiated policies which are described in Section 2. Much activity took place in TVE over the next four decades – activity largely expressed in pan-Commonwealth and regional workshops. TVE activity was stimulated by the formation of the Commonwealth Secretariat in 1965, and thereafter made steady progress. However, the progress varied from country to country. Singapore utilised TVE and entrepreneurship to expand its economy rapidly. India made great strides in training manpower with specialised skills. In some other countries overemphasis on

academic education and the low social status of technical education weakened the expansion of technical skills.

Each ministerial meeting made a large number of recommendations which the Commonwealth Secretariat was expected to carry out. But the Secretariat was provided with limited resources, as explained in Chapter 1, so it was essential to prioritise and, where possible, to select appropriate recommendations (Section 3). The Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation (Section 4), the Commonwealth Foundation (Section 5) and, more recently, the Commonwealth of Learning (Section 6 and Chapter 6 below) have all contributed to the support for TVE and entrepreneurship which, nevertheless, remains still seriously underprovided in several large and small developing countries. Both TVE and entrepreneurship within the Commonwealth have, over the past two decades, built up and strengthened their inter-relationship with employment in industry and commerce (Section 7).

Throughout the 40 years covered by this survey the persistence of large numbers of people working in informal economies in many developing countries has led to efforts to provide employable skills through informal methods of education (Section 8). The informal sector continues to present a massive educational and social challenge for most developing countries. Entrepreneurship deserves separate treatment (Section 9) because its full understanding and widespread application could provide a lever to raise standards of living.

For the future, Section 10 offers an 'Outlook for Technical and Vocational Education and Entrepreneurship in the Commonwealth' by employing the SWOT analysis to assess Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.

e. The Colombo Plan

Preceding and running parallel to the events studied in this 40-year survey was the Colombo Plan. The plan originated in 1951. Its original formulators were a group of seven Commonwealth nations, but some non-Commonwealth countries were also involved. The plan provided assistance to the nations of south-east Asia and the Pacific in the form of educational and health aid, training programmes, loans, food supplies and technical aid. Originally conceived as lasting for six years, the plan was extended indefinitely in 1980 and still continues at the time of writing.

2 Formulating the Policies

It is a tribute to the wide-ranging scope of the first meeting of the Commonwealth Education Conference in 1959 that considerable attention was paid to Technical and Vocation Education.

Technical education was the subject of one of the four main committees established by the conference. The committee's terms of reference were: 'To consider the extent to which countries of the Commonwealth can help each other to meet their needs for the development of education and training in technical subjects, including

training in industry, and the arrangements for providing such assistance' (CEC 1).

The Technical Education Committee made a series of recommendations which were adopted by the Conference. The recommendations included:

- A small information centre should be established in London to provide information about facilities for technical education and sources of advice available in the Commonwealth;
- It would be valuable to establish, preferably in association with existing institutions, regional technical teacher training colleges;
- All countries offering scholarships, other awards or facilities for education, training or research should devote to technical education in the Commonwealth a good proportion of the awards and facilities they might offer.

The Technical Education Committee set the scene for future analysis and consequential action in TVE by defining some terms. These were:

Technologist
A person holding a degree or equivalent professional qualification in science or engineering who is responsible for the application of scientific knowledge and method to industry.

Technician
A person qualified by specialist technical education and practical training to work under the general direction of a technologist.

Craftsman
Normally a person who has served a recognised apprenticeship in a trade, and who applies his skills on the shop floor.

In an interesting development, the 3CEC held in Canada in 1964 agreed to consider 'technical education' and 'vocational training' as one subject. The same conference added to the above classifications that of:

Operative
One who has developed skills in a narrow section or field of a trade or occupation, and works under close supervision.

The Commonwealth now had agreed definitions of four levels of TVE which have remained valid for 40 years.

The same conference in Canada introduced three major new concepts into their deliberations and recommendations. These were that:

- Attention should be paid to economic and manpower surveys in the planning of technical education;
- Vocational guidance and counselling services, particularly in schools, should be built up through Commonwealth co-operation;

- Among priorities was the need to obtain a better flow of suitable students into technical institutions.

Each of these concepts carries major implications for TVE. Manpower surveys, though sometimes misleading for long-term planning, had long formed part of governmental planning in the developed countries of the Commonwealth. By contrast, developing countries were often without the statistical base upon which to undertake manpower planning. The large sectors of their population working in the informal economy made the accurate collection of information impossible. However, steady progress was made in several countries. Vocational guidance and counselling was not highly organised even in the developed countries at this stage. The plea for 'suitable students' was the first, if somewhat bland, reference to the second-class status occupied by TVE which meant that it was given a low priority throughout the second half of the twentieth century.

A further addition to the TVE arena was made at the 5CEC held in Australia in 1971. The Technical and Vocational Education Committee of that conference recommended that management or supervisory studies should be incorporated in technical education at all appropriate levels.

The sequence of regular TVE committees at the Commonwealth Education Conferences was broken in 1974 at the meeting held in Jamaica, for which the theme was 'Managing Education – Innovation, Implementation and Consolidation'. This general theme precluded the conventional division into committees related to different levels of education. Instead, five working groups reported to plenary sessions. Hence, there was no specific consideration of TVE at that meeting. There was, however, a criticism of the status that societies accorded to different types of education with children being made to aspire to academic subjects as a criterion of success.

By 1977, at the meeting in Ghana, there was another general theme: 'the economics of education'. Within this framework five committees were appointed, of which one was designated for 'science education and technical education. That committee made a series of recommendations about TVE. They were that:

- A further Commonwealth regional seminar/workshop should be held on technical education and industry;
- A study should be made of the problems encountered in technical examinations;
- A meeting should be convened to consider the establishment of an association of polytechnics in Commonwealth African countries (see Section 5 – Commonwealth Foundation);
- The desirability and feasibility of a regional staff college in Africa for technical education should be explored in consultation with all interested parties;
- Proposals for a Commonwealth Exchange Scheme for Industrial Training and Experience be worked out in detail and commended to member governments (see Section 7 – TVE and the World of Work).

The 1980 Sri Lanka conference put the TVE examination system on the agenda. It recommended that a working group be set up to formulate proposals for Commonwealth action to assist member countries to overcome problems encountered in technical and vocational examinations. That role was to be undertaken by the Commonwealth Secretariat (see Section 3). The same meeting (8CEC, 1980) re-introduced sector committees, of which there were eight. Sector Committee 1 was covered 'Science and Mathematics Education; Technical and Vocational Education and Training' (see also Chapter 4). Here we see the beginnings of a strategy to inter-relate science education with technical education, especially in the school sector.

A further important addition to TVE was contained in the word 'training'. Training had historically and practically been undertaken within employment, i.e. it was on-the-job training – a concept familiar in developed countries but, at this stage (1980), limited in the developing countries to their relatively small industrial and service economies.

A much wider issue, however, was a sadly divisive topic (already alluded to in Chapter 1). As the meeting reported: 'The recent increase of tuition fees in some countries – even to the point of charging full economic cost – has become a burning issue between developed and developing countries of the Commonwealth'. This matter is treated extensively in Chapter 7. Here we need to emphasise that TVE in Commonwealth developing countries was even more severely affected by the fee increase than was higher education. In a study published in 2000, a Joint Working Group of the CEC and the UK Council for Overseas Student Affairs (UKCOSA) showed the changing position, taking the UK as indicative:

Commonwealth Students in UK Further Education

	1979–80	1997–98
Students	14,440	2,834

That is, there was an 80% reduction of Commonwealth students in UK further education over the period 1979–80 to 1997–98. By a remarkable contrast, the number of Commonwealth students in UK higher education at first dropped substantially after 1979–80, but by 1997–98 the total had actually increased by 45%.

Figures are given below:

Commonwealth Students in UK Higher Education

	1979–80	1997–98
Students	30,728	44,609

Source: CEC/UKCOSA 2000: Tables 4.1a and 4.1b

All these developments led in 1987 to the first CCEM to be planned on the general theme of 'vocationally oriented education'. It was the first of four agenda items, the others being student mobility and higher education co-operation; co-operation in distance education; and future priorities for the Secretariat's work in education

The committee on vocationally-oriented education discussed many of the issues already outlined in this survey. In particular, it welcomed a proposal for a regional workshop to be held in 1987–88 and recommended that the workshop should be the first in a series of meetings to be held over the triennium. The topics were to be 'developing the curricula for vocationally oriented education' and 'the cost-effective use of resources' for the same arena of education.

The committee also examined various views about TVE's low prestige in the educational world. These views were, in general, accepted, but the committee made an important point about prestige. It felt that there was little evidence of negative attitudes towards a vocational curriculum in countries where technical and vocational teachers enjoyed equal status with teachers of academic subjects, and where equipping pupils with vocational and technological skills was perceived as being essential for national development. In contrast, the committee discussing future priorities for the Secretariat's work commented:

> *Given that vocationally orientated education was the theme of 10 CCEM (1987), the group expressed concern that the work programme proposals appeared to give insufficient priority to the theme.*

Here is a gentle reminder, from an objective source, that the previous educational experience of practically all those involved in Commonwealth education had been derived from school and university education. This educational experience may have led to a mindset in which school education and university education were to the fore, whereas TVE was a less well-known field.

The Barbados Conference of 1990, on the theme 'improving the quality of basic education', provided a scenario for the improvement of school education at primary and secondary levels. TVE was a peripheral consideration, and was considered only in so far as it provided an alternative programme to academic education at upper secondary school level. Shortly after, however, a seminal study about the relationships of human beings within the Commonwealth was initiated by the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Zimbabwe in 1991. They recognised in their Harare Declaration that human resource development was central to the promotion of sustainable development and the alleviation of poverty in all Commonwealth member countries, despite a wide diversity in terms of population, income and of ratings on any human development index.

A Commonwealth Working Group established to consider human resource development strategies set out in its report the core constituents required for an integrated view of human resource development. These were:

- Education and training;
- Primary health care;
- Nutrition at adequate levels;
- Population policies;
- Employment.

The report noted (para. 22) that 'Outlays on education and training represent the best possible long term investment for human resource development'. It went on:

> *People who cannot read, write or deal competently with numbers are severely disadvantaged; an illiterate and innumerate population is cut off from the modern world.*

This statement firmly defines basic education as a necessary component of TVE.

The Working Group examined and made recommendations on five strategies which they regarded as requirements for effecting human resource development and as integral components of the human resource development process itself. The five strategies were:

- Well-managed and more professional government;
- Partnerships with NGOs and the private sector;
- Priority for women;
- Utilising resources ;
- Using technology.

This valuable analysis, offering a vision for the future, was published as *Foundation for the Future* by the Commonwealth Secretariat in 1993. It was endorsed at the Pakistan CCEM Conference of 1994 and at the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in New Zealand in 1995.

Partly as a result of the publication of *Foundation for the Future*, the theme for the 1994 Meeting of Education Ministers in Pakistan was 'the changing role of the state in education'. Ministers supported much of the content of *Foundation for the Future*, and agreed to pursue the five strategies outlined above. Rapid technical and technological changes underlay the theme discussions at the 13CCEM in Botswana in 1997. The theme was 'education and technology: the challenges of the twenty-first century'.

However, the education and the technology discussed were much more related to school and university education than to TVE. A major concern was that the rapid changes in technology largely led by the developed nations might widen the gap between developed and developing economies.

An even sharper forecast about future technology was made by Elifa Ngoma, Secretary-General of CAPA (see Section 5). Ngoma was addressing a conference held by CAPA in 1997 under the title 'Technological Education and National

Development'. He took the view that world trends were dealing death blows to the African polytechnic leaving it 'emaciated and utterly disorientated' (*Conference Report*, 1997). Mr Ngoma referred to several arenas which supported his thesis, and which had been discussed at an International Colloquium organised by CAPA in 1996:

- Existing training had become largely irrelevant and obsolete;
- Training programmes and curricula needed regular review to match them with rapid technological change;
- Lecturers and instructors in the African polytechnics lacked relevant skills to handle the changing environment;
- Textbooks in use were mostly outdated;
- Graduate technicians and technologists taught by the polytechnics were not aware of technologies in use by industry;
- Industry was reluctant to support the training of technicians and technologists in the polytechnic;
- Governments did not have the financial capability to fund, let alone procure, modern training equipment for the polytechnics.

Mr Ngoma was, of course, speaking for a particular region. If his strictures have parallels in technological institutions elsewhere in Commonwealth developing countries, then the 'gap' mentioned in Botswana could increase rather than diminish.

It was as a response to the needs expressed at 13CCEM that the Commonwealth Secretariat published a series of papers in January 2000 in a book entitled *Issues in Education and Technology* (Wright ed., 2002). The book made clear that:

> *... changes in education are inevitable in the face of the inexorable advance of the knowledge and information age that is being fuelled by rapid developments in ICT.*
>
> *Issues in Education and Technology*, p.11

The book's introduction also regarded the changing role of technology as:

> *... not a matter of wholesale investment in certain new technologies, such as computers. Rather, it is about the role of technology in promoting deep systemic changes in education to meet the challenges of a new era.*
>
> *Issues in Education and Technology*, p.12

The major theme of the Halifax meeting (14CCEM, 2000) in Nova Scotia, Canada was 'education for our common future'. Remarkably this wide framework resulted in a joint statement about educational objectives and needs agreed by delegates from many different Commonwealth countries. There was, however, relatively little specific content relating to TVE either in the proceedings or in the final statement. Nevertheless, the statement did refer to one role of education as facilitating the

expansion of human capabilities, and the enhancement of competitiveness in a knowledge-based economy. The statement firmly supported the provision of learning for all, and that the private sector and non-governmental organisations should be involved in expanding access to education.

A delegate from the Association of Canadian Community Colleges attended the main sessions. The same body was strongly represented at the exhibition and symposia, together with the Canadian Centre for Entrepreneurship and Development, and the National Association of Career Colleges. This latter association is the equivalent of private sector provision for further education in the UK. The association claims to provide about half of national Canadian provision for TVE.

3 Applying The Policies

a. Structures

The first three Commonwealth Education Conferences held in 1959, 1962 and 1964 produced a considerable number of policy recommendations, but at that stage there was no institutionalised administration to apply the policies. Above that level of policy-making were Heads of Government meetings, also producing recommendations. The establishment and evolution of the Commonwealth Secretariat and its education function have been described in Chapter 1.

Arnold Smith's first report as Commonwealth Secretary-General latched immediately onto technological development. It had become obvious to him that, as a result of technological advance, the world was becoming ever more interdependent, and that international understanding and co-operation would be 'increasingly needed to find and apply solutions to problems too broad for individual states' (*Secretary-General's Report*, 1966). That was a principle which Commonwealth education ministers and the Secretariat increasingly sought to apply. As described in Chapter 1, the earliest structure of the Secretariat did not include an Education Division. However, a decision of the Prime Ministers in 1966 led to the integration of the already existing Commonwealth Education Liaison Unit (CELU) with the Secretariat to form the Education Division. The Commonwealth Education Liaison Committee (CELC) remained in being as an advisory body for the Education Division of the Secretariat.

b. The Huddersfield Conference

By 1968 Arnold Smith was reporting that, in addition to co-ordinating educational activity through its Education Division, the Secretariat was, in response to ministerial policy, organising 'periodic conferences or seminars of education experts for intensive discussion of a particular field of special interest to Commonwealth countries' (*Secretary-General's Report*, 1968). It was this activity which opened up aspects of TVE, as well as entrepreneurial studies, to groups of representatives of Commonwealth countries. For example, in 1966 a conference on the education and training of technicians took place in Huddersfield, UK.

Organised by the Commonwealth Education Liaison Committee, it was a landmark in the history of Commonwealth education, for it was the first conference to be held specifically in the arena of TVE. The conference was attended by 118 delegates and observers representing 24 Commonwealth countries and British Territories, as well as a number of international organisations. It surveyed the whole field of technical education and training. The delegates considered a broad spectrum of occupations lying between craftsmen and technologists. That spectrum they classified as technicians.

Conference working groups discussed lead papers on:

- Manpower planning and the status of technicians;
- Type, content and organisation of courses;
- Planning and equipping institutions;
- Supply and preparation of teachers and ancillary staff;
- Entrance requirements, selection and standards of attainment;
- Administration, finance, control and inspection.

No resolutions were passed, and no detailed prescriptions for administrative action were set out. This process enabled each country to apply the broad principles in its own circumstances. A full report of the conference was published, *Education and Training of Technicians* (HMSO, 1967), providing a valuable source of reference for many Commonwealth countries.

The Director of the Huddersfield College at the time of the conference of 1966 was A. Maclennan, and he was asked by the Secretariat in 1974 to review and update the report of the 1966 conference. The resulting report was published as *Educating and Training Technicians* (1975). It was no accident, as Maclennan himself reported, that his chapter headings repeated the titles of the six working groups of the 1966 conference.

c. Increasing Attention to Technical Education

The fourth CEC was held in 1968 in Nigeria. The Secretary-General reported three important aspects of that meeting. Since then, each of them has continued to influence the policies and their application. The three issues were:

- The role of education as an instrument of development;
- The importance to Commonwealth developing countries of properly balanced programmes of agricultural education and education in rural communities;
- The fact that the urgent demand for quantitative expansion of educational development had caused the qualitative aspects to receive less attention than they deserved.

In 1971, the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation was established.

It formed part of the Secretariat and served as a multilateral assistance agency. Its function was to support development by providing experts and advisers to developing Commonwealth countries, and arranging training abroad for their nationals. The CFTC remit was widened in 1972 to include help for exports, and in 1980 assistance to industry. As early as 1975, Arnold Smith was reporting that the Secretariat had begun a programme of research into how technical education could be provided for industrial purposes in developing countries. This move led to the inclusion of a section on technical education in the 1977 report of the new Secretary-General, Shridath Ramphal. The issue was included in the section on education, and was the first indication of the rising status of TVE. A TVE specialist was appointed to the Secretariat.

The technical education section of the report indicated that the Secretariat was responding to the wishes of governments in giving increasing attention to the education of technicians and their practical training in industry. It was becoming clear that there was inadequate provision for the education and training of technical teachers in developing countries, which might have to recruit such teachers from developed countries.

On the recommendation of the Accra 7CEC (1977) a working group was formed, and met in 1978, to work out detailed proposals for a Commonwealth Industrial Training and Experience Programme (CITEP). The working group surveyed the training needs of Commonwealth countries and recommended that there should be a programme providing 2000 training places around the Commonwealth for technicians, craftsmen and managerial grades. By 1981 the needs of development had led member states to give high priority to technical education and training. The Education Division of the Secretariat supported that priority by:

- Helping to establish regional associations of polytechnics;
- Assisting with technical teacher training;
- Improving the suitability of technical examinations;
- Liaising between technical education and industry.

Despite this activity, a regional meeting held in the Caribbean in 1982 concluded that the contribution which technical and vocational education could make to national development in the smaller countries had yet to be fully exploited (*Secretary-General's Report*, 1983).

On the other hand, by 1987 the Secretary-General's Report praised the extension of Education Programme's scope by the establishment of the CITEP, which was to facilitate practical training and experience in industry as well as opportunities for practical experience with advanced technologies and changing manufacturing processes. The 1989 Secretary-General's Report noted that the CITEP programme had continued to expand and had implemented more than 200 train-

ing projects over the period 1987–89. Subsequently, CITEP continued to extend its activities, and organised training programmes in advanced technological fields such as software systems, digital satellite communications, computer-aided design and computer-aided manufacture.

d. Specialist Training and the CFTC

Throughout the 1980s the Secretariat continued to support development efforts by supplying some of the specialised skills – managerial, professional and technical – which developing country governments still needed. It offered expertise in development economics, fiscal policy, law, taxation and statistics. By 1983, the Secretariat had formed a Human Resource Development Group which incorporated six different programmes. The education aspect was a major programme provider. Other specialist programmes covered health, management development, women and youth, and the Fellowships and Training Programme (FTP) of the CFTC (*Secretary-General's Report*, 1989).

The FTP had been launched in 1972 under its original title, 'The Education and Training Programme'. The objective was initially to finance the training and education of people from one developing country to another.

This objective was later broadened to enable the FTP to help Commonwealth governments to provide for their manpower development and training needs, as well as to increase the supply of trained people with the skills and expertise required to manage the machinery of government and to support national development plans.

The FTP has provided:

- Policy seminars and advanced training;
- Programmes and workshops for senior government officials and top level executives from both the public and private sectors;
- Training for middle-level technical and managerial staff;
- Training with a multiplier effect, for example the training of trainers;
- The design of customised and specialised training attachments and study visits.

In 1993 the FTP was merged with a Management Development Programme to form the Management and Training Services Division. The service continues under that umbrella utilising broadly the policies set out above.

e. The 1990s: Focus on the Private Sector

Chief Anyaoku was appointed Secretary-General in 1990. His first report, published in 1991, made it clear that one of the primary functions of the Secretariat was to help member countries build sound economic and social infrastructures through the development of skills. By 1993, Chief Anyaoku was reporting that more and more Commonwealth governments, at every stage of economic development, were seeking new ways out of the old economic impasse. They recognised

that the way to future growth lay in a commitment to market principles, the development of international trade and the attraction of private capital for productive investment. Instead of trying to run businesses as instruments of government policy, many of the governments were transferring parastatal industries out of their direct control. They were seeking to provide an environment in which individual enterprise could thrive (*Secretary-General's Report*, 1993).

It is notable that the 1991 Harare Declaration had included sound economic management among its aims – thus recognising the central role of the market economy. No doubt this change of economic direction had been influenced by the break-up of the Soviet Union in 1989, and consequential changes of political philosophy within the former satellite countries of the Soviet Union. The effect in the Commonwealth on TVE, as well as on entrepreneurship, can be described as dramatic. New techniques, new structures and new styles of teaching were required to enable the rapidly developing private enterprise sector of the economy to grow. This was especially true in states which had, earlier, been highly centralised.

Consequent upon the changed attitude of several Commonwealth governments towards encouraging a private sector economy, the Secretariat developed a range of activities designed to assist that change.

- A Commonwealth Business Network (COMBINET) was launched in 1993. It aimed to strengthen the role of private business organisations by promoting investment and technology, and by helping small businesses.
- In order to support this activity, a Commonwealth Private Investment Initiative (CPII) was formed. This was a collaborative partnership with the Commonwealth Development Corporation (CDC) and the Commonwealth Secretariat. The venture was intended to facilitate a flow of investment funds to the developing regions of the Commonwealth.
- The Secretariat raised the level of the Commonwealth Business Network by providing online access to the internet in 1997. This provided chambers of commerce, industry associations and businesses with information on new technologies and training opportunities, and with direct access to market intelligence; contacts and opportunities to enter new markets.
- The Commonwealth Business Forum, established in 1997, initiated a Commonwealth Business Council which covered trade policy and facilitation; investment promotion; the promotion of good business practice, corporate governance and corporate social responsibility; e-commerce; publications and information exchange; and the young executive exchange programme (*Secretary-General's Report*, 1999).

Complementing this private sector activity was an urgent need to train skilled personnel capable of supporting private sector business. As the Secretary-General's Report of 1997 put it: 'A major bottleneck in many developing countries is the gap

in key skills and expertise'. By then the Secretariat was already providing more training and more experts at the request of member countries, mainly through the CFTC. In the two years 1995–1997 the CFTC provided training to 9000 middle and top-level managers and officials in the public and private sectors in order to upgrade their skills (*Secretary-General's Report*, 1997).

Over the same period, the Secretariat met requests from 46 countries, six dependent territories, and several regional organisations serving Commonwealth countries, by placing about 650 short- and long-term experts and advisers in essential positions where qualified nationals were not available (*Secretary-General's Report*, 1997).

The Secretariat also organised a Pan-Commonwealth Workshop in India in 1996 under the title 'Partnership between government, the private sectors and NGOs in education, training and employment opportunities'. The workshop identified unemployment and under-employment as major concerns in Commonwealth developing countries. It was confirmed that the largest section of the population in most developing countries was employed in the informal sector where there was low productivity through lack of training or appropriate support services. Hence we begin to see where TVE did not reach. It failed to reach the informal sector which contained many millions of people unable to improve their low standard of living because they were not being provided with marketable skills. As the 1997 Secretary-General's Report stated:

> *The Commonwealth continues to be deeply concerned about poverty – about half the world's poor live in its member countries.*
>
> *Secretary-General's Report*, 1997

Reliable statistics are not available, but an informed guess suggests that at least 600 million people the Commonwealth are living in poverty.

The Secretariat was well aware of this tragic situation. It therefore carried out a major study to identify successful approaches to poverty alleviation, and initiated a series of regional workshops to promote the sharing of experience. Building on the conclusion of these workshops, the Secretariat planned to provide technical assistance and play a brokerage and catalytic role in mobilising expertise and seed capital to countries interested in self-help schemes (*Secretary-General's Report*, 1997).

f. Overview of the Secretariat's Work in the Field

This survey of 35 years of work (1965–2000) by the Commonwealth Secretariat in education reveals the dedication and immense output of the Secretariat's multinational staff. Throughout the 35 years the senior staff have struggled to respond positively to the manifold recommendations and requests arising from the triennial meetings of education ministers and from the many regional or Commonwealth-wide workshops. In addition, the impact of large-scale bilateral and multilateral aid programmes aimed at TVE in developing countries have had an effect on the

Secretariat's activity. A single World Bank project in one country might have inputs greater than the Secretariat's funding for all African member states put together. Inevitably, senior management has had to prioritise functions, and some programmes or requests have had to be given lower priority than others. It would appear from this survey that high priority has been accorded to the highest levels of TVE, i.e. the professional and administrative levels which are broadly at tertiary education level. A somewhat lower priority has been accorded to the vocational aspect in schools; and perhaps lower still to the various skill levels required by technicians and craftsmen. Beyond that level, the lowest priority appears to have been accorded to the provision of TVE for those millions of people currently subsisting in the informal economy. It may be that future ministers of education will wish to reconsider these priorities.

The record of publications provides some evidence of priorities over the 40 years from 1959. The Commonwealth Library has provided two print-outs of recorded publications. The first records the amazing output of 450 publications or papers by the Education Division, or its equivalent, over the 35 years of its existence. However, inspection of the titles indicates that less than 10% relate to TVE and entrepreneurship. A second print-out lists all publications and papers containing the word 'training'. There are no less than 235 such documents. A similar inspection of titles shows the following breakdown of subjects:

Senior officials, specialists and administrators	57%
Technical and vocational education and entrepreneurship	26%
Teachers and teacher training, including technical	14%
Others, e.g. book publishing or resources	3%
	100%

An inspection of the *Commonwealth Year Book* for 2000 shows that there are 90 listed agencies associated with the Commonwealth. No more than seven of those agencies could be regarded as related to TVE and entrepreneurship.

Nothing can detract from the massive, formidable and professional output of the Commonwealth Secretariat over its history so far. The statistical indicators, set out above, simply suggest that TVE and entrepreneurship may well need higher priority in the future.

4 The Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation

The Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation was formed in 1971. It was an extension of, and replacement for, the Commonwealth Programme of Technical Co-operation, which carried out similar functions but on a lesser scale, from 1967 to 1971. As noted above, by 1973 the CFTC had already prepared an update of a 1966 report on the education and training of technicians. As became customary, consultants were recruited for this task. Nigeria and UK provided the specialists for

the project. The final document was published in December 1975. By 1974, the Secretary-General was already reporting that the CFTC's Education and Training Programme had become an important medium for Commonwealth co-operation in professional, technical and vocational training in the developing countries (*Secretary-General's Report*, 1974). The programme continued to grow year by year. Governments had identified the main priority as the training of middle level personnel, managers and technicians (*Secretary-General's Report*, 1979)

The same report noted that 53 people from the Solomon Islands had gone on courses and training attachments with CFTC support. Those trainees had travelled to Fiji to learn business accounting and public health nursing, and to train as forest guards. This is an excellent example of partnership and sharing of resources between two small Commonwealth countries. The CFTC awarded scholarships to enable government-nominated students and trainees to gain from training facilities throughout the developing countries of the Commonwealth. This support was mainly directed to job-related training. The scholarships were awarded for institutional courses, mainly professional and technical, but including some academic courses (*Secretary-General's Report*, 1981).

A revealing sidelight on the growing involvement of women in the CFTC training programmes was shown by the following figures published in a CFTC report of 1993. (The first two rows are taken from the CFTC report: the percentages have been added.)

Students/Trainees

	1986/7	1987/8	1988/9	1989/90	1990/91	1991/2	1992/3
Total	2649	3252	4141	4725	4884	4039	4341
Women	306	793	1094	1543	1629	1394	1604
Women as % of total	11.5	24.4	26.4	32.6	33.4	34.5	36.9

The most recent figures available cover the period 1997–99:

Students/Trainees 1997–9

Total	7185
Women	2852
Women as % of total	39.7

This report appears to show (on an annual basis) some fall in overall numbers; but it also shows a continuing rise in the proportion of women (*Skills for Development*, 1999).

By 1997 he CFTC was reporting that some 2000 training fellowships a year had

been granted over the period 1993–1997. These were given to middle and senior professional, technical and administrative managers to study at some of the Commonwealth's best institutions, or to take up work attachments (CFTC, 1995 and 1997). Some of these fellowships were provided in the South Pacific region which praised CFTC in 1996 for supporting on-the-job training to foster entrepreneurship and to assist the development of small-scale industries to process locally available resources. The same report noted that women entrepreneurs and other groups newly venturing into industrial activities were the main beneficiaries of the assistance (*The Commonwealth in Action – The South Pacific*, 1996).

In contrast to the many middle-level TVE activities, and perhaps as a positive shift of priorities, the 1999 *Secretary-General's Report* stated that, to avoid duplication of effort, the Commonwealth (through CFTC) is concentrating its poverty alleviation assistance in specific areas, such as access to credit. The report also recorded that CFTC had provided regional training programmes in Cameroon on the management of micro-credit schemes for women at which participants had developed a practical and integrated approach to enterprise development. Many of the 60 to 70 enterprises receiving help were processing raw materials in one form or another. Most of them were small, privately owned and agro-based (*Secretary-General's Report*, 1999).

In 1998–99, the CFTC's budget stood at £20.5 million. The CFTC is a mutual and voluntary fund. Governments make contributions of finance, training places and expertise according to their ability, draw on these resources according to their need and govern CFTC jointly. The CFTC regards its special strengths as:

- Accessibility
- Cost Effectiveness
- Speed of response
- Flexibility
- Neutrality
- As a catalyst to bring in other agencies.

Commonwealth Year Book, 2000

Most CFTC activities are carried out by divisions of the Commonwealth Secretariat, notably the Management and Training Services Division, the General Technical Assistance Services Division, the Export and Industrial Development Division and the Economic and Legal Advisory Services Division.

The CFTC, working closely within the Commonwealth Secretariat, has played a valuable role in raising the level of skills in Commonwealth developing countries, especially at the middle areas of TVE. Experts or advisers with TVE skills were provided to fill key posts in TVE. These skills need to percolate down to much wider sections of the populace in order to have an effect upon the really poor.

5 The Commonwealth Foundation and Non-governmental Organisations

This section concentrates on the TVE and entrepreneurship-related activities of the Foundation.

The Foundation was established in 1966 by Commonwealth Heads of Government. It was designed as an intergovernmental organisation with the mission to serve, support and link the 'unofficial Commonwealth'. The unofficial Commonwealth initially consisted of mainly the professional associations. The Foundation is an autonomous body with a Board of Governors which determines its policies. The Board is made up from member governments and meets twice yearly.

In its early years the Foundation developed a programme of support for professionals, consisting of start-up and sustaining grants for Commonwealth professional associations and centres. In addition, there were responsive awards to individual professions and organisations for training, workshops and exchanges. The Foundation is the major external source of funds for the majority of the Commonwealth Professional Associations. These associations cover areas such as agricultural sciences, architecture, archives, education, engineering, geography, the disabled, human ecology, journalism, law, librarianship and literature, medicine, musicology, nursing, pharmacy, surveying, broadcasting, music and the veterinary sciences. Over the 40-year period covered by this book it was customary for the Foundation to provide annual grants for some 30 Commonwealth professional associations. Their members possess qualifications at the tertiary level. Their activities are directed towards their own professional vocations and are frequently educational.

Their importance for this study is that many, perhaps most, of the professional associations have organised training sessions for their own members. Financial help from the Foundation has contributed to the technical and vocational education of professional association members. However, of the 26 Commonwealth professional associations supported by the Foundation in 2000, only one was related specifically to TVE.

A major shift in the policies of the Foundation occurred in 1979 when the Foundation's mandate was extended to include NGOs. At the same time the Foundation was reconstituted as an international organisation.

As early as 1970 the Secretary-General's Report referred to the existence of over 250 Commonwealth-wide NGOs. The extension of the Foundation's mandate brought several hundred NGOs into a partnership relationship with the Foundation, which began to spend a growing proportion of its funds on NGOs.

The table below illustrates this change of direction.

Commonwealth Foundation Expenditure 1967–994

	1967/8	1993/94	1986/87
Funds	£250,000	£1,540,000	£1,900,000
Spent on:	%	%	%
1. Professionals	100	69	50
2. NGOs	–	15	30
3. Culture	–	16	20

Source: The Commonwealth Foundation. A Special Report, 1966–93

Total expenditure on professionals steadily declined over the period 1967–1994 from 100% to 50%, whereas expenditure on NGOs rose from zero to 30%. As a result of this change, the Special Report for 1966–93 recorded that the Foundation was supporting education for development by funding those people who were working to make education relevant to local conditions.

A subsequent report, *The Commonwealth Foundation*, covering 1996–1999, described how priority was given to collaborative activities, and to a range of development issues. These were the eradication of poverty, rural development, health, non-formal education, community enterprise, gender and disability. In the allocation of awards to individuals to support these aims, it is notable that preference for the awards was given to mid-career women and men who had had limited opportunities for overseas travel.

The same report referred to individual skill building, organisational development and Commonwealth exchange. The strategies for these activities came from support for training, technical assistance and exchanges, workshops, study visits, regional and pan-Commonwealth conferences, information sharing and networks. The same report gave two interesting examples of success from Commonwealth agencies supported by the Foundation. In India, the Commonwealth Trade Union Council's participatory training methods had enabled women to become leaders in their unions and associations. The cascading-down effect had spread the information widely because women had introduced their own training courses. Similarly, the Commonwealth Veterinary Association had organised a programme targeted at women smallholder farmers to provide information about scientific knowledge and appropriate technologies and to improve the production and safe management of animals.

In August 1991, the Foundation helped to organise the first Commonwealth Forum for Commonwealth NGOs. This event brought 170 NGO representatives from 48 countries to a meeting in Harare. Careful timing enabled the NGO meeting to put forward proposals to the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Harare later in the same year. The Forum proposed that there should be a Commonwealth NGO charter to outline good practice and to chart relationships

with other agencies. It took some time to get this proposal under way, but in 1996 the Foundation published *Non-Governmental Organisations: Guidelines for Good Policy and Practice.* Three years later, the *Commonwealth Foundation Report*, 1996–1999 saw this event as a watershed in the developing partnership between the Commonwealth and NGOs. Further NGO forums took place in 1995 and 1999.

The twelfth Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers (1994) agreed that the private sector, including NGOs, could play an effective role in the provision of education.

A year earlier, the *Commonwealth Foundation Report*, 1966–1993 had stressed the importance of enabling people in the expanding Commonwealth to earn a livelihood. The Foundation had therefore funded training and exchange programmes to promote income generation, self-employment and community-based development.

The same report offered the example of a southern NGO, the 'Small Industry Development' of Tanzania, and a northern NGO, 'Tools for Self-Reliance', which had worked in partnership to distribute refurbished hand tools to village enterprises and to entrepreneurs.

It is a tribute to, and a recognition of, the partnership between the Commonwealth and NGOs that the thirteenth Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers (1997) recommended that practical strategies should be encouraged for promoting partnership between the public sector, the private sector and civil society in all areas of education and human resource development. The Commonwealth News Release of the same meeting recorded proposals to devise viable partnerships with the private sector and relevant NGOs in adapting school curricula and university courses to meet the demands of the workplace and the requirements for new means of literacy.

Early in 1999 the Foundation initiated a new project on government/NGO partnership development in collaboration with the Commonwealth Association for Public Administration and Management. This project envisaged the collection, writing and analysis of country overviews and case studies on NGO/government partnerships. It was intended to produce materials which could be used by governments, NGOs and other institutions to build understanding, skills and knowledge in this field (*Commonwealth Foundation Report*, 1996–1999).

The Foundation's support for appropriate NGOs can be illustrated by the Commonwealth Association of Polytechnics in Africa. On the recommendation of the 1977 CEC meeting in Accra, CAPA was launched in December 1978 with its headquarters in Nairobi. By 1997 CAPA had a membership of 143 polytechnics and high level technical colleges spread across 17 African Commonwealth countries. From 1980, the Association ran training workshops in different locations in Africa. For all these events the Canadian International Development Agency provided funds to supplement those of the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Commonwealth Foundation. The Education Department of the Commonwealth

Secretariat was a prime mover in promoting the CAPA projects.

In 1988, CAPA in collaboration with the International Labour Organisation, established a pilot project to address the issue of under-representation of women in technical education and training. Despite the doom-laden forecasts about the future of Polytechnics expressed by the CAPA Secretary-General in 1997 (see Section 2 above), CAPA still exists and seems set to continue to make a contribution to TVE in Africa.

A further example of the capacity of NGOs to contribute to TVE is that of the south India community colleges based in Madras. Here the vision and energy of a Jesuit Priest, Father Xavier Alphonse, initiated a survey of community colleges in the USA and of further education colleges in the UK. As a result of his researches, Father Xavier managed to obtain grants from many sources (including DfID) to set up a community college on similar lines to US or Canadian colleges. He made the project very practical by obtaining a detailed survey from all employers in and around Madras of their needs for skilled employees. These specifically requested skills formed the basis of the courses offered by the Madras Community College from 1996. The targeted clientele included school drop-outs, and students unqualified for university traditional courses; the college also offered a second chance for apparent failures.

By 1998 there were 13 community colleges in Tamil Nadu, with others being set up in Pondicherry. More such colleges are in the process of formation in south India.

All the community colleges offer a one-year diploma. The training is for 48 weeks. Of these, 18 weeks provide for life skills, 20 weeks for work skills, 8 weeks are for practical work experience and two weeks for preparation for work (Madras Centre for Research and Development of Community Education, 1999).

The Commonwealth Foundation has evolved from its earlier concentration on professional development. There is now a good mix of activities which can support TVE at several levels. NGOs have a valuable role to play in TVE, and will, no doubt, continue to receive seed-corn from the Foundation. It is partnership with NGOs which may enable the Commonwealth to tackle the TVE needs of millions of people in the non-formal economy.

6 The Commonwealth of Learning

The Commonwealth of Learning is the subject of the next chapter and aspects of it have been referred to in Chapters 1, 3 and 4. It is such a significant institution for Commonwealth education that it is not surprising it should be frequently alluded to. From the perspective of the subject matter of this chapter, the following points should be made.

From the beginning, COL was envisaged as placing an emphasis on technical, vocational and continuing education (10CCEM) and, once established, it was required to strike a balance between programmes relevant to higher education and

those relevant to other levels of education and training (11CCEM). It operates by providing training materials and programme models of distance education and, as Chapter 6 demonstrates, it has helped national distance learning agencies to develop a number of innovative courses.

Specific COL activity in relation to TVE operates by merging workplace training programmes with proven distance education methods and national standards, thus overcoming traditional barriers to obtaining useful vocational skills. Examples include a technical teacher training system in the Caribbean; distance education materials to support plumbing courses in Tonga; and computerised control of curriculum, administration testing and access to training materials for vehicle manufacturing and its production line workers in South Africa (*COL Summary Report, 1994–1996*).

In a significant development, COL held a four-day workshop in Namibia in 1997 to consider the application of appropriate technologies in non-formal education and development communications. Twenty-seven people attended, representing 13 countries. Six new project proposals were put forward in the areas of literacy, basic education, agriculture, vocational skills and community development.

7 TVE and the World of Work

Industry and commerce as potential partners in the process of TVE had scarcely been mentioned at the first Commonwealth Education Conference in 1959. However, the second Conference held in India in 1962, while endorsing the TVE proposals from the first meeting, added that approaches should be made to industry by governments to see what additional help could be afforded to place students for training in industry. The Lagos meeting of 1968 also added two further relevant recommendations. These were that:

- The training of workers in small-scale industries should be given special attention in the drawing up of technical education plans;
- Industry should be closely associated with technical education in and through policy-making, manpower planning, curriculum development, provision of opportunities for industrial experience, accreditation, consultancy services, part-time courses and vocational guidance.

Analysis of the realities of the relationships between TVE and industry featured at the Canberra Conference held in 1971. The report of the main committee on TVE agreed that the chief function of technical education was to satisfy the needs of commerce and industry for various categories of technical manpower. In this respect, they argued, the needs of small-scale industries should not be overlooked. The main report went even further, for it found evidence that some countries had produced too many highly trained personnel, and too few with appropriate training for middle and lower positions in industry and commerce. It was recommended that such countries should review their existing provision in this regard.

In a widening of the economic aims of TVE, the Jamaica Conference of 1974

stated that the aim of TVE should be to contribute to increasing employment and per capita income.

These aims led the Ghana report of 1977 to state that most developing countries were faced with the paradox of having a shortage of persons with critically needed skills and a surplus of unskilled labour. This aspect was steadily becoming a feature of all economies in the world, and in developed and developing communities alike. By 1980 even the technical teachers were seen to be failing to relate their teaching to the specific developmental needs of each different country (CCEM, 1980). So the CEC urged the Secretariat to investigate the interactions between technical education curricula and associated industrial training programmes by means of a survey in member countries, followed by the publication of appropriate manuals on the subject.

By 1987, the analysis of TVE was becoming of deeper significance. The CEC held in Kenya agreed that although the cost of TVE was high, the cost of not providing it must not be overlooked. Where adequate provision for TVE was lacking, other sectors of the economy were certain to suffer, with the whole society having to bear the strain of unemployment and the loss of youth morale. In this regard an estimate made in India put the cost of not providing TVE as being 1.8 times greater than the cost of providing it.

It was relatively late, in 1984, in this 40-year period, that the conferences began to discuss an inter-relationship between schools and TVE. The 1984 meeting in Cyprus (9CCEM) recommended that a study should be made with reference to pre-vocational and vocational education of different approaches to the provision of work experience in schools. In addition, it was felt that the bringing together of school and work could help counter attitudes inherited from colonial times, i.e. that educated people should not do manual work, and that workers did not need to learn.

Going further, the same meeting suggested that there was a need to explore ways of introducing a pre-vocational element into schools and to learn from the varied and extensive experience of doing this within Commonwealth countries. One working group studied the contribution of education systems (formal and non-formal) in improving young people's access to work. The group found that terms such as employment, work and jobs need redefinition in view of the economic, social and political diversity of the Commonwealth. The group noted that the economies of developing countries were primarily based on agriculture. Up to 80% of those populations led agricultural, semi-subsistence lives. For them, life was work: work which encompassed food production, cash crop farming, home-care, house-building and road-making. This led to the question of whether all children should be taught basic technical skills as part of a broad and balanced curriculum. Increasing concern was expressed at the high cost of establishing separate technical education facilities; equipment was expensive and teachers scarce.

The working group recommended that the Secretariat should continue its

initiative of providing opportunities to discuss the integration of science, technical, vocational and mathematics education in schools. The Cyprus meeting summarised the main TVE needs. These were to endow young people with the capacity to respond flexibly to changing patterns of work, and to provide for those who could go into wage employment, become self-employed, work in the traditional sector, in co-operatives and other semi-formal institutional environments. At the same time, while education needed to reflect the world of work, a narrow vocational emphasis would not meet all these ends.

All these recommendations were placed in a different context by the Kenya Conference of 1987, where ministers agreed that measures needed to be taken to overcome negative attitudes of parents, teachers and pupils towards vocationally-oriented programmes which were commonly identified as being intended for slow learners, under-achievers, drop-outs and the culturally deprived.

Already by 1987 doubts were beginning to arise about the role of the state in relation to TVE and industry. A key question was: at what point should governments inject support for entrepreneurial development and provide assistance for small-scale businesses? The 1990 meeting in Barbados was concerned that the private sector was also developing vocational institutions, and a committee on TVE recognised that it was becoming necessary to control the standards and practices of private sector TVE institutions. By the time of the 1994 meeting in Pakistan, ministers were recording that pressures on the state from different sources had necessitated a serious rethinking of the role the state played in the delivery of services. However, they felt that calls for the state to withdraw from educational provision to any significant degree were likely to be restrained. In any case, the state remained responsible for the securing of the provision of basic education as a right of all citizens (12CCEM).

Over the 40-year period to 1999 there has been a progressive development of the inter-relationship between TVE and the worlds of public and private employment. That inter-relationship seems likely to expand and improve for the future, as the possession of marketable skills becomes a prerequisite of employment.

8 TVE and the Informal Economic Sector

The informal economic sector was rarely mentioned at early meetings of the Commonwealth Education Conferences. Almost by definition, little was known about the extent and variety of the informal sector, and ministers were preoccupied with expanding formal education, especially in the developing countries. Only later did non-formal education become noticed as a potential means of providing for the unknown millions in the informal economic sector.

The ILO had, however, already studied the sector, and in 1971 the ILO Director-General described the informal sector as:

- Unregistered and unrecorded in official statistics;

- Tending to have little or no access to organised markets, to credit institutions, to formal education and training institutions or to many public services and amenities;
- Often compelled by circumstances to operate outside the framework of the law;
- Almost invariably beyond the reach of social labour legislation and protective measures at the workplace, even when the workers were registered and respected certain areas of the law.

There appears to have been no major recommendation about education for the informal sector from the CECs until the conference held in Ghana in 1977. That meeting recommended that the Commonwealth Secretariat should:

- Carry out surveys, case studies and pilot projects in the field of non-formal education;
- Assist in the exchange of information concerning programmes designed to identify solutions to common problems in non-formal education and rural development. Inevitably non-formal education, i.e. education conducted outside formal educational institutions, became a vehicle for TVE to reach people working in the informal sector.

As a result, a Commonwealth Specialist Conference on non-formal education was held in Delhi in 1979. The conference lasted two weeks and was attended by 109 delegates from 27 countries. Observers attended from the host country, several international agencies and the UK. The conference recognised the importance of non-formal education for national development. The meeting produced no less than 61 recommendations. The following lists a selection:

- National councils or boards for the non-formal education of adults and children;
- Seminars and consultative meetings to share experiences;
- Redesigning census procedures to provide information about relevant groups of people;
- A governmental budgetary allocation for non-formal education;
- Co-operation with appropriate voluntary agencies;
- Co-operation with private enterprise where appropriate;
- Non-formal education programmes to provide 'drop-outs' and school leavers with a second chance;
- Many recommendations to involve women, both to help with, and to receive non-formal education;
- Specific training for appropriate teachers and workers with community groups;
- Provision for adult illiterate people;
- All programmes to be related to local circumstances.

Few of the 61 recommendations have been widely adopted. All remain desirable to raise the living standards of the poorest peoples in the Commonwealth.

In 1985 the *Secretary-General's Report* recorded that work in the non-formal education sector included publishing studies of non-formal education for out-of-school children and for women, and completing a survey of the involvement of Commonwealth universities in non-formal education. In 1984 a regional workshop was held in Dhaka on the evaluation of non-formal education programmes.

Professor Ashoka Chandra wrote the main working papers for a Commonwealth Workshop held in Jamaica during 1997. Professor Chandra was the Director of the Institute of Applied Manpower Research at New Delhi, India. His working paper stated that in India the organised economic sector accounted for only 8% of total employment. The bulk of employment was in the informal sector, which in manufacturing accounted for 76% of total manufacturing employment. Professor Chandra used evidence from Jamaica, India and Tanzania to analyse four broad categories of employment in the informal sector. These categories were:

- Entrepreneurs – owners of small establishments and principal workers in the enterprises;
- Establishment workers – wage earning employees, apprentices and unpaid workers;
- Independent workers – basically self-employed, street vendors, repairmen, producers of earthenware and leather products, and providers of day-to-day services of generally low market value;
- Casual workers – mainly manual labour, household workers, gardeners, sweepers, construction labourers, watchmen and others in typical casual jobs.

If we take Professor Chandra's figures of 8% of workers employed in the formal economy in India, then 92% of the working population in India, that is, say, 460 million people, are working in the categories outlined above. Manifestly, formal education cannot reach those people, and informal media of education have to be used if any level of technical and vocational education is to provide the skills to enable them to raise their standard of living.

Evidence about this desperate situation is not confined to Professor Chandra's research in Asia. The International Labour Organisation reported in November 1998 that the informal sector is a major provider of urban jobs in developing countries. In Africa as a whole, informal employment accounted for over 60% of total urban employment. Among individual countries for which statistics were available, the figures reach 57% in Bolivia and Madagascar, and 50% in the Republic of Tanzania (*ILO Governing Body Report*, November 1998).

By 1999 UNESCO published an even more worrying report. This stated that in many low-income countries, and even in medium-income level countries, employment in the formal economy was stagnant. The absorption of new entrants into the labour market takes place in the informal sector (UNEVOC Info. 3/99). Some sug-

gestions for improving the economic position of those in the informal sector in developing countries were made in a *World Employment Report*, published by the ILO in 1998. These suggestions included:

- Upgrading traditional apprenticeship systems;
- Increasing access to new technology;
- Strengthening linkages with medium-sized and large firms;
- Increased networking to arrange cost-effective training programmes;
- Training as a crucial part of a package clearly linked to credit and institutional support.

The great virtue of non-formal education is that it is flexible in regard to timing, venue and the curriculum needs of the clientele groups. Functional NFE can range from pre-primary to adult education (*Action for Human Resource Development*, Commonwealth Secretariat, 2000). Provided NFE takes full account of the local pattern of employment of even the poorest families in the informal economy, it may be able to transfer skills which are used by families even living at subsistence level into survival skills for the future. Such families make dwellings, find food, fish, often make minor weapons, and bring up children. The potentiality is there to be used.

Issues in Education and Training (Wright, 2000: 28) summarises the important challenge in terms of access to education, namely how to ensure that those who are outside the formal system can be provided with alternative means and opportunities for acquiring the knowledge and information they need to realise their full potential for development.

9 Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is the ability to combine the factors of production so as to produce saleable goods or services at prices which will enable the entrepreneur to make a sufficient profit to finance continuity of production. The factors of production in traditional economic analysis are land, labour, and capital. Entrepreneurship is sometimes regarded as the fourth factor of production. The vast expansion of knowledge over the past 100 years and its rapidly growing dissemination over the past 50 years, leads to the theory that there is now a fifth factor of production – 'specialised knowledge'. Countries with a high average level of specialised knowledge have a high standard of living. Countries with a low average level of specialised knowledge have a low standard of living. Thus, it is now the entrepreneur's task to combine land, labour, capital and specialised knowledge in order to maximise production and thus raise standards of living.

Entrepreneurship has created the vast majority of the world's wealth. When wealth became institutionalised as 'capital' in the nineteenth century the process was attacked and totally opposed by 'socialist' thinking. The capitalists supported

private enterprise. The socialists believed that the state should centrally control the economy. Despite 70 years of experimentation, by the late 1980s it had become clear that total state control did not produce as rapid an increase in Gross Domestic Product as did individual enterprise in mixed economies.

Over the past 40 years, Commonwealth countries have had to adjust to the extensive changes in political philosophy and economic theory which are implied by the analysis outlined above. Many newly independent developing countries within the Commonwealth initially introduced centrally controlled economies. Even the mixed economies of the developed countries were still debating the role of the state in relation to individual enterprise through most of the twentieth century. The balance is not settled yet, but most countries of the world have 'mixed' economies, i.e. a mixture of individual enterprise and social control. The turning point came in 1989 when the Soviet Union's people changed its government's philosophy. The Soviet Union divided into its constituent parts, and several of its satellite nations in Eastern Europe dismissed their highly centralised governments and introduced partially private enterprise economies in which individual enterprise was key.

Up to 1990, relatively little was said at CECs about the need to educate for entrepreneurship. It must be noted, however, that an Entrepreneurship Development Institute had been set up in India by 1984. A keynote address to the Kenya Conference of 1987 did, however, suggest that in the then turbulent economic environment, young people should be prepared, through vocationally oriented education, for employment in small businesses and in the informal sector.

At the same meeting, education ministers noted that pressure was growing on them and the school system to prepare pupils for self-employment. More explicitly, the 1989 report of the Commonwealth Secretary-General described entrepreneurship as important in helping to create economic growth and employment. Many Commonwealth governments were keen to find ways to develop appropriate skills. Over the period 1987–89 the Commonwealth Fellowships and Training Programme allocated 600 fellowships for attendance at training courses in entrepreneurship and small industries development. Some of the courses were provided specifically for women (*Secretary-General's Report*, 1989).

With this background, it was not surprising that the Barbados Conference supported the Secretariat's activities since the previous conference in 1987, in focusing on a manageable set of activities geared to producing curriculum guidelines on entrepreneurial skills development for technical and vocational institutions. The conference report accepted a Working Party's recommendation that work on entrepreneurship should continue and should not be bound by the triennium between ministers' conferences (11CCEM, 1990). As a result of a recommendation in 1987, the Commonwealth Secretariat's Education Division initiated a three-year project focusing on entrepreneurial skills development programmes in technical and vocational training institutions. The results were published as *Designing*

Entrepreneurial Skills Development Programmes – a Resource Book for Technical and Vocational Institutions (1990). The book expressed doubts about the benefits of some technical and vocational education projects because they did not always appear to be cost effective to the national governments.

A further publication, *Entrepreneurial Skills Development Programmes in 15 Commonwealth Countries*, was produced in 1991 (Rao and Wright, 1991). That publication expressed considerable doubts about advocating an Entrepreneurial Skills Development Programmes (ESDP) for all or as part of general education. The view was expressed that changing the culture of a school to make it more conducive to promoting ESDP was an extremely difficult and long-term process. It might, therefore, be better to locate attempts to promoting ESDP within specialist institutions. The authors did, however, note that by 1991, there were already 300 agencies in India that conducted ESD programmes and promoted entrepreneurship.

By 1993, the Secretary-General's report was referring to the establishment of Youth Enterprise Development Funds. These funds were designed to assist young entrepreneurs to start small-scale enterprises and, in the example given, were organised by the Africa Centre. The same report referred to increased demand in 1991–93 for training in the area of entrepreneurship and small business development. Improving entrepreneurial skills in trade promotion and export development had been central, over the same period, to the Secretariat's export development efforts.

It soon became clear that the lack of start-up funding was a major hindrance to the expansion of entrepreneurship. As a result, in 1995 ministers responsible for youth affairs launched a Commonwealth Youth Credit Initiative. This provided small loans at low cost, and established revolving funds so that repayments could be re-utilised (*Secretary-General's Report*, 1995). As *The Commonwealth in Action – The South Pacific* pointed out in 1996, helping young people to access adequate capital is as important as nurturing youthful talents and honing business skills. The Commonwealth Youth Credit Initiative would help to finance enterprising young people, who are often ineligible for commercial credit, by providing an alternative to collateral.

A number of co-operative agencies helped to provide very limited amounts of credit in different countries of the Commonwealth, but perhaps the most famous of the approaches to providing credit to enable poor people to start up businesses is that of Bangladesh's Grameen (or village) Bank. Professor Muhammed Yunus, Managing Director of the Bank, was a major developer of micro credit. He claimed, in an article in *The Observer* (15 November 1999) that repayment of loans by people who borrow without collateral is much better than those whose borrowings are secured by enormous assets. The Grameen Bank came into existence in 1983, and by 1998 was employing 12,000 people. Similar institutions have been set up in over 50 countries.

Credit traditionally depends on the use of some asset as collateral. De Soto has

stated that the most important source of funds for new businesses in America was a mortgage on the entrepreneur's home. This process is not easily available in many developing countries because there is often no clear documentary legal basis for the ownership of land, and thus no clear ownership of any property on it, such as a house which could be used as collateral for a loan from a bank.

By 1997 the Secretary-General's report was referring to the fact that women faced special problems when they wished to borrow money to start a business. In May 1996 the Secretariat had sponsored a training scheme for women entrepreneurs in Africa. Training workshops assisted would-be entrepreneurs. Of 100 people who attended such workshops, most were women. More widely, the Secretariat had been supporting the training of entrepreneurs in the establishment of appropriate legal, economic, and fiscal frameworks for the exploitation of key natural resources, and the delineation of maritime boundaries of member countries.

Professor Chandra, in his presentation to the Commonwealth workshop held in Jamaica in 1997 had suggested that each level of education could focus on developing entrepreneurial capabilities through specific content and programmes to promote a movement towards self-employment, thereby reducing excessive dependence on wage employment.

Entrepreneurship forms a fundamental part of every economy. Its influence ranges from an individual sole trader to multi-million pound multinational organisations. Many countries in the Commonwealth and elsewhere in the world are currently incorporating aspects of entrepreneurship in education for employment programmes. This is an arena in which governments are beginning to co-operate closely with the private sector of the economy and are engaging NGOs as partners. In the developed, as well as the developing, countries re-structuring of industry and commerce has caused widespread unemployment. This situation has forced many people into self-employment and entrepreneurship as a means of survival. Nevertheless, this should not be seen as a fall-back position, but as a valuable strategy for enlarging employment opportunities and thus raising standards of living.

Successful entrepreneurship combines all the factors of production into the optimal use of all resources. Entrepreneurship is thus a faculty as essential to civil servants and to local government employees as it is to buyers and sellers of goods and services.

10 The Outlook for Technical and Vocational Education and Entrepreneurship in the Commonwealth

Technical and Vocational Education in the Commonwealth has experienced continuous and productive attention over the 40-year period covered by this survey. Entrepreneurship received limited attention for the first 30 years, but has rapidly achieved recognition over the years from 1989 to 1999 and beyond.

It is possible to envisage a substantial future extension of Commonwealth activity in both TVE and entrepreneurship because both can now be seen as compo-

nents in all educational processes. Those components have emerged from the past 40 years of Commonwealth educational activity and are at the following levels:

University and Postgraduate
For professional vocations such as doctors, construction engineers, veterinary experts, soil agriculturalists, and information technology specialists.

Upper Secondary School/Technical Institution
As a component, including generic studies, in all courses, and separately, as structured studies leading to preparation for employment in general, and eventually to technicians and technologists.

Lower Secondary School
As a component, including generic studies, in all courses and leading to employment as craftsmen/craftswomen, and operatives.

Primary School
As a minor component but including generic studies.
(Generic studies include literacy, numeracy, team working, problem solving, adjustment to change; and examples of the daily working lives of different peoples.)

Basic education for adults
Literacy and numeracy are pre-conditions for communication and for learning new employable skills.

In addition:
On-the-job-training
Continual upskilling will be required for everyone, whether they are employed by others or self-employed. Entrepreneurship, i.e. the capacity to manage available resources well, to respond to change and to innovate, will be required in every employment, self-, public or private. An understanding of entrepreneurship should be expected to become a component of the total curriculum at every educational level.

Given that outlook for the future, and based upon the evidence of TVE and entrepreneurship in the Commonwealth over the course of this survey, it is possible to construct an analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats which now face the Commonwealth in these two arenas.

a. Strengths

- The professional commitment and expertise of the Commonwealth Secretariat.
- The policy move from the giving of aid to the concept of partnership.
- Adoption of the concept that education, including TVE, is in itself development.
- Exceptional help made available to individuals in member countries at the higher levels of specialism.

- Diversity of the Commonwealth members, which offers many model solutions to human development.
- Pan-Commonwealth and regional workshops.
- A common communication language – English.

b. Weaknesses

- Insufficient resources devoted to TVE and entrepreneurship training.
- Prioritisation of resources insufficiently related to the poorest members of communities, and to the informal sector.
- Over-emphasis on academic education.
- Relative lack of provision in some developing countries of manpower planning allied to labour market analysis.
- No Commonwealth-wide TVE national network for mutual exchange of experience.
- Unequal provision of TVE and entrepreneurship training for women as compared with men.

c. Opportunities

- Use of technology to provide distance learning.
- Capacity to provide the TVE network suggested above by enabling all Commonwealth countries to establish UNEVOC centres (UNEVOC is the vocational arm of UNESCO). Twenty-five Commonwealth countries already provide UNEVOC centres. The remaining 29 could also do so, thus providing a Commonwealth subset of the global UNEVOC network.
- Engage all employers (including the state) in TVE and entrepreneurship training, by establishing the paradigm that training is the duty and social responsibility of every employer.
- Harness and co-ordinate the activities of the many Commonwealth professional associations and NGOs.
- Promote more rapid growth of National Income in developing countries as compared with developed countries. This process, if continued, could release more resources for TVE and entrepreneurship training.
- Channel aid from external sources (the World Bank and regional banks) to TVE as an investment in people.
- Initiate a common admission qualification to all institutions of higher education in the Commonwealth. This might contain a TVE component and an entrepreneurship component.

d. Threats

- Failure to provide hope via TVE for those in the informal sector. This could lead to serious social unrest.
- Information Technology and the internet could widen the gap between the standards of living in the developed countries, and those in the developing countries. This could weaken Commonwealth ties.
- Private enterprise is capable of offering distance teaching 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 52 weeks in the year. There may need to be some control over the content of this output.
- Restructuring of industries and commerce is likely to lead to higher unemployment.
- In some developing countries, the expansion of all educational provision is insufficient to match the expanding population.

11 Conclusion

The outlook for Technical and Vocational Education and for entrepreneurship training in the Commonwealth is one of vast opportunities limited only by the resources available to finance them. Every human being must now expect a lifelong learning, training and rètraining process. Skills will be required for survival at all stages in life. Inevitably, the application of TVE and entrepreneurship training will need to be related to the different cultural, social, economic and political structures in each Commonwealth country. Developed countries already have in place policies, practice, institutions and resources available to address the growing need for TVE and entrepreneurship training. Most developing countries will need all the help they can obtain, both from the global aid agencies and from Commonwealth resources. The use of resources for TVE and entrepreneurship is not a cost: it is an investment in the development of human beings.