

Preface

In mid-1985 the Commonwealth Secretariat sought the views of over 200 organisations and government departments throughout the world about the need for a practical handbook on setting up and operating rural learning resource centres in developing countries. Their responses revealed that no such publication existed and that a simple manual would make a very useful contribution to rural development.

The Secretariat accordingly commissioned Ms Shirley Giggey to prepare the first draft of a manual on the subject, taking into account her personal experience of organising rural resource centres. Her draft was submitted to a specially convened working party which met on two occasions in London and gave its enthusiastic support to the project. Arrangements were then made with the Government of Malawi to hold an international workshop with the following aims:

- to review the draft manual so as to meet the requirements of a wide range of developing countries;
- to prepare an accompanying training guide;
- to provide suggestions on the promotion and distribution of the manual and on the concept of rural community resource centres.

The workshop, held in Lilongwe in January 1986, brought together experts in adult education, agriculture and health extension, community development and librarianship from twelve countries. In addition to Ms Giggey, who served as the workshop consultant, those who attended were:

Mr G Chowa – Ministry of Health, Malawi

Mr J Chuma – National Library Service, Malawi

Mr S Dube – Senior Government Librarian, Zimbabwe

Mrs L Maepa – Division of Extra-Mural Studies, University of Swaziland

Mr O Makafu – Tanzania Library Service

Mr S Malya – Department of Adult Education, Mozambique

Mrs A Maruatona – Department of Adult Education, Mozambique

Mr R Mbando – Ministry of Agriculture, Malawi

Mr G Mkamanga – Ministry of Community Services, Malawi

Dr J Mutanyatta – Institute of Adult Education, University of Botswana

Dr B C Muthayya – National Institute of Rural Development, India

Mr J Mutimba – Department of Agricultural, Technical and Extension Services, Zimbabwe

Mr N Ndzingi – Department of Non-Formal Education, Botswana

Dr Z Ngoitima – Institute of Adult Education, Tanzania

Mr A Njanga – Ministry of Culture and Social Services, Kenya

Miss M Picart – Jamaica Library Service

Mrs K Raseroka – University of Botswana Library

Miss M Reynen – Canadian Organisation for Development through Education

Mrs D Rosenberg – University of Juba Library

Mr E A Ulzen – African Association for Literacy and Adult Education, Kenya

Dr W Witjetunga – Asian-South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education, Sri Lanka

Mr J Macpherson – Chief Project Officer, Education Programme, Commonwealth Secretariat

Local arrangements for the workshop were undertaken by the Director of the National Library Service of Malawi, Mr R Mabomba who, with his staff, also provided all the support services.

At the conclusion of the workshop, the participants drew up and adopted the following resolution:

The Commonwealth Workshop on Adult Learning Resource Services in Rural Areas of Developing Commonwealth Countries, organised by the Commonwealth Secretariat, hosted by the National Library Service and the Ministry of Community Services of the Government of Malawi, and held at Lilongwe on 20-31 January 1986, having prepared a very comprehensive manual and training guide, recommends that:

1. The Commonwealth Secretariat explore the possibilities of co-opting other international agencies, including UNESCO, in undertaking or sponsoring translations of the manual into international languages such as French, Spanish and Portuguese so that the manual will have wide distribution outside the Commonwealth.
2. Member governments of the Commonwealth undertake or sponsor translations of the manual into national languages so as to achieve its maximum dissemination.
3. Member governments sponsor and support the dissemination and practical application of the manual through workshops, seminars and other activities, and in doing so ensure the minimum

participation of their extension services.

4. National non-government organisations involved in adult/non-formal education and related matters, library and other information-related subjects, undertake or sponsor the study, application and dissemination of the manual.

5. Member governments encourage and support the efforts of appropriate non-governmental organisations in the application and dissemination of the manual.

6. International associations, such as the International Council for Adult Education, the International Council for Voluntary Agencies, the International Federation of Library Associations, the International Community Education Association, and the Commonwealth Association for the Education of Adults, involved in adult/non-formal education and related matters, undertake or sponsor the study, application and dissemination of the manual among their members.