

PREFACE

Commonwealth Heads of Government, during their November 1995 Meeting in Auckland, focused their attention on the persisting problem of poverty occurring in many Commonwealth developing countries. They agreed to support the Secretariat in its efforts to identify policies and programmes which had made a direct impact on the alleviation of poverty in Commonwealth countries and which might provide an insight into the formulation of new initiatives and strategies.

In this regard, the Commonwealth Secretariat has been engaged over the past six months in a Commonwealth wide study of the mechanisms employed to tackle the seemingly intractable problem of poverty. International consultants from the Institute for Development Policy and Management (IDPM), based at the University of Manchester in England, have visited a number of Commonwealth countries with well established poverty programmes, discussed the issues with interested donor agencies, listened to the views of a number of leading Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), and attended key international meetings to learn more of the current thinking on this topic.

This document is the final report of that study written by Joseph Mullen and David Hulme of IDPM. The document has at its centre an overview of Commonwealth experiences in poverty alleviation and this leads to a number of recommendations for Commonwealth action. The Commonwealth Secretariat will be seeking ways in which to implement these recommendations in the near future beginning with the suggestion that the Secretariat should adopt a catalytical role to facilitate exchanges of experience within regions.

I am sure this document will be useful in informing the debate on poverty issues which will take place in a number of Commonwealth fora in the future. The views expressed in the paper are however the considered conclusions of the consultants and are not intended to represent the policy of the Secretariat or of individual member governments.



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